Recognizing Delusion

Andrea Fella · Notable Dhamma Teachers — Andrea Fella · 1:01:58

In his teaching on freedom, the Buddha over and over emphasized that freedom was not freedom to do things, but freedom from ways that we get caught. And over and over again he said that freedom, Nibbana, is freedom from greed, freedom from aversion, and freedom from delusion.

Our practice is not—I mean, it would be nice if we could just simply hear that and go, "Oh, greed, aversion, and delusion, that's not helpful. Let's stop." That doesn't work that way, as I think you all are very aware. Our work is to understand. The Buddha said we need to understand our suffering, we need to understand the things that cause suffering, and let go of the causes of suffering. We move in this direction by studying how our minds get caught in greed, how our minds get caught in aversion, how our minds get caught in delusion.

We've been talking about working with these over the last couple of weeks. This morning Greg brought out the teaching on mindfulness of mind, which emphasizes these three: recognizing the presence and absence of greed, aversion, and delusion as a very big part of this aspect of studying mindfulness of mind. We get familiar with what the presence of greed is like, what the absence of greed is like, what the presence of aversion is like, what the absence of aversion is like, and what the presence and absence of delusion are like.

It's relatively easy to begin to recognize greed and aversion. It has been commented in the hall that they're at least recognizable, if not easy to be with. We can begin to recognize when we're caught by those energies and begin to learn some tools to allow us to open to them, tools that allow us to work with them. But delusion, by its very nature, is much harder to even recognize.

So how do we do this? How do we begin to know the presence of delusion? As the Satipatthana Sutta recommends, one knows delusion when it is present, one knows delusion when it is absent, when delusion is not present. How do we recognize delusion being present? That's the subject for the talk.

Delusion is more fundamental, in a way, than greed or aversion, in that greed and aversion arise in dependence on delusion. If delusion didn't exist, if we didn't have delusion in our minds, greed and aversion would not be arising. And so greed and aversion always exist simultaneously with delusion—some fundamental misunderstanding in the mind that leads it to want, leads it to want to get rid of.

There are different forms of delusion that I'd like to explore with you tonight. My aim with this talk is mostly to provide some information, some examples, and some stories that I hope will help you begin to

be able to recognize delusion in your experience. To begin to follow that instruction: delusion is present, delusion is affecting the mind right now. That simple instruction of the Satipatthana is not so simple to implement, not so simple to recognize. But my hope is that with this talk there will be some understanding that allows you to begin to recognize this—that delusion is affecting the mind.

So, different forms of delusion. Two basic broad categories. One is simply the not-connecting form, the form of delusion that is checked out, lacking awareness. This is maybe the more obvious form of delusion. The second more general form of delusion is where we're aware, we're present, it's not that we're checked out, but we are experiencing things through some kind of filter, some kind of perspective, agenda, or view that alters how we take in information.

To begin with an example of this: greed and aversion, while they already have delusion at their root, can also create a form of delusion on top of themselves. For instance, with aversion, if we are caught in the field of aversion—some of you may have recognized this or noticed this, I certainly did at one point—I knew that I was in this aversive state, and everywhere my eyes landed, I saw things to hate. I was doing walking meditation downstairs in the walking room, and I was noticing that I was in this aversive state. As I turned around and looked at the other end of the room, my eyes landed on some shoes that somebody had left at the end of the walkway. And my mind just exploded with aversion. Who left those shoes there? This is a form of the aversion, but with everything being colored by that lens. It's like we only take in things from that perspective. That's the delusion.

At one point, in an early exploration of choiceless awareness, my teacher asked me just to notice whatever my attention landed on. I did that for a few minutes, and as I finished, I stopped and said, "Well, you said to do choiceless awareness, but this couldn't possibly have been choiceless, because everything my attention landed on was unpleasant." Again, that speaks to a filter, a kind of view that the mind is seeing through, pulling out of the environment, pulling out of experience, things that are in line with that view or that filter. This is the second form of delusion. It's not a form of delusion that prevents us from being present, but in our being present, we are not taking in information in an unbiased way.

There are three areas I want to explore tonight. One is this area of uncertainty, the lack of connection to experience—that part of delusion, the more cloudy, unconnected, disconnected state. Then, within the area of filters—of taking in information in a biased way—there are two ways I want to examine this.

