



## **September 21, 2021 Tuesday Evening, Dharma Path Class**

Karma: Identifying, Releasing, Balancing; Exercise Watching Impulse Energy; Being Active in the World from the Place of Awareness; Sanna; Vipassana, Pure Awareness, No-Self and Karma

**Barbara:** Good evening. Welcome to Dharma Path. We've had several Eden Project classes but not yet Dharma Path. Aaron has decided, and I have agreed, to focus on the subject of karma tonight.

Karma is an interesting and very broad topic. There's no way we're going to cover it tonight. We'll just get into a bit. I'm going to speak, then Aaron will speak, and then after a break Mary is going to come in and I think do a guided meditation. So, that's our plan. And if we have time, time for questions. I'm not sure how that's going to work because they seem to have a lot packed into this.

It's a beautiful rain. I can see it pouring over the gutter; it's like a waterfall coming down from my roof. And I'm just picturing myself sitting under a waterfall and the coolness of it, because it's hot and humid. The energy of the water pouring down on my body. Ahhh.... Very pleasant.

So, I purposely went to bed early last night, with the intention of getting up early to spend some very early hours with Aaron and Mary talking about tonight's class. What they wanted to teach; what was my part in it.

In the morning, if Hal wakes up before the caregiver arrives at 9, about 50% of the time, then I must go and take care of him until the caregiver comes, either just keep him company, or even, if it's necessary, get him up, changed dressed, fed. So, I never know how long I'll have in the morning.

I got up, did what I needed to for self-care, got myself a cup of coffee, came out here, looked at email, got caught up in a computer game, checked email again. An hour had passed. I went in, it was maybe 7:30am. I lay down in bed where I was going to meditate and talk to Aaron and Mary.

Mary said to me, in a very kind, non-judgmental way, "Do you realize you were avoiding speaking with me?" As soon as she said it, yes, I saw it.

She just said, "Do you know why?" She wasn't judging; she wasn't scolding; just a very straightforward question: do you know why?

I've spent a lot of time with Mary in this past week. Her energy is amazing and her thoughts and what she offers are so clear and loving. I see not just this and that but the



big container of what she's hoping to teach this year, and in the future, and what she and Aaron are doing together, which they planned long ago.

The thought that came up, which I really thought I had moved past, is, "I'm not worthy to do this. I don't have..." there was no special thought, "Oh, I'm bad. I'm prideful. I'm angry. I'm dumb." There was nothing like that; it was just this subtle contraction of "not worthy." Not pure enough to carry this.

And she said to me, very gently, "The reason I invited you to work with me as an instrument is because you are capable of carrying this message. Otherwise, I would have gone elsewhere. Why are you holding these thoughts?"

I want to be brief, here, not go into what took an hour to talk about. But I began to see the past. Aaron in that lifetime with Yeshua was named Nathaniel, and I was his son, Mark. Nathaniel was a shepherd and also a teacher, part of the Essene community at Mt. Carmel, and he brought me with him for several days a week. He also was teaching me how to be a shepherd and how to deal with the pains of the everyday people living in the hills; how to love the animals and care for them.

But I saw that Mark felt inferior, not being 100% part of the community. Some shame. "What's wrong with me?" And I saw how old that kind of thinking was. And I've seen this subtle shame so many times before. As I said, I thought it was resolved. And it largely is resolved; it doesn't run my life at all.

But I could see how I was avoiding Mary because of the sense of, "I'm not good enough, pure enough, clear enough."

So, after some discussion about it—and the discussion does not run in words; it's blocks of thought, as it is with Aaron when I'm privately with him, just blocks of clarity and thought and insight.

She said, "What do you choose to do with this? Are you ready to drop it off?" And she gave me a beautiful image. She said, "imagine a whole group of friends, climbing a hill pre-dawn to get to the top of the hill to see the sunrise. You're with beloved friends. You,"—she said—"You, Barbara, you've chosen to carry two 50 lb suitcases with you and you're straining with them, carrying them one in each arm." People are climbing the hill lighthearted, with ease, and I'm struggling with these two 50 lb suitcases. One is shame and one is unworthiness.

As I said, this is not a part of my life anymore. I mindfully see it come up once or twice a month just as a blip, note it, and it releases.



But I see how the old habitual tendencies, the karma—karma moves into all the bodies—physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. And I see how it's not fully released.

So I was watching people walking past me. "Hurry up—you'll miss the sunrise!"

"But I have my baggage."

"Can you just put it down?"

I stopped, and Aaron stopped with me; he said, "Are you ready to put it down? Give it to me and we'll stow it away behind this rock. Nobody will steal it. If you want it on the way down, you can pick it up again. Otherwise, we'll just leave it there. You've been carrying it forever. Are you ready to let it go?"

I gave it to Aaron. We stowed it behind the rock. Climbed up and saw the sunrise, and then, in my meditation, just sat there for maybe an hour with the radiance of the sunrise. The radiance of everything, including the self. Filled with so much light, so much love.

I thought to myself, is it really this simple? Aaron said, "It's just little bits of it that have been stuck, as if you've been walking through the countryside and picked up stickers from the thorn bushes and they've caught on your clothes, they've caught on your skin. They're latched in. You've let go of the main but the stickers could be brushed away."

