

J: Good morning, everybody. Day 3.

So without kind of going out of your body—if you're able to do that or not, if you are able to do it, don't go out of your body—but place your attention deep within your head really, so that you can have an awareness of your body, so you can see it, feel it, but it's just a little bit separate. Just that there's a little bit of distance between the viewing point and that which recognizes the body, the sensations, the way you recognize the body. Put a little bit of distance between viewing that and the information about your body, so the body is, you know, being seen.

So now the aspect that's kind of watching your body, go behind that and see that. It might just feel a little bit more still. If you can't do it, don't worry about it.

So without figuring out what exactly I might mean, place your attention further back. Let's see where your attention lands if we move towards like just the ability to be conscious. You're not looking for any qualities. That's the only signpost—the ability to be conscious. Not conscious of anything, just the ability to be conscious, to be aware. Place attention there.

[short pause]

See if you can internally take a jump to before that.

[short pause]

If your mind is hanging onto being conscious, jump again, prior, go before that.

[pause]

If your attention is drifting forward, go back—prior to the ability to be conscious, prior to that sense of being conscious.

[long pause]

Attention, or your point of symmetry, can stay back there, and way in front, the senses can still pick up what I'm saying, without you moving forward to engage. Way back there, outside of all of it—something can stay there, and yet the body will do its thing by listening, talking.

If attention is being pulled forward to listen to these words that's fine, it just means that you're not used to hanging out prior to consciousness, that the norm is to be out there with what's happening for the senses. Stay back. Stay as far back as you can.

So from there—if life is being lived from there—what happens in the outside world doesn't touch you, because it's happening to the body or the thought mechanism that we call mind. You're not those front layers that engage in the world. Behind all of it, outside of all of it.

Mind can understand it as home. It's what's completely natural. It's where your attention is in deep sleep. The show isn't running.

[pause]

Keep pointing back. Prior to all of it. No time no space. Prior to all of it.

[pause]

Just sink back. Let your attention sink back. It's actually not going someplace new. It's returning from the source where it came from. This is why it feels like home.

Outside of all of it.

[pause]

Outside of all of it.

So let's see. Let's see how you get on with engaging, and maintaining a pathway, or resting some of your attention back there outside of all of it. Let's see how it works—if talking can happen, if participation can happen—while there is some pathway open to the outside of all of it, or better still, that some attention can stay outside of all of it.

I'm going to open it just for a general discussion to see how folks got on. And I have an experiment to see if you can talk from there. Or if you couldn't get there at all, okay, let's talk about that too.



J: Anyone not able to touch it at all?

Q: I found it difficult because I'm having a massive hot flush and my heart is pounding, and I was trying not to engage with it.

J: Yeah, yeah. Do you think you accessed it at all?

Q: Yeah, but you know, just to maintain that, it's very... This kept...

J: Yes, pulling your attention forward. Yeah.

Q: But it showed me how much attention... Well, I'll come up later and talk about that. It was just something when you said, "Go back," and I remembered that because I'm front-line, that like all of me is on the line. That's why I need to... Sometimes I feel panicky, you know?

J: Yes. That's interesting, to re-find your centre of symmetry. Where's your midpoint? It's too on the front; it's too frontal.

Q: Yeah. Even though every morning consciously when I'm going in to work, you know, I hand it all over. It's not me; it's—I don't know who it is—holding onto it.

J: Yeah, and the investment goes back out. Good thing to know about, because that changes your wiring, you know, as you can feel. Um-hum. Okay.

- Q: Well, what can I say is, this place is very familiar for me. It's like (inaudible) from home. It reminds me of my child home.
- J: Yes.. Before you lost it for a little bit.
- Q: Yes. But yeah, it's something that goes on in all my life. It's something that...
- J: Was there access to it even through difficult times in your life?
- Q: Do you mean, if I can go back?
- J: Yeah. Was there a sense of that continuing even when there was depression right through?
- Q: Oh yeah. Oh yes. [short pause] It gives a multiple way, but as you were just saying about going back, going back, going back, it really helped me to go much faster. I don't know, maybe because it's all faster we are merging to do the same things, so maybe energies..... I don't know.
- J: And it's day three of a retreat, you know, so there's not so much out in the world so it's more natural to fall back.
- Q: Truly the words you used today, for me it was very helpful, very explicit.
- J: Okay. Very good. Very good.
- Q: Just not stopping to any feeling of formality or whatever.
- J: Yes, not hanging out with presence, not hanging out with love, none of it. These are just phases along the way. Good. Yeah. Because already, Jean-Manuel, I know you don't invest your attention in the outside world, you invest your attention on where the attention, how the attention, is moving, you know. You're not out there in what... So you're already a bit back. So it's not too much of a push to pull your focal point of attention, your centre of symmetry, back further. It's well worth doing. Well worth doing. Does that make sense?
- Q: Oh yes.



- J: Jane, how did you do?
- Q: I found it really fascinating to be led there and, like Jean-Manuel said, the words were really helpful. In particular, prior to consciousness; I've never tried it before in such a deliberate way. When you said about being in the, you know, sensations of the body and then going back from that, I felt an awful lot of sensations, like a vibrating thing and sort of... I felt all the sensations sort of exquisitely in the body. And then I moved back, and that was less important, what was happening in the body. And I was trying not to image anything or start a little story about how I should be feeling or, you know, this isn't working. So I just kept coming back to

the words really, and I got an echo from the words. You know, I found that whole echo thing really beautiful last night. It's sort of like a calling or something, you know.

J: Yes, yes, yes.

Q: When you said the arrows, I could see the arrows going back, and then home. That was the real landing or clincher. Not that I was anywhere, but there was all this sort of velvet, soft velvety...

J: Yeah, the cushioning.

Q: Yeah, yeah, cushioning, I didn't see that but...

J: Some people describe it like that.

Q: And it was dark, but there was no darkness in it. There were pinpoints of light at some stage. The whole thing really got to me, because I know it's home really, you know. And I had a little judgment because I was feeling sad. But I think it's natural for me to go to tears. They're tears of longing, really, and tears of recognition. So, thank you.

J: Yes, recognition. You can't be kidded about this; it's either familiar or it isn't. It's kind of beyond the idea. Okay, mind will play with the idea of home but there's something else, you know?

Q: There's no messing around with it.

J: Yeah, there's no messing around there.

Q: Yeah, the real thing, or nothing.

J: The recognition is there from another level. You're not creating something to feel good, you know. You're either resonating or you don't. You hit it or you don't.

Q: Well, it's a relief not to be not trying to create anything.

J: Yes, isn't it.

Q: Because you know that's a very familiar way of being in the world.

J: Yeah, you can drop that one. Go for what's authentic, what's really happening for you. Yeah.



J: David, how did you do?

Q: It was really blissful. I was able to go back into the space. And I know some part of me was hearing you say things, what you said, but I was just sort of there. In a way, it's like what I imagine it's like when I sleep deeply. Normally if I sleep deeply and I get woken up suddenly, then mind pulls me back into

immediateness, and there's nothing left of the experience. But the experience is still with me now. It's sort of dying away a little bit. It's like sort of the words that you were saying, whatever they were, it was like a marker pole, which kept me in the place with another marker pole, and another marker pole. And I could have just gone on, and on, and on. I wasn't aware of my body at all. These last few days, because of these health things I have, I can't sit still. But I was just sort of totally away from all that. It was really surprising that I could get to a place like that. And for me it means that maybe I can do it myself, rather than... It doesn't have to have your voice, but it's very helpful.

J: Yes... Yes... Not at all. Good, good, good.



J: Anybody else feel the urge to say how it was? Rodney?

Q: Yeah. I don't know if actually it's this or not. It's interesting because as I was going back there was this sort of... Initially it was something I was familiar with, with things having a glow around them and stuff like that, and then that passed and I started to go into this dark place. It was like my eyes were... Something was coming in front of my eyes, but I couldn't really control it. And so it was getting darker. And then something brought me back to where I was previously. And you said something about go back in again or whatever you said, and this time I sort of actually allowed it, I suppose. I could really feel that my whole body going back, especially the back of my head going back.

