



MIND & LIFE  
I N S T I T U T E

**Inspiring Minds Transcript**  
**Transformative Change: Where Research and Action in the World Meet**  
**Live online conversation: March 10, 2021**  
Retrieved from [video recording](#)

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:00:14):

Welcome everyone. Thank you so much for joining us this afternoon. I'm Shankari Goldstein, Program Manager at the Mind & Life Institute and the host of the Inspiring Mind series.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:00:26):

So at Mind & Life, we work to elevate leading-edge insights at the intersection of science, contemplative wisdom, and action. We believe such knowledge is critical to cultivating personal well-being, building more compassionate communities, and strengthening the relationship between humans and the earth.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:00:45):

As I look out my sunroom window right now on my pond and my crops that are waiting to be tended to, it also reminds me deeply of the respect and appreciation that our Monican and Indigenous First People brought to this land and the enslaved African-Americans, and the respect that they deserve for cultivating and maintaining this great nation that we call home.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:01:08):

Please feel free to share the First Peoples tribal or community names in the chat where you reside so that we may honor those who came before us.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:01:18):

So we launched the Inspiring Minds series last October to engage prominent thought leaders in conversation with contemplatives and a wider audience to inspire action toward positive change. Since then so many people from around the world have joined us, and it's been so exciting to see the growth of this program.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:01:35):

At our last conversation in January, we welcomed Rhonda Magee and Jack Kornfield. In the wake of the Capitol siege in the United States, both shared valuable wisdom for our times. They stressed the importance of grounding through contemplative practice and through time spent with family and nature or even dancing. And they spoke to the need to take action to minimize suffering in the world and to be, as Jack put it, a lamp in the darkness. Rhonda cautioned

listeners to be aware of the multitude of causes and conditions that prompt each of us to think and behave in certain ways, urging us to strive to see the humanity in those who cause harm.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:02:13):

These are just a few of the rich insights that our guests have shared, and you can view prior episodes through our website.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:02:19):

Our theme for today is “Transformative Change: Where Research and Action in the World Meet.” And I’m so delighted to welcome our featured speakers. So first I’ll introduce Doris Chang. Dr. Doris F. Chang is a clinical psychologist and associate professor of NYU Silver School of Social Work. And next we have Reggie Hubbard who is the Founder and Chief Serving Officer of Active Peace Yoga. He’s a teacher and an activist strategist.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:02:51):

I’d like to bring musician Grant Jones in as our guest performer today. We’re going to open the episode with a contemplative arts offering from Grant. Grant is a contemplative musician. He’s a researcher and activist, a third year clinical psychology PhD candidate at Harvard University. And he’s the Co-founder of the Black Lotus Collective, a meditation community that centers the healing and liberation of individuals with historically marginalized identities. His music is deeply rooted in Black Soul, R&B, and alternative music traditions. He loves his family, his friends, nature, travel, moving his body, and good food. Don’t we all?

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:03:33):

So please welcome Grant Jones.

**Grant Jones** (00:03:35):

Thank you so much for that beautiful introduction, Shankari. And hello everybody who’s here with me on this episode of Inspiring Minds. And like Shankari said, my name is Grant Jones. And to start us off, I want to invite everybody here into practice and invite everyone here into their breath. This is “Invitation to Breathing”.

**Grant Jones** (00:03:58):

(singing)

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:07:58):

Thank you, Grant.

**Grant Jones** (00:08:08):

Thank you.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:08:11):

I got caught in the moment. I teared up a little. That was really, really beautiful, thought provoking. The birds in the background. Were you going to do one more for us? Or we coming back at the end?

**Grant Jones** (00:08:21):

I am. I'm going to do more.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:08:22):

Okay, great. Wonderful.

**Grant Jones** (00:08:25):

I got you. Yeah, for sure. No, thank you. Yeah, thank you for practicing with me. It means a lot to be able to share and practice with you all. Now that we've settled into our practice, a formal practice, I want to shift our practice a little bit and introduce us to a practice around rage, which has been also present for me in the past year. And particularly the song is about rage with white supremacy to be frank. And the song is called "Insidious". I hope you all can receive it.

