

A CONVERSATION WITH DIANE HAMILTON

Bill Harris: Hello everyone! This is Bill Harris again, Director of Centerpointe Research Institute. I'm here with Diane Hamilton today and we're going to be talking again about the ideas of Eckhart Tolle and some other related things and hopefully this will be helpful to people in more fully learning how to embody and live from this place that he's talking about. So, hi Di, how are you?

DIANE HAMILTON: I'm great. It's good to see you... good to hear you, Bill.

BH: Yeah, you can't see me.

DH: I can't see you no, but I can feel you.

BH: You can feel me and I'm sure you have a picture in your mind of me that's with you always. Well, maybe not. Anyway, why don't you tell people a little bit about yourself and your background so they'll know who you are and why what you say is in my opinion, very insightful about these things.

DH: Okay, alright, well, my name is Diane Hamilton, as you already said, and I'm a successor of Genpo Roshi in Soto Zen tradition and a teacher of Zen and also a teacher of his process, his Big Mind process and Big Mind is really another, like, really beautiful technique for helping people see the experience that Eckhart Tolle is pointing out in his tapes and in his book. So, I train in Zen. I teach Zen. I'm also involved with Ken Wilber's work at the Integral Institute and Roshi and you, I think, met through Ken. Didn't you, Bill?

BH: We did, yes.

DH: And our connections through integral and through Ken's work as we just have been introduced to a lot of people who are working in different ways within, you might call, the spiritual realm in our time and place and so, I happen to have, you know, I've been a seeker most of my life and I have been a meditator for many, many years and I consider the questions that Eckhart Tolle is taking up in his work and that Oprah has supported on her program to be kind of the most central questions and, you know, the things that are the biggest consideration to me and my life so therefore, I just have, you know, a very direct interest in what people have to say about this. So, I appreciate that we are going to have a conversation.

BH: Yeah, I think one of the things that a lot of people may not realize that are listening to this, some probably do, is that there are quite a number of people around the United States and certainly in other countries too, who have been involved in the type of thing that Eckhart Tolle is talking about and are also in that place that he is in and are teaching other people and helping other people to get into that place and it is kind of a subculture that a lot of other people aren't aware of. So, part of the reason for even doing this and making this little free course is to introduce people to other resources, other people that know a considerable amount about this.

DH: Yeah, I think that's right and so that the focus and what it is that we're interested in, which is kind of you might say, the realization of your spirit or self-realization or we call it enlightenment in the Buddhist tradition, that there are different ways to bring this experience and this recognition about and Eckhart Tolle is giving us a very, very precise, very clean and very direct

teaching in terms of how to bring this experience about or how to sort of break down the barrier of the ego if you will, but Roshi's Zen training and Big Mind process does the same thing. Byron Katie's work seems to be pointing to it also and your Holosync product is fantastic in this regard, in really helping people relax, that kind of conceptual, self-cleaning that keeps us alienated from our true nature. So, I think that's correct.

BH: One of the things that has been kind of a theme in all of these conversations that I have had with teachers like you has been that you really need to have some kind of a practice that these little ways that Eckhart Tolle talks about for getting yourself into the now moment are all great and a lot of them he actually took from different traditions including from Zen. But unless a person does some sort of a practice, the mind, the ego, whatever you want to call it, keeps pulling people back and it's really a long-term practice that kind of loosens things up so that it becomes more and more easy to stay in that transcendent, now moment or what Tolle calls presence. So, what would you suggest to people in terms of how they can do some sort of a practice?

DH: Well, so let me just repeat a little bit of what I heard you say, which is that we can have a recognition or an insight that our discursive mind and the mind that's concerned with self and that's concerned with a lot of thinking and strategizing and trying to trying to survive in the world, that we can start to see that actually our greater being lies sort of beyond that or behind that in some way, but to really live from that deeper recognition is not easy because the habit of self-clinging is so intense and the habitual patterns are so deeply ingrained both in the mind and the body and so the insight itself, it sort of depends on how deep the recognition is. But for most of us, we have to actually involve ourselves in some sort of ongoing, daily practice that really enhances our identification with that larger sense of self with what Eckhart Tolle calls presence or being or emptiness in the Buddhist tradition and that that kind of shift of identification or allegiance requires a really deep commitment on a daily basis and the practices

that we use to deepen that identification and to relax the grip of ego, make a difference. I mean, Ken often says that one of the things about the human potential movement in the kind of 60s and 70s, one of the things that they discovered is that people could have really big breakthrough weekends where they just really felt and experienced themselves beyond this kind of ordinary difficulty that we've been describing, but that once the weekend was over and they went back into their normal lives, all of the same patterns emerged and really, there wasn't measurable change unless they engaged in an ongoing practice.

BH: Yeah, it's kind of seminar high.

DH: Yeah, like seminar high. Yeah. Precisely. So, in the Zen tradition, basically you have sitting practice, you have koan practice and now with Roshi, we do also Big Mind and all three of those are designed, not only to help with this recognition, but to help us freely function from that much more durable place is a way of saying it, I guess. In the integral practice, we usually talk about people addressing kind of four different areas of experience. The body, having a practice related to the body, something like Tai chi or yoga, where you really connect to the kind of energetic field of who you are and strengthen your relationship to energy and to the body and then the second one is the meditation practice or spiritual practice where you identify with that which is much larger than your individual ego. So it could be prayer. It could be meditation. Then we also recommend the study of the integral framework, which is really the body of Ken Wilber's work and others who've done work in this area where the kind of largest possible perspective is held by taking into account as many perspectives as possible and that's a kind of exercise of cognition, which really just stretches your ability to hold paradox and to hold multiple perspectives so that you enlarge your identification through cognition. And then finally, he always recommends and we recommend, that you do some kind of psychological shadow work because there are certain kinds of deeply held patterns in the body and the emotional body that just sitting on

a cushion doing meditation or engaging in prayer won't address because they are activated in relationship and in the patterns from our childhood and it is kind of simple, psychological understanding, but I think the point is is that spiritual practice doesn't necessarily address our psychology and simple psychology won't address our transcendent nature. So, we need to work both sides of the street. We need to work the psychological side and address what we call our shadow issues and at the same time, have a practice that really helps us identify beyond that.

