

MIND & REALITY

DAY TWO – TAPE 2 of 7 – ALAN WALLACE KEYNOTE

\*\*\*TAPE START\*\*\*

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:00.00

-clue of the bliss of Shamata, if all you've had is sex and food and beautiful sunsets. Luminosity, I know that. It's up there. I see it, you know, that's luminous. You don't have a clue. Non-conceptuality - I know that sometimes I'm really tired. And I'm listening to a lecture. I know non-conceptuality.

00:00.24

The words sound familiar. You don't have a clue. It's a specialized vocabulary. They're using ordinary words for a rarified set of experience. People have achieved that, this is not ineffable at all. Anymore than Riemannian geometry is ineffable until people understand it. And it's completely ineffable to people who don't. So maybe that one can be surmounted.

00:00.46

Oh, but now we go to the Freudian challenge. This is serious. Freudian challenge - the tendency of unconscious mental processes and unconscious motivations to conceal and misrepresent. Now, that's thorny. There's no little slick answer I can give to that one. So, that's a serious pragmatic challenge. Can it be overcome? Well, I think the Buddhists, Hindus, Taoists have been grappling with that one for thousands of years.

00:01.10

And I think the answer's yes. And I think there are strategies that we can conceptually inspect and evaluate and then better empirically investigate. Very serious problem. Maybe it can be surmounted, maybe it has been. And I will point in a minute to a technique that may be a step in that right direction. And then, finally, there- and that's from Freud and then Gilbert Ryle's concern here of the possible differences or even disparity or incompatibility between mental appearances and mental reality.

00:01.37

Maybe the way mental phenomena appear is radically incongruent with the way they actually are. It's possible. At the same time, the way we've understood about the constitution of galactic clusters is by looking at the appearances, understanding the phenomena by way of the appearances, not understanding the phenomena by looking at the terrestrial correlates.

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In other words, you don't learn about the constitution of galaxies by studying astrology. Doesn't matter how good your astrology is. Doesn't matter that the appearances that you're getting from the galactic cluster just traveled 12 billion years as photons which are invisible, have no color at all and suddenly are creating an appearance to your visual field that's ancient history.

00:02.23

I mean that's just an appearance. When you're looking up there in the stars, what you're seeing

there I think you're gonna be almost certain - there's nothing there where you're seeing something. The earth is spinning, right. It took some of those- the light from some of those stars or galaxies thousands or millions or billions of years to get here. So, by the time it got here, they're way over yonder. Or maybe they actually died out. They went into a supernova 5 billion years ago and what you're seeing is something that's, you know, like yesterday's news.

00:02.51

But that doesn't mean we should stop astronomy because appearances don't correlate with reality. In fact, we know the reality by way of appearances, not by ignoring it. We know reality by way of meticulously observing the appearances. That's how Galileo proceeded. That's how Darwin proceeded. That's how William James wanted us to proceed.

00:03.09

But instead, we're so far satisfied with focused-folk psychology, the actual data collection.

Maybe it's not such a clever approach. So, is it possible to refine introspection? I would say yes. In Buddhist practice, you are cultivating two faculties. Mindfulness is really non-forgetfulness. The primary connotation of it is recollection, not bear attention. It is an ongoing flow of not-forgetfulness, an ongoing flow of engaging, engaging, engaging with your chosen object. An introspection is a quality control.

00:03.41

It's not thinking about your mind. This term sheshen (ph) or samprajna (ph) is monitoring the quality of retention from moment to moment. It's like somebody looking at the telescope to see that it's not jiggling. The lenses are not going out of focus or what have you. So those are the two faculties - mindfulness engaging with the optic that you're attending to, introspection monitoring the way you're attending.

00:04.02

And especially looking for occasions when- in which you fall into dullness or laxity, when you fall into excitation or agitation and tweaking it. Again, like adjusting your telescope. Tweaking it and, of course, making it better. And in that context, you use your faculties of mindfulness, introspection to develop stability and vividness of attention so the mind can be focused on any chosen object with continuity, coherence and high resolution.

00:04.25

In other words, I think before we try to go gung-ho into the introspective exploration of the mind, we might want to develop the technology first. Attention skills. And in my collaboration with John Coen and then a whole team of neuroscientists and psychologists at UC-Davis with whom I'm developing this whole shamata project, it's remarkable how little is known. For all the studies - and there are wonderful studies - neuroscientific and psychological studies of

attention. It's- there are decades of research there.

00:04.52

But here's a simple question. Can attention be developed? Is- Well, now here's a more basic question from John Coen - is there such thing as attention? That is we know there's skill-related attention, that's for sure. People become better air traffic controllers, jet fighter pilots, chess players and so forth - skill-related. But is there a faculty of attention like a bicep that you could develop it.

00:05.16

Not just a skill of being a better air traffic controller, but develop attention. Is that possible? We don't know. Is there even such a separate faculty or is attention always skill-related? We don't know. If there is, can you develop it? Can you enhance it beyond normal? The good news is- the bad news of the good- the good news of the bad news is we know attention can get a lot worse. It's called ADHD.

00:05.39

So it's plastic down. Is it plastic up? Well, symmetry would suggest sure, why not. But we don't know that. But it's remarkable that we don't know it for all of the scientific curiosity about the mind, we don't know whether attention can be trained or not? It's really basic and we don't know.

00:05.56

Because that's just not what we've been doing. If it can be developed, is it generalizable? Can you develop like a bicep? Can you develop your attention skills of stability and vividness and now apply this to interpersonal relationships, to scientific research, to education, to a myriad of tasks - athletics, for that matter. Can you be a better tennis player if you practice shamatha? It's an empirical question. The answer is we don't know.

00:06.19

It's remarkable how much we don't know. In terms of training the mind. Well, this lends itself to

study and that's exactly what we're doing in this shamata project. Very brief - I'm gonna wrap up very quickly here. But I wanted to mention something here that is worthy of a lot more time and I won't give it to it now.

00:06.36

But a particular practice, called in Tibetan *simnelubapa* (ph) - settling the mind in its natural state is settling the mind in this substrate. In this relative ground state. Like a relative vacuum of consciousness - voided of the kinetic energy, the contents, the particles and fields, metaphorically of emotions, thoughts, mental images, so forth. The mind is like, imagine this. Imagine somebody put you in a perfect sensory deprivation tank when you just had five cups of coffee.

00:07.04

And it's a perfect sensory deprivation tank because you have now no sense or experience of any of the five fields. You can't even feel your body. This is a great sensory deprivation tank.

And on top of that, while you're completely divorced from all physical stimuli, for a little while, somebody zaps you with a little numbing device for all of your mental activity and makes the mental activity of thoughts, compulsive ideation and so forth, all go flat, but leaves you with that extraordinary state of clarity and vividness that you brought to the tank itself.

00:07.35

So there you are inside the sensory deprivation tank, no thoughts arising, no images, nothing happening, no experience of your sensory environment at all. What are you aware of? You're really aware. Of pretty much nothing.

00:07.57

Except that you're conscious. And a little thought might- if you could kind of break the gag order on your mind - let me out of here. Or maybe it would be blissful and you'd enjoy it. If you get there the old-fashioned way by shamata, they say one of the greatest challenges is you don't

want to get out of there. It's blissful, why move.

00:08.16

Settling the mind in its natural state - the basic strategy is rest the attention in the field of mental events. That is, it's selective. You select that particular domain of experience that's purely mental - thoughts, images, dreams - that area. Not sensory input. Observing whatever rises in that domain without distraction, without grasping. A loaded, loaded term, but that is basically the strategy for addressing Freud's concern.