**Grant Jones** (00:09:06):

(singing)

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:12:11):

That's beautiful. Thank you so much, Grant. So we're looking forward to Grant rejoining us at the end of the episode. So don't stray too far.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:12:24):

So I am going to bring our speakers up onto the screen. Allow me to do a more formal introduction of our two speakers for today. So again, Dr. Doris F. Chang, thank you so much for joining us. Doris's research seeks to improve the well-being of racial and ethnic minorities. She is on the editorial boards of the *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, *Psychotherapy Research*, and *Frontiers in Psychology*, which is the cultural psychology section. Dr. Chang is a graduate of Nalanda Institute certificate program in contemplative psychotherapy, and she maintains a private practice in New York city.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:13:01):

Thank you, Doris.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:13:03):

Reggie Hubbard began his yoga journey in November 2014, seeking to alchemize and navigate extreme professional adversity. Reggie teaches members of Congress, congressional staff, leads progressive organizations and individuals sharing techniques for growing peace and ease as a foundation, not an afterthought. He also advises yoga communities and yoga studios, teachers, and broader wellness industry on the importance of diversity and inclusion, opening the practice to all, and eliminating exclusionary cultures and habits.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:13:37):

He currently serves as a senior political strategist for a leading progressive campaigning organization Move On, and he manages the relationships, impact, and communications with Capitol Hill.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:13:48):

So thank you so much, Reggie, for joining us today.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:13:51):

Again, our theme is “Transformative Change: Where Research and Action in the World Meet.” And I thought really long and hard about how this conversation should look between the three of us. And it led me to reflect on some sharings that some of our very own Mind & Life community has asked in the post-evaluation process, even as soon as CRC, Contemplative Research Conference that just ended. And one of the things that they stated in the evaluations is this desire to see more connection between research and practitioners, to see more teachings from more educators that implement programs on the frontline, and addressing how we put these theories into real practice.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:14:34):

So I'll start with Doris. Doris, the research that you conduct around critical cultural-relational approach and race to me seems to capture how privilege, racism, classism, and gender play out in the therapeutic environments between patients and therapists. And it really feels like you're bringing that research to the front lines. Can you share more about this incredibly important work that you've been doing, particularly the concept of rupture and repair, and why it's so important to you as an individual?

**Doris Chang** (00:15:04):

So, right. So I'm a practicing clinician and I'm also a teacher. And in my own clinical practice work, I've really tried to pay attention to moments where the relationship I have with my clients begins to break down. And so for those of us who are in any kind of relationship, we know those moments where we're feeling connected, we're feeling close, and then something happens and maybe you feel misunderstood or you feel harmed. And so you pull away or you might really want to kind of confront when that happens.

**Doris Chang** (00:15:40):

And so ruptures are really common in all relationships and especially when there's some form of social difference, like racial differences, gender differences. Those ruptures are actually more common and harmful in the context of differential power dynamics. And so in my research, I'm really trying to understand how can we build trusting, productive relationships across racial and cultural differences? How can we train clinicians better? How can we train teachers better to look at our programming and look at the ways in which we've been socialized to interact with one another produces harm in those relationships. So it feels like really crucial work that really is born out of my own lived experience.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:16:30):

Have you seen a change or an evolution of this work during the pandemic? Or how has it shifted your approach?

**Doris Chang** (00:16:37):

Well, one thing that I have tried to do increasingly, and this hasn't just been through the pandemic. But I think one of the things the pandemic has done is it has given us all permission to take better care of ourselves. And so really leaning into contemplative practice and mindfulness is a very important part of how I train young clinicians who are about to go into the world, who want to be helpful agents of healing and not cause harm. And so we regularly talk about how we need to really be still and centered and grounded to be able to hear that really harmful programming that comes from a culture of white supremacy and to be monitoring our own thoughts and behaviors with compassion so that we can show up for our clients the way that we actually want to.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:17:34):

I'm really glad that you touched on self care and incorporating the contemplative practices into the research. And it leads me into this question that I had for Reggie. Reggie so much of Doris's work is centered around learning from marginalized voices, our stories, and then allowing those stories to shape how we view human condition. And then that informs how we become more aligned as a human society. There's this need for global community work to rupture the systemic inequities in our society, and Grant's lyrics "Insidious," that tending to my needs. He addressed that in his song.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:18:11):

You've recently become much more focused on your own inner self study through extensive meditation training, more collective moments of silence and stillness, and you even broke your vow of silence to join us here today. 2020 proved to be an exhausting year for almost all of us mentally, spiritually, politically, physically. For someone like yourself who spent the better half of your life rooted in purpose and activism and engaged action-oriented political work, why is it so important for mindfulness and contemplative practices to play an equal part in that journey towards right action and addressing systemic change?