BH: Well, so, let's look at each of these a little more deeply. I mean, the first one you mentioned was the body and in terms of the way Tolle talks about this, getting into the now moment, doing some sort of the practice with your body really does that. It takes you right into the present moment. If you're doing yoga or Tai chi or Qigong or even weight lifting or something like that, you tend to be right there, present, doing it and that does take you right into that present moment and get you more connected to your body.

DH: Right and to, he puts a big emphasis on connecting to the experience of the aliveness of the body. So, he's inviting people to connect both to the gross body, but also to the subtle body or the energetic body and to feel, kind of the presence and the aliveness of who you are, kind of even beyond the physical form, but what that energy kind of surging through you and giving you life force, what that feels like and how to stay connected to that part and that's what practices like Tai chi and yoga, Eastern practices are really great for helping with that connection to the energetic.

BH: Yeah and this is related to breath to a certain extent too, because people, a lot of people, because they have been traumatized often is the reason, they have learned how to not breathe very deeply and that kind of turns down the energy in your body so that you don't feel a lot of things that you don't want to feel. So, some of this has to do with breathing and breathing is a pretty common thing in spiritual practice as a matter of fact.

DH: Yeah, connection to the breath and connection the life force and how it circulates through the body and how it has an automatic... Automatically when we connect to the breath and to the life force, the kind of grip of the ego is relaxed. It's just an automatic thing.

“ We need to work the psychological side and address what we call our shadow issues and at the same time, have a practice that really helps us identify beyond that. ”

BH: Yeah, if you are paying attention to your breathing, that does take you right into that now moment and it takes you out of the past, out of the future, out of your ideas about things and just back to the now moment and the more times you visit that now moment, the more likely it is to become home to you instead of a foreign place that you visit once and awhile.

DH: And so that you become so familiar with this moment, with this now that I don't want to call it IT, but this is where I live all of the time and even though I can now kind of use my analytic mind. I can think into the future. I can remember the past, that I'm so firmly grounded that the past and the future are actually contained right here, right now. So there's no moving out of this.

BH: And so the second thing that you said was the spiritual dimension, which again, is about getting into

that presence, that now moment. Say a little more about that.

DH: Well, I think if you look at Eckhart Tolle's book, he's fundamentally discussing two different realities; one apparent and one real and one is kind of the functioning of ego. In other words, the experience we have of ourself as an individual, separate being who needs to find his or her way in the world. It takes a lot of energy, a lot of striving. There's generally quite a bit of struggle involved and certainly a lot of thought, that lots of times we're identified with this particular activity and we're really doing our best to become healthy and we're doing our best to have a positive self-image and we're doing our best to survive in the world, but as long as we're involved with this identification of a separate, individual me, we're extremely limited in terms of who we really are. So, spiritual practice is really concerned with helping us actually let go of that identification and relax into a much larger realization of our being, which is not limited by these ordinary notions of self and unless you've had this experience, either spontaneously, like Eckhart Tolle did in his life, in his past, or through a meditation practice or other spiritual practice, it's not that obvious actually. It's not that obvious that we are something much greater and much...

BH: Much more fundamental.

DH: More fundamental and ultimately, certainly, just less knowable. Something mysterious and fabulous, indescribable, that when we're identified with that and you call it many things in many different traditions. Our identification with God, with the way, with the Tao, with all that is. When we're identified with that, there's just like, remarkable relaxation, sense of capacity, sense of power, ability in the world, manifestation of a loving heart like that identification just flowers into a remarkable quality of being and once we've started to really recognize and live this deeper recognition, it's not even possible to want to go back and live from that other, more separate place. Not to say that we don't. We can go back and forth and we can also learn to integrate

kind of small-self into this larger flow, but without, for most of us, without spiritual diving in, we won't come to this recognition and we will live in an idea we have about what deity is, what spirit is. We'll live in a concept of God. We'll live in a belief system, but we won't come to an actual, first hand recognition and that's really what he's pointing out is the importance of really finding what he calls presence behind these, you know, this machination of mind, you might say.

BH: Yeah, I mean, one of the key things about this is this is not... This differs from what most people think of as religion or spirituality in that this is not an idea about it or a dogma about it or information about it, it's an experience of it and there's quite a difference of that and the other thing I think is interesting, is it's sort of like, you know, those pictures where there's either the lady's faces or the wine glass and you can see one, but you can't see both of them at the same time. And as you alluded to, there is a way to integrate the relative world of the mind with the world of the transcendent, but in the beginning, it's kind of like you have to get the mind still enough that you can experience that now moment and that's part of the reason for having some sort of an ongoing practice because though a good teacher can do something to help you get into that now moment, and Tolle's books are full of little ways to do that, to have that be something that you're able to do all of the time or most of the time, does seem to take some sort of a daily practice that gradually kind of disengages you from such a strong identification with all of your ideas about who you are and get you more into an experience of who you are as was said, actually now it was about 90 years ago that Sir Alfred Korzybski said, "The map is not the territory." And most people are living in the map they and miss the territory or as Allen Watts used to say, "It's like eating the menu instead of the meal."

DH: That's nice! I like that. I think I've done that before.

BH: Yeah and so, you know, as long as we're living in this world created by all our ideas about things, we tend

to miss what those ideas represent, which is the real experience of it and I think that's a lot of what Tolle is talking about, is how do you get out of your ideas about who you are and into who you really are and a lot of people think it's got to be some really wild metaphysical experience, and it can be rather startling if you first really get into this fully, but it really is, in a way, it's very ordinary, but just different and better.

DH: When do you recall the first time that you started to have that recognition? Do you have a... Was there a time in your life or a particular experience you had that opened you to that?

BH: You know, that's an interesting question because... And it sort of has to do with that third thing that you mentioned, which is sort of the cognitive part of learning about this that Ken Wilber talks about because I remember taking naps when I was, I don't know, I was probably 3-years-old or something, and I would have these experiences where I felt like I was expanding to be infinitely large, but at the same time, I felt like I was infinitely small, which is... And I remember having that experience while I was lying in my bed when I was supposed to be going to sleep and I had that quite a few times and now I look back and I say that was a transcendent experience, but of course, I didn't know what it was then and I just thought, "Wow! That's a weird experience." I would say that...