00:08.41

And again, this is an empirical question. In that context, you can make- you can begin to examine the degree of subject-object participancy in this endeavor. And that is many people- I've been teaching this for many, many years. When people start observing the mind, you find doggone it, whenever I observe something it vanishes, or at least it changes. How can I possibly develop a

science of the mind when whatever I'm observing actually changes or maybe even doesn't happen unless I observe it.

00:09.04

And that's when the quantum physicists, they come in and say, oh join the party. We've had that problem ever since, you know, beginning. The whole notion of pure separation of subject-object doesn't work in quantum mechanics. It's a complete- it's vanished, it's history. And so, join the party. Niels Bohr recognized this decades ago.

00:09.21

To what extent are thoughts and emotions yours? Does the mere fact that you experience them make them yours? If so, why and what does that mean? And so it's possible here to bring to awareness a broadband of previously unconscious mental processes, which having done this for some thousands of hours draws me to a strong conclusion that the membrane between conscious

and unconscious mental phenomena is very malleable.

00:09.43

Very malleable. Must be tested. So, I'd like to propose a new paradigm with no totem pole and no idols. Not a supernatural totem pole, not a naturalistic totem pole. No totem pole and no idols. In which the study of the natural world should have at its center consciousness because it after all is the common denominator to all modes of inquiry.

00:10.07

If you're not conscious, you're not inquiring. Consciousness should be center- It shouldn't have been left until 1990. I'm sorry, but it really shouldn't have been left that long. In fact, it would have made a lot more sense to start there. But there are major reasons why it wasn't that were largely theological in nature. Let consciousness be at the center.

00:10.29

And if our better graphic artists, I mean-  
graphic- If I'd have been gotten to first grade  
instead of preschool, in graphic- else I would  
have all these little lines be arrows going in  
both directions. Consciousness interfacing with  
philosophy - which has a lot to tell us about  
consciousness - interfacing with science, of  
course. Interfacing with religion - let's leave  
that one open. They may have discovered  
something, who knows.

00:10.48

Mathematics. It's a very fascinating area.  
Penrose and other people are talking about, you  
know, what it's like to make a mathematical  
discovery and what that has to do with  
consciousness. And let all of these be in a  
reciprocal relationship. Philosophy engaged  
reciprocally with religion, that with science,  
that with mathematics and all of these together  
more of a lattice structure of knowledge, rather  
than a totem pole of a hierarchy of idols.

00:11.13 We haven't had a revolution in the cognitive sciences. A lot of knowledge, a lot of progress, but a revolution? Like the Galilean revolution, like the revolution of quantum mechanics, relativity, like the revolution of natural selection. I don't think so. Not for 130 years.

00:11.30 It's been delayed. I think it's been delayed because we've not treated mental phenomena with respect and the seriousness that we have physical and biological phenomena. Is it possible - and I would suggest it is - I think William James is our beacon here. And it might come about. This is now- I've gone to the past, the medieval period, looked at the present, now imagining the future.

00:11.49 And I was challenged because Piet brought us 30,000 years in advance, so that really kind of sets me back on my heels a little bit. So, but- let's just even imagine a century. Let's be really modest here. A synthesis- imagine a synthesis of rigorous first-person and third-

person inquiry by means of empirically investigating a wide range of mental phenomena and their relation to the physical world.

00:12.11

In other words, bringing in a third profession - that's what I'm really saying here. Is an addition to professionally trained psychologists and neuroscientists, develop a profession of well-trained, highly-trained professionals for the first-person observation and experimentation on mental phenomena and start investigating into the phenomena themselves. Like Galileo did, like Darwin did. Like William James wanted to and began to do.

00:12.34

So, this could be a collaboration between cognitive scientists, psychologists, neuroscientists, philosophers play an important role, contemplatives - they're the data collectors here. With exception- But specifically contemplatives with exceptional mental skills and

insights resulting from rigorous sustained contemplative training.

00:12.51

That's a vision that I think would be a win-win situation. It would be good for the contemplative traditions to slip them out of the vortex of dogmatism to which religions so easily succumb. Also, to help science slip out of the vortex of dogmatism to which scientists very easily become. Because we're human beings. Return to a true stance of empiricism and be equally empirical with respect to first-person as we have been so nobly with respect to third-person.

\*\*\*APPLAUSE\*\*\*

00:13.40

Owen absolutely gets the first word.

**OWEN FLANAGAN**

00:13.47

Thank you very much. Wonderful talk. Your father would be very proud. No, Alan and I love each other and we love to do this. And, I want to actually make a completely- oh, I need to- What I think is a friendly amendment that so many of us

are on really the same side of things, here, I think.

00:14.20

And you bringing up James, of course, I- we have to- idols with a small i. He's my idol too, of course, that's why I named one of- my second book, "Varieties of Moral Personality." And the- I was struck - this is just a new thought I've had about your work.

00:14.43

There may be a mistake that many of us are making in overemphasizing the privacy of experience and mind. I think this- I hope this will be received- So I think of Evan's work and actually, work of all my philosophical colleagues in the room who- Alan said, let me start it this way so I can be articulate - sort of.

00:15.16

I invented ADD though, so I- My students tell me - focus. Alan suggested that there was two components to naturalism as he saw it and I believe I'm speaking correctly from the slide -

one is the ontological commitment that has to do with nothing supernatural - whatever that means. He rightly points out. And then there was this epistemological component and I think he said there that it's the commitment to a gathering knowledge from the third personal perspective, or the objective perspective.

00:15.59

And I want to suggest that most of us here, I mean who've been speaking and are on the panel, don't believe in the- that expression of the epistemological component. Because then we won't understand mind. And here, I think of a person who inspired James greatly, who never held down a real job and is very difficult to understand.

00:16.29

But, Charles Sanders Peirce, who emphasized something that I think Piet Hut spoke eloquently about yesterday, which is a way to break the subjective-objective divide of thinking of everything- things on one side as subjective and private and on the other side as third personal

and objective, which is to emphasize the intersubjectivity of all knowledge.

00:16.59

That we- As Alan says, it's only in virtue of having conscious minds. Well, I mean, you could- some people in robotics or AI will say, there could be- we could evolve to be zombie-like robotic information processors and maybe we would still write books with physical equations and that sort of thing. I don't know. But we're not that way.

00:17.20

But we're not that way. How do we understand the world? We understand the world as very smart, sentient beings. And how do we do it? We appropriate the world - and here I'm talking about, you know, this auditorium that we're in, as Piet Hut was saying - not just as individuals, but as individuals who have grown up learning a language, a common language. Not always using vocabulary the same way and that's part of the regimentation process.

00:17.49

But even our understanding of the physical world is an intersubjective thing – the way we teach our children to understand things. And I think the same thing is true of mental vocabulary. So I applaud completely the project that Alan's doing and I think that one way – just – so I'm suggesting this. I mean, Habermas has made a great deal of this idea in the political sphere – about ideal speech communities, which get together and press themselves to see if they can give, reach intersubjective agreement.

00:18.23

But I – So, I think what science may have done, or there's a form of perhaps scientism, which historically overemphasized objectivity and then that makes mind quite a bit more mysterious, spooky and private than, in fact, I think it is. So, one suggestion I would have is simply to start to think this way.

00:18.47                   That all knowledge practices are attempts to gain intersubjective understanding of things and help break the subjective-objective divide that way.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:19.02                   Thank you. Yeah, thank you. And a very brief response because I want to have more questions. But that would be, I think, the strength of the shamata project, where we're not letting the meditators kind of dominate just from the first-person perspectives. The I experience, if therefore that's true, that in fact, we're bringing together some very sophisticated measurements from psychology.