J: You had a sensation in the back of your head?

Q: Oh yes, absolutely. I've still got that. It seemed to go right back, and then it just went black. It was black. There wasn't anything more to it than that; it was just black. It wasn't a horrible black or a nice black or a...

J: Very good, no quality.

Q: No, there was nothing to it. There was no sensation, no feeling associated with it whatsoever. It was completely blank.

J: I love it. Yes.

Q: And yet I could hear what you were saying quite clearly actually, but not taking any notice of it, and also not taking any notice of my body. The body was there. I've had quite a lot of arthritis pain recently and that wasn't there, so the body was comfortable. But it was just this quiet and just peaceful. I can't say I'm familiar with it. Maybe I am. I was disappointed we stopped.

J: Wow! You could've taken more. Okay.

Q: Oh yes. Yes. And I'm aware of the fact that I can... I'm not sure I could drive a car like that.

J: Yes. Not yet.

Q: It doesn't feel like I could do very much, but I could listen.

J: Yes, even that's great that something could stay there and allow participation, because that's when... Okay, so when you see the truth and the disconnection from the personal 'I' happens, that's where you are all the time, you know, outside of all of it. That's where you are. And then, to be established in the embodiment that Adyashanti does so well, is about living from there. But then how does the world appear, then how do you function. Do you know? And that's the embodiment part, but that takes some time. Currently it takes a few years, but we're getting cuter. Everything is, you know...

Q: But I'm also surprised, I'm really surprised that anything happened at all. In a way, it was a shock that I allowed myself, if you like, to do...

J: To go that far away from story.

Q: Yeah, because I've been full of story this morning. So it was really... No, I was having breakfast. Thank you. I don't know...

J: Yeah. It was just when I was coming down the stairs. It was like hmmm, it would be interesting if people have some kind of technique that worked for them, you know, if it's like self-inquiry, if it's the trap door, if it's Nisargadatta's "not this, not this," rejecting everything on the outside. So that's kind of where it came from, it's like if you could leave with some kind of a tool that would enable you to go back, go back, go back, really regularly. I tell you, that's a catalyst.

Q: Just need a CD of it now from you.

J: Yeah, maybe that will happen. Let's see.

Q: It would be helpful wouldn't it to have it.

J: It would be helpful wouldn't it?

Q: That would be great.

J: The "going home" one, you know?

Q: A little reminder to...

J: The steps to pull back. Okay, let's see how that happens.



J: Connie?

Q: I wasn't able to go back. I just felt like it was here maybe, I don't know. I just couldn't do it.

J: So how far did you get? Were you able to watch the body, and were you able to watch the thing that was watching the body?

Q: I just felt like I was just this far.

J: You were just kind of hanging there? Yeah. That's okay. You know, there's no right or wrong. It's just great if somebody can, but if you can't, that has to be how it is, you know? That's all right.



Q: So those markers that you were putting down verbally were helping me to... Whether I was moving to the places you were describing, it felt like I was going in that direction anyway. But then as you said, when you spoke, you would like pull me forwards. So the going back was like really cautious or slow to do or... Then the words would like...

J: Zap you forward again.

Q: Yeah, zap me forward again, and then I'd have to go back.

J: And then she talks again, and it's like, "Drat, there she goes again."

Q: So it was interesting to watch that process of gently, slowly beginning to go back and then being pulled very quickly forwards again. I felt like I ended up in the place that I was talking about on Day One about the connection. To be honest, it felt like that experience, but not with eyes; so that was good.

J: That's interesting.

Q: I kept my eyes open. I find somehow that's easier to sort of still my mind if I've got like a, don't know, palliative form or something in front of me. As I was looking at one place on the fireplace, and what I noticed as I'm going back is that what's actually, what I'm experiencing is I'm seeing the same shapes but they're sort of changing there... The light is changing there.

J: Your perception of it is changing.

Q: Yes, it's difficult to describe. It sort of flickering in some way. The light is sort of doing that. It's fascinating, but it's difficult to describe. Whether it means anything, I don't know. It just feels very related to what I've been experiencing. So, yes that was great. I do feel like I could go away and practice doing that myself. And I've tried to stay in that space while you've been working, and now I'm coming forwards and forwards...

J: You're coming forwards? Yeah.

Q: ... and forwards. I'm still a little bit back. That's my sense...

J: Good, keep a little bit back.

Q: But if this goes on too much longer, I'll be right back here you know.

J: Yeah, in the front. Yeah. So it just shows you what a bad habit we've learned. You know, this is how to engage in life, get fully in there, fully in there. It's like, "Ooh, ooh, not with your attention!" You know, participate, but being fully in there, you know, well that's just life and every experience ends up like the next one really. So yeah, it's just undoing a bad habit to be able to hear what's in front but to hold yourself steady inside.

Q: I didn't really think that's possible until just then. I've sort of been in similar situations even in satsangs with you where I just shot straight forwards again. I'm sort of trying to keep myself back now a little bit.

J: Yes. That's it. Fantastic.

Q: It's back. I can do it a little bit.

J: Keep back just a little bit, yeah. Fantastic. It's about keeping back because the front part it doesn't matter if you stop in the middle of a sentence here or something, it's like so what? Do you know? So you can practice, staying back.

Q: It's a bit like weird doing this.

J: It is a bit weird. It is a bit weird, but it's funny because once you kind of get used to it, your system gets used to it, your participation in the world or talking, it happens without... You wouldn't even... You don't care, you know? You just don't pay much attention to it. It's like you just have to trust whatever comes out; and if it's gobbledygook, frankly I wouldn't give a shite like. Do know I'm saying? Do you know? It's whatever flows. Your attention is behind and the rest of it just... The controller dies, and it just takes care of itself. Do you know? It might be sloppy and it might not, but you really couldn't be bothered editing or auditing. But somehow it's all right. It must be all right, you know, because life continues. So don't bother so much about maintaining your usual standard of participating on the outside. Whether it's talking or listening, let that get a little bit loose. You'll find that it works just fine without your management of it. That's the killer.

Q: Loosening my listening would be good one.

J: Loosening your listening. Yeah.

Q: I tend to hang on everything that's coming in.

J: Coming in auditory.

Q: That's a habit.



J: Yes, Penny.

Q: I just wanted to say thank you so much. It's such a gift because as soon as I went back there, it was so familiar and I thought, "Ahh, I'd forgotten this place existed; why have I been away so long?" I know as a child I spent a lot of time hanging out there, and now I can feel that it's still there. Talking is bringing me forward, but I have the feeling because I re-experienced that I know it's there, and I can just go back again and try to stay there as much as possible.

J: Yeah, just go... And try to stay there as much as you can.

Q: Yes. Thank you.

J: You're welcome.



J: Phil?

Q: This is exactly what I was talking about on Monday. It's becoming more and more familiar, and it seems I could drive in that sort of state.

J: You could drive in that state? Yeah.

Q: And talking in that state is happening now. Several things have kicked just in the past, since we talked on the road. It's a selfless state. It's everything dying into selflessness. And it's a baseline state pretty much. And what there's been a noticing of is that also the mind comes in trying to contradict that and, "Oh no way, I'll show you something." But that's getting less and less. Does that make sense?

J: Yes. Yes.

Q: Because that's the 'I' desperately trying to hang on.

J: Yes, trying to hang on. That's what that is.

Q: And in that state there is a recognition of it's just energy; the whole thing is just energy.

J: Correct.

Q: And everything is just that. Yesterday I experienced that and down the coast it was, "Ahhh." It was just that wow normal sort of everything, just everything—from the dog that was disappearing into the sea, to my son next door to me enjoying that same experience, and the dog with us was doing the same. It was amazing, amazing, so immersed in it!

J: Yes. The beauty of it all.