DH: Bill, the baby mystic.

BH: Well, you know, and a lot of people have these experiences here and there. You know, if you start talking about this people say, "You know, I had a funny experience when I was 12-years-old or whatever," but they just don't have any reference point for what it is and what it means and that sort of a thing. I really kind of woke up to this sort of thing when I was about 19, actually, and somebody gave me a book that was about Tibetan Buddhism and I was reading it and it told how to meditate in it and it was a fairly unsophisticated book actually, but so, I began meditating and I didn't re-

ally know whether I was doing it right though because I didn't have a teacher or anybody to get feedback from. Then I saw an ad in the school paper. I was going to the University of Washington at the time that was for TM and I thought, "Oh! Well, there'll be a teacher and they can tell me whether I am doing it right." So I went and did that and got a TM mantra and actually the first time they gave me this TM mantra to repeat and started repeating it, I had this very profound experience of sinking into myself and I thought, "Wow!" You know, it was pretty dramatic actually what happened and so, I was kind of off and running from that point.

Since then, I've had, before I really got to the point where I could be in that transcendent space all the time, I had a few times where, and this is after I started using Holosync, where for two or three months I would be just floating, just in that transcendent place and I remember I got fired once from a job when I was about 35 and I was in one of these periods of several months where I was just blissed out, in that place, for a long period of time and I got fired from a job and I just went, "Oh, okay, whatever." It didn't matter to me because I was just in that place where everything is okay, everything is perfect, everything is, you know, the worldly part of it just didn't matter to me when I was in that place. As I know you know, there's a more integrated place you can get to where you're not just divorced from the world as I was in those little times when I had that kind of an experience, but that's, I don't know, just a few little comments about how of some of this happened for me.

DH: It sounds like in a really fundamental way, Bill, that it's always been a part of your life, from the time you were really small and then your kind of late adolescence, you know, starting to learn about it again and tracking it down all the way to being completely absorbed by a transcendent state of non-identification. So much so that you got fired and now you're in a place where you are really seeing how the relative and absolute, you can call them relative and absolute, but how your small individual self and functioning in the world

from that place is integrated with your larger identity.

BH: Yeah, I think one of the things that I have enjoyed in reading Eckhart Tolle's books is that he doesn't seem to be stuck in the transcendent like some people can get. He continues to talk about real life and how this is applied to real life because that is one of the dangers, that some people have these experiences and it is so powerful and so potent that it so takes them out of that separate self that they reject it completely and as Genpo Roshi is fond of saying and the whole Zen world says, you can be just as stuck in the transcendent as you can be in the relative. It's something that to most people when they first stick their toe in the transcendent and find out what a lovely place it is to be, they think, well, it's a problem I wouldn't mind having, but once you get to that place, you know, if you have a teacher, a good teacher, they're going to say, "Don't stop there. There's more."

DH: Right, keep going. Keep going.

BH: So, anyway, let's talk for a minute about this cognitive part of it I guess because I think that's important too. I think that, for instance, when I had those experiences when I was really small because I didn't know what they were, I didn't, you know, I was three-years-old or something like that, so I probably wasn't prepared to do anything about it anyway, but I think people do have these spontaneous experiences of the now. I mean, people can go sit in front of the ocean or sit in the woods and have them, but if you don't realize that lots of other people have these and that there have been whole traditions and approaches that have looked at how you can be in that state and integrate it into your life, you just dismissed them as an interesting experience.

DH: Yeah, well, somebody was telling me recently, you know, that the brain research that is being done right now is really, really interesting in relationship to this topic because you could say that this transcendent experience might be on the right side of the brain and the more discursive, analytic, logical side of the brain

that explains and interprets might be on the left and yet there's an interesting feedback that happens, which is that when you have an experience in the right brain that is emotional in nature or in your case, a big state experience like what you described, that an ability to name it on the left hand side of the brain, to actually apply a label, actually relaxes the whole system. So there is a way that being able to interpret or give a name to an experience helps us to be able to actually integrate it as opposed to become absorbed in it or just leave it behind because we can't integrate it. So, what you're getting at is really important.

So it could be that the framework that we are working with from a logical perspective is, you know, could be a tradition like the Buddhist tradition, all of Dharma's study that gives you a basic framework that helps you both define and interpret experience as you're having it. So it creates that kind of conceptual container and also, helps map the territory you said a few minutes ago or it could be a combination, for instance, of Dharma study and then integral study, which... What's beautiful about integral is what it tries to do is to include the work that's been done in the interior by the traditions and on the exterior by science. So basically, integral theory itself is trying to create a cognitive framework that will hold all of your experience, whether it's contemplative or whether it's empirical or whether it's cultural or whether it has to do with how you are interacting with the world and systems, but there is a place where kind of all of your thinking and all of your understanding and you are really encouraged to hold and be able to see complexity and hold paradox, which is a really highly developed thing to be able to do.

You have to be, you know, which takes us into the conversation about development, which Eckhart Tolle doesn't address at all in his work and this is where Ken's work really adds a lot to this conversation because we can have the state experiences and the shift in identification, but at the same time, where consciousness itself is developing in a very particular pattern, which as it evolves, integrates this spiritual identification more and more and more easily until it's not separate from it any

more and the more developed we are, the more we can hold complex ideas, apparent contradictions, paradox, without it being disturbing to our system. So, the cognitive piece is a really important one. I hope that wasn't too abstract.

BH: Well, I don't think so.

DH: I can get very abstract. I apologize.

BH: One of the things that I think is really important to acknowledge is that maps are useful. You know, the mind does tend to make maps and representations of things and in order to experience the transcendent, you do have to disengage from your identification with those things, but that doesn't mean that they are not useful because, you know, if you try to go driving on those little lines on the map, then you have sort of mistaken the map for the territory, but if you use the map as a way to get around in the territory, that is very useful.

As you know, I've been presenting workshops with Genpo Roshi and he tends to do the experiential part of it, for the most part, leading people through Big Mind, which allows people, among other things, to have an experience of the transcendent and my role, although I do a little bit of Big Mind also, but my main role is providing the cognitive part and that happens to be one of the things that for whatever reason, I'm pretty good at is explaining this stuff and giving people sort of a cognitive framework to allow them to understand it and when Roshi is on the stage and he's taking people through all of this stuff and then when I come out next, then I say, "Okay, let's look at what just happened," and then we talk about it and I kind of explain it and give a little structure to it.