First are views or perspectives that we grow up with. These are views and perspectives created because of our culture, our family, the way we interacted with people—basically because of our conditioning. As human beings, we have navigated this world carrying various views, perspectives, and agendas that we have lived with. Those views, perspectives, and agendas influence how we see the world and create a skew, a bias, in how we take in information.

The third category I want to explore is what I will call more human delusion—a kind of fundamental distortion of our experience that we share uniformly with all human beings. It is very deeply ingrained in

our structure as human beings, not so particularly conditioned by our families, but simply part of our very makeup. These misperceptions are part of the structure of how we interact with the world because they are not seen as distortions.

This first one—not connecting with experience—we have actually talked about quite a bit: this form of delusion where we're in a fog, or lost in a story, in a thought world, a thought bubble, basically living in some world where we're not really connecting with what's actually happening here and now. These thought bubbles, these thought worlds we inhabit sometimes—when we get lost in thought, it's quite amazing sometimes when we come out of those thoughts to recognize just how much we might have believed the world that was created by them.

At one point, I had broken up with a partner several years before. I had pretty much gotten over any of the anger or hurt—it was all gone at that point. When thoughts about my ex-partner would come up, there wasn't any particular emotional charge anymore. One day I was walking down the street, and I woke up into this thought world. I had been lost in it for about five minutes, and in that thought world, I was back in relationship with that partner. As I came out of that thought bubble, awareness immediately arose. In that moment, I could see that what was being experienced was confusion—because the mind had so thoroughly believed the story that I was back in relationship with that partner. When I came out of it, it was like, "What? No. What? Where am I? What's going on?" It was really like a waking dream.

I think this kind of thing happens to us a lot. But often we have an emotional charge around those thoughts, so what's obvious to us when we come out of some of those thought worlds is emotional reactivity. In this case, it was really clear to me that the mind had been caught in this world and believing it, precisely because there wasn't an emotional charge. There was this recognition that the mind had thoroughly been believing something that was just a construction, something that had not been part of my life for years.

So this is the kind of disconnection from reality—taking birth into our thought worlds. This is a form of delusion. We can start to get familiar with this disconnection from experience. In the moment that we return back into mindfulness, when we remember, there can be—if you're curious about that moment, if you're curious about the re-arising of mindfulness itself rather than thinking, "Oh, I need to do something, I need to come back to my breath, or do metta"—rather, just: here I am, I'm aware in this moment. What is awareness like in this moment? In that moment, as we come back into mindfulness, there can be a lingering memory of what it was like to be lost moments before. We get a flavor of what that disconnected state is like in the moment that we come back.

We can also begin to get curious about those states that are habitually disconnected—as we've been talking about with the hindrances: sleepiness, dullness, fogginess, confusion. With many of these states, we habitually experience a disconnection from experience. But it doesn't have to be inherently non-mindful or unaware in those states. Again, we can begin to explore, to be curious about states that we

think would be inherently non-mindful.

It is possible to be mindful when the mind disconnects from what we think we should be paying attention to—we can stay present for the spacing out itself. We can begin to get familiar with these foggy, hazy, confused states of mind. And in the very becoming mindful in those states, we are no longer in that condition of delusion where we are disconnected.

Habitually with spacing out, we're disconnected from experience, not even aware of what's going on. But there's the possibility of becoming aware of the spacing out. In that moment, we are aware of what's happening in the present moment, connected with the experience of spacing out. It's a very different relationship to that experience.

I think I said the other day that if there's any state of mind that you believe or think it's not possible to be mindful while X is happening, don't believe that thought. Rather, perhaps try exploring: how might it be possible to be mindful while X is happening? When I've explored it from that perspective, it can take some time—sometimes it can take some time to find the way to connect, to have the mindfulness kind of infuse that state. But the curiosity about how it might be possible is very supportive. You may not figure it out right away, but keep holding that question.

Now, in the terrain of the second kind of delusion—where we're not disconnected but we are seeing things in a biased way based on our personal conditioning, our cultural conditioning—how this becomes delusion is that we're immersed in a view, immersed in a perspective. Being so thoroughly immersed in a perspective, we are unaware that we're even holding a view or a perspective. It's simply the way things are. And because we don't even have a clue that we are holding a perspective, the way we're taking in information, we assume it's an accurate representation of reality.

These views in place, one of their functions seems to be to pull things out of the environment, have us find things that corroborate those views, and to conveniently ignore things that do not line up with those views, that do not match them. It's very hard when we're immersed in views like that to see evidence or information that would counter them.