Q It is. It's awesome. Now I feel *ahhh!*

- J: And the beauty in man-made things and the beauty in a rubbish tip. It's obvious in nature, but that frequency is in everything, you know?
- Q: I remember a couple of years ago walking around the pier and just seeing beauty in drain pipe. I did. It sounds crazy, but I did. [laughing]
- J: No. I totally get it.
- Q: Sorry, comes to me with tears now. Yeah. It is. It's just that. It just is. It's life happening and it's wonderful. Just life happening.
- J: Just life, yeah.
- Q: And interestingly, when you said you might be familiar with it from your childhood, that immediately brought something up, "Ooh, I don't know about that," because there was a lot of trauma in my childhood. Then comes up that memory of sitting in a wonderful wing chair, a lawn chair, and sitting there as a child and feeling just that, just that, and just *ohh*.
- J: Before it all got knocked out, yeah, before the 'I' was developed, you see.
- Q: Exactly. Exactly. It's so vivid now. It's almost like sinking back into an armchair. Does that make sense?
- J: Yes. Yes. So there is a mixture. Some of you remember something in your childhood, you know, like a dot. And then some of you feel that there was a thread the whole time. So a memory says, "Yeah, I remember feeling this as a child." Just check it out yourself. Is it possible that it was there all the time but that your attention was away from it? Answer that question for yourself, you know. Was it there all the time or did it really... Is it gone? Can it disappear? Can it go? Can it change? And then the other question is, for those of you who did access it, was there an 'I' there? Was there a sense of your character in there? Was there *ownership* of the blackness?



- Q: I don't think so, but I'm just listening about this childhood thing because I don't remember anything. But with Phil talking about trauma in childhood, my childhood was traumatic. So maybe I won't allow myself to see. But certainly I don't remember seeing *that* or feeling *that* in the interlude, but I'm wondering if I would've even noticed it.
- J: Yes. When we're very invested in protecting ourselves and just *surviving*, it takes one hundred per cent of your attention. If life has knocked you about, you just tune out, you know.



Q: Something critical there about, “Was there a sense of 'I'?” You asked that question, so I'm asking myself. So I don't know if you can help me, because I can't hear your voice very clearly when you're speaking. So sort of part of me is recognizing that. “But what's the relationship with that to the 'I'?” is coming in this moment.

J: That's perfect. Stay there. Don't go deeper into that anymore. That's perfect. That's a beaut. I'm not going to explain it because I'll only create an 'I'.

Q: I thought I had a clear answer and now I've not got a clear answer.

J: That's perfect. Lovely. Can the rest of you see what's happened there?



Q: I experience that's there all the time, all my life. Even when I had a traumatic time but it was the one constant that never ever left me *ever*. It was there. I mightn't have tuned into it, but it was the one constant. It's like I never gave up. I never lost faith. I never didn't see the beauty, if you know what I mean. I'm very familiar with that space. I pulled back very quickly today. I either dissolve and go through a trap door or I'm pulled up and back. But it's more like a force and when I get there, it's like I hear your words, “Let it have you.” You know? But I pull back, it's a force, and my ears go and my eyes go back—do you know what I mean?—and there's a whole...

J: Is it a pulling or a pushing or what's the force?

Q: It's suction.

J: Uh-huh, we've got a vacuum. Okay.

Q: I hit that plot regularly, you know what I mean? I hit that during meditation last night. Do you know what I mean? But I don't know what to do with it.

J: Oh, don't do anything. It will probably build.

Q: That's where I go to. What stops me is because I think physically I'm going to start, you know... It feels like I'm being pulled literally. I could follow it.

J: Yeah. Why not?

Q: I could be going into contortions, honestly.

J: But sure, isn't that all right? I'll manage you.

Q: I've done it, you know. But it's just this particular space. I've don't it, and it feels like... I know it. But it's to allow it; I just have to allow.

J: Yes, allow it, yeah.

Q: There's no emotion really; there's nothing.

J: Yeah. There's nothing. Yes.

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J: Wendy?

Q: I did the exercise with my eyes closed and then opening. I have no idea how far back I went. There was a lot of energy in the back of my head, and then I opened my eyes and tried to maintain it. It's like, do you know, the idea of the Brown study, the Brown stare?

J: Brown stare, no.

Q: It's called that, anyway. Well, it's that thing from childhood that kids do when you see them zoning out, looking out the window and they're...

J: All right, just glazing over kind of thing.

Q: And they're not present.

J: Yeah. And they're not present.

Q: So I recognized the space from that, and then jeepers, a child is fine to zone out but... It's harder to indulge the time it feels in that space, as an adult. You know, taking the thread with familiarity from childhood.

J: And when you were doing it now, did that thought come in?

Q: No. No. It's more like motherhood thing, let kids to do that, and the need for simplicity and allowing space for that just to happen. It was more that thread. No, it's like a softening of everything in front. It's just softer and merged somehow.

J: Something merged?

Q: Yeah. It got softer and merged. I suppose the separation thing is reduced.

J: *Aha*, that's exactly it. Separation is dissolving, yeah. When you hang out back there, it's very difficult to... Well, you can't do both. You can't be full on 'I-me-my' and back here; that just is gobbledygook. It doesn't make any sense at all this: What am I? What's going on for me right now? The two don't happen together. We can't stretch that far, you know? So the separation thing is wearing thin, you know, pulling back from it.

Q: I find that interesting because that's where I get headaches. They're always at the back of the head.

J: Yeah, yeah, yeah. There is a school of thought that says migraine is keeping the door, the access to that, shut. There's a school of thought that says that too.

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J: Yes, Kaori.

Q: Also, I started to pull back myself, it felt like my brain goes back, and I felt pain in my back. It felt like my mind was... I tried to do things like that. Then I dropped this way. I can see things, but I don't feel my body. And I could hear your voice, but sometimes I had a blank and I came back. It's really soft, and that's what I wanted. Yeah, that's what I wanted. I remember in childhood that was familiar. I think when I was young I used sex to get that. When I was depressed, I really wanted this. Then that's why I really wanted to sleep. I really love sleeping because I can access with this. Dreamless sleep. It's so soft. It feels like my body getting warm. Phenomenally, I feel that in my body. I feel something, since last year something shifted. And it's still difficult to speak from this place. When I start speaking, it feels like I go in front. It feels like my English gets worse. There's something about it with communication and speaking. I find it difficult when I pull back, when I try to communicate.

J: Yes. I remember a phase in India where I was just like in my room, and just silence. And in this exercise lasted for weeks, and I would only move if the body moved naturally. I wouldn't decide, "Oh, I'll make lunch or I'll go to the ashram," you know? It was like no action was going to come from my head, you know, so I just found myself sitting. I managed to usually get up and have a shower and eat something. And I would just be sitting because that's it, because I wasn't following any idea. I remember during that phase going out to... I actually bought a newspaper. And I never read the newspaper, but I bought a newspaper. And it was like, "What the heck?" A newspaper was bought and it has no function. Okay, why not, you know? When I went into the shop, I could hear words but there was no meaning—none at all. They were just sounds, and it was like, "Is this supposed to mean something?" I remember thinking inside, "Those words were supposed to translate into something." And I couldn't and there were days of like, "I'll just have to take a guess that he's telling me the price for something." I did not have a clue. There were just sounds as though... My ears weren't muffled, but it was like I had ten blankets over my ears. No meaning, just sounds, but no meaning at all. And following on from that, there were loads of English words that were gone like I had never heard them in my life. I carried around a dictionary. I had to carry around a dictionary with me. I'd be talking to somebody and I'd go into the loo and I'd look up basic words; they were *wiped*. I don't know what the research is around that, but something around language got destroyed with me too. And so what? Go through it. You'll manage.

Q: I wanted to be a translator. [laughing]

[laughing]

J: The universe might be saying, "Do something else first." Let's see. Let's see. I'm interested also... The pain in the back of your head, you left it. You changed direction to down into your torso, because of the pain in the back of your head.

Q: Yes. Tight... It feels uncomfortable.

J: It like tightening or a pulling back. I wonder if it's worth pushing through that and really exploring it and seeing what happens there. I don't know. Use your own gut, but I'd be interested in that kind of saying if you were to push through that, what would happen, you know?

Sorry, Phil, did you want to add something to this?

[Phil responds: When you've finished.]

Yeah. But when you dropped your attention into your body, you still managed to go back. It still made sense to disconnect from the outside.