I said again, "Can it be this simple?" He said, "Yes. The letting go is a matter of free will to come to that decision. Enough."

That doesn't mean it won't stick anymore, whatever that karma is. It means with mindfulness we're much more able to release it.

So, that was my morning. And I'm going to give you Aaron now and let him talk.

**Aaron:** My blessings and love to you. I am Aaron. Karma: there are so many different aspects of it. Karma is basically energy. It adheres to all the bodies—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. This means it gets caught up in the cells of the body, which is part of where physical illness comes from. It gets caught up in the thoughts.

I think the most important thing to remember about karma is that it is both real and an illusion.

For those of you who have done some Pure Awareness practice, when you rest in awareness you come to a place where awareness is strong, present, there's no longer an individuated self with whom karma can stick.



Of course, when you come back to the everyday self, the karma comes back. One of the things we're going to learn here are practices to move into Pure Awareness and see, as if you were holding it in your hands, to see the mass of karma that has been sticking to you and literally put it down.

There's no self doing this; you're in a place of pure awareness. But it can be a very powerful practice. It is often necessary to repeat it time after time. But eventually it releases. Barbara talked about her surprise that feelings of unworthiness—not really shame but unworthiness—came up in relation to the question from Mary, “Why are you avoiding talking with me this morning?”

She really felt that she had resolved that. But she could feel the few places where it was left where it was sticky, and the need to consciously say, “That's enough. I set this down.”

The ground for that “That's enough” does not come from fear or getting rid of but from the deepest intention to service to all beings, to love. And at that point, being very present, one sees that there's really nothing for the karma to stick to.

Awareness does not really set it down; awareness notes that it never was real in the first place.

Awareness also notes that illusory self to which it stuck. And awareness centers on the deep intention to service to all beings, to love, to awakening, and just says, “That's enough.”

I'd liken it to how you might greet a...the image that comes to me is a pet parrot, who is a bit spoiled, and every time you come in the room it talks to you. “I want a cracker. Feed me! Feed me! Feed me! Play with me! Play with me! Play with me!” The parrot just keeps repeating whatever it has been taught. The parrot did not think of these words in its own; it was taught.

Some years ago, in Brazil the entity did surgery on Barbara's eyes, and said, “No reading for 40 days.” But she can't hear. She couldn't talk to people or converse by writing. She asked, “Can I read just enough for them to write notes to me?” “No, no reading.”

There was a large cage in the courtyard of the pousada with several parrots; they had picked up some rather wild language, some curse words, or demanding, “Feed me this!”—things like that.

What was Barbara to do with all her time? She had nobody there with her who could



talk to her in any way; no one who could sign. She sat alone at the meals. She was there for four weeks after the surgery.

She began to sit with the parrots out there. She couldn't hear them. She couldn't hear what they were saying. She just began to chant with them, "Metta, karuna, mudita, upekkha..." repeatedly for several hours a day. Not all at once, but an hour here, an hour there.

One day about a week into this, somebody came out looking for her; she was sitting by the parrots. They said, "Oh, do they talk?" Barbara said, "I don't know, I'm deaf."

So she looked at them and she said, "Metta," and they replied back to her, "Karuna, mudita, upekkha..." and kept it going. Of course, the parrots had no idea of the meaning of the words. Only, they had a new habit: rather than cursing at people they were able to offer a blessing.

Is it still a blessing if it's not conscious? It seems to me that at some level they had felt the energy of Barbara, as opposed to the angry energy of people who went out to the courtyard and said, "Shut up! Shut up, you blasted parrots!" And then the parrots repeated, "Shut up! Shut up!" Instead of feeling anger, they were feeling harmony and kindness. So yes, I think it did change their consciousness and karma.

When you keep repeating the same negative stories—"I am not lovable. I am unworthy. I am inadequate. I am damaged. I am poisonous, I cannot heal. I cannot love. I cannot be loved."—how do you free yourself of those stories, if you're going to keep repeating them?

There must be a conscious intention, and then the willingness to watch the power of the story and how it catches you, over and over. That's Part One.

Part Two is to begin to learn to rest in the one who is not caught. I'm going to go into this a bit with a guided meditation, to support awareness of the one who is not caught.

If you're going to rest in the one who is not caught, there needs to be a willingness to be the one who is not caught. What does being caught protect you from?

If you are not the inadequate one, are you the adequate one? If you are not the unloved one, are you the loved one? That's very hard. Then you must be the one who is loved, the one who is adequate, the one who is loving—you have to be that all the time. That's also an area of karma.

What if you drop the whole storyline and just be? Just be present, watching the stories arise without latching onto them, without building further stories on them.



We're going to take a few minutes here and try an exercise. Does everybody have some kind of small container with something that you might like to eat or drink? Take a minute to get it, if you need to.

Please put the container in front of you and simply look at it, and watch an impulse arise. Contact, seeing consciousness, pleasant. From that, pleasant, maybe desire, wanting. It may be a very light wanting or it may be a big wanting.

Be aware of reaching out; reaching, touching, holding. Perhaps smell it; does it have any smell? Is it pleasant? Put it in your mouth... Tasting, tasting. Try not to swallow it immediately. Hold it in the mouth and get the taste. Know it as pleasant... You may hold it in the mouth quite a while or swallow it quickly.

