

Hello, welcome back. Alright, welcome back to talking about mindfulness. And I'd like to propose two approaches to mindfulness, the way that I've sort of come to understand it. The first one is you choose an object, you keep that object in mind, and you try to do it skillfully. Let's call this sort of focused attention. The other approach is more of a choiceless awareness, where you're not choosing an object, it's whatever object comes up, you're with that object, and as the next object comes, you're with that object. The big difference between these two is in the first approach, there's a subject-object distinction. So I choose an object, I watch the object, I do it skillfully, I am the observer observing my object, subject-object distinction. In the other approach, the choiceless awareness, I am the object. What is passing through my mind is the subject. We'll go into that in a little more detail here, trying to explain that. So we talked about objects as sensations, feelings, things that you can be aware of, maybe a sound, maybe a physical, tangible sensation, maybe a thought, maybe your breath. So all of these sensations that you can be aware of are available, and you choose one that's going to be your focus. Let's say that I'm trying to focus on my breath. So I focus on my breath. Next thought moment, still with my breath. But then just naturally, my mind starts to wander into something else. Thought moment going by, my mind is somewhere else. And then I realize, I'm like, oh, wait, my breath. Let me come back to my breath. And again, I come back to my breath. And then maybe someone starts talking, I'm in that thought, what are they talking about? I start thinking about it, and I've completely forgotten my breath. But then I realize that, and I come back to my breath, back to my breath, like that. So in a way, what I'm trying to do is keep track of where my attention is and bring it back to this anchor that I've chosen. Here in the choiceless awareness, slightly different approach, I maybe have a sensation, something I can see, something I can hear, maybe a thought, maybe my breath, maybe a physical sensation. Here I'm just sort of opening my mind to whatever is there in that particular moment. So in this particular moment, I'm feeling my body, feeling my body. And then all of a sudden, I notice my breath, not really pulling my attention there. I'm just sort of open to what's coming up, and my breath is there. And then maybe I notice I'm thinking about something. If my eyes are open, I might notice what I'm looking at. If somebody's talking, I might just be aware of that. I'm listening to something. The point is that I'm not trying to focus in on something. I'm just aware of what is actually there. So two approaches, choosing an object, choiceless awareness. Maybe for the beginner, I would suggest going with choosing an object. Once you feel a little more comfortable in your practice, try the choiceless awareness. Mix it up a little bit. It's a trial and error experiment for you. It's a challenge, so enjoy the process. Keep the practice simple, light, and easy. A word of caution maybe, this practice, mindfulness practice in general, is going to bring your attention to the inner workings of your mind. So thoughts, feelings, emotions are going to come up. That's part of the practice. It's normal for it to maybe be a little uncomfortable, but it shouldn't be a torture. It shouldn't be something that's really going to cause a lot of anxiety or stress you out. So be prepared. Stick with an object that you enjoy being with. As you build up more confidence, try other objects and maybe try a choiceless awareness. Just be with whatever comes up. Thank you.