00:19.20                   They will be informing the meditators, in some respect, how their own practice is going. I, as a second person, as the instructor will hopefully - if I'm any good at it - will inform them. The neuroscientists slowly, but perhaps over time very informatively also come in and cross-reference. And so I think this is really- this little project is kind of like developing- like

Galileo developing his eight power telescope. The first one. It's only three months.

00:19.42

A little eight power telescope, but it's a full-scale collaboration, I think exactly along the lines that William James would have applauded. That's certainly my hope. As we both idolize him, as you say, with a small i. I hope William James would be happy. Yes, Billy.

**QUESTIONER**

00:20.09

I want to go back to your title - Naturalizing the Natural Sciences.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:20.12

The Mind Sciences.

**QUESTIONER**

00:20.13

Oh, the mind sciences. And give you a little thought experiment and ask you to respond. If we take David Grossman - he's doing mathematics and physics - and stick him under an fMRI and a PET scan and EKG and stick a couple electrodes in there and watch his brain while he's doing physics or we take Bob Pollack when he's doing

microbiology and do the same or Owen Flanagan when he's doing philosophy, or even more interesting when he says he loves you, and look at- or anybody here in the room and look at their brain when they're paying attention to your talk - what have we learned that's really interesting about the realities of which they purport and actually do map out into a human consciousness?

00:21.03

So, if you were to take that kind of paradigm and apply it to science itself, what kind of conundrum have we got ourselves into?

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:21.12

If it's- Yeah, if it's good for the goose, why not for the gander, right? I think it's a very legitimate point. And I think one point you're probably getting at implicitly is if we can- if we had no first-person experience at all - I mean, again, hypothetical - no first-person experience of mental phenomena at all. I mean, actually if it were true what the behaviorists said that mental events never even take place at

all, then if all you study with the brain, you'd have no idea there is such a thing as mental phenomena.

00:21.39

Because they never manifest. You never see a mental phenomenon with an MRI or an EEG or anything like that. And likewise, as John Searle pointed out, if you confine yourself to studying only behavior, mental phenomena are not physical behavior either. They may be very closely related - a facial expression may express, press out, bring into the public world what you're feeling, but a facial expression - a particular configuration of 128 muscle groups that Paul Ekman has studied, those are not mental phenomena.

00:22.07

So I think by itself, you don't learn anything at all. If it's an isolation about mental phenomena, although you may learn a lot about the causes giving rise to mental phenomena and the effects produced by mental phenomena by way of behavior

or the impact on the brain. But what this emphasizes to me is the importance of William James's strategy of being triadic. Because over time- number one, as a meditation teacher and just a meditator - gosh, I think Einstein was right when he said - at least the statement is attributed to him - that there are two things in nature that are infinite - the human capacity for self-deception and space. And I'm not so certain about space.

00:22.44

It's a cute phrase, but it's an enormous amount of truth in it. It's Freud's problem that Owen brought to my attention. And so, what might the psychologists and the neuroscientists tell about what's going on when I say I love you? Well, maybe I don't love you at all, what I want to do is get you in bed. Or maybe I love you because I want your money. I love you because I like your respect. I love your adulation.

00:23.05                   And so, can psychologists study love and its counterfeits? Might there be different correlates - neurophysiological correlates - of love of the type that you and I regard as a virtue, as opposed to its sad facsimiles or counterfeits of self-centered craving, attachment, lust and so forth and so on. So, I think over time they actually may tell us a lot, but again, I'm a Jamesian at heart, here, and I think first and foremost, let's do really develop a sophisticated methodology for studying the phenomena themselves-

00:23.34                   -and then the backup - and very important backup - in a- this triadic structure is psychology and brain science. Oh, Piet, please. Please

**PIET HUT**

00:23.47                   Thanks, Alan. This was really a wonderful presentation and I completely agree with you that in a dialogue between science and contemplation, contemplatives have to take science seriously and

scientists have to take contemplation seriously.

So, I couldn't agree more.

00:24.05

The only addition I would give is that you have defended the Santa Barbara way, the California way.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:24.11

Yes, quite so.

**PIET HUT**

00:24.13

And, I would like to put in a pitch for the New York way. I'm a New Yorker myself. I'm an immigrant as you can hear. Maybe that makes me more of a New Yorker. And I think in Buddhist terms, California is the realm of the deities-

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:24.30

Yes, deva realm. Santa Barbara, especially.

**PIET HUT**

00:24.32

And New York and Wall Street and all that is the realm of the semi-gods, yeah. The demigods.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:24.37

I fell that every time I come here, yes.

**PIET HUT**

00:24.40

So, the demigods are not as patient as the gods are. So, as an alternative to spending years doing shamata - although I highly respect it and I think it should be done by those who would like to do that. Those who don't have the patience for that, I think there is a New York alternative. And the alternative is as follows.

00:25.02

Instead of taking where we are and learning a new skill, namely to concentrate, we can also try to realize that we have been training ourselves our whole lives in a particular way of looking at the world. In a particular way of looking at what we call the world. Part of our construction.

00:25.23

And to try and stop that. And we don't believe we can stop that. But if, in a discussion, and if in thinking things through, in much less than a year we can try to convince ourselves that there is a possibility as a working hypothesis to stop right now. To stop believing that you are embedded in

time, in the linear time of past, present,  
future.

00:25.46

To stop believing that you are a person. To stop believing that you are determined by your personal history. If you make it move, as a New Yorker, you can be very ahead of the Santa Barbarans. And then you can go on vacation to Santa Barbara and then you can learn how to really sustain it.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:26.03

Thank you, Piet. Maybe we should have that as- I'll be right with you Teed. Maybe we should have that as a prerequisite before we have people coming to Santa Barbara for year-long or years-long retreats. First, the litmus test - can you handle New York City with mental balance? People handle it without mental balance, but can you live here and maintain exceptional degrees of mental balance? That would be a very good kind of boot camp. Boot camp in New York and then you get the dessert in Santa Barbara. Teed.

**TEED ROCKWELL**

00:26.34

Ok, now, you were talking about the possibility of an ideology-free science. You asked about the possibility of that in this meditation and I don't think if, you know, if you were talking about developing a contemplative science and have it correspond to the way science actually operates, what you really don't want is an ideology-free science, but one that has an ideology that creates solvable puzzles.

00:26.57

And, the real problem with the Titchener form of introspection- and I've- there's a paper on my Web site that deals with this in greater length, you might be interested in looking at. Is that they had a- they had an ideology, a paradigm that created unsolvable puzzles. It basically came out of Hume and so the question was, you know, they were assuming there must be, you know, a set of fundamental bits and that the mind was assembling those bits. And so they kept trying to find the individual bits.

00:27.26

And ok, there's one and there's another one and then we'll start assembling them. And the problem was they didn't take into consideration the point you made earlier, which is every time you look at the same thing, it changes. You know, no two experiences are alike. So, you know, one group of people, you know, Titchener found 30,000 different possible fundamental parts of the mind. You know, fundamental bits.