Q: Yes, it made sense, and it felt a bit more natural. It's a bit difficult to describe. It feels like when I went back I sort of feel like *I* am trying to do this. It feels like something... Mind is still involved.

J: Mind is going with you, but not when you go into your body. That's interesting. Okay.

Q: It feels like I'm kind of going to go upside down and it feels a little sick. It's like my eyeballs go back.

J: Maybe it's just too much right now. It might be, and it might work better to just go into your torso until something else opens or fries or something.



J: Great. Yeah, we'll go back to David, then Michael.

Q: Just to say that, I guess it's obvious, but it feels very tiring to get pulled back into the world.

J: Yes! Delighted you observed it. Yes.

Q: I still feel that now as I'm sort of coming back. That other place was totally different and no sense of anything. It does feel as though that now I'm back, I'm holding the world again. And it really is tiring, and I've been doing it all my life.

J: Yes. Yes. Oh, great observation. See if you can step back a little bit and find a place that's not so exhausting, because sure, running the personal 'I' and the 'I am me,' and 'I am this body,' it's dying off. I mean, you wouldn't be sitting in satsang unless it was in its decline. So it's got old-age for sure, you know, that pattern, for sure. It's dying off, hah. Yeah, yeah.

Q: Senility. It's nearly senile.

J: It is senile. To imagine that you are an individual is loop de loop.

[laughing]



J: Michael.

Q: So thank you, like everyone else. I have done so much holotropic breath work in this room. So to go through the process, it felt very much like you know, the non-ordinary state, the process—the topography that Stan often talks about—the sensory barrier. And I always used to tell people who were leaving be very careful when you're driving a car. That's where I disagree with Phil because I very nearly hit someone on the way home because I was just not concentrating, in a sort of holotropic state. My real question is, if it's through the sensory barrier, moving deeper and deeper and deeper until you get to the edge of consciousness, and at that point there are no appearances in mind... So the phenomenal world has dropped away. And I don't know whether it is the void or what it is, but I feel, you know, completely disconnected at that point. I feel like a spaceman let out of the shuttle or something, just completely disconnected with everything. There's nothing wrong with that, in fact; I'm not frightened of it or anything. But it feels very unconnected with anything.

J: But there is a *you* who is disconnected with everything?

Q: No. No.

J: No. So what's disconnected from what? What's registering the experience of disconnection?

Q: I can only say that it's very similar to the end of a holotropic breath work session when you've gone through all these barriers, you've gone through all this catharsis, you know, and you're coming out of it. There's just this feeling of sort of BPM IV, you know, the cathedral, the emptiness, the blue sky. But it's not an image. There's no image there.

J: Okay. Okay. Is that an altered state then?

Q: I think it's an altered state, or it's no longer a state.

J: That's what it feels like to me too. Hmm-hmm. I'm wondering, because your system is familiar, it kind of pulled that state in. I'm wondering.

Q: Probably. Yes, it probably has something to do with this room and familiarity with it.

J: Indeed the associations.

Q: I'm been through that so many times in this room.

J: Indeed. Indeed. Yeah.

Q: It's this question of... I always think of consciousness as quite tied to the body, and you sort of get to the edge of that. I think, Jean Dunn wrote a book called

Prior to Consciousness or something like that. There is something beyond consciousness.

J: Yes. But it's not phenomenal, but yes. There is a beyond consciousness.

Q: It's not phenomenal. It's called noumenal, being the absence of phenomena. And that's what it felt like, the absence of phenomena.

J: Yes. There's a prior to that too, the noumenal. Yeah.

Q: I don't know what's prior to that. Can you know what's prior to that? Is it by definition beyond...

J: Yes, but not consciousness.

Q: It's beyond description. Is that correct?

J: Yes, it's beyond description, and I have a theory. That at some point consciousness itself is... Consciousness is, is not. You know the way at a certain place things are and are not simultaneously. And then prior to that, they're *not*. They never were; they could not be. Everything is gone. It's all gone.

Q: Absent.

J: Absent. Now prior to that absent and then take the absence away. There isn't "an absent" present. You know?

Q: The absence of absence.

J: Yes, exactly. The absence of absence. So absence is gone.

Q: And that's who we are, I guess.

J: Yes, that's who we are. That's who we are. So prior to that, what... I have a theory—I don't know how to prove it yet, don't know it could ever be proven, but the experience of others will make it more solid or not—that at some point consciousness itself collapses.

I've so many things to say I'm getting them all mixed up together. Okay.

So the non-dual work goes as far as 'I am' and the absolute 'I' and everything dissolves in the Self and there is no personal 'I.' Okay, and then you've got Buddhist that goes prior to that into an empty awareness, you know? It's like pure consciousness, pure awareness is the non-dual, but Buddhism goes into emptiness, the emptiness of awareness. Now, prior to that we have things are and are not. Right? There simultaneously is and is not. Prior to that, things are not. We've got nothing. We've got the absence of nothing—nothing and the absence of the concept of nothing. Okay? Then there's non-being, is what some wing of Buddhism, way up, Tibetan Buddhism have written about this in the ancient Scriptures. It's like... The non-beingness is what travels through all of it, all of it, seen and unseen. There is a non-being aspect. Right?

Now, prior to that, prior to that consciousness collapses. We have some capacity that we haven't even... "Ooh! I'm tingling all over." I've never spoken about this before. We have some capacity, and because we are so obsessed with consciousness, we don't know about this other capacity. We have a capacity, which is not consciousness, and it is in itself a... It resonates, somehow. There is a knowing—shit, you see every word is screwed up. We have a capacity when consciousness itself has collapsed, and I'm kind of becoming a bit interested in that. It's like there is the capacity. We're putting it all down to consciousness, but you know what, there is absolutely prior to consciousness.

So what the heck is conscious of prior to consciousness? Okay, that's a better way to explain it. What can be conscious of prior to consciousness? That doesn't make sense; it's completely falling in on itself. It's one of those misnomers or whatever the word is. There is some resonance. There is some capacity for prior to consciousness that doesn't register in consciousness, from which arises the knowing that everything imaginable in all the galaxies can collapse and what you are is beyond all of that. Consciousness can't know that. It just can't know that. Consciousness translates it, but there is a knowing that's outside of that. Now it's a Jac theory that we have a capacity that is not consciousness, that is something else. But I know I'm on to something.

Q: Thank you. Wei Wu Wei talks a lot about non-being. And I've never really got it. But that's very helpful why we didn't get it.

J: Good. Have another look.

Q: You know, Sri Aurobindo talked about superconsciousness, what was beyond consciousness. And then at the end of his life, I remember there was lots of stuff where everybody thought he was trying to be immortal. I think that's a misinterpretation. I think what he was talking about was exactly what you're saying, that superconsciousness is beyond. It's the (inaudible) beyond our current state of consciousness.

J: Yes. Yes. Yes. Ha. Great. Oh, isn't it lovely? Another piece has come in, so you're not loopers, jac. I don't care if I am. Okay, thank you. Thank you for that. That's really great.

Q: That's very moving.

A participant: Don't the Buddhist talk about the unborn, or is that something else?

J: I don't know I've only just come across this. I don't know. I have no idea.



Q: One is a question about memory because what there's been a noticing of is that memory is going loopy. I couldn't tell you what I did last week or two weeks ago

or whatever. If someone ever asked me, what did you do the 10th of December, whatever, there's no way. Time seems to have gone loopy as well. But to go back to what Michael was saying, years ago I did a whole series of, a whole stretch of work, using primal therapy. I don't know if you've ever heard about primal therapy, but it's very similar to holotropic breath work in a lot of respects. I understand what you say about that, that space of being completely unable to do anything, because that's a state that (inaudible) seems to reach. Really it's an altered state where everything collapses as far as resistance is concerned, and all sorts of stuff comes out because there's no resistance to it coming. From this point of view, it doesn't seem the same as that. It's not that altered state, because for years I worked being a therapist, and that's why I said to you on Monday, comparing the two states, it didn't seem to be an altered state of awareness.

J: Yes, it's a natural state.

Q: It is. It's different.

J: It's different, yeah. It's the natural state.