DH: So, you do that thing of giving a name to the experience and helping people actually integrate the experience by using their rationality to understand it.

BH: Exactly, and there does definitely seem to be, you

know, there is obviously a certain recognition that happens for people when they have an actual experience, but then when somebody comes and says, "Now, let's talk about this experience and what happened," and like you say, you give it a name, you give it a structure, you put it into a context for people. What I hear over and over is, "Oh, okay. I get it." Yeah and so, that cognitive piece, which, you know as you alluded to a moment ago, it can get abstract, it can get very sophisticated and the only danger in that that I see is that if people get lost in the cognitive part and it divorces them from the actual experience, then, you know, they've sort of thrown the baby out with the bath water in a way. It has to be an integration of those two, which again, is another one of those paradoxes you were talking about.

DH: Right. Well, I've heard Ken Wilber talk about how in the American spiritual scene and even in the psychotherapeutic world, where people are doing a lot of emotional work, that there becomes this bias against logic and against rationality and against discourse and against analysis because people have felt so limited by that. So once they break out of it, they almost react against it and what you're describing is actually how to reengage cognition, rationality in its proper role and I have heard it said, Ram Dass used to say this years ago, that the rational mind is a beautiful servant, but a terrible master and that we have allowed it to be in the role of master for so long that once we actually relinquish it and actually experience our true freedom and just the expanse of being without the constraint of that, then there's a reluctance to bring it back on board. But in fact, it would be a shame not to use it for the integrative function that it has and the other thing that I've experienced through integral theory is that sometimes we talk about how cognition will precede development.

So for instance, the idea that there is a thing called enlightenment and you don't know anything about it, actually opens up the possibility of having an experience that in a way, the cognition can kind of lead out in terms of helping us bring our experience to it and we may need to drop our ideas to actually experience what

it is and then bring the naming, if you will, back as a way of kind of completing the process. So, thought is really important in terms of helping us get through an experience, also. If we never have the idea it's possible, we are never going to move toward it.

BH: It's really interesting how people, you know, back in the middle ages or in the enlightenment when rationality began to really be a huge part of the human experience and there was a rejection of what went before. Then later, this new revolution where looking inward and this whole spiritual aspect of being human became kind of a revolutionary change, then there is a rejection of the rational and, you know, Ken talks a lot about transcending something and then including it and we tend, it seems, to transcend and exclude if left to our own devices and you even see this when people have a powerful experience of the transcendent, they then tend to, you know, reject the relative world and hopefully then later there is an integration of the two.

But it just seems to be a normal human thing to do to transcend something and exclude it and I think this is a really important point that people should be very conscious that that can happen and if they start doing that, to perhaps, observe that they are doing it and because there are some things that you exclude about the past way of being, but there are other things that are valuable to include. It's the identification with the mind that's the problem, not the fact that you have one.

DH: Or the exclusive identification. So, you're pointing out something really important right at this moment in terms of, let's just say, how we think about it or how we write about it, what we read about this process. So, this is really important. So on the one hand, we can create

a binary structure where there is the egoic activity of mind and then is non-ego or there is enlightenment or there is realization, whatever you want to call it, transcendence, identification with God, divinity, whatever it is. So, we should be very cautious too and notice how we set up that the nature of the mind, or the analytic mind, is dualistic and binary.

So there is ego and non-ego, but one of the ways of

considering how to inhabit this reality that I think is really helpful is to use a developmental model instead, which is larger and larger circles that embrace. So you don't exclude

the ego and set up this binary of yes/no, but rather the model, and this is what I've learned through Ken's work, the model of how we begin egocentrically that expands to include our ethnocentric identity, nationality, our tribe, our beliefs or values and there's still a lot of warring going on at that level. But when we take another step and we start to now identify as world-centric, we're not getting rid of that which came before, but we are expanding to include more. So, we keep including until we reach what might be called cosmic-centric, which is now Big Mind. In other words, there is nothing that is arising in phenomena that we are not identified with. So it's not that we don't identify with a small eye, it's just that we are identified with so much else that to just limit ourselves to this experience of what Diane is and what she needs and what she wants isn't even possible because I'm also so identified with everything else that is arising and that it just changes the way we relate with the world. There's less kind of fundamental conflict.

BH: Yeah, less stress, less tension.

DH: Yeah, and then we can still make discriminations and we can still take care of the mind and the body and

“ If we never have the idea it's possible, we are never going to move toward it. ”

our home and our family and all of that, but it's without that really desperate sense of clinging to our identity, which I think Eckhart Tolle really describes very beautifully in his writing, very simply and very straightforwardly and explains a lot of this kind of the strife that we experience as a human family and when we all start identifying more broadly and larger and so maybe we don't work quite as much in this binary, ego, non-ego place and more in these greater and greater circles of identification.

BH: Well you talked about paradox before and one of the paradoxes is there is this tension between polar opposites like me and not me, up and down, here and there, Yin and Yang, all of those. There's good and bad, having and not having and so on and when you are solely in the relative world, you really feel that tension and it's stressful and frustrating and so on, but when you move into the transcendent and include the relative also, you still see those polar opposites, you still see that, but you kind of have let go of the tension and it doesn't affect you in the same way.

I remember Allen Watts saying, "Get two knitting needles and hold one in each hand and then have a fight with your left hand and your right hand," and he is kind of pointing out that these pairs of opposites actually include each other, they depend on each other and it's a different perspective.

DH: They can't exist without each other. There's no female without the male.

BH: Yeah, you can't have buying without selling. So, you know, you could see it as a conflict or you could see it in another way. Another little bon mot that he, Allen Watts, used to say where he would talk about Lewis Carroll and he would say, "Do you remember Tweedle-

Dumb and Tweedle-Dee? They agreed to have a battle." You know, it's a reference to these polar opposites and this tension and that's one of the big benefits of being able to include the transcendent in your life is that there's this relaxing of all of this stuff that seemed so important and so stressful before.