*(exercise)*

Once it's swallowed, ahhh, feel appreciation for that taste. Look at the bowl or empty glass and see if there's any impulse: wanting, wanting.

Wanting is a kind of habit energy. When something is pleasant, we want more of it. This is grounded in karma. It's such an old habit. When something is pleasant, the human wants more of it. Any sentient being wants more of that which is pleasant!

As much as is possible, take this wanting as an object. This practice is not just about mindfulness, but I want you to see how the karma of that experience of wanting becomes caught up in the self, in any or all of the bodies, and so you begin to become identified with it, either as something that's "good" or something that's not so good. "I should be able to overcome this." In Barbara's words, "To put this baggage down."

Let's take a few minutes. I want you to sit with your eyes open and look at that bit of food or drink, to observe the wanting, and to move into the space where you can ask, with clarity, "Who is it who wants? Who is grasping?"

Don't try to push away the experience of grasping. Say, "Thank you, teacher," to the grasping.

In a very deep way, begin to feel how it has lodged itself perhaps in all the bodies, and just watch it, with no self-condemnation, which is just a different object. Hold this wanting with peacefulness, with spaciousness.

I'll be quiet for perhaps two minutes. If we had a lot of time, I'd give you ten minutes. I hope when you repeat this exercise, you'll take longer. At any point within this ten



minutes that you feel so moved, feel free to take another nibble of the food or sip of the drink. And then come back to mindfulness again.

*(exercise)*

So, you may ask, “Where’s the karma in this?” You can see the arising of an impulse, but everybody would not feel the same impulse, based on that object. For you, there is a certain karma that ties you in relationship to this object.

We’re using a very simple physical object. Barbara spoke more of an emotional and mental object. But we also see karma literally adhering into the cells of the body, often contributing to disease.

All of it yields to patient presence and kindness, but you must be very honest with yourself. What is the karma, here? And where is that which is willing to say “Yes, I’m getting something out of holding onto this or I wouldn’t be holding onto it. But I am ready to let it go. I choose to release it.”

There are three parts to the work with karma. One is identifying the karma. It’s more a mental job, just seeing it. Releasing the karma. We’ve been talking more about identifying and releasing. Finally, we come to balancing the karma. Balancing comes in many ways.

If you have been hoarding things out of a fear that your needs wouldn’t be met, recognize that kind of movement, that kind of impulse. Feel that presence of hoarding as a tension in the body comes first. Recognition, “This is not wholesome.”

Put the baggage down so you can climb up and see the sunrise.

And then balancing, which might come in a form of giving things away. Seeing what you’ve been hoarding, the energy behind the hoarding, the fear you won’t have enough. And then literally giving things away. Feeling the fear, “What if I need it? What if I need it?” Giving it away slowly. Not fast but slowly, mindfully. Looking at the fear that comes as you give it away. Find the joy in it which replaces the fear and really leaves no room for the karma to attach itself further.

So, awareness, release, and balancing.

Now let’s go back to whatever food or drink you have in front of you.

Awareness: I have been holding onto this. I brought something to this circle that I thought would bring me comfort, and I’m holding onto it.





This next step would work much better if we were all in a room together. I would ask everybody to pass their bowl to the person to their right. We can't do that, but what if I asked you that? How would it feel? And then you turned to the left and see what they had. You're giving your M&Ms to the person on the right, and the person on the left is passing you... spicy nuts? "I want my M&Ms!"

You're passing something that you cherish, a loving memory, to the person on your right, and receiving a different memory from the person on your left. "What if it doesn't work for me? What if it doesn't open my heart? What if it's not enough for me?" Fear.

At this point I want you to turn to your bowl or glass again. Begin to bring it to your mouth, one object or the glass. And then on your screen, look who is to the right of your picture, or if you're on the far right, go to the left. Think yourself lifting that and giving it to that person, offering it to them, noting any resistance.

And then, turning to the left and receiving whatever that person has given. You can lift it so it can be seen. I see somebody is holding up a bowl so the person can see it. Passing it on, and then receiving.

Note any resistance. The subtle fear, which is common for every sentient being: My needs may not be met. It won't be good enough. I won't be safe.

Receiving, giving and receiving. Giving and receiving... Softening around any resistance, softening around any fear.

"Ahh, I don't like chocolate, and he's got my glass of wine." Tension. Softening, softening. Trusting your needs are being met. At some level this is exactly what you needed.

Then a conscious decision. Seeing the tension this has caused, "I choose to release this old fear. This baggage is really getting heavy. This fear, 'I won't be safe. I won't be loved. My needs won't be met.'"

Put it down. Call on me to help you, if you need help. Put it down. Releasing.

At this stage there is still a 'somebody' releasing; that's okay. Just releasing...

*(pause)*

Some deep breaths. Feel the increased lightness, that you have put this down, if only temporarily...

*(pause)*





Now return to what you have put down. What led to clinging to it? Feeling unsafe, unloved, confused, bad because there is negative emotion in you.

What might help to balance that old habit?

Let's use a simple example: not feeling lovable or loved. In your mind, turn to somebody in your life whom it has been a little bit challenging to love, and simply say "I love you" to that person.