Q: I know there's a big question about why don't I actually just hypnotize myself into all this lot.

J: Sure of course, doubts will come up, you know, "Am I imagining all this?" Of course. This is normal. Yeah. Yeah. Okay, there is an adjustment period, but you're kind of carried through the adjustment period. And yes, you can drive; and yes, you can function.

Q: That's right. There's listening. There's functioning. There's everything. Then when there is that zoning in on the 'I,' that's when it gets painful and suffering occurs. This is when the 'I' is desperate to hang on and brings in all sorts of stuff.

J: Yes, any drama will do. Any story will do to give it life again. Of course.

Q: Enormous... That's when there is a noticing of, "Well, this is ridiculous, this is just rubbish." And it falls apart at that stage.



J: Duncan, how did you do?

Q: Well, I came in part way through. It didn't help me. I caught hold of your words just to be carried on.

J: We had only just started. Actually there was only about two sentences before you came in, but the energy was probably already set.

Q: It was interesting what I was trying to.. I can't remember exactly what you were... It was something about having a viewpoint where you can see yourself, but from behind in some way, being the observer, I think. I found that I could sort of do

that, but it felt very much like the 'I-me' still and for me to get beyond that, what I needed to do was to not be myself but to view the room, to take a picture rather than just me, and then I could sort of separate. Then when you were asking about where that was located, when I looked for that, it did come up here.

J: The back of your head again.

Q: And of course, I was immediately conscious of, "Well, that's part of me."

J: It's part of the body, which isn't you at all.

Q: Okay. So that's what happened in my head anyway. So I kept going in and out and at some point I think I fell asleep. Before I fell asleep I... And I don't normally dream at all. So I can fall asleep very easily. Actually, I am aware that I do dream, but I very very rarely remember anything of them. And I wasn't asleep but I had this picture, image appear in my (inaudible) vision if you like. And they were just faces one after another, there, just sort of down there, on the same... Almost like a little frame.

J: It's very interesting that you described that actually.

Q: And it seemed to be... It's almost like... It was slightly bizarre thing. The first one that appeared, so that is (inaudible) but it was mainly just the hair, and the hair didn't change, but different faces appeared.

J: It's interesting that you say that, the screen and the frame in the lower left, because that often is a transitional phase. Right, so very often, when people go back prior, the personal 'I' appears in a screen in the lower left, interestingly enough. It's like, "Oh, that's the character; that's the ownership bit of the thing that I can imagine is me, the character, the personality, the body, the life being lived." People often say it is like a TV screen down in the lower left.

Q: And to me though, I don't know if it was a thought or whatever—I find it hard to separate it—you know, something that's saying this is the world. Actually, I didn't get a sense of it being me.

J: Yes, but either way, it's the structure, it's the framework, to kind of relocate where the personal 'I' is. Structure is there. If the pictures are different, it doesn't matter. It's just an interesting structure.

Q: I'm in discussion... It's interesting. I don't do lots of this sort of work. I don't read lots of spiritual texts and things. One of my interests is in mathematics and so I read... I did do science, so I have some mathematics, but I read about it and about the history of it. You know, a lot of this stuff is related completely to maths and quantum physics.

J: Yes, it does. Yes. Quantum mechanics.

Q: And it also relates to lot of the thoughts that came up and in what I've noticed in doing this retreat, it gives me more time and, you know, I'm very comfortable if you like in the silence, but I just go in my head. There's lots of thoughts which I

find fascinating so they just, you know, go on and on. But I don't... Where some people will say you'd be bored, but no, I'm fascinated with what it conjures up. I'm not sure if now is the place to go into it. But I have lots of thoughts around mathematics in the course of this morning, that are all just plugged into what people are saying.

J: Yes, perfect. Perfect. That's great, Duncan. It's a matrix, you know? The world is a matrix. And if you're being shown, you know, an understanding is coming about how it's built up... It is mathematical. It is. It absolutely is. So if that's how the illusion is showing itself to be not real, you're blessed. You're blessed. Keep with that.

Q: I'll keep reading the mathematics books. [laughing]

J: No, but follow in terms of like, show me the maths behind this, and see if you can get some kind of understanding of how something is created. Do you know? Even if it's an argument with you partner, what's the maths behind this? What is this? What is this?

Q: I do that all the time.

J: Okay, wonderful.

Q: And I've got lots I can tell you about the maths of things you've been saying.

J: Sure. Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's great. That's wonderful because the illusion can break down that way, of course, because that's all it's made up of anyway.

Q: Including prior to consciousness itself.

J: Yes, yes. Do you see math as the only thing that's unchanging then?

Q: I don't see maths as unchanging.

J: Don't you? Okay.

Q: No.

J: There's no constant at all in mathematics?

Q: Well, people have looked for it, but what they found is that they can't find it.

J: Okay.

Q: Bertrand Russell did his head in as a mathematician and then became a philosopher. One of the things that—I can't remember just what his phrase is—he just substituted the words about this thing about the Barber of Seville, which was just an analogy, but he did tell people I'm studying a mathematical problem. So the Barber of Seville shaves everyone who doesn't shave themselves. So who shaves the Barber of Seville? And there isn't an answer. If he does shave himself, he doesn't. And if he doesn't, he does.

J: Yes. Yes.

Q: And those problems absolutely exist.

J: Yes, they absolutely exist.

Q: In mathematics and in science and in quantum physics—in the world.

J: In the world. *Ooh!* I could sit and talk about that for a day! Okay.

A participant: There is a young lad a 17-year-old, who won the Scientist of the Year last week in Dublin. And he came up with answers to previously unsolvable mathematical problems, and the judges said it was just an incredible profound contribution to math. This is incredible. It's interesting.

J: Wow! It's the quantum area is what has opened up a whole new series of possibilities, yeah. We're only just starting that really.

Another participant: Also there is a strong correlation between music and maths, which I find fascinating. I don't really relate to maths, but I'm really into music. So I went to a seminar about it, and I found it really fascinating, about the correlations. I was so blown away because I think of maths in school, you know, and I was so bad at it that I had to go to the Institute for a crash course to get my Leaving (certificate). So it felt very logical, super logical, and then there's music which appears the opposite, but it's not really.

J: Yes, it's all based on numbers, intervals. And so is everything else. It's just obvious in music once you start watching the spaces between notes. Hmm.



J: Dennis, how did you do?

Q: Yeah, it was beautiful. It was lovely. Thank you. I experienced being pulled back. Everything came to a very, very still point. It was exquisite. It was very fine. There was no real movement, no real flavor, no real sensations. I was aware of the body, the shaking going on with the body, to some degree. But I was able to pull back from that. I could feel the sense of being pulled from here.

J: Was there a sense that it was *your* body when you were going back? Were you still Dennis?

Q: There was no sense really. There was neither a sense that it was my body or it wasn't my body. There wasn't an identification with it as such. There was an awareness of it, but it was neither one thing nor the other. And it was lovely. It was a shame to come out of it. It was really, really beautiful.

J: It's there all the time, you know.

Q: Just resting. Yeah. It's great.



J: Naomi, how did you do?

Q: Yes, I can go back. I can go back and always stop with this consciousness bit, couldn't really go beyond or behind. This morning I thought I could ask you how to go beyond, behind. Yeah, this exercise was great for me. I have a difficulty to hear at the moment, something like I'm covering my ears. When I really went back, just tears came out. I've been longing for home and kind of like phew.

J: And was there a sense of going prior to consciousness?

Q: Yes, I thought, I felt yes. And I'm not sure because I really don't know—was it or not.

J: Yes. That's completely... Afterwords you won't know. You won't know, so that's the best answer. You really don't know.

Q: Last night after chanting and meditating, I felt like, oh yes I can really see, I can really let go of Naomi character easily. But this consciousness, I don't know how can I get (inaudible) like this trapdoor, how can I do this. But this morning I felt like it went back further. I don't know.

J: Perfect.

Q: I'm have difficulty to hear really, physically. I can understand, or I think I'm understanding what you're saying or other people, but some sound really far away.

J: Okay, you can sit up front or wave at me and I'll know when to talk louder or something. We can work around that.