00:27.46

And Kerler (ph) found, like, 50,000 and none of them were the same. So, you know, to some degree what you've already come with a possibility of accounting for why their paradigm didn't work, why their puzzles were unsolvable. And if you just think if you're- if you're creating solvable puzzles like some of the ones that you came up with before - you know, is there such a thing as attention - that's the way to look at the goal. Don't try to find an ideology- don't try to think in terms of an ideology-free system, try to find

an ideology that creates possible solvable puzzles. And I think you are doing that.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:28.18

Thank you and I couldn't agree more. And the- I presume this is being taped so whatever I said is unretractable. I believe I said- and I'll stand by it, although I maybe can change my mind. I believe what I said was without ideological bias, which is a tall order. But I think even from the time of Galileo, when he was doing simple things like rolling balls down ramps, he already had a notion of acceleration versus constant velocity. He had a notion of time.

00:28.42

So, even that, which is very, very primitive kinematics, even that was not ideologically free. Let alone string theory or quantum field theory and so forth. I mean, any sophisticated science I would say - here, I'll be really dogmatic or make a generalization - any observation in any sophisticated stratum of any science is heavily theory-laden.

00:29.02

Right, so it's not ideologically free, but good science is aware of its assumptions. It's not falling into the illusions of knowledge and the wonderful statement by Richard Feynman - I'll paraphrase and then I'll move on. But he said, he gave the ideal of science and scientific skepticism and he said we scientists inspect most carefully those areas where we feel we could be wrong and we spend a lot of time investigating that because the way science progresses more quickly than anything else is by recognizing where we're wrong, rather than putting that into a blind spot.

00:29.34

And saying well, we already know, we already- Well, if you- in the future, the future will corroborate what we believe to be true now. I think that's bad science. But ideology-free I think is a chimera not even worth pursuing, so I'm totally with you.

**CHRIS KELLEY**

00:29.47 We have one question-

**EDITH WYSCHOGROD**

00:29.50 I'll be very brief. First, a brief remark. Here we are at Columbia University where alongside William James, we were all dominated by the wonderful portrait of John Dewey in the philosophy library for any number of years. And I wonder whether you would inject his thinking into your paradigm.

00:30.12 But my question is another one. In talking about the Freudian paradigm, what comes up is the pathologization of the unconscious. Now that has permeated our culture. How do you plan to distinguish between a non-medical model or perhaps you want to inject the medical model, to our (unintell) quotes, normal mode of existence to distinguish that from what we designate as mental illness?

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:30.51 Very good. Thank you. There were many people I didn't discuss and I probably went on a little

too long even as it was. But I didn't mention Husserl. I didn't mention the whole gestalt movement in Europe, in European psychology. I didn't mention Freud, who took first-person experience very, very seriously, as we know. A number of psychiatrists just recently pointed out to me how psychoanalysis can be quite similar to some kinds of meditative practices.

00:31.16

So, there are many things I didn't mention, including the brilliant work of John Dewey. And so, I would have to say for brevity of time and also limits of my own knowledge, would be two reasons for that. But certainly enormous- and Peirce himself (unintell) a lot in terms of pragmatism. And there, William James is deeply indebted to him for his wonderful development of pragmatic philosophy.

00:31.37

In terms of the point you did raise about kind of the interface between kind of contemplative inquiry, contemplative practice and the

diagnosis, treatment of mental illness, I think- my overall orientation towards this, let's say Buddhism and science, religion and science interface is not one of competition. For very good reasons, I think. And that is, Buddhism has no brain science.

00:31.58

No brain theory. And so- and we've met- I've been translating and primarily Thubten Jinpa being the primary translator - I'm being made a lightweight back-up as the years go by, especially. When the neuroscientists are telling the Dalai Lama about the role of the amygdala, the hippocampus and so forth, he never says oh well, but that's not what we believe. Our theory of the amygdale is... It just never happens.

00:32.18

Buddhism doesn't have a theory of, you know, that kind of thing. And so it's complementary. Buddhism is very strong, I think, for the first person and it's quite strong for qualitative evaluations of behavior and their relationships

to meditative experience and general overall mental well-being or lack thereof. Qualitative emphasis. As we know, psychology very strong for quantitative measurements, analysis of behavior, extremely strong. Neuroscientists are in a class by themselves.

00:32.44

But there's another area where there's complementarity, I believe. In a very rich and happy way. And that is- my understanding is in the DSM, there are about 300 specific mental illness that have been diagnoses and for which there's various forms of treatment. That's just not Buddhism's strength. That is, I lived in the home of the Dalai Lama's personal physician when I was living in India and psychotic people would show up periodically.

00:33.07

I mean really schizophrenic. Really, really terribly mentally ill. Buddhism doesn't really have anything to offer to that. That's not what it's designed for. And so, this is the strength

of Western clinical psychology and Western academic psychology has a great strength in studying the normal mind. Clinical psychology, psychiatry - very great strengths. Hallelujah for understanding, diagnosing, treating, sometimes only managing - at least that is better than nothing - managing the symptoms of mental illness.

00:33.35

It's not a strength of Buddhism. Buddhism is kind of more or less starting normal and frankly, Buddhism doesn't have any developmental psychology either. What type of meditation should you teach to a five-year-old, 10-year-old, 15-year-old? What about gender differences? I could be just ignorant here, but I'll speak with ignorance - I don't think it's there.

00:33.54

Because Buddhism is pretty much a language for healthy normal adults. And now, what can we do with it? Where that's about where psychiatry pans out. By the time you're as mentally healthy as

your psychiatrist, that's when he's saying you're finished. You can go. He or she. So, I see a complementarity there, but I see it's - to my mind, it's my hypothesis - it's a smooth continuum.

00:34.15

That is, I'm working with a team at UCLA, taking some basic meditative practices and applying to them for the prevention and treatment for ADHD. Who has ADHD? Everybody here. You know, relatively speaking. Compared to a person that's achieved shamatha, we're all cuckoo, you know. Just off- you know, we're- you know, just, we're flopping like fish on the sand in terms of attention deficit, hyperactivity, attention deficit, hyperactivity.

00:34.41

It's relative. It doesn't mean we're crazy. It just means relative to a person who's achieved shamatha, we're really out to lunch. But there's a smooth continuum there for- to people who are completely dysfunctional, cannot operate in the

world without heavy medication, massive doses of Ritalin, all the way through the spectrum to normal and then there's a continuing smooth spectrum beyond that to exceptional states.

00:35.01

And I would say it's not only true for attention, but for emotional balance, for the type of desires and motivations that we have, for our cognitive engagement with reality. There are people who are suffering from greater or lesser imbalances. So, I see it as a very smooth continuum and then what within that continuum is considered to be normal is always relative to time and place.

00:35.22

So, what's normal in Manhattan might be not so normal in Santa Barbara. I speak- say that in a bit of jest. But also, what's normal now- to a final point - a good friend of mine is Lobsang Rapgay and we were monks together in the Buddhist school of dialectics. Where Georges was also until he got sick - back in the early '70s. And,

Lobsang Rapgay got his monastic training, then trained in Tibetan medicine and then got his degree in clinical psychology and is running a center at UCLA.

00:35.47

But he a very interesting, kind of, polymathic kind of background. And, as a Tibetan doctor, traditional Tibetan doctor, he said, you know, you Westerners - I mean, that's everybody here and me too - he said, you're all suffering from very significant neural disorders. They call them lung (ph) disorders in Tibetan. You're suffering- all of you are suffering from neural disorders, but considering how ill you are, you're coping remarkably well.

00:36.13

Maybe that's it for now. Cheerio.

\*\*\*APPLAUSE\*\*\*

**CHRIS KELLEY**

00:36.25

We're gonna take a 10 minute break and then reconvene for panel four - Meditation.