I'm going to give you some examples of this kind of delusion. There's so many ways. But I want to give you a flavor of different ways that this kind of delusion works.

One is simply views that we have about ourselves—what we can do, who we are, what we can accomplish. "I'm good at this kind of thing, I'm not good at that kind of thing." We have these views of who we are, and from that perspective it's almost like we're limiting ourselves, boxing ourselves in. We do this to ourselves and we do it to other people.

There's one friend of mine who for a while I was noticing was late a lot. I began creating this view about her that she was always late. And I noticed the times that she was late. Then I began to get curious: am I just highlighting those? Am I just highlighting the ones where she's late? And then I discovered, actually, it

was maybe fifty-fifty. She was sometimes late, she sometimes wasn't late. We create views of ourselves, of other people, and then we see our world in ways that support that.

One of my colleagues, Gil Fronsdal, tells a story that when he was young, maybe ten or so, he was in an art class drawing, and his art teacher came up to him, looked over his shoulder, and said, without any particular charge in her voice, "You have no artistic ability." He just took that in—okay, I don't have any artistic ability—and went through life thinking that. Then at some point in college, somebody convinced him to take an art class. He said, "I don't have artistic ability." But somebody convinced him to take an art class anyway. And it turned out he did have artistic ability. We can go through our lives with beliefs and limit ourselves based on those beliefs.

We notice when other people do this to us. Have you noticed sometimes when somebody says, "You're like this," and you bristle? It's like, "Well, yeah, I know I'm sometimes like that, but that's not who I am." We notice when other people do that to us, but we equally do it to ourselves—create these identities and limitations around who we are.

Our culture offers us many views. In American culture, one very predominant view—I certainly grew up with this belief—is that America, this country, is the land of opportunity. If you work hard enough in this country, you can get what you want.

So I grew up with that belief, and for me it happened to be fairly true. But the conditions of my life were really smooth. My family had enough money to send me to live in a place where I had really good schools. I felt safe at school. They had the money to send me to a good college.

In my case, yes, I worked hard and I accomplished many things, and I felt good about what I accomplished. But that perspective—that America is the land of opportunity and if you work hard enough you can get what you want, achieve your dreams, achieve your goals—is based on a very limited perspective. It doesn't take into account certain segments of the population: people living in poverty, in slums, in areas that are not safe, drug-dealing neighborhoods where there's a lot of gang warfare. It doesn't take into account that for some people, working hard means they have to overcome so much. And the patterns of culture keep one really embedded and stuck in various ways.

This kind of belief, this view that America is the land of opportunity where anyone who works hard enough can achieve their goals—this is kind of the root of what we could call white privilege. And I have to acknowledge that as a child, and even more recently, some part of my mind still has this very deeply held conditioning, these beliefs. My mind still has this little subtle thought if I see somebody who's on the street—that they're just not trying hard enough. These views are, I know, delusion. I know it's delusion. And so now at least I can start to see it, see these little thoughts. This is a view. It's a perspective. It's not based in everybody's reality.

There's a saying in the circles that are exploring this terrain of white privilege and

understanding—recognizing that the perspectives we hold as a white culture are not universally applicable. This is really the perspective of one segment of the population. So the saying is: some people are born on third base thinking they hit a triple. I was born on third base. I had a really fortunate childhood where my parents had funds to clothe me and feed me, and they weren't abusive to me. I was born on third base. And I know now that I didn't hit a triple.

This kind of delusion, these filters, these views that have us taking in information in a biased way, can also be amazingly simple. Just a simple agenda in our minds can create a filter that selects certain information out of the environment and not other information. This is actually a useful function of the way our minds work. There's a name for it in psychology—it's called selective attention. It has a purpose. When we have a particular goal, it helps us to find information that relates to that goal and ignore information that doesn't relate to that goal. So it's a useful feature of our minds.

But what happens with that feature is that we do not recognize that this selective attention is operating. And we think that our mind and our sense apparatus is recording reality completely. It's like we have cameras for eyes and microphones or receivers for ears, and we're taking it all in and it's all available. But that's not the way our minds work. Our minds selectively pull certain things out of the field of sight and don't see other things. Selectively pull things out of the field of sound and don't hear other things. It's mind-blowing, but it's true.