See what blocks the offering, the expression of that love. "(The person's name silently to yourself), I love you."

Perhaps it was something different, like "My needs won't be met." Turning to others who you know are afraid their needs will not be met; what would you offer them to help them know their needs will be met? Can you hug them or bake them a pie? Can you simply listen to them?

Imagine yourself really being available to somebody who is afraid their needs won't be met. If the thought comes up for you, "But what about me? My needs are not being met," —shhh, that's just fear speaking. Right now you're helping another by helping to meet their needs. This is perfect; this is just what you need. Can you trust it?

Needs being met...

*(pause)*

Needs always being met...

*(pause)*

So we have the recognition of the karmic pattern. The exercises that can help release it. And then, balancing. Seeing how you held that pattern perhaps for ages and ages, and that it did harm to other people. And now you are balancing that harm by offering support to others.

That's the basis with which we're working with karma. Let's have about 10 minutes here of questions and a short break, and then Mary will come in to offer more information and perhaps some guided meditation.

Q: Is there a difference between the aggregation of our karma and our personality?

**Aaron:** Can you say it in a different way?



Q: Are what we think we are when we say “I”, is that simply our karmic pattern, or is there something else?

**Aaron:** There is no “I”. That’s one of the central areas of karma, the belief that there is this “I”. And yet you still must take care of this “I” and help it resolve its karma. To try to turn your back on it is just more karma.

John: Related to Q’s question just now, when you asked the question, “Who is that wants or grasps?” I saw that there wasn’t anybody who wants or grasps. However, I could see that I want or grasp out of fear that I’m not going to be okay unless I have what I want.

So on the one hand there is no one who wants or grasps, but at another level there is this karma or way of thinking or believing that I’m not going to be okay unless I have what I want.

**Aaron:** John I believe I have heard your words but I don’t hear a question. What you say is accurate, yes.

John: There’s no question; I was just relating my experience to what Q was saying.

**Aaron:** Yes. There’s nobody there, there’s just awareness. But perhaps the central piece of karma that every human being drags through every lifetime is the whole idea of self and the mammalian imperative for the safety of that self.

One of the things that deep caring for another being gives you is the willingness to put that other person’s safety and well-being at least equal with your own, if not ahead of you own. Because each time you do that it shakes loose the whole idea of “I am unsafe.”

On the relative level, of course you’re unsafe—you’re going to die, all of you. On the ultimate level you are absolutely safe.

Each time you act on the relative level of fear, “Oh, I need that!” and then allow it to perpetuate itself and blossom—‘blossom’ being perhaps not the best word; burst out—you become more caught.

Each time there is strong mindfulness seeing what has arisen, there’s an opportunity to say, “Enough. How long am I going to carry this baggage?” And then, “Who is carrying this baggage?”



But you cannot escape into simply the awakened mind, the Dharmakaya, because then when you come back, even just onto the bridge, or certainly into the nirmanakaya, all the old feelings come back.

So you can't hide out in the Dharmakaya; you have to resolve it in the relative plane. You do that through facing it again and again and again.

Years ago, Barbara had a repetitive frightening dream. A number of times a week, sometimes several times a night, she would wake into a dream that there was a very angry tiger coming after her, perhaps a result of my last lifetime and the information I had recently imparted to her, the fear of that tiger.

She tried saying no to the tiger in various ways. And finally she went into—many of you have done this meditation with me—she simply faced the tiger and said, “Okay, eat me.” This is related to that Milarepa passage where he serves tea. He sits with it. He's still trying to calm it down, but that negative tendency keeps coming back. And finally, he turns to it and says, “Eat me.” Dissolving into it. Finding there was never anything separate; you and the tiger are one.

Each time such fear and separation come up, one of the practices you can try, if you feel ready for it, is to say, “Eat me.” But you must mean it. You can't use it as a way to get rid of that negative quality, only to move into it completely until you truly see there is no duality between the fear and anger and love.

When the tiger eats you, what remains? I pause.

Q: When we talk about asking ourselves “Who is doing this?”, we're invoking a deeper kind of reflection or mindfulness, but we are still thinking. And there is some of the “I” in the question, “Who is doing this?”

So Krishnamurti had a great comment about this that I would love Aaron's advice on. Krishnamurti said, “At some point that ‘I’, the center, must decide to end.” Right? “Must decide.” The wisdom isn't just going to slowly wear it away. There is a moment when we have to choose. Is there any comment on that process?

**Aaron:** First, thank you, Q, it's a wonderful question. This class has practitioners at different levels. Q's question is really for those who are more advanced, especially those who have been in the Dharma Path class the past three years. New people may not feel ready for this; that's fine. Please work with whatever practices resonate for you.

We do ask at some point, “Who is doing this? Who is carrying this karma? Who is reacting?”



But as Q pointed out, it's an intellectual question. It can even be a diversion; trying to figure that out instead of facing and moving into that true emptiness, that emptiness that is so extraordinary because it's grounded in love, and when you are there there's nothing else, just that love and light. Everything else dissolves into that. Think of, *"I Am That"*, that beautiful book by Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj.

What is "That"? You cannot conjecture about it; you can only come to it in deep practice.