00:41.56

\*\*\*TAPE END\*\*\*

MIND & REALITY

DAY TWO – TAPE 2 of 7 – ALAN WALLACE KEYNOTE

\*\*\*TAPE START\*\*\*

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:00.00

-clue of the bliss of Shamata, if all you've had is sex and food and beautiful sunsets. Luminosity, I know that. It's up there. I see it, you know, that's luminous. You don't have a clue. Non-conceptuality – I know that sometimes I'm really tired. And I'm listening to a lecture. I know non-conceptuality.

00:00.24

The words sound familiar. You don't have a clue. It's a specialized vocabulary. They're using ordinary words for a rarified set of experience. People have achieved that, this is not ineffable at all. Anymore than Riemannian geometry is ineffable until people understand it. And it's completely ineffable to people who don't. So maybe that one can be surmounted.

00:00.46

Oh, but now we go to the Freudian challenge. This is serious. Freudian challenge - the tendency of unconscious mental processes and unconscious motivations to conceal and misrepresent. Now, that's thorny. There's no little slick answer I can give to that one. So, that's a serious pragmatic challenge. Can it be overcome? Well, I think the Buddhists, Hindus, Taoists have been grappling with that one for thousands of years.

00:01.10

And I think the answer's yes. And I think there are strategies that we can conceptually inspect and evaluate and then better empirically investigate. Very serious problem. Maybe it can be surmounted, maybe it has been. And I will point in a minute to a technique that may be a step in that right direction. And then, finally, there- and that's from Freud and then Gilbert Ryle's concern here of the possible differences or even disparity or incompatibility between mental appearances and mental reality.

00:01.37

Maybe the way mental phenomena appear is radically incongruent with the way they actually are. It's possible. At the same time, the way we've understood about the constitution of galactic clusters is by looking at the appearances, understanding the phenomena by way of the appearances, not understanding the phenomena by looking at the terrestrial correlates.

00:01.59

In other words, you don't learn about the constitution of galaxies by studying astrology. Doesn't matter how good your astrology is. Doesn't matter that the appearances that you're getting from the galactic cluster just traveled 12 billion years as photons which are invisible, have no color at all and suddenly are creating an appearance to your visual field that's ancient history.

00:02.23

I mean that's just an appearance. When you're looking up there in the stars, what you're seeing

there I think you're gonna be almost certain - there's nothing there where you're seeing something. The earth is spinning, right. It took some of those- the light from some of those stars or galaxies thousands or millions or billions of years to get here. So, by the time it got here, they're way over yonder. Or maybe they actually died out. They went into a supernova 5 billion years ago and what you're seeing is something that's, you know, like yesterday's news.

00:02.51

But that doesn't mean we should stop astronomy because appearances don't correlate with reality. In fact, we know the reality by way of appearances, not by ignoring it. We know reality by way of meticulously observing the appearances. That's how Galileo proceeded. That's how Darwin proceeded. That's how William James wanted us to proceed.

00:03.09

But instead, we're so far satisfied with focused-folk psychology, the actual data collection.

Maybe it's not such a clever approach. So, is it possible to refine introspection? I would say yes. In Buddhist practice, you are cultivating two faculties. Mindfulness is really non-forgetfulness. The primary connotation of it is recollection, not bear attention. It is an ongoing flow of not-forgetfulness, an ongoing flow of engaging, engaging, engaging with your chosen object. An introspection is a quality control.

00:03.41

It's not thinking about your mind. This term sheshen (ph) or samprajna (ph) is monitoring the quality of retention from moment to moment. It's like somebody looking at the telescope to see that it's not jiggling. The lenses are not going out of focus or what have you. So those are the two faculties - mindfulness engaging with the optic that you're attending to, introspection monitoring the way you're attending.

00:04.02

And especially looking for occasions when- in which you fall into dullness or laxity, when you fall into excitation or agitation and tweaking it. Again, like adjusting your telescope. Tweaking it and, of course, making it better. And in that context, you use your faculties of mindfulness, introspection to develop stability and vividness of attention so the mind can be focused on any chosen object with continuity, coherence and high resolution.

00:04.25

In other words, I think before we try to go gung-ho into the introspective exploration of the mind, we might want to develop the technology first. Attention skills. And in my collaboration with John Coen and then a whole team of neuroscientists and psychologists at UC-Davis with whom I'm developing this whole shamata project, it's remarkable how little is known. For all the studies - and there are wonderful studies - neuroscientific and psychological studies of

attention. It's- there are decades of research there.

00:04.52

But here's a simple question. Can attention be developed? Is- Well, now here's a more basic question from John Coen - is there such thing as attention? That is we know there's skill-related attention, that's for sure. People become better air traffic controllers, jet fighter pilots, chess players and so forth - skill-related. But is there a faculty of attention like a bicep that you could develop it.

00:05.16

Not just a skill of being a better air traffic controller, but develop attention. Is that possible? We don't know. Is there even such a separate faculty or is attention always skill-related? We don't know. If there is, can you develop it? Can you enhance it beyond normal? The good news is- the bad news of the good- the good news of the bad news is we know attention can get a lot worse. It's called ADHD.

00:05.39

So it's plastic down. Is it plastic up? Well, symmetry would suggest sure, why not. But we don't know that. But it's remarkable that we don't know it for all of the scientific curiosity about the mind, we don't know whether attention can be trained or not? It's really basic and we don't know.

00:05.56

Because that's just not what we've been doing. If it can be developed, is it generalizable? Can you develop like a bicep? Can you develop your attention skills of stability and vividness and now apply this to interpersonal relationships, to scientific research, to education, to a myriad of tasks - athletics, for that matter. Can you be a better tennis player if you practice shamatha? It's an empirical question. The answer is we don't know.

00:06.19

It's remarkable how much we don't know. In terms of training the mind. Well, this lends itself to

study and that's exactly what we're doing in this shamata project. Very brief - I'm gonna wrap up very quickly here. But I wanted to mention something here that is worthy of a lot more time and I won't give it to it now.

00:06.36

But a particular practice, called in Tibetan *simnelubapa* (ph) - settling the mind in its natural state is settling the mind in this substrate. In this relative ground state. Like a relative vacuum of consciousness - voided of the kinetic energy, the contents, the particles and fields, metaphorically of emotions, thoughts, mental images, so forth. The mind is like, imagine this. Imagine somebody put you in a perfect sensory deprivation tank when you just had five cups of coffee.

00:07.04

And it's a perfect sensory deprivation tank because you have now no sense or experience of any of the five fields. You can't even feel your body. This is a great sensory deprivation tank.

And on top of that, while you're completely divorced from all physical stimuli, for a little while, somebody zaps you with a little numbing device for all of your mental activity and makes the mental activity of thoughts, compulsive ideation and so forth, all go flat, but leaves you with that extraordinary state of clarity and vividness that you brought to the tank itself.

00:07.35

So there you are inside the sensory deprivation tank, no thoughts arising, no images, nothing happening, no experience of your sensory environment at all. What are you aware of? You're really aware. Of pretty much nothing.

00:07.57

Except that you're conscious. And a little thought might- if you could kind of break the gag order on your mind - let me out of here. Or maybe it would be blissful and you'd enjoy it. If you get there the old-fashioned way by shamata, they say one of the greatest challenges is you don't

want to get out of there. It's blissful, why move.

00:08.16

Settling the mind in its natural state - the basic strategy is rest the attention in the field of mental events. That is, it's selective. You select that particular domain of experience that's purely mental - thoughts, images, dreams - that area. Not sensory input. Observing whatever rises in that domain without distraction, without grasping. A loaded, loaded term, but that is basically the strategy for addressing Freud's concern.