Q: Thank you.

J: Okay.



J: And I'm sorry, I don't know your name.

Q: Kate.

J: Kate.

Q: Yeah, I really enjoyed the exercise. I found it helpful to have your voice popping in every so often to remind me. At some point I felt like I collapsed into my heart, and that was a really good thing for me. I felt like emotion came with it, but it felt like a physical falling into my heart.

J: Very good.

Q: I think following that, I then had this incredible build up in my head. And it feels like the feeling of high blood pressure when your head is going to explode. So it's not the back of my head; it's all of my head. So it's pretty... Body wise, it feels quite distressing.

J: Is that still with you?

Q: No, it's not like it was, not that intensity. It's a little bit like a fullness in my head. It's interesting this conversation that's followed, because in the work that I do, a lot of what I do is act as a bridge for people to understand the body and the consciousness. And I personally integrate a lot of information in order to disseminate that as needed to whomever or whatever is needed in the moment. So I'm working with mathematics, with sacred geometry, with how music connects to that. All this information is just coming at me in a way that I feel like my head wants to explode, and I want to break through into another level that I don't think I have any words, but it's just known. So that's what I'm sitting with. I have a longing to do what you described before. I've had the experience of going through such a big awakening process that I couldn't do anything that I normally did. I just waited to see what my body was going to do next, as you've described. And I have this longing to just do that and do nothing else. I feel like I want to be somewhere on my own for six months and just see what is it that comes, you know? So when my head wants to explode like that, that's the place I want to go. Is that the place that you described?

J: Could you do that though, Kate? Could you just take six months out?

Q: Yes, I could. I've just taken three weeks out as a tiny way of doing it, and this is my middle week. And I noticed what I wanted was a lot of silence and what I'm getting is a lot of talking, and I'm laughing at that. I'm just curious about, "Oh here's a good mirror," you know, for how much I'm in my mind.

J: Yes, because you know the information that's coming, you're kind of accumulating it for work then?

Q: There's a fascination with the personal 'me.' The 'I' is fascinated by how it all fits together.

J: Could you just be entertained by that in a light way? Or alternatively, could you just say, "I'm not interested anymore," and actually not grasp it? Just not grasp it, not engage your intellect in the fascination zone, because you've hit a bit of an overload. Do you know? It would be great to play with not grasping what you're hearing, no matter if it's going to change your work and change the world and change everything. It's like no, no, "I'm not grasping any of it. Nope, it's just talk, it's just more words. No, I'm not going to change anything here. What's important is for me to go behind all of it or whatever." You know?

Q: What feels important is to soften the focus around it all and trust that it will come when I need it to be there.

J: And if it doesn't, so what? So what, do you know? You'll do something else, you know, you'll say something else in the moment. It might not be as profound as what you might have said if you had read another book or something, but so what? Is that a bit of a challenge?

Q: No.

J: Okay. Great.

Q: I'm very much with that process at the moment of trying to let it all go.

J: Yeah, yeah. There's a softening that would work well for you. You know? There's no need to accumulate anymore, not in this phase anyway. There's no need to accumulate; it's the opposite. It's the letting go phase. If you can take six months, take six months. Four would probably do it, but you need a bulk—three weeks won't do it—of just kind of moving through life organically and not taking anything, not accumulating *anything*, meeting new people and not even taking their e-mail. Like nothing. Take nothing with you. Nothing. That would be a great exercise for you. Sit with it and let's see.



J: Nickola, how did you do?

Q: Grand.

[laughing]

Q: (inaudible) punch-drunk. There's a very large chunk when you were going through the before, before, before. It's like *oo-whit*; it's like I have a cone-head. That's what it feels like, that I'm sitting here with a cone-head. Can anybody else see it? Yeah. It's kind of back there. But there's less of me functioning at the moment. That's what I feel.

J: Because of the exercise?

Q: Yeah. It feels like, you know, in a magic show when they're chopping somebody up, where they put the sliding doors in; that's what it feels like here, that there's a sliding door. And that whatever happening here is happening here, but there's nothing happening here. Do you know? It's like if I go back here there's nothing.

J: Yes. And is that okay?

Q: Yeah. Yeah. It's just... Yeah. It feels fine. Actually, I can physically feel it, that trap door or there's a door or a slidey thing through my head, halfway through my head, and the rest of it is just *owhit*.

J: Yeah, the emptiness is behind it.

Q: Yeah, but it's fine.

J: So where are you hanging? Where is your attention arising from?

Q: Kind of halfway.

J: Like around the sliding door?

Q: It's like I can hear what you're saying and I can talk to you, but back here there's nothing happening. So it's kind of halfway between the two. Do you know what I mean? It's a bit strange.

J: Yeah... Okay... It's fine. Let's see how the operation and Nickola will...

Q: Yeah. But there is... Yeah. No, no.

J: I'd say, you don't know, do you?

Q: I actually don't know. I don't know.

[laughing]

J: Only the Irish people are laughing. Okay. I touched on everybody, I think, did I?



Q: Yeah, what I was saying, what came up about being on the front line at work and all that entails, and I'm just finding it so stressful, you know, with everything else involved with the cuts and with the extra paperwork and everything. Sometimes I feel really, really panicky.

J: Do you?

Q: Yeah. I'm doing my job, you know, and then as I said the other night, there are people just like swanning around and swanning in and out and then leaving me and others with double the load. And it's like phееew, I can't do this anymore. I don't want to do this anymore. I don't want to listen to all this, you know, bickering with clients and fighting, the constant stuff that goes on that we used to be able to sort of alleviate somehow with humour, but we don't have time. Last week, I was thinking, "I've got to get out of here like." I don't want to spend the next five and a half years doing this. It's not good for me.

J: Have you tried being there in a different way?

Q: I have but then I don't know. I guess it just gets lost or I get lost. There have been quite a few serious incidents, and I haven't had to deal with that before personally, you know, like nearly physical attack and stuff. And that's scary.

J: Yeah. What you're describing is bad management. That's what you are describing, it's just bad management.

Q: Yes. Of course, yeah. But I can't change that.

J: No, you can't change that.

- Q: And everything's been made clear, you know. The decision has been made clear.
- J: Yeah. You have two options. You either get out or you be there in a different way, because what's happening is not good for you, as you know. Do you know? When we leave a job, you know, if you're looking at things spiritually, it's really good to only leave a job when you've exhausted every way you can make it help you grow. So if there is another way where you can approach it differently, see it differently, change your perception, and see what's coming up for you. If you've squazed it dry, then leave. Do you think you've completely squazed it dry?
- Q: Hmm, almost. I mean I think at this stage, if somebody comes at me, I'm just going to give them a box or something. I mean, "Fuck off, I don't care if you've got an intellectual disability." I'm going to protect myself. You know? We joke about it, you know, among ourselves, but I don't know if I'd actually do it. That's what it feels like. This thing with the heart—it's not related to that—but it's quite strange. About a month ago I had a stress test, and actually what was really interesting... It was related to what you were talking about this morning. While I was all strapped up and waiting for the doctor, the nurse and I were talking about Christmas decorations or something. And I just noticed even something as simple as that and the heart rate was jumping. Even just a silly little conversation that meant nothing, I wasn't invested in it. It was really interesting, and it would go back down when I was quiet and not talking.
- J: Wow. Okay, this is interesting. All right.
- Q: Yeah. I couldn't believe it. It wasn't a serious discussion, and it didn't mean anything.
- J: Yeah. Did you feel calm when you were having the conversation with her?
- Q: Yeah! It was really puzzling. I was watching the monitor and going, "Wow!" And then when they put you on the treadmill and you're like a little hamster. You have to run uphill like hell. That was fine. I could do it, but I'm noticing since it's like my heart has altered its rhythm or something. Whereas before I'd be lying in the bed and going, "I wonder is it beating; oh, it must be, I'm alive." I couldn't quite feel it. And even when I'm resting, it's still...
- J: And did they find anything strange?
- Q: Not at all. If they did, I imagine they would have rung me, but you know? No, it all seemed to be... He said, "What are you doing here?" basically. "I don't know. The cardiologist sent me. Ask him."
- J: Did you think at the time of telling him about the conversation with the Christmas decorations?
- Q: *Not at all.* He'd be no more interested in that... Come on, he's a consultant. He just comes in and does his thing. You know, he's not answering anything else.
- [laughing]

J: Yeah.