“ You, yourself, are this quality of presence, this quality of being... ”

DH: And I think that the role of meditation, of spiritual practice, generally right now is to really help address the problem of stress and over-tension and the

kind of really, almost insane striving that we experience without it and I think that's partly why Eckhart Tolle's book is so successful and that Oprah has done such a good job of presenting his teaching.

The other part that I think is significant that I'd like to just notice is, I mean, I don't know, one- and-a-half million people now who are tuned into this and working with it and the significant difference between the way Eckhart Tolle is presenting his teaching and let's say, traditional religion as we have been taught and experienced is that there is a very fundamental pointing out that you, yourself, are the transcendent. You, yourself, are this quality of presence, this quality of being and prior to this, lots of times we have had a very kind of more mythic understanding of religion where we have looked for a god or for an authority outside of ourselves.

We kind of looked to the heavens and I think that there is a deep intuition and a deep longing at this point in our development to really recognize that God is not separate from our life and from ourself and that's one of the reasons I think that this teaching is catching fire the way it is right now is because this, and the East has kind of always contained more of this, which is why people have gone to the East for teachings. This kind of

fundamental recognition that spiritual realization is no other than your own life, it's not separate from you and while you can engage in kind of petitionary prayer and looking to the heavens, even the heavens are not separate from your own being, that it is all one, fundamental is-ness.

BH: And it's important to realize that this is something that you can experience. One of the big differences between this mythic type of religion you are talking about, traditional dogmatic religion, is that some person had an experience of the transcendent, described it in a certain way and then a religion is created around it and the premise seems to be that this person was a real exception. They had this exceptional experience and they're telling us now, this is what's true, this is the way to live. Whereas what Tolle is talking about and a lot of other teachers too, is not to just have somebody tell you about what's real and what's true, but there are certain things that you can actually do to experience it for yourself and find out for yourself. And Tolle's book is full of, you know, little things that you can do to get into that place and experience it for yourself and that's a huge change in society if we go from this idea of somebody telling us what's true to actually going inside and finding out for ourselves.

DH: Yeah, that's an enormous shift. That's a huge shift, Bill.

BH: Well, let's talk a little bit about the fourth thing that you mentioned, the shadow, because I think that's really important too and in terms of people listening to this that are thinking, "Well, I want to get more into the transcendent." One of the benefits of dealing with the shadow stuff is that your shadow stuff can pull you out of the transcendent and back into just the world of the mind and Tolle actually talks about this quite a bit. He calls what we would call the shadow, the pain body, is the term he uses for it. So, why don't you explain what we mean by shadow.

DH: Well, he says also, he also talks about how we will

sometimes notice egoic patterns in others that we are particularly reactive too that actually mirror our own, but we can't really see these kind of negative patterns in ourself, so we spot them in others and then we are particularly judgmental about it and in my work, that's usually what we mean by shadows. We're talking about the aspects of experience of ourself that are so unacceptable to us that we can't possibly identify with them.

So for instance, I might be particularly toxic around the notion or the experience of arrogance, like I really can't stand that in other people and I'm very reactive to it and that is actually because I haven't really seen into my own arrogance and so therefore, I kind of displace, if you will, arrogance out of my recognition of self and put it out into the world and then I see it out there and I condemn it because I'm not able to actually recognize it in myself. And when we talk about spiritual practice and the way spiritual practice and shadow overlap, is that as we're expanding and as we're starting to identify, there are all kinds of little pockets of negativity, emotional patterns that are held in the body, experiences that will be provoked and this is what you're describing as the pain body in Eckhart Tolle's work and that those patterns are really deep and our identification when they arise, inevitably, we project them out into the world because it's very hard to metabolize that kind of negativity in our own first person experience. Does that make sense what I've said?

BH: Yeah, it is sort of like the righteous, fundamentalist preacher who turns out is secretly really into pornography while he's condemning it because it's a part of himself that he is trying really hard to repress and so he hates it everywhere he sees it outside of him.

DH: Right. Exactly.

BH: I mean, that's a more extreme example.

DH: No, but it's a good example and I think it helps. Or for instance, the Buddhist teacher who condemns and screams about violence and in her speech, is actually

creating violence in the way she's talking about it. So, it happens all over the place and I think it's really one of the harder aspects of spiritual practice because it's such a relief to relax the ego. It's such a relief to feel your limitless nature. It's so gratifying to just feel love for all that is, but it gets much more challenging to start to embrace the darkness and that's really what we are talking about with shadow and I see it, actually, in the psychological, but also in the spiritual that there are two kinds of spiritual practice.

There is the spiritual practice that divides the world into good and bad and identifies with the good and condemns everything that's bad and there's spiritual practice that embraces the whole and because it embraces the whole, necessarily, is required to feel and experience the dark or more difficult aspects of being human and great compassion arises through shadow practice. Great compassion and great humility because there isn't one of us that's free of, you know, egoic clinging and the pain body and all of that and as much as we practice and as much as we see ourselves beyond all of that, there is another step we have to take, which is to integrate all of its difficulty and to be able to relax with it and be at one with it. Because in this realm, I mean, I like Eckhart Tolle's vision that we are going to move to a more evolved place and I'm for that, but so far, I would say that things are tough out there and how do we integrate how devastating and painful human life can be without finding a way to experience it fully and love it for what it is, in all of its dualism and complexity and yuckiness?

BH: That's right and a lot of things that people have pushed down out of their awareness and made wrong are things just that their parents told them were wrong. In other words, it's kind of a matter of opinion. If your parents, every time you stood up for yourself and said what you wanted, they gave you some sort of negative reinforcement, then pretty soon it's not okay to stand up for yourself and ask for what you want and suddenly, you are bugged all the time by pushy people, you know, that you run into. I mean, it could be something

as simple as that and it's because you have denied that part of you and you had a good reason for denying it because somebody very powerful when you were small, made that wrong.

So one big clue, as you know, is that if you're bugged by something, particularly a lot in others, it's very likely that that is an aspect of you that you had to disown at some time and then when you reown that, it really does create some really dramatic, positive changes. So, talk a little bit about the ways that a person can reown some of that.

DH: Well, we all do pretty well in spiritual practice as long as we're sitting on our cushions and as soon as we start interacting with each other, it just gets much more difficult because the ego is involved and now all of these difficulties that we've put away and all of these patterns that we have of preserving ourselves and claiming territory and prevailing, those are there and as soon as we start to interact in relationship, this all gets really sticky.