00:08.41

And again, this is an empirical question. In that context, you can make- you can begin to examine the degree of subject-object participancy in this endeavor. And that is many people- I've been teaching this for many, many years. When people start observing the mind, you find doggone it, whenever I observe something it vanishes, or at least it changes. How can I possibly develop a

science of the mind when whatever I'm observing actually changes or maybe even doesn't happen unless I observe it.

00:09.04

And that's when the quantum physicists, they come in and say, oh join the party. We've had that problem ever since, you know, beginning. The whole notion of pure separation of subject-object doesn't work in quantum mechanics. It's a complete- it's vanished, it's history. And so, join the party. Niels Bohr recognized this decades ago.

00:09.21

To what extent are thoughts and emotions yours? Does the mere fact that you experience them make them yours? If so, why and what does that mean? And so it's possible here to bring to awareness a broadband of previously unconscious mental processes, which having done this for some thousands of hours draws me to a strong conclusion that the membrane between conscious

and unconscious mental phenomena is very malleable.

00:09.43

Very malleable. Must be tested. So, I'd like to propose a new paradigm with no totem pole and no idols. Not a supernatural totem pole, not a naturalistic totem pole. No totem pole and no idols. In which the study of the natural world should have at its center consciousness because it after all is the common denominator to all modes of inquiry.

00:10.07

If you're not conscious, you're not inquiring. Consciousness should be center- It shouldn't have been left until 1990. I'm sorry, but it really shouldn't have been left that long. In fact, it would have made a lot more sense to start there. But there are major reasons why it wasn't that were largely theological in nature. Let consciousness be at the center.

00:10.29

And if our better graphic artists, I mean-  
graphic- If I'd have been gotten to first grade  
instead of preschool, in graphic- else I would  
have all these little lines be arrows going in  
both directions. Consciousness interfacing with  
philosophy - which has a lot to tell us about  
consciousness - interfacing with science, of  
course. Interfacing with religion - let's leave  
that one open. They may have discovered  
something, who knows.

00:10.48

Mathematics. It's a very fascinating area.  
Penrose and other people are talking about, you  
know, what it's like to make a mathematical  
discovery and what that has to do with  
consciousness. And let all of these be in a  
reciprocal relationship. Philosophy engaged  
reciprocally with religion, that with science,  
that with mathematics and all of these together  
more of a lattice structure of knowledge, rather  
than a totem pole of a hierarchy of idols.

00:11.13 We haven't had a revolution in the cognitive sciences. A lot of knowledge, a lot of progress, but a revolution? Like the Galilean revolution, like the revolution of quantum mechanics, relativity, like the revolution of natural selection. I don't think so. Not for 130 years.

00:11.30 It's been delayed. I think it's been delayed because we've not treated mental phenomena with respect and the seriousness that we have physical and biological phenomena. Is it possible - and I would suggest it is - I think William James is our beacon here. And it might come about. This is now- I've gone to the past, the medieval period, looked at the present, now imagining the future.

00:11.49 And I was challenged because Piet brought us 30,000 years in advance, so that really kind of sets me back on my heels a little bit. So, but- let's just even imagine a century. Let's be really modest here. A synthesis- imagine a synthesis of rigorous first-person and third-

person inquiry by means of empirically  
investigating a wide range of mental phenomena  
and their relation to the physical world.

00:12.11

In other words, bringing in a third profession -  
that's what I'm really saying here. Is an  
addition to professionally trained psychologists  
and neuroscientists, develop a profession of  
well-trained, highly-trained professionals for  
the first-person observation and experimentation  
on mental phenomena and start investigating into  
the phenomena themselves. Like Galileo did, like  
Darwin did. Like William James wanted to and  
began to do.

00:12.34

So, this could be a collaboration between  
cognitive scientists, psychologists,  
neuroscientists, philosophers play an important  
role, contemplatives - they're the data  
collectors here. With exception- But specifically  
contemplatives with exceptional mental skills and

insights resulting from rigorous sustained contemplative training.

00:12.51

That's a vision that I think would be a win-win situation. It would be good for the contemplative traditions to slip them out of the vortex of dogmatism to which religions so easily succumb. Also, to help science slip out of the vortex of dogmatism to which scientists very easily become. Because we're human beings. Return to a true stance of empiricism and be equally empirical with respect to first-person as we have been so nobly with respect to third-person.

\*\*\*APPLAUSE\*\*\*

00:13.40

Owen absolutely gets the first word.

**OWEN FLANAGAN**

00:13.47

Thank you very much. Wonderful talk. Your father would be very proud. No, Alan and I love each other and we love to do this. And, I want to actually make a completely- oh, I need to- What I think is a friendly amendment that so many of us

are on really the same side of things, here, I think.

00:14.20

And you bringing up James, of course, I- we have to- idols with a small i. He's my idol too, of course, that's why I named one of- my second book, "Varieties of Moral Personality." And the- I was struck - this is just a new thought I've had about your work.

00:14.43

There may be a mistake that many of us are making in overemphasizing the privacy of experience and mind. I think this- I hope this will be received- So I think of Evan's work and actually, work of all my philosophical colleagues in the room who- Alan said, let me start it this way so I can be articulate - sort of.

00:15.16

I invented ADD though, so I- My students tell me - focus. Alan suggested that there was two components to naturalism as he saw it and I believe I'm speaking correctly from the slide -

one is the ontological commitment that has to do with nothing supernatural - whatever that means. He rightly points out. And then there was this epistemological component and I think he said there that it's the commitment to a gathering knowledge from the third personal perspective, or the objective perspective.

00:15.59

And I want to suggest that most of us here, I mean who've been speaking and are on the panel, don't believe in the- that expression of the epistemological component. Because then we won't understand mind. And here, I think of a person who inspired James greatly, who never held down a real job and is very difficult to understand.

00:16.29

But, Charles Sanders Peirce, who emphasized something that I think Piet Hut spoke eloquently about yesterday, which is a way to break the subjective-objective divide of thinking of everything- things on one side as subjective and private and on the other side as third personal

and objective, which is to emphasize the intersubjectivity of all knowledge.

00:16.59

That we- As Alan says, it's only in virtue of having conscious minds. Well, I mean, you could- some people in robotics or AI will say, there could be- we could evolve to be zombie-like robotic information processors and maybe we would still write books with physical equations and that sort of thing. I don't know. But we're not that way.

00:17.20

But we're not that way. How do we understand the world? We understand the world as very smart, sentient beings. And how do we do it? We appropriate the world - and here I'm talking about, you know, this auditorium that we're in, as Piet Hut was saying - not just as individuals, but as individuals who have grown up learning a language, a common language. Not always using vocabulary the same way and that's part of the regimentation process.

00:17.49

But even our understanding of the physical world is an intersubjective thing – the way we teach our children to understand things. And I think the same thing is true of mental vocabulary. So I applaud completely the project that Alan's doing and I think that one way – just – so I'm suggesting this. I mean, Habermas has made a great deal of this idea in the political sphere – about ideal speech communities, which get together and press themselves to see if they can give, reach intersubjective agreement.

00:18.23

But I – So, I think what science may have done, or there's a form of perhaps scientism, which historically overemphasized objectivity and then that makes mind quite a bit more mysterious, spooky and private than, in fact, I think it is. So, one suggestion I would have is simply to start to think this way.