Q: Why are you here?

J: Yeah, have a heart attack and I'll be interested in you.

Q: Yeah. Have one here while you're doing this, you know. A bit disappointed, "You sure you're not feeling any pain now? This is boring." Anyway. it's not related to the other thing, but there is something because even at home I was feeling nearly overwhelmed coming up to Christmas. There was no reason to. I decided I was out of all that shopping and stuff, you know? I'll just give the lads some money, but I just feel completely phew.

J: Because you get overwhelmed though before you travel.

Q: I do. Yeah but there was no reason to get overwhelmed with this. There *is* when I travel sometimes.

J: You know, a pattern like that isn't based on logic. It's just a loop we get into, and we create our own reason to be panicked about something, because there's no reason to be overwhelmed about anything actually. So we just created a scenario and then this is our response then to what we've imagined.

Q: At times I can see why it's happening, but I couldn't understand it. I mean, I was looking forward to it and everything was fine. There's no need. But I think it's all tied in with maybe the work thing.

J: Yeah. So the thread then that ties it all in, it's like there's this low-grade stress anxiety threading through everything and can peak really easily. It can just peak.

Q: Yeah. It had been there in work for several months before that, really insistently. And then it had eased off. But it's always that threat in the background, a feeling of threat, which I didn't experience before.

J: Yeah. And then during that exercise earlier, you felt like as if your energy was very much in the front.

Q: Yeah, that's what I realized. This is where my energy is.

J: So then there's like, you know, we're out of balance then because we are too invested. The outside has too much of an impact on us. It just does. There's a few things that can pull your centre of symmetry back in. One is literally that exercise of, "Pull back, pull back, pull back," just constantly pull back and train yourself. Develop a new habit.

The other one is mindfulness. Mindfulness as a technique, mindfulness really helps in stress reduction, because it stops those loops that you don't even see until you feel the overwhelm. Something is running in there, do you know? Either way, you're going to have to take action, because it's changing a pattern that's kicked in. Mindfulness just gets things in proportion, and just what's in front of you is all that's happening actually. So it stops the other scenario.

But other than that, it's like pulling back your centre of symmetry; pull it back, pull it back, pull it back. So the body is doing its thing at work, but you're behind. And then if somebody is becoming violent or something, it's like you're behind, so your body is going to do what it needs to do. But there is no sense that you can really be hurt to the same extent. You're not under threat so much because you're behind. Do you know? You can shield your body, jump out of the way and protect your body, but you're not under threat, whereas now you're talking as if you are under threat. And it's like hold on, hold on, you're too out there. Do you see? So something has forgotten about like, hey, hey, hey, come right back, come right back inside, and just watch, just watch it. Some kind of mindfulness thing would be great. Something you can put into your ears, someone can talk you through exercises or techniques or really explaining it. And just keep feeding yourself. Keep feeding yourself about mindfulness, just to reprogram a bit.

Q: This week, you know, obviously that doesn't impinge. It's like ahh!

J: Yeah, you have a reprise. But when you go back, the thing is not to plug in the old status quo again. And of course, it's going to cause anxiety if you're in the front, if you're up there identified with the body, because then there's unnecessary vulnerability. There is an unnecessary openness. And of course, your heart is going to respond. Of course, your physiology is going to respond. Of course, it is. You know, whether there's something else going on I don't know, that's a medical thing. But of course, it's going to respond in some kind of anxious way because it's out of balance. It's out of balance. It's like, phew, back we go in here.

Q: Yeah, it's out of balance and it's lack of support. So it's both those things.

J: Yes. And it's lack of support, sure because there's a mess at work. It's a mess, but it's probably not going to get better for the next few years, you know? So, it's like okay. But it does feel like you can be there in a different way. It does feel like you can be there in a different way. I don't know if it will last five and a half years, but it does feel like you can be there in a different way. It does, yeah.

Q: Okay, I'll give it a go until the end of the year and see what happens.

J: Yeah, exactly, exactly.

Q: Oh, that's a long time. Hold on a minute.

J: It's just day by day, "Okay I'm going to use this place. I'm going to use this place because if I'm threatened or things are not right or I'm pissed off because somebody is just breezing in and breezing out and I'm carrying it, *pull* back. I'll do what needs to be done, whatever is in my capability, and you know what, this isn't my family at all. I'm going to close the door and go home." Do you know? So when you're pulled back, you can do that. Whereas, when you're up front, you *hold* the space and *hold* the energy. That's not your gig. Not your gig.

Q: No. I am good at cutting off from it. I mean to the extent that I won't even keep my work keys and my own keys on the same key ring.

J: Fantastic. Yeah, that's great. But when you're there, pulling back. You're too there when you're there. You're too in there.

Q: Okay. But this is still thumping, but anyway.

J: Sure. I mean... Yeah.

Q: It could be just something that kicked in.

J: Yeah, I don't know. That's medic...

Q: It doesn't feel like it's dangerous or anything. It's just something new.

J: All right, okay. Yes, something new. No easy way now, mind you. It's just in the minute, pull back, pull back, pull back. Get a different perspective; get a wider perspective.

A participant: Can I say something about mindfulness? I just completed a mindfulness stress-based reduction course, which they run here, an eight-week course based on a book by Jon Kabat-Zinn. It was fantastic and there's stuff on the website you can download. There's stuff on that which is really useful. So it's definitely a good place to start. I'm sure they probably run courses in other places too. I quite enjoy it. I'm someone that's lived on stress. It's very very helpful.

J: Yeah, just put it on your iPad so that you're listening, listening, listening so that it's fed into your brain.



Q: I just need to be here. [laughing]

J: Good, then just be there.

Q: [laughing] I've just been out of it the last couple of months. It's just like I've fallen into a black hole. I told you I was at the doctor last week and he told me I had post traumatic stress disorder. This subject is very fat, you know, because I can feel myself quaking literally here all the time. I think some of the legs have stopped shaking, but internally, and I have settled down. It's been really great being here because it's just allowing myself to be present to what's going on in my physical system, because out in the world I'm so much out there that I don't even realize... Like last week I went to the doctor because I thought I was going to collapse, you know, because I was kind of like, "What's this about?" I just seem to have pulled in a lot of darkness in my life. I don't know what it is, you know? I just seemed to fall into it. Christmas was distressing; my mother raged up at me, the usual kind of craziness. But I really should be beyond that.

J: Says who?

Q: I'm very hard on myself. And part of why I'm here as well is that I need some nice attention, you know? I just need nice attention. I need soft attention. And ah...

J: So why are you being hard on yourself if you know you need the opposite?

Q: It's obviously a neurological pathway or pattern or something, you know, that's very familiar with me. It's like about struggle or something. It's always been about struggle. I've had to deal with chronic illness over the last... I've dealt with... And it has kicked in the old struggle, because I ended up just finding myself quite isolated around it. Somehow my patterns facilitated and created that as well, that I'm only safe. I'm vulnerable.... I can't have people around me so much.

J: Why can't you have people around you so much?

Q: I don't know, because I'm vulnerable or I'll be attacked.

J: Do you believe that?

Q: I don't believe it but sometimes it runs. You know, it certainly runs around work more so than anywhere. It doesn't happen. The only person that attacks me is really my mother you know; she still does it. I'm just feeling very vulnerable right now, just feeling very vulnerable. It's just seeping out through my pores, my body. It's like... I'm in, inside it.

J: Vulnerability is okay, you know. It doesn't come with the automatic, "Therefore it's not safe." Vulnerability itself is beautiful. It's beautiful. But if you add on the tag, "Therefore it's not safe and I could be attacked," it's like, what does that have to do with it? Vulnerability is beautiful.

Q: Yeah... Yeah. Unfortunately...

J: Can you separate the two? Can you see vulnerability as an asset, as a quality?