*(smiling)* Which comes as a reminder to pitch the Oakwood retreat! I hope many of you will come and get into a deep level of practice. Only one week; not two weeks, not a month, one week. But still an opportunity to taste that place—That. There's no word for it, only That. The place where everything comes apart and there is nothing solid, only light and love. Love and its expression as light. Presence.

You may feel an extraordinarily high energy. But that energy has the capacity to burn through, and helps to release the karma. It's like something moves through you and disengages some of that old karma.

So when you can rest in that space of very high vibration and presence of love, that helps to release karma.

At a certain point we look at the old karma as we would if you were walking through a woods and small stickers were latching onto your clothes. In the beginning, you'd keep trying to pull them off. You have gloves on. As you pull them off, they're sticking to your gloves. Then more attach; you're pulling those off.

At a certain point you just say, "This is the experience of walking through woods. This is the experience of walking through a human incarnation. I can observe that which tries to stick and neither allow or disallow it to stick; I just notice that certain conditions are still present for it to stick. When the conditions cease to be present it won't stick anymore."

Part of the condition that allows it to cease to be present is this resting in awareness, no self. Really allowing that to stabilize, so you know what you are when you're not busy being yourself.

Q, I don't know if that answers your question. I'll pause.

Q: Yes, it answers the question. But after eons of just observing the object and gaining understanding of the nature of the object—anicca, anatta, dukkha—I am still interested in the part of the observing mind that finally makes decisions about change. Not just the result of wisdom wearing away misunderstanding; that part I'm quite clear about. But without saying there is a true self, there seems to be a part of the self, you know,



Dharmakaya moving toward sambhogakaya, but still an active part of the self that makes decisions to let go of karmic objects, karmic accumulations, karmic drives. So, it's a different part than just sitting and observing for 20, 30, 40, 50 years. It's a part that says, "Now do something about it." And it isn't coming from the self, but the self is involved.

When you talked about going into the Dharmakaya and then the reentry into the nirmanakaya, where your old stuff is still there— it may be for another time, but this part of the mind that actually seems to decide to end some of that material. You know, it's a choiceless choice. It's even a hard question to ask. But it's very much where my practice is at.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. I understand, Q. I'd like to suggest to Q and others with a similar question, Q, you've done a great deal of vipassana. Your vipassana practice is strong and mindfulness is strong. I would like to recommend that you spend some time in the next weeks, or even months, with an abundance of Pure Awareness practice. Simply resting in awareness.

The state of resting of awareness is not vipassana; it's a different kind of presence. There is no contraction or tension, but if tension arises, you simply note it. Right there with the tension, where is spaciousness? If a thought arises, you note it. Right there with the thought, where is spaciousness? So that you begin to ground into that emptiness, that true awakened self, and can increasingly live from it, without analyzing it in any way, just resting in it.

That would be my recommendation. Others of you may find it more fruitful to mingle some vipassana and some awareness, depending on the depth. As Q said, he has been doing that practice for so many decades.

So, just resting in awareness can help invite awareness of more space. When there's more space there's less movement into the solid self, more ability to rest in that "I am That"; just to be there.

If a great sense of joy and high energy comes, don't get lost in it. Bring awareness to it. That's still an object. The work here is to move beyond all objects, even the very pleasant and high vibrational ones. Just to rest in that deepest truth of being. Such awareness may then observe intention and distinguish between intention from the small self and intention from the awakened self. They possess a very different energy.

That said, it's 8:20pm and I'm going to give you back to Barbara for 5 minutes, give you a chance to stretch, and then see if Mary still wants to come in.



**Barbara:** Thank you, Aaron. Just a minute... it's very hard for me to talk after Aaron's been in my body. I need to get some semblance of thought back together...

He's saying to me to please just share what happened with me this morning, when Mary asked me to note the resistance to being with her that was arising from this old habitual tendency of one who is not quite pure enough, good enough, loving enough. Just to watch that.

Okay, you're all going to have to excuse me here, if I'm a bit incoherent. It's a little hard to come back to Barbara consciousness and try to talk. I'll do what I can...

I could really see that habitual pattern. As I said earlier, I really thought I had released it, but here it was, tagging along behind. And I could see all the ways I had treated it as something solid instead of really as—it's like a shadow, because if Barbara still has some solidity, she's going to cast a shadow. She doesn't then get angry at the shadow. The shadow is just being there because Barbara is being somewhat solid. What is the solid Barbara? Who am I?

Coming back with that "Who am I?" there was a deep heart opening of love for myself. An awareness of the times that I have resisted love from others, not fully been open to it. That I have created somewhat of a solid self with the "not good enough" story, using it to resist the love from others, because the one she was in whatever lifetime, was afraid she wasn't good enough, and thus wanted love from others to prove her goodness. The whole mingling of those stories, it was like a bubble that burst.

And Mary was just holding me. She said to me, "Let me hold you. Let me hug you." And that was a first for me. I have hugged Aaron but not Mary.

But I remembered being that child, Mark, and Mary hugging Mark. I approached her and I felt her hug and so much light and energy. I started to cry. And I could feel some of this old fear just falling away, the fear that kept a 'me' as solid.

Such old stories. She kept saying, "Let the tears wash it away. Old story."