00:18.47                    That all knowledge practices are attempts to gain intersubjective understanding of things and help break the subjective-objective divide that way.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:19.02                    Thank you. Yeah, thank you. And a very brief response because I want to have more questions. But that would be, I think, the strength of the shamata project, where we're not letting the meditators kind of dominate just from the first-person perspectives. The I experience, if therefore that's true, that in fact, we're bringing together some very sophisticated measurements from psychology.

00:19.20                    They will be informing the meditators, in some respect, how their own practice is going. I, as a second person, as the instructor will hopefully - if I'm any good at it - will inform them. The neuroscientists slowly, but perhaps over time very informatively also come in and cross-reference. And so I think this is really- this little project is kind of like developing- like

Galileo developing his eight power telescope. The first one. It's only three months.

00:19.42

A little eight power telescope, but it's a full-scale collaboration, I think exactly along the lines that William James would have applauded. That's certainly my hope. As we both idolize him, as you say, with a small i. I hope William James would be happy. Yes, Billy.

**QUESTIONER**

00:20.09

I want to go back to your title - Naturalizing the Natural Sciences.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:20.12

The Mind Sciences.

**QUESTIONER**

00:20.13

Oh, the mind sciences. And give you a little thought experiment and ask you to respond. If we take David Grossman - he's doing mathematics and physics - and stick him under an fMRI and a PET scan and EKG and stick a couple electrodes in there and watch his brain while he's doing physics or we take Bob Pollack when he's doing

microbiology and do the same or Owen Flanagan when he's doing philosophy, or even more interesting when he says he loves you, and look at- or anybody here in the room and look at their brain when they're paying attention to your talk - what have we learned that's really interesting about the realities of which they purport and actually do map out into a human consciousness?

00:21.03

So, if you were to take that kind of paradigm and apply it to science itself, what kind of conundrum have we got ourselves into?

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:21.12

If it's- Yeah, if it's good for the goose, why not for the gander, right? I think it's a very legitimate point. And I think one point you're probably getting at implicitly is if we can- if we had no first-person experience at all - I mean, again, hypothetical - no first-person experience of mental phenomena at all. I mean, actually if it were true what the behaviorists said that mental events never even take place at

all, then if all you study with the brain, you'd have no idea there is such a thing as mental phenomena.

00:21.39

Because they never manifest. You never see a mental phenomenon with an MRI or an EEG or anything like that. And likewise, as John Searle pointed out, if you confine yourself to studying only behavior, mental phenomena are not physical behavior either. They may be very closely related - a facial expression may express, press out, bring into the public world what you're feeling, but a facial expression - a particular configuration of 128 muscle groups that Paul Ekman has studied, those are not mental phenomena.

00:22.07

So I think by itself, you don't learn anything at all. If it's an isolation about mental phenomena, although you may learn a lot about the causes giving rise to mental phenomena and the effects produced by mental phenomena by way of behavior

or the impact on the brain. But what this emphasizes to me is the importance of William James's strategy of being triadic. Because over time- number one, as a meditation teacher and just a meditator - gosh, I think Einstein was right when he said - at least the statement is attributed to him - that there are two things in nature that are infinite - the human capacity for self-deception and space. And I'm not so certain about space.

00:22.44

It's a cute phrase, but it's an enormous amount of truth in it. It's Freud's problem that Owen brought to my attention. And so, what might the psychologists and the neuroscientists tell about what's going on when I say I love you? Well, maybe I don't love you at all, what I want to do is get you in bed. Or maybe I love you because I want your money. I love you because I like your respect. I love your adulation.

00:23.05                   And so, can psychologists study love and its counterfeits? Might there be different correlates - neurophysiological correlates - of love of the type that you and I regard as a virtue, as opposed to its sad facsimiles or counterfeits of self-centered craving, attachment, lust and so forth and so on. So, I think over time they actually may tell us a lot, but again, I'm a Jamesian at heart, here, and I think first and foremost, let's do really develop a sophisticated methodology for studying the phenomena themselves-

00:23.34                   -and then the backup - and very important backup - in a- this triadic structure is psychology and brain science. Oh, Piet, please. Please

**PIET HUT**

00:23.47                   Thanks, Alan. This was really a wonderful presentation and I completely agree with you that in a dialogue between science and contemplation, contemplatives have to take science seriously and

scientists have to take contemplation seriously.

So, I couldn't agree more.

00:24.05

The only addition I would give is that you have defended the Santa Barbara way, the California way.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:24.11

Yes, quite so.

**PIET HUT**

00:24.13

And, I would like to put in a pitch for the New York way. I'm a New Yorker myself. I'm an immigrant as you can hear. Maybe that makes me more of a New Yorker. And I think in Buddhist terms, California is the realm of the deities-

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:24.30

Yes, deva realm. Santa Barbara, especially.

**PIET HUT**

00:24.32

And New York and Wall Street and all that is the realm of the semi-gods, yeah. The demigods.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:24.37

I fell that every time I come here, yes.

**PIET HUT**

00:24.40

So, the demigods are not as patient as the gods are. So, as an alternative to spending years doing shamata - although I highly respect it and I think it should be done by those who would like to do that. Those who don't have the patience for that, I think there is a New York alternative. And the alternative is as follows.

00:25.02

Instead of taking where we are and learning a new skill, namely to concentrate, we can also try to realize that we have been training ourselves our whole lives in a particular way of looking at the world. In a particular way of looking at what we call the world. Part of our construction.

00:25.23

And to try and stop that. And we don't believe we can stop that. But if, in a discussion, and if in thinking things through, in much less than a year we can try to convince ourselves that there is a possibility as a working hypothesis to stop right now. To stop believing that you are embedded in

time, in the linear time of past, present,  
future.

00:25.46

To stop believing that you are a person. To stop believing that you are determined by your personal history. If you make it move, as a New Yorker, you can be very ahead of the Santa Barbarans. And then you can go on vacation to Santa Barbara and then you can learn how to really sustain it.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:26.03

Thank you, Piet. Maybe we should have that as- I'll be right with you Teed. Maybe we should have that as a prerequisite before we have people coming to Santa Barbara for year-long or years-long retreats. First, the litmus test - can you handle New York City with mental balance? People handle it without mental balance, but can you live here and maintain exceptional degrees of mental balance? That would be a very good kind of boot camp. Boot camp in New York and then you get the dessert in Santa Barbara. Teed.

**TEED ROCKWELL**

00:26.34

Ok, now, you were talking about the possibility of an ideology-free science. You asked about the possibility of that in this meditation and I don't think if, you know, if you were talking about developing a contemplative science and have it correspond to the way science actually operates, what you really don't want is an ideology-free science, but one that has an ideology that creates solvable puzzles.

00:26.57

And, the real problem with the Titchener form of introspection- and I've- there's a paper on my Web site that deals with this in greater length, you might be interested in looking at. Is that they had a- they had an ideology, a paradigm that created unsolvable puzzles. It basically came out of Hume and so the question was, you know, they were assuming there must be, you know, a set of fundamental bits and that the mind was assembling those bits. And so they kept trying to find the individual bits.

00:27.26

And ok, there's one and there's another one and then we'll start assembling them. And the problem was they didn't take into consideration the point you made earlier, which is every time you look at the same thing, it changes. You know, no two experiences are alike. So, you know, one group of people, you know, Titchener found 30,000 different possible fundamental parts of the mind. You know, fundamental bits.

00:27.46

And Kerler (ph) found, like, 50,000 and none of them were the same. So, you know, to some degree what you've already come with a possibility of accounting for why their paradigm didn't work, why their puzzles were unsolvable. And if you just think if you're- if you're creating solvable puzzles like some of the ones that you came up with before - you know, is there such a thing as attention - that's the way to look at the goal. Don't try to find an ideology- don't try to think in terms of an ideology-free system, try to find

an ideology that creates possible solvable puzzles. And I think you are doing that.