There's a very famous study—I think maybe some of you have heard it, but I'm going to tell it again because there may be some of you who have not heard this story about selective attention. There was a research study doing an exploration of this selective attention, examining just how selective it is, how much we might miss. People were given a task when they watched a video. The video was of people throwing a basketball to each other, and they were told to count the number of times the basketball passed between the people in the white shirts. They watched the video, counted the number of times the basketball passed, and at the end they were asked how many times the basketball passed between the people in the white shirts. Largely, people could do that task.

It took some degree of focus. You had to follow and count, so the agenda was very selective—following that basketball.

A few people after the study would say something like, "Was there a gorilla that went through the video?" And indeed, there had been a guy in a gorilla suit who walked through the middle of the people, kind of stood there for a minute dancing around, and then walked out. I've seen this video—it is so obvious. If you're looking for the gorilla, you are not going to miss the gorilla. Or even if you're not looking for the gorilla but you're not doing anything else, if you're just watching the video, you're not going to miss it. Most people did not see the gorilla. That's selective attention.

Now in and of itself, that is not necessarily delusion. It's a form of not taking in information. But to me, the real delusion came in what's almost a footnote at the end of the study: some of the people, when shown

the video again to demonstrate that yes, there was a gorilla in the video, said, "That cannot be the same video. I would have seen the gorilla." That is delusion. That is the believing of our experience as the truth of reality.

This kind of thing happens a lot, in so many ways with little small agendas. We walk into the dining room getting ready to get some tea—a little agenda of getting tea—and we may miss something entirely. Again, it's not that we're trying to not have selective attention happen. But I would say we need to begin to have some respect for the fact that we are probably not taking in everything. And if someone proposes an alternative view of reality, rather than saying, "Nope, doesn't match my experience," you might think, "Huh, that's interesting. Somebody else thinks it's different. Maybe I could check that out."

Another very common way of having a view created is when a view gets created based on incomplete information. The classic story about this is the elephant and the blind people, where blind people are given various parts of the elephant to touch. Some touch one part—the foot or the tail or the ear or the trunk—and then they're asked to compare notes about what an elephant is like. They have very different perspectives. This story is actually a teaching story from the time of the Buddha. At the ending of this story, after the blind people have touched the various parts of the elephant and they're comparing—"Well, an elephant is like this, it's like a trunk." "No, an elephant's like a broom." "No, an elephant's like a hose." "No, an elephant's like a storeroom"—they come to blows, saying, "An elephant is like this. It's not like that. I'm right, you're wrong."

Now, it's natural that we would create a view based on our limited experience, but to hold to that and say, "This is reality"—that's a very powerful form of delusion that works in our minds: not being aware that we're holding to views like that.

Views are useful. They help us to navigate the world. But often our views are below the level of our conscious awareness. We see somebody do something and we react. Sometimes in our meditation here when we're on retreat, we can recognize, "Wow, I see that person do that thing and I'm reacting, and I see it's completely out of line." All they're doing is getting a cup of tea and moving a little slowly. What is the reaction to? Often what's going on there is that there's some kind of belief operating, something that we believe that we're not seeing. And so it can be useful or interesting at times to check in.

If there's some kind of suffering happening, some kind of greed or aversion or confusion arising, and it's not clear to you what's going on, you could try checking in. Just ask the question—not trying to figure it out, but simply asking: What's being believed here? Is there a belief happening underneath this?

Then, rather than trying to figure it out, sometimes just opening the door to "Is there a belief here?" allows us to see something that was previously hidden. So check it out. Is there a belief? What might be being believed? Something about ourselves? Something about the other person? Something about the way the world works?

As we begin to see the way we believe things—one belief I had about myself for quite a long time was that I was a failure, that I was no good. This was a very subterranean belief for a long time in my life. It wasn't until I started meditating, actually until some of the three-month courses here, that I really began to see just how deep this pattern was, that I felt like I was a failure.

And so that thought, "You're a failure," at some point became such a refrain in my mind. I think I mentioned my self-hatred retreat a few weeks ago—just the mind that kept going back over and over again: I'm no good, I'm a failure, I can't do this, I'm a failure, I'm a failure, I'm a failure. Over and over again the mind was thinking that.

Sometimes when we see this, when a belief like this gets revealed—I mean, it was better to have it revealed than to have it be subterranean. It wasn't very pleasant to have it revealed, I'll say that, but at least it was seen. And when we can start to see these beliefs, what we can sometimes recognize is that it's a thought and it's being believed. "I'm a failure" is a thought. And the power we give to that thought is the belief we invest in it. It's simply a thought. It's simply a blip going through the mind. And yet when we are caught in the belief of it—and that being caught in the belief is the form of delusion—when we're caught in the belief of a thought like that, sometimes we might try to tell ourselves, "Oh, I'm not a failure." But what that's trying to do is deny the belief that's happening.