After a few minutes of feeling the power of Mary's energy and Aaron's and other entities' just energetically holding me, there was a very powerful experience of all the components that create a sense of self, of it all breaking up. I could see it just as pieces floating away, and then went into a period of meditation for about a half an hour where there was nothing but light, a high feeling of love.

From that deep experience just resting in the Dharmakaya, after a while Aaron's voice said to me, "Who are you?"



And there was such a clarity, an immediate, “I am love, and in this lifetime I am acting as the entity Barbara, for healing and service.”

And he said, “Are you Barbara?”

And I said, “Right now in this lifetime I am using the Barbara consciousness for learning and serving.”

And there was such a sense of, I don’t have to identify with *any* accumulated karma of any of the entities out of which Barbara has emerged because I am not Barbara.

And yet I am willing to stay here and serve and love as Barbara because that’s the body and the various aggregates I’ve been given in this lifetime. And there was such a sense of peace to it.

I’m feeling very peaceful now. (*smiling*) I’m curious how long that stays. I can’t hang onto it.

Okay, let’s have a 5 minute break and then have Mary come in.

(*break*)

I’m going to read Q’s question out loud.

Q: The modifier of consciousness called sanna marks something so that it can be recognized later. Does sanna also recall the karma around it? How is karma carried?

**Barbara:** Give me a minute, here...

I’m going to ask John Orr also to respond to this, but from my experience, sanna, meaning cognitive perception, can recall karma as an object, but it’s not involved in carrying or releasing the karma. Sanna is not active in that way.

Intention—and I don’t have a clearer word than intention—is what either holds or releases the karma. And then we get to the question, “Whose intention?” No one’s. As long as there’s a somebody with the intention, it’s perpetuating the karma. As soon as the somebody falls away then the karma breaks up. But as soon as the somebody comes back, the karma can reattach to it.

The question for me is then, how does this nobody prevent the karma from reattaching?

My experience with that is simply mindfulness and intention. And we do come back into *my* mindfulness and *my* intention. But it keeps getting thinner and thinner.



John Orr, do you want to add anything to that?

**John:** Sanna is perception. So, perception essentially is the experience of the mind touching and object, such as seeing something or hearing something, tasting something, feeling something, that this is what sanna or perception is.

There is no self in this perception; it's just a meeting of, say, the mind with a thought or an image, and then the perception of thinking or imagining. But in that process there is no self, and there isn't any karma within the experience of that perception.

It's what happens after we perceive something through the senses, in terms of either aversion or attachment that creates the karma. That's my understanding of it.

**Barbara:** Thank you, John. I agree with that. With awareness of the chain of contact, consciousness, feelings, perception, the shift into mental formations, seeing what we're doing with the attachment or aversion, and seeing the somebody who's doing it, the experience of attachment or aversion cannot arise. Here is access concentration. The arising can be experienced as empty. It just has arisen out of conditions and it's flowing. Because there's not sense of a solid self, the karma is not carried anymore; it begins to release. Each time we do that it gets thinner and begins to further release. As soon as there's somebody who's trying to get rid of the karma, that's just more karma.

But the other important thing for me, and I'll have to check it in with Aaron, but on a certain level karma is an illusion that we've been perpetuating as part of this solid somebody existence. And yet it's just part of the human experience. There are going to be bodies, if I'm human. There's going to be a mental body, a physical body, an emotional body, a spirit body. There's going to be contact and consciousness, all the aggregates will be there.

But the whole karmic habit of creating a somebody around each of these, that's totally unnecessary. It arises because of contraction of the arising, instead of just knowing it as that which is passing by. But it's hard to step out of that habit until we've deeply experienced that emptiness which is our deeper truth.

Again offering this back to John, in case there's anything you'd like to add.

**John:** Just that I think this relates to what Aaron was talking about today, which is that when we perceive something, say a thought about wanting to do something, and that thought arises, there's not any self in the arising of that thought.

But than as it moves further along the Chain of Dependent Origination into stronger grasping and aversion, then it gives rise to the illusion of self.



And that what I hear Aaron saying, and I hope he will correct me if it's not right, is that by resting in pure mind, in pure awareness, and seeing the arising of, say, wanting, desire, grasping— seeing it as a mental object while resting in pure mind, and seeing its dissolution while resting in pure mind, that that in part is what helps to release that karmic pattern in that moment.

And I also think that this kind of relates to what Q was asking about, which is, at what point is there some level of choice on the relative level?

And to me what that means is, I'm not in pure awareness or pure mind all the time, and so when I'm more in mundane consciousness and there is the perception of wanting something, and I see the arising of that, there is that active moment where I have a choice: do I want to act on this desire and therefore reinforce the grasping in the mind and the karma, or do I make a different choice?

So, on a certain level there is a choice there that I need to make as to how I want to relate to this desire and craving that's arising within myself. That's all.

**Barbara:** The difference for me, the balance of vipassana and Pure Awareness practice, with vipassana I have had, and many of you have had, some very profound experiences of dissolution of the body, dissolution of the ego. They're life-changing experiences. We start to really know that we're not these aggregates.

But when I come out of that experience, although I am changed by it, I still am pulled by the old karma and the old habitual tendencies. The profound awakening experiences loosen the karma but don't completely free it. There has to be some intentionality of moving beyond the karma, rather than just slipping back into it again.