So, if you're going to do a certain kind of spiritual practice, you're actually better off to find a cave and stay in it because as soon as you start interacting with others, the shadow qualities are going to come up. So, I think there are different ways to work with it. One of course is to use a simple technique like the shadow, the three, two, one of shadow we use in the Integral Life Practice Kit, which is basically what you and I have described, which is we look for something out in our environment or in another person that has really provoked us emotionally. For whatever reason, that particular trait just drives me crazy.

For instance, in a workshop that I was doing recently, a woman was really upset with me because she felt that I was facilitating a group in a way that was unsafe. Now, is that just true or is that shadow? Right? The way we look at whether it is shadow or not is whether or not our emotional equilibrium and our energetic body is upset. Has the pain body been provoked? To

use Eckhart Tolle's language. So the practice would be in her case and she did it as part of a shadow work is she described me as unsafe in a lot of detail and then she moved into a conversation. So, you face it out there in third person, then you start to have a conversation with it. So she started to talk to me about my un-safety and what was it about and why was I so dangerous and on and on and on and then the final step is to actually become it or identify with it. So she took the un-safety back from me and held it in her own experience and started to really feel the part of her that is really deeply unsafe and this was a very powerful exercise for her because she started to see certain ways in which her fear and her own anxiety was at work and that she wasn't able to create safety for herself and she was giving that responsibility to me, when in fact, she actually was perfectly capable of doing that and that's what I helped her with.

So, that's an example of how shadow work... Now, that's not to say that her perceptions weren't true. The question becomes though, how do we have the power to stabilize our own perceptions so that we can discriminate and we can see what's true or not true. We're just not provoked in a way that creates a lot of reactivity and, you know, you might say provoking of the pain body. So that is one example of how you can do shadow work.

BH: Yeah and since that was a shadow aspect of her, someone sitting right next to her could have been sitting there saying, "You know, I can see some ways about the way Diane is doing this that could be unsafe for people," but she's not, herself, feeling upset about it.

DH: Right, that's precisely the difference. That's precisely the difference is you still have your discriminations, you don't have the emotional distortion and the upset. Which usually when we are coming from that place, we don't deal well in the world anyway.

BH: So, what you had her do was first of all, say what she was seeing kind of. You're doing something that I think creates a lack of safety and then she spoke from

that place, where she described it.

DH: Yeah, so we talk about describing it in the third person like as, you know, a she or he or it. It's out there. It's very separate from me. This is what it is. This is what it's qualities are. This is how it's experienced and then we move it into a relationship. So we move it one step closer. We don't own it yet, but we bring it into relationship and then we have a conversation with it in second person. So the it becomes you. So now she's talking to me as Diane and she is saying, "You were really unsafe yesterday and I didn't like how you did this and why did you make that choice and why did you leave people vulnerable?" and then I am just talking with her and she is bringing it one step closer to identification.

BH: Right, so it was an it now it's a you.

DH: Yes. Right. It was an it and now it's you and then finally it becomes I. So, I'm unsafe. She pulled the projection back and owns it in her first person.

BH: Yeah, now, Genpo Roshi has his own way of working with shadow stuff and that is, you know, speaking from a certain voice inside of yourself that you've disowned and, I mean, in this case it might be the voice of fear would be one way to describe it.

DH: Right, or the voice of danger.

BH: You know, I mean, a good facilitator would figure out the best way to describe that voice and then ask the person to speak from that voice.

DH: And what's important is that's a first person identification. So when Roshi says, "Allow me now to speak to the voice of fear." Everybody identifies as fear. It's not projected out into the world. They actually are, by the very act of speaking it, they're reowning it into their first person.

BH: Yeah. So she would say, "I'm fear and it feels very

unsafe when you do these things,” and then she would go on and describe fear, which she had been putting out onto you instead of really owning that it was something that was happening inside of her. It was not okay to feel that way, you know, really fully so she pushed it out of herself onto you.

DH: Right and one of the real challenges is that so often, we don’t do the work with ourselves. We don’t do the work in our own interior and with our own anxieties, our own

fears, our own aggression and so we try solving it out in the world and the world’s just too big. I mean, the best place to solve the problems of the universe is in your own interior and then when your interior is resolved, then you can actually act in the world with some kind of a sure-footedness. We don’t have it if we’re coming from a kind of interior that is fragmented and scared.

BH: And to pull this back to Eckhart Tolle, these two little methods that we just talked about are ways to deal with what he calls the pain body. So, and calm it down I guess you could say, so that it doesn’t keep pulling you out of the now moment, out of the presence, out of the transcendent and back into a painful world that you’re creating in your head.

DH: And you’re participating and recreating. Yeah, and I’ve been doing a little bit of work with root firmness because I think Eckhart Tolle does a good job also of showing the relationship of the individual pain body to the corrective pain body and so it’s one thing to kind of try to metabolize the hurt and the fear that I experience as myself, but then when I’m also experiencing that of my family or that of my culture, it becomes really very

challenging and so I have been doing some work with groups to look into kind of the egoic suffering and then to look at ethnocentric suffering and then to keep moving up the scale so that we can identify in a larger and larger way so that we’re not pulled into those kind of collective battles that, you know, just plague our planet.

“ We don’t do the work in our own interior and with our own anxieties, our own fears, our own aggression and so we try solving it out in the world and the world’s just too big. ”

BH: Yeah, one of the ironies of this whole process of waking up is that as you, you know, if you start off and you’re just concerned with me and you are completely identified as the separate self,

then that pain body, you’re feeling your own pain body and that’s hard enough, but when you then begin to identify with the group, there is more pain because it’s a collective pain and so, if you don’t have the ability to hold that, it can be really overwhelming and then when you finally get so that you’re really identified as the transcendent and it’s a world-centric or cosmic-centric approach, there’s a tremendous amount of collective suffering in humanity and you have to be able to handle that and what is it that Ken says, “The more you wake up, the more you suffer, but the greater your ability to handle it.” Or something to that...