Something I found very helpful is to acknowledge: "Ah, 'I'm a failure.' Believing is happening." So when beliefs get revealed like this, we can acknowledge, "Oh yes, believing is happening right now. Believing 'I'm a failure' is happening right now." Acknowledging belief is a very powerful way to crack the door open around delusion, because it can take the experience from being something we take to be true—"I'm a failure, that's true"—to "'I'm a failure' is a belief that's arising in this moment." And again, there's a big difference between those two.

You're not trying to convince yourself not to believe it in that moment, but you're acknowledging: believing is what's happening right now. I've suggested this to some people, and the space this can create around even very powerful self-negativity can be quite helpful.

The most fundamental kind of delusion, the delusion we're all subject to as human beings, really the most insidious form of delusion—these are views that we share as a species, tend to share as a species I should perhaps say, that cloud accurate perception of experience and have us take in information in a very biased way. These views of taking what is impermanent to be permanent, taking what's unreliable to be a reliable source of lasting happiness, and taking what is not self to be self.

These are views that we are so deeply enmeshed in, they're very difficult for us to free ourselves from. Sayadaw U Tejaniya, in speaking of this form of delusion, says: delusion doesn't mask the object; it masks the true nature of the object. And so with this form of delusion, we can be aware, we can be mindful, and yet the very way that we're mindful, the very way we're taking information in, has a spin to it.

Beginning to see through these three very fundamental distortions of our perception, these distortions of the way we take information in—beginning to see through these is a lot of what our practice helps us to do.

There's so much rapidity of change in our experience that actually some of our perceptual processes work to slow down that change to some extent, to keep us from being overwhelmed by this massive amount of change. So we create concepts about experience.

Just for instance, looking out at this room, I'm seeing a room full of people and zafus and walls and lights. There's all kinds of concepts in this room. And largely, it's hard not to see experience through those concepts because it happens so fast. I've had some experiences at times on retreat when the mind got very, very still and I'd look out at something and all I would see would be form and color. It would be just like a blur of pixels. Thank goodness we don't have to walk through the world that way, figuring out moment by moment, "Oh, that's a person. Oh, that's a wall—don't walk into that." We need our concepts.

And yet, because we are unaware that we are living our experience through concepts, we take our concepts to be reality. It's actually the concepts that we take to be permanent. Concepts mask change.

The rapidity of change itself can also mask change. If you think about movies—they aren't like this anymore—but it used to be films with different frames, and the frame would go past the projector really quickly. Each frame is just a little still snapshot, but the rapidity of the motion creates the sense that there's some kind of continuity happening on the screen. So rapidity of change can create an appearance of solidity.

Another example of this is mentioned in the suttas, or maybe in the commentaries—a fire stick. If you have a stick with a burning fire on the end and you spin it around in a circle—we used to do this with sparklers when I was a kid, spin it around in a circle really fast—you'd see a circle in the air. The rapidity of the movement created the illusion that there was something hanging in the air. Our perceptual processes also mask the rapidity of change in just this way.

Our mindfulness begins to unmask this, to reveal that what we take to be solid and stable is actually very rapidly changing. A way to explore this is with anything that seems solid—I did this at one point on retreat—anything that seemed solid, I would put my attention there. "Wow, that seems like it's solid. What is that solidity?" Often it would actually start to break up as the attention actually met it and landed on it.

You can sometimes see this with pain. With the idea of pain, the concept of pain, it feels like in the knee there's a big block of pain. But if you can get past the aversion to the pain—which is contributing to that idea, "This is pain, this is a problem"—and get past that and just kind of hang out with the actual sensations, you'll see it is so rapidly changing. There's almost nothing anywhere that you can say, "Well, that is the pain." It's just this little flash of sensation and then that little flash of sensation and then another little flash of sensation, just moving, dancing around.

So investigate: What appears solid? What are you taking to be solid? What are you taking to be permanent? We can begin to go below the level of our concepts and actually meet the direct experience.