I'm not saying put one aside and just do the other but mingling the practices, some hours of this, some hours of that.

With Pure Awareness, the power of that presence, that awareness, allows me to come back—not "me"; there's almost no way to talk about this—allows the awareness itself to come back and look at what's happening and see the whole entangled web of karma and say, "That's enough. It shall be put down."

And I keep coming back to it. Each time a similar object comes up, "Ah, here it is again."

But when awareness is strong, we slip back into it pretty quickly. It becomes steady, a real resting place. It's like stepping back and seeing all this tangle and saying, "Uh-uh." Stepping back and taking care of, not avoiding, this tangle. Willing to step into it, but there's no "me" stepping into it.

So that we find we can be active from the place of awareness in a way I find I personally at least cannot be active in a place of body and ego dissolution.

In terms of what we talked about last spring, at the point above I am very much at the edge of the sambhogakaya bridge, able to completely bring the Dharmakaya with that which is aware, and enter the nirmanakaya touching the Dharmakaya. Not losing track of the Dharmakaya, but there's no self coming in to do it.

Aaron, is there anything you would like to add? He says, "Not right now. You were all talking about it clearly, and it's helpful for them to get a human perspective."

Anybody else?

Q: (*Practices making her intentions and decisions with love rather than fear.*) Do I need to practice that I need to dissolve my karma or not dissolve my karma? Or think about karma? I can just live with those intentions and practice... working with love and compassion—is that okay enough to live?

**Barbara:** It's enough for now. Yes, it's fine until it's not enough.

At a certain point, when you start to realize that you're repeating the same unwholesome patterns again and again, there's love, but there's repeated wanting to control, fear, not good enough, whatever the different stories, my needs won't be met, that come up and you meet them with love, at a certain point you're going to want to ask, what is the karma behind this?

And the karma for the most part is not the specific, "Oh, this happened to me in this lifetime and that's why I have these experiences." That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about the whole reality of karma which attaches to the aggregates.

As long as the aggregates are given a solidity due to a belief in the solid self, the solid body, mind, emotions, even spirit body, there's something to which the karma can attach.

Am I ready to step beyond that? Some of you will say, "Yes, I need to do that at this point." Or "Love needs to do that,"—not so much "I" but love chooses to do this. Others will say, "No, I'm just going to keep working with love." There's no "I should" here. Just, in this moment for each of us, what is the most useful?

Q, I hope that answers your question to some degree. Let us move on to other questions.



Aaron is saying about that question, perhaps you have an exercise program. Every day you do this exercise 25 minutes, walking and whatever. In the beginning your body was getting stronger. Now a year later your body is not getting weaker, but it's not getting stronger. And so you want to ask yourself, do I need to add different exercises to further strengthen the body? He's saying a complacency can come, "Oh, I'm doing everything I can." But you might want to just add a little bit. And the adding a little bit might involve looking at the attachment to being a self.

Thank you, Aaron. Others? Alright, Mary says she would like to speak to us for just a few minutes so she's going to incorporate. She understands there may be more questions and she asks your forgiveness for intruding on them. I'm going to invite Mary to come in. Give me just a minute...

**Mary:** My love to you. I am Mary. Let's take a step backwards together and look at what we're doing in these classes.

If this is just about resolving your own personal karma so you can be more comfortable, even so you can be kinder in your life, there's still going to be a self propelling that effort.

My question to you then is, what truly propels you in the effort? I find that the deepest power within you is love. But it's hard to know that love and say, "Oh, here is love." Love is a base expressing in different ways: the aspiration to live with kindness, to live with non-harm, to live in service to others and for the self.

Let's take it a step further. To live in a way that all suffering, not just on this plane, not just in your expression, your body, but that all suffering everywhere is resolved. What would that mean?

The Buddhist teachings are toward an end to suffering, and you can realize that individuated liberation. But what would it mean to live in a universe in which there was no more suffering?

A vital question to me here is that first one: Who is suffering? Who am I?

But also, to go beyond all of these questions into the direct experience of the non-dual. As Barbara has just spoken of it, of resting in awareness.

On the ultimate level there is no duality. On the relative level there are joy and sorrow, love and fear, light and darkness; seeming dualities.

As I see our work together this year and, in the future, it is to help you resolve the dualities, including self and no-self.



Don't strive for no-self, because that's just a self striving. Don't cling to no-self, because that is a self clinging.

I hope you can come to even a taste of the direct experience of connection with everything.

With this in mind, I come back to my suggestion that you go out and hug a tree until hugger and hugged dissolve, until tree and self dissolve. Feel yourself putting roots down. Feel yourself launching up into the sky and the light. Feel the joy in this.

But our work is not just to learn how to rest in pure awareness. That is almost easy. You can learn how to do that.

Our work is to learn how to bring this awareness consciously into this heavy density plane and offer the light that is your essence out into this plane to help raise the vibration of this plane, to help ease suffering throughout this world, throughout the universe, by being that light.

To be that light means to also know the darkness, which has no ultimate reality but still arises on this plane; not to enact the darkness, but not to fear the darkness.

It is very powerful work. Together we can do it.