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:28.18

Thank you and I couldn't agree more. And the- I presume this is being taped so whatever I said is unretractable. I believe I said- and I'll stand by it, although I maybe can change my mind. I believe what I said was without ideological bias, which is a tall order. But I think even from the time of Galileo, when he was doing simple things like rolling balls down ramps, he already had a notion of acceleration versus constant velocity. He had a notion of time.

00:28.42

So, even that, which is very, very primitive kinematics, even that was not ideologically free. Let alone string theory or quantum field theory and so forth. I mean, any sophisticated science I would say - here, I'll be really dogmatic or make a generalization - any observation in any sophisticated stratum of any science is heavily theory-laden.

00:29.02

Right, so it's not ideologically free, but good science is aware of its assumptions. It's not falling into the illusions of knowledge and the wonderful statement by Richard Feynman - I'll paraphrase and then I'll move on. But he said, he gave the ideal of science and scientific skepticism and he said we scientists inspect most carefully those areas where we feel we could be wrong and we spend a lot of time investigating that because the way science progresses more quickly than anything else is by recognizing where we're wrong, rather than putting that into a blind spot.

00:29.34

And saying well, we already know, we already- Well, if you- in the future, the future will corroborate what we believe to be true now. I think that's bad science. But ideology-free I think is a chimera not even worth pursuing, so I'm totally with you.

**CHRIS KELLEY**

00:29.47 We have one question-

**EDITH WYSCHOGROD**

00:29.50 I'll be very brief. First, a brief remark. Here we are at Columbia University where alongside William James, we were all dominated by the wonderful portrait of John Dewey in the philosophy library for any number of years. And I wonder whether you would inject his thinking into your paradigm.

00:30.12 But my question is another one. In talking about the Freudian paradigm, what comes up is the pathologization of the unconscious. Now that has permeated our culture. How do you plan to distinguish between a non-medical model or perhaps you want to inject the medical model, to our (unintell) quotes, normal mode of existence to distinguish that from what we designate as mental illness?

**ALAN WALLACE**

00:30.51 Very good. Thank you. There were many people I didn't discuss and I probably went on a little

too long even as it was. But I didn't mention Husserl. I didn't mention the whole gestalt movement in Europe, in European psychology. I didn't mention Freud, who took first-person experience very, very seriously, as we know. A number of psychiatrists just recently pointed out to me how psychoanalysis can be quite similar to some kinds of meditative practices.

00:31.16

So, there are many things I didn't mention, including the brilliant work of John Dewey. And so, I would have to say for brevity of time and also limits of my own knowledge, would be two reasons for that. But certainly enormous- and Peirce himself (unintell) a lot in terms of pragmatism. And there, William James is deeply indebted to him for his wonderful development of pragmatic philosophy.

00:31.37

In terms of the point you did raise about kind of the interface between kind of contemplative inquiry, contemplative practice and the

diagnosis, treatment of mental illness, I think- my overall orientation towards this, let's say Buddhism and science, religion and science interface is not one of competition. For very good reasons, I think. And that is, Buddhism has no brain science.

00:31.58

No brain theory. And so- and we've met- I've been translating and primarily Thubten Jinpa being the primary translator - I'm being made a lightweight back-up as the years go by, especially. When the neuroscientists are telling the Dalai Lama about the role of the amygdala, the hippocampus and so forth, he never says oh well, but that's not what we believe. Our theory of the amygdale is... It just never happens.

00:32.18

Buddhism doesn't have a theory of, you know, that kind of thing. And so it's complementary. Buddhism is very strong, I think, for the first person and it's quite strong for qualitative evaluations of behavior and their relationships

to meditative experience and general overall mental well-being or lack thereof. Qualitative emphasis. As we know, psychology very strong for quantitative measurements, analysis of behavior, extremely strong. Neuroscientists are in a class by themselves.

00:32.44

But there's another area where there's complementarity, I believe. In a very rich and happy way. And that is- my understanding is in the DSM, there are about 300 specific mental illness that have been diagnoses and for which there's various forms of treatment. That's just not Buddhism's strength. That is, I lived in the home of the Dalai Lama's personal physician when I was living in India and psychotic people would show up periodically.

00:33.07

I mean really schizophrenic. Really, really terribly mentally ill. Buddhism doesn't really have anything to offer to that. That's not what it's designed for. And so, this is the strength

of Western clinical psychology and Western academic psychology has a great strength in studying the normal mind. Clinical psychology, psychiatry - very great strengths. Hallelujah for understanding, diagnosing, treating, sometimes only managing - at least that is better than nothing - managing the symptoms of mental illness.

00:33.35

It's not a strength of Buddhism. Buddhism is kind of more or less starting normal and frankly, Buddhism doesn't have any developmental psychology either. What type of meditation should you teach to a five-year-old, 10-year-old, 15-year-old? What about gender differences? I could be just ignorant here, but I'll speak with ignorance - I don't think it's there.

00:33.54

Because Buddhism is pretty much a language for healthy normal adults. And now, what can we do with it? Where that's about where psychiatry pans out. By the time you're as mentally healthy as

your psychiatrist, that's when he's saying you're finished. You can go. He or she. So, I see a complementarity there, but I see it's - to my mind, it's my hypothesis - it's a smooth continuum.

00:34.15

That is, I'm working with a team at UCLA, taking some basic meditative practices and applying to them for the prevention and treatment for ADHD. Who has ADHD? Everybody here. You know, relatively speaking. Compared to a person that's achieved shamatha, we're all cuckoo, you know. Just off- you know, we're- you know, just, we're flopping like fish on the sand in terms of attention deficit, hyperactivity, attention deficit, hyperactivity.

00:34.41

It's relative. It doesn't mean we're crazy. It just means relative to a person who's achieved shamatha, we're really out to lunch. But there's a smooth continuum there for- to people who are completely dysfunctional, cannot operate in the

world without heavy medication, massive doses of Ritalin, all the way through the spectrum to normal and then there's a continuing smooth spectrum beyond that to exceptional states.

00:35.01

And I would say it's not only true for attention, but for emotional balance, for the type of desires and motivations that we have, for our cognitive engagement with reality. There are people who are suffering from greater or lesser imbalances. So, I see it as a very smooth continuum and then what within that continuum is considered to be normal is always relative to time and place.

00:35.22

So, what's normal in Manhattan might be not so normal in Santa Barbara. I speak- say that in a bit of jest. But also, what's normal now- to a final point - a good friend of mine is Lobsang Rapgay and we were monks together in the Buddhist school of dialectics. Where Georges was also until he got sick - back in the early '70s. And,

Lobsang Rapgay got his monastic training, then trained in Tibetan medicine and then got his degree in clinical psychology and is running a center at UCLA.

00:35.47

But he a very interesting, kind of, polymathic kind of background. And, as a Tibetan doctor, traditional Tibetan doctor, he said, you know, you Westerners - I mean, that's everybody here and me too - he said, you're all suffering from very significant neural disorders. They call them lung (ph) disorders in Tibetan. You're suffering- all of you are suffering from neural disorders, but considering how ill you are, you're coping remarkably well.

00:36.13

Maybe that's it for now. Cheerio.

\*\*\*APPLAUSE\*\*\*

**CHRIS KELLEY**

00:36.25

We're gonna take a 10 minute break and then reconvene for panel four - Meditation.

00:41.56

\*\*\*TAPE END\*\*\*