DH: Yeah, he says, “The more you develop, the more it hurts. It hurts more, but it bothers you less.” It’s an interesting way to talk about it. You know, in a way, you really do start to experience just kind of the massive, intractable, human suffering and at the same time, you both experience it, you’re free of it and you are compassionate towards it. So there is this kind of wild expansive response that includes and doesn’t negate it because you can’t work with people if we don’t somehow identify that the pain is real for them.

BH: Yeah. An example of this that most people would be able to relate to would be someone like Mother Theresa who is, you know, very much concerned with alleviating the suffering of a lot of people and, you know, when they found her diaries after she died, they found out that she was experiencing a tremendous amount of pain. She may not have been able to handle it as well as maybe someone like the Dalai Lama or someone like that and I just use him as an example, again, because it is someone that is a public figure and a lot of people know and know about.

DH: Well, you know Mother Theresa's story for me is both beautiful and really provocative in a sense that, you know, the source of her pain was that she had a rapturous experience of Jesus and then in her experience, Jesus asked her to go to India or instructed her to go to India, which she didn't really want to do. She did go to India just to work in, really, just kind of hell on Earth poverty and human suffering and what the source of her pain was is that she felt Jesus left her and that that experience that she had of his presence disappeared. So, it wasn't the suffering of the others was probably challenging enough, but what was really heartbreaking to her was the loss of her beloved, and that's such a feminine experience. I mean, that's so deeply female to have the experience of the loss of love like that and then I read a really fascinating and beautiful interpretation that in her loss of Jesus, she also gained, in a way, the deepest identification with him because his, God's abandonment of Jesus on the cross is the parallel experience to Mother Theresa's abandonment by Jesus. So in her abandonment, is actually her deepest identification with his suffering, which is a kind of wild story. I mean, personally, I would just prefer that she had been able to be happier in her life, but she also seemed to be going through something really enormously huge in terms of her identification with Jesus.

BH: Yes, well, anyway, I just thought that that was, you know, a potential example of how that pain body works in people and I mean, but the main point we were making is that as you become more awake, you do become

aware of more of the pain of humanity and one of the things that attracts people to something like the Power of Now and the things that Eckhart Tolle is saying is that they have this idea that there is something out there, some way that they can get rid of all of their problems and certainly, that's, you know, a pretty universal hope that people have, but the truth is there are certain inherent problems, if you want to call them that, just that are part of being human. You know, bodies are sensitive, things are in time and they pass away, things come into being and then they are not in being any more.

DH: In Buddhism, we discuss that...

BH: You live and you die and I often have told the story of when I was about three-years-old and I first realized this. My mother bought me an ice cream cone and I was just in heaven as I ate this ice cream cone and I got about half way through and it suddenly occurred to me that I was going to finish it and it was going to be gone and I had a lot of trouble in fully enjoying the last half because I was already projecting into the future not having the ice cream cone and that was the first realization I had of that thing that all things are in time and they pass away and the fact that that is a source of suffering and frustration for people and there's no escape from that as long as you're human. But you certainly can escape from unconsciously creating all kinds of other sufferings and that's really what happens as you wake up to the Power of Now or the transcendent or whatever you want to call it, is that you become more and more aware so that you don't create suffering by resisting what is and so, it's like Genpo Roshi's talking about the one who chooses to be a human being. He is really talking about, you know, the fact that you choose your suffering when you're awake. When you're not awake, it tends to choose you.

DH: Right, that's a nice way to say it.

BH: Or you tend to step into it without intending to.

DH: Right and I have heard it said too that pain is built

in, that suffering is optional.

BH: Yeah, I mean, if you sprain your ankle, it hurts, but if you then get into all kinds of resistance to the fact that that has happened, then you... You know, I remember going through a stop sign when I was 16 with my first car. I'd only had it for about three weeks and I'd just spent half the afternoon washing it too and waxing it and all of that stuff that you do when you first get a car and I went through a stop sign and some guy broadsided me and it was totaled and that was enough of a problem, but I went into, "Oh no! Now I look like an idiot and my dad is going to kill me..." and on and on and on and on and I can't say if that same thing happened today I wouldn't be annoyed by the whole thing, but pretty quickly I would say, "Okay, the car has been totaled or wrecked or whatever. Now what do I do about it?" And I wouldn't spend much if any time being in resistance to the fact that it's already happened because once it's happened, it's happened and you might as well just get on with it.

DH: So you wouldn't create an opening for the pain body to take over.

BH: I guess that would be the way Tolle would talk about it. Yeah and you know, I think that the reason that I could do that in, I won't say that I would always do that in every situation that would happen that would be a 'negative' situation, but compared to the way, you know, I was many years ago, I'd say that I do it most of the time, 95 percent of the time and I think the reason is all of the practice I've done and the teachers I've had and, you know, there is a process of paying attention to all of this stuff and working with it and you gradually embody it more and more so that it becomes... I don't think there is anything magic about this.

You know, people read Tolle's books and I'm sure that they read them and as you and I probably did too, you admire someone like him and because he does very much seem to be embodying what he's talking about, in addition to being very articulate about expressing it,

but you know, he didn't spring out of the womb that way and Genpo Roshi didn't spring out of the womb the way he is either and it's a process and that's why I think one of the important things is that people have some sort of a practice. You know, that they're meditating a little bit each day or that they are doing some of the things Tolle talks about in response to daily events and making it into something not just that they, well, I read that book and I took that Eckhart Tolle course and it wasn't that fun and then they forget about it and they don't do anything.

DH: Right. Right and that's why the, you know, just the skillful means like the Big Mind on DVD or Holosync or the Integral Life Practice Kit, I mean, all three of those are basically designed to help people do what you're talking about.

BH: Exactly. Exactly and, you know, someone who's skillful at teaching or providing these tools, hopefully does so in a way that makes it easier for people to use them and I certainly like to think that I've done that with Holosync and I know that Genpo Roshi has done that with Big Mind and so on. So, at any rate, that kind of brings me to asking how can people, if they wanted to, get involved with some of the things you're doing that I know will help them to wake up and embody this place that Eckhart Tolle is sounding about? You do seminars and other things...