You are not here by chance. All of you have heard Aaron and my call and have come together to do this work, supporting each other. And you are so loved, and we are helping you. Ask for me and I am with you. I am Mary, and I love you.

Aaron is asking that you take your little bowl of food or glass and tonight or tomorrow morning, or whenever it suits you, spend a half hour watching the impulse to take some into the mouth. Watching contact, consciousness, pleasant feelings, perception, watching it all arise. Knowing, not just watching—knowing the one who is free of being controlled by this arising, who can watch it with spaciousness and just say, “No, thank you.” Rest in the awareness but still remain connected to the conditioned realm and to the aggregates through the joy of that taste free of clinging and grasping. Try it. See what happens.

I have not given you back to Aaron. It's harder for Barbara for us to transfer back and forth like that, so I'm just communicating his thoughts. I am Mary and my love is with you. We have much to talk about and we will talk. I will probably come into many classes in this way, at least briefly. I love you.

**Barbara:** Thank you, Mary. Okay, it's 8:58pm, so, time to stop.



I'm going to say something here, and I'm going to share something for just two or three minutes. It's something that will need a longer discussion period than we have right now. We'll find a time to talk about it, if there are people who want to talk about it.

There is a new Netflix video series about John of God. I have watched it and some other people have watched it and communicated with me about it. People have been upset about it, and I have found it troubling too.

One part of my trouble with it is that it may very likely be that this man did some real harm. I don't know that first person, but it sounds like it's likely. But equally or more disturbing, whoever made the video is so deeply negative, filled with rage about what happened, perhaps filled with rage about what many beings through history have done, especially men harming women but, in any case, people with power using that power against others. I feel the rage coming out of the film, a rage filled with so much negative polarity.

So, asking that if you are moved to watch it, know that we can find a time to come together and talk about it. I think it will be useful for some people. But also, as you look at it, to see how one-sided it is. It does not look at the wonderful gifts this man has and the ways that he helps tens of thousands of people.

People have asked me did I know about this. While I was at the Casa I heard some stories here and there, but they were never confirmed in any way.

I based what I knew of him on my direct experience of him. I never had anything negative happen to me. Those who saw the film, they show an office in which he was and in which he is said to have abused people. But I was in that office either with a translator or occasionally alone and was only ever treated with kindness and respect. When I took somebody who was part of my group to see him and we were in that office, we were treated with kindness and respect.

So, instead of becoming polarized as you watch the film, ask, where is the truth here for him and for any being? It's not okay, if he abused somebody. Absolutely not. Abuse of another is always wrong.

But also, for each of us, we've done things for which we're not proud and we've done wonderful things. Can we see in this man also the completeness, saying no to abuse but also being grateful for the good things he's done? Can we offer that same compassion to ourselves, noting and stopping our negative tendencies, releasing them, as we have been taking about tonight, but with compassion for the humans we are, not self hatred.



The film talks about the money that was found in his house. Well, he worked very hard as a cattle rancher. He created soup kitchens in many poor cities throughout Brazil. He gave away probably millions of dollars of food to keep these soup kitchens stocked with food and also necessities like blankets. I observed him offer money, his own, not Casa money to, for example, a poor Brazilian with severe tooth ache and whose teeth needed to be pulled. The man told. The entity not to pull his teeth as e would be unable to eat, but his mouth was terribly infected. The translator told me Joao told the man he (Joao) would make money available for dentures. He has given a great many people money for school, with intention to help end cycles of poverty.

So, keep in mind the balance. The power of negative polarity, of hatred and fear, comes through so strongly in the film by those who made it. Don't jump into the negative polarity of, "Oh, how terrible that he did this," and condemnation. Can there be a centered place that says no to abuse and thank you to that which is good, not only for Joao but for any human? For ourselves?

If people would like to set up a time when we can gather together, perhaps sometime on a weekend, and talk for an hour about this, I'd be happy to do that. I know it's an area for a lot of concern for some people. I will have to be after the Oakwood retreat.

Thank you.

Aaron is saying one more thing. People have asked him (Aaron), "If you knew this was going on, why didn't you speak up and tell Barbara to stop bringing groups?"

Aaron said that he strictly observes each being's privacy. Each of you has secrets you would not like shared with the world. He has the ability to look in the akashic records, to know what's going on with you, but will never do so without permission, for any reason. He totally protects your privacy and will never tell on you in any way. Anything that he sees about you is private unless you personally decide you choose to share it. It's not up to him to share.

He's saying the thing he told me is, there is a possibility that there could be abuse, so watch your groups carefully. Make sure nobody is alone not only with Joao but with any men there at the Casa, because it's a Brazilian patriarchy and they don't treat women well. Don't allow any woman to be there alone. And so, I've done that. People have come before I came or stayed after, and some of them have been uncomfortable. But when I've been there with groups, I know I've been able to keep people safe.

I did not choose to not bring them, because I saw the profound healing, people being cured from cancer, muscular dystrophy, blindness and other things. I chose, and I would still choose, to take people. Just to make sure that they're safe.





Aaron is saying he did not know for sure because he does not look at this. He doesn't go into your private lives and see if you've told a lie or punched somebody. This is your private life.

Okay, enough said. We can talk about it further. Good night.