Q: No. I'm numbed...

J: You're numbed?

Q: ... By something. I just feel like I'm numb, that I'm somehow shut down in some way. There is a huge amount of fear, you know, that has control over my thinking.

J: And when you go back prior to this perspective of how life is, what happens then?

Q: It was peaceful. It was peaceful.

J: Is it still there?

Q: Yes, it's still there.

J: Is there vulnerability there?

Q: There's no quality there. I can feel myself being pulled back. I'm tired of this life. I'm tired of it, you know?

J: And so from back there, what would arise to change something, to alter it, to change your perception of it? What would arise from there or would it be just the same—let life be as it is? What comes from there?

Q: Well, there's fragrance of peace and ease, and perspective, and distance, and allowing, just allowing this as the experience, acceptance. It's funny I go in and out of it, and then I come out and fear gets me, grabs me, because I hear a word and it kind of grabs me.

J: Yeah. So where do you want to hang out?

Q: Well, I don't want to hang out in suffering, for sure. I don't want to hang out there.

J: So why not shift your perspective? [short pause] Or do you need to fix the world and how you are in it?

Q: I suppose it's this idea of being safe in the world, you know, being safe here. At one level, it's about wanting to feel better, not to feel this way. In a way as well, things have accumulated for me over the last couple of years. It's just accumulated. It's just got harder, harder because of what I've had to deal with since I got sick. This wouldn't be an issue if I hadn't gotten sick. But I have got sick and it's ongoing. And it's forcing me to look at this.

J: Yes, it is.

Q: And this is the gift of it, as well.

J: So you are telling yourself. [laughing]

Q: I'm trying to make myself feel better for fucks sake. [laughing] *Ohhhhh!* I can't laugh my way out of this one, I'm afraid. I just can't laugh my way out of it; it has me.

J: Yeah. It has you.

Q: It really has me. But actually, there's a bit of light already, and I can see that light by just being here with you.

J: It's your own light I'm reflecting back. I hear the story but I'm not buying it.

Q: I know. I know.

J: I'm not buying it. It's just a perspective and if you move your attention to some place else in your head, it's not there.

Q: It's just perspective... Okay.

J: It's a six million dollar question, "Which am I going to focus on?" Do you know?

Q: Yeah, I'm going to focus on the light.

J: Yeah. Or even just prior to it.

Q: Just prior, prior to this.

J: Prior to it. A light comes from it and it softens your way in the world, you know. It softens something, how you see it, how it impacts on you, because that's not where you invested anymore, you know. But you're invested in it, you know.

Q: I'm invested in it, yeah

J: In the awful feeling and wanting it to change, you know, that's full on for you.

Q: Yes, it's like wanting it to change is the problem, you know, because in some ways ... And even if I do things to try to change it, at this point nothing works. It just feeds it.

J: No, they only work for a while. You have a few days breather and then you're back in again.

Q: Yeah. And they don't even work that long anymore. It's like things I would have done in the past would have shifted it, but they don't work anymore in the same way. I can't rely on them for some reason. Interestingly. So there's just this, just settling back.

J: Yes. Just unplug all your attention from that story, because you can't fix the story. What's not working now is the desire to fix it isn't working.

Q: Yes. That's very clear. I just need to sit with you for a little while.

J: Yeah. [short pause] The key is less attention on the character story. It's just less attention, pull back.

Q: Yeah, totally... Pull back, yeah.

J: Less attention, and it is soft behind that. It's soft.

Q: Yeah. I have to keep it soft.

J: You've got to pull back and it's automatically soft, you know. And vulnerability is safe. It's fine. It's beautiful, actually.

Q: To be explored.

J: To be explored, yeah. You have to check that out.

Q: I have to work that one out, because my associations are all wrong.

J: Yeah. One thing means this, yes exactly, your associations.



Q: I felt very peaceful during that sitting with Dennis. Then it didn't seem so urgent. I know I wanted to talk all morning and I woke up with thoughts. So it's got to do with the baby and you're saying to me that I was put down, I wasn't held. Before you said that even, I've had these images of waking up frightened and cradling the baby. You know, holding my baby. It doesn't really work, yet anyway. It feels

almost mechanical, like I'm doing this. Yet it is the image that comes up in the fear. It feels a bit contrived even though nobody suggested it or put it on me or anything. And I sort of feel I don't know how in a way. I've never had kids so I haven't got practice. I actually think it was really hard for my mother to have kids. She had them like so many women, but I do think it was hard for her. So I have a lot of empathy and loyalty to her. Maybe I can't kind of admit it or something, own it fully, and I'm protecting her. The strongest feelings of hate I had as a kid were for her, and I don't feel I have the corresponding feelings of love. In fact, I was frightened of her.

J: You were frightened of her?

Q: Yeah. And she's dead twenty-one years and I still can look at a photo of her and I still have fear and still feel a bit frightened. I've never looked at this as deeply before, and I just feel I have to now. I look at her picture and I can't... One part of me smiles because I recognize her and maybe recognize the sundress she's sitting in and her smile. And it's not that she wasn't a warm character at all, but I have this kind of coldness or it's sort of a disconnect. Yeah. So when I posed that word this morning, I was crying.

J: So can you put aside the values of being loyal to her and honouring her because she did her best? Can you put aside all those values for a while? Really park them and don't judge yourself if you need to break them. Okay? Maybe what she had for you wasn't enough. Maybe it just wasn't good enough for you. Whether or not she did her best, that's over there with those values that kind of justify it; but something wasn't sufficient. Some level of nurturing wasn't sufficient. Something wasn't sufficient. So you have to be okay about admitting that before you can find the broken one, because you can't compensate now in your own cradling of the baby. You can't compensate if you're still imagining that what she did was okay, was good enough. You know, first you have to admit, "Actually she was bloody brutal and I was petrified of her." If you were able to say that, then you can come in and compensate, "Well I'll just do it myself for myself now," to give you a door in.

Q: Yeah, I've been saying to myself I can do it myself, but it's like I have brought her with me because I don't want to leave her outside maybe.

J: Push her out of the way. Just push her out of the way; you've got to do this for you, Jane. She'll be all right; this is about you healing you. She's blocking your view of what needs to happen for you. And it's just your image of her. It's the shrine you want to hold for her. It's all your creation. Whether it's her or not, she's gone on her own path. This is what you have held up. You have no access to the little 'you' because she's in there being protected. But you've got to chuck her out. Fire her. Do you know? Fire her. "It's not good enough, Mam, not good enough—out; I'll take over myself now." That kind of strength woman-to-woman, you know, to meet her as a woman. So let's meet her as a woman. Do that even today, where you face her as a woman, and let it rip. Don't hold anything back.

Q: Okay... I think that's the answer, meet her as a woman because I've been meeting her as a baby or vulnerable child. I can't. I've been trying to come to terms with this idea of being lovable, you know, because we've been talking about it. Part of me knows I'm lovable, but another part doesn't really at all, and that's probably to do with, you know, cradling, not being able to...

J: Having it validated when you were a wee little one.

Q: Yeah. I notice I do this rocking thing when I'm really distressed. And my sister did it too.

J: Rocking yourself?

Q: Yeah. I like it because it's sort of like an internal, you know, the thing that goes on the piano.

J: Metronome.

Q: Yeah. A metronome. Rhythmic. It gives me rhythm and sort of like connects me to life, I guess. So, yeah. [bell ringing] So does the bell.

[laughing]

J: So find the woman, and then meet her as a woman. You can't go in there meeting her as you would meet her photograph. Even now meeting her photograph, it's like *no*, you know, the capable woman and, "Right, I'm going to have a conversation with you lady." Imagine that she's a tree, no, imagine that a tree is her. Even if you go out there and you talk to a tree, let that be her and just like go for it. Go for it. Meet her as a woman. And then we'll see what your access is like. Step-by-step. It's okay. You're getting there.

Q: Yeah. Yeah.

J: Well done.

Q: Yeah. Thanks.

J: You've been living with this one and it is very tender. You've been living with this for a long time. It's not easy.

Q: No, but I'm ready for it.

J: That's the thing. You can do it.