DH: Yeah, well I, I mean, I mainly work within the umbrella of Zen and Big Mind with Roshi and within Integral, but I have my own teaching schedule. So if people are interested in my particular work and my style, then they can go to the DianeMushoHamilton.org and find my teaching schedule and be able to, you know, I'm pretty much traveling most of the time and teaching in different places. I just came back from Europe and from Israel and have a pretty full teaching schedule for the rest of the year. So, that's DianeMushoHamilton.org. That's my personal site.

BH: Okay, so, and I'll have to say, having seen you

work with people and knowing you, you really are very skilled at what you do and I know that people that work with you have tremendous shifts. I know that my wife, Denise, I remember one time she was very caught in something and upset about something and she had a 20 minute phone conversation with you and she came back from that totally transformed because you had done something that caused her to go Ah-ha! And really shift something. So, I really would encourage people to check out what you do because you are very skillful at what you do and...

DH: Thank you! I appreciate it. I preach my own little version of all this stuff. I mean, I'm a woman so I teach in a I'm very concerned with relationship and I'm concerned with how we are communicating and I'm concerned with the collective pain and I think my fundamental intention is the same as yours, which is to wake up and to wake up with those around me. So, thank you for the support.

BH: And you know, there are all kinds of ways to do this and I have found, I'm sure you would probably agree with this too, that when you first find out about this, first of all, you don't know the different ways, you know, your different choices for what kind of a path you could take and I think it's a great idea to sample different things and try different things and one of the reasons I wanted to do this series, was to introduce people that were listening to Tolle and Oprah Winfrey to realize that there are a number of other choices and to find out a little bit more about them and to experience some of them because you, you know, when you finally find that way that you're going to go about this, there is some sort of an Ah-ha! Recognition. Oh, this really feels like the way that fits me! And I know for you, that has been Zen and there's lots of other ways too and everybody has a different temperament.

DH: Yeah and no one can actually know, really, what their path is until they are living it and you can kind of see your path in retrospect, but you can't really see what's ahead of you

and one of the beautiful things about the time and the place that we're in, Ken says this a lot, is that no other time in history have we had access to all of the spiritual traditions, to their teachings, to their techniques and to actually be able to apply some empirical understanding or some research to see what actually works for people. Like, I use the example sometimes, if you found out that, you know, two hours of meditation a day was optimal in terms of awakening, would you do six or seven? What if you found out according to a scientific study that there has been a study that shows that when you are doing physical cross training, this is one of the integral points, that when you're doing spiritual practice that you're also doing a physical practice that what you can measure about your growth or these shifts in identification gets greater, that that just is empirically true.

So, I think our time in history gives us so many options and so many different opportunities that it's both a gift and a challenge to kind of make our way through the spiritual marketplace. But the point that you made a minute ago about really listening for what speaks to you and what resonates in your experience and then also understanding that that can change and you made a point earlier in the conversation that one of the errors we make in life, but it is a consistent one, is that when we outgrow a phase that we have been in, there is a tendency to reject it rather than transcend and include.

So sometimes you'll see people go through a period of time where they are studying Zen or they're doing some other spiritual or physical practice and then when they complete that and they come to an end and they sort of turn against it or they turn against the teacher and suddenly that all becomes bad in order for them to move on, but what we really need to have is a model where people are able to move through different phases in their practice and in their life and you know, Aristotle had the idea that it's only at the moment of your death that you really know what your life was and I think that's true of the spiritual path. So the point is to stay open and be available and stay congruent and just see very clearly that you're a learning, evolving, develop-

ing being and that you're not fixed and that you're in a process like all of humanity.

BH: Yeah, I think it is really amazing that you have someone like Eckhart Tolle who is talking about this stuff that not too very long ago was very esoteric and only a few people knew about it and here it is on a big, public stage and people that didn't know anything about it are finding out about it now and what they don't know is that there has been for actually thousands of years, but particularly lately, there is, you know, a growing subculture of people who are very interested in this and have been working with this sort of stuff and there are lots and lots of resources that used to be, you know, you'd have to climb up the mountain and find the teacher in the cave or something, but now you can go down to your local book store or go on the internet and here's all of this stuff.

DH: Yeah, that's amazing. It's really amazing. I actually have a friend who is working on a site so that he can bring heart and breath into the internet. So, he's concerned that the internet is just random information that doesn't have a kind of moral compass or a sense of compassion and so how do you introduce the heart and the breath into the internet. So, that's a really interesting idea.

BH: That is and I'll be interested to see how that works out. Well, so, it's kind of time to wrap this up. Do you have any final words that you want to leave people with?

DH: No, but just basically my Tao is just carry on.

BH: Yes, well, I just think it's, whether a person has just found out about this whole idea of the now moment, the presence, the transcendent, whatever you want to call it or they've been working on this for a long time, there are just so many... There are so many people that are involved in this now and there's such a... You can get with other people and be supported and I think that you are one of those people that can help support other

people and so are the other people that I've talked to in this series and I just feel very humbled that I somehow get to be a vehicle for introducing you to a lot of people.

DH: Well thank you! Thank you so much for thinking of me and it's a pleasure to get to know you and it's a pleasure to be on this call and I'm also just really happy that people are... That there are a large, large number of people that are actually now looking into this because it was true when I was young also that I lived in a very small body of people who were interested in this particular approach to spiritual practice. So it's a beautiful time of flowering. I am really happy about it. Yeah, thank you.

BH: Alright, so with that, I'll say goodbye to all of you and until the next time, everyone, be well!

Thank you so much for listening to this conversation in our Mastering Eckhart Tolle's The Power of Now series. I know this information will help you to master the ideas Tolle is sharing with the world. To thank you for listening, I have a very special free gift for you. As I've worked to master and implement these amazing ideas in my life, one of the most powerful tools I've used is Holosync audio technology, which, when listened to using stereo headphones places the listener in deep states of meditation, literally at the touch of a button. In addition to many mental, emotional, and spiritual benefits, Holosync creates an ability to focus your mind so powerfully that manifesting what you want becomes easy. I'd like to send you a free Holosync CD so you can try it yourself, along with a free Special Report explaining how it works and all the amazing benefits it has created for the nearly 300,000 people around the world who have already experienced it. To get your free Holosync CD, simply click here <http://www.centerpointe.com/FreeDemoCD/> or call 1-800-945-2741 and we'll send it out to you right away.