Then we see what's unreliable as reliable, as satisfying. This is the story of greed, really. This is the delusion that underlies greed—that this thing will make me happy. This sense pleasure, this pleasant experience, this is what will make me happy. Greed is the actual reaching out, but it's motivated by this belief that something will make me happy. Likewise with aversion—the belief that getting rid of that thing will make me happy is the underlying delusion of aversion.

An exploration here is to begin to investigate, not to just try to tell ourselves, "Oh, I shouldn't want things. How can I stop believing that when I get this thing it will make me happy?" We can't stop believing that. We have to begin to investigate, to explore. One of the instructions the Buddha gave around this: he said, yes, there are things that are going to make you happy. Pleasure, sense pleasure will make you happy. But start looking at how long does it last? This points back to impermanence, because the belief that something will make us happy is based on the view that it's going to last.

And so as we begin to see these things that we think are going to be reliable, that they end, that they vanish, it begins to undermine this belief. It begins to help us to let go.

And this is a very, very deeply ingrained belief. It goes beyond simple sense pleasure. On one retreat, I had enough understanding to recognize that searching for happiness in something was not going to work. But at some very deep level in the mind, what I got to watch at one point was just the mind searching, searching, searching. It's like, there must be some place for happiness to be found. Just this restless quality—surely somewhere, surely somewhere there's happiness to be found.

Early on in this, as I saw this pattern start to happen, I thought, this is ridiculous. I know this is not going to do any good. And I would try to stop the searching and just come to some kind of more stability. But at some point it's like, wow, this is some deep pattern that just wants to be convinced. And so I just let it do it. I was very mindful. This is the searching. Trying to find something, trying to find something.

And lo and behold, actually, the mind would find something. It would create a state of peace that felt really good. And I'd think, ah, that's nice. And then that state of peace would begin to disintegrate, and there was an even deeper release that happened as the mind just saw that state disintegrate and there was nowhere to land. It was just disintegration. And there's a little bit of learning there. Right, even that, even that peace isn't the place to land.

And then the mind would do it again. And again and again and again, over and over and over again. It's like, well maybe it was just that state of peace or something. I don't know what the mind was thinking, but it was just this very, very deep pattern that was asking to be seen.

And so sometimes that's what we do with delusion. This, to me, was watching delusion at work. Watching the mind searching for happiness, having some kind of feeling that surely there's some belief somewhere,

some happiness somewhere. Understanding at an intellectual level that it wouldn't find it, but at this very deeply ingrained level, just watching it.

Watching that delusion at work, just watching it. Each time the mind let go, there was a deep release, a very deep release. That was kind of a moment of the mind going, right, okay, yep, nowhere to land. Absolutely nowhere to land.

I don't have time to talk about seeing what is not self as self, but I know somebody else will talk about that.

Exploring delusion, exploring non-delusion, is not something we can do directly. But as we explore delusion, as we get familiar with it, there are times when there's a kind of state of insight where the mind lets go of some confusion. And it sees—oh right, sense pleasure is not the way to go. Or it sees, yeah, aversion around this situation, that's not helpful. Or we see how thoughts are just thoughts. And it seems so obvious to us at some point.

When we're in a state where the insight or the non-delusion is functioning, it often seems so obvious. Like, how can I not see this? When delusion falls away, there is such clarity about particular understandings. And yet it is not obvious. Minutes later, maybe an hour later, the delusion comes back. And then we see, ah, it wasn't so obvious. How was it that I was seeing thoughts? How was it that it was possible not to think there was something out there that would make me happy? We're confused again.

At that moment we might disbelieve the insight, or disbelieve that what we saw was real or true or really seen. But what that can do for us actually, over time, what we can begin to recognize is that delusion falls away and it comes back. It falls away, it comes back. When it's fallen away, we see something really clearly. When it comes back, we can know it's delusion operating.

At that point we can know: delusion is present in me. And we are often not able to simply say, "Oh, let delusion go away and let me see things clearly again." But we can at least know delusion is present. Delusion is affecting the mind.

Even that is incredibly powerful—to know there's a belief here, and this belief is affecting the mind. Again, it creates a little gap around that delusion so that we're not just taking that delusional reality to be truth. And so delusion unwinds in a slow process.

Patience. Patience with this.

But I hope that you get curious about your delusion, as opposed to being combative with it or frustrated by it. We're all deluded. It's the nature of our minds. I could even go so far as to say: enjoy your delusion. Not in the deluded way, but in the curious way—being curious about it.

Thank you for your attention. Thank you for listening.

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