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:18:50):

Thank you for the question and thank you again for the opportunity to share and serve. I'll answer the question twofold.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:18:56):

One is that sometimes rupturing is necessary. As someone who spent the past four years on the frontline of disrupting Donald Trump's agenda, we saw opportunities to disrupt and rupture norms that never served us in the first place. So I would offer a, not a counter, but a different view of rupturing. Sometimes rupturing is essential to disrupt systems that never served us in the first place.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:19:25):

And with respect to self care, I mean, I've shared this before and I actually had the blessing of sharing this - it's my experience with about 200 global changemakers yesterday. I've been blessed to live like my activist career one way and then the other way, right? So the first half of my activist career, I did the 18 hour days, and bourbon and cigarettes for breakfast, and cursing everybody out because that's just kind of what you did. And as I debriefed with someone

yesterday that I thought I was doing good, and in my heart, I was doing good. But I was like diminishing myself, which is a net negative. So you can have the best intentions in the world, but if you do harm to yourself, you're actually doing harm. Your good is being seen through the filter of harm, which is actually harm.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:20:13):

So the blessing of contemplative practice for me and why it's so essential is that there's no way that I would have been able to view the past years specifically as a blessing were it not for contemplative practice. Contemplative practice, especially in the past year or so, showed me that... It gave me the opportunity to teach. Were it not for contemplative practice, I would have been stuck in my norm as like, "I don't need to teach. Someone else can do that." But contemplative practice was the genesis of that benevolent nudge that was just like, "Homie, you're up. Speak your mind. People need to hear from you."

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:20:53):

And were it not for that contemplative practice and that benevolent spiritual nudge, I wouldn't have been able to share these practices with members of Congress last year, right? So the pandemic hit. Everyone and their mama was like, "This brother is hella peaceful. So show us what you're doing." And if I were just like, "Nah, I'm good," then it never would have happened. But contemplative practice gave me the humility to step into the opportunity to be of service.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:21:22):

Benevolent spiritual practice. I love that. Thank you, Reggie. And I'm hearing you say that there's a real need to humanize resistance politics and movements that seek to change oppressive systems in the world. I hear you say that throughout all these platforms that you're featured on. The work that we do as social changemakers and activists is very much like going into a battlefield. And how you are kind of like this General, holding space for members of Congress, I really appreciate all of that work that you did.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:21:53):

And I think creating intersectional approaches from research to contemplative practices can help connect sustainable action in the world, which builds that resilience and self-care that I think both of you were talking about.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:22:04):

So Doris, recently Mind and Life community member Tish Jennings came out with a book titled "Teacher Burnout Turnaround", and we featured a blog on teacher led reforms. Can you share your thoughts on how teachers can combat or better yet exist in this new normal during the pandemic and how centering mindfulness studies in K-12 education settings can potentially help uplift the education system?

**Doris Chang** (00:22:32):

Yeah. Thank you so much for the question. So some of my work has looked at how do we develop teachers' critical consciousness and give them, as Reggie was talking about, tools to disrupt normative patterns of oppression that are reified in classrooms all over the country, in

terms of who gets referred for behavioral problems, who gets suspended more often, who graduates, who doesn't. So giving teachers the tools to be able to do a critical analysis of the educational system. Also to have their own classrooms and their own teaching practice is so crucial to address these racial inequities, social class inequities we see.

**Doris Chang** (00:23:13):

So mindfulness and other contemplative practices in our work: so we have been training teachers with critical consciousness content paired with mindfulness and contemplative training. And our thinking is that it gives them greater capacity to sit with discomfort because they are aware of the ways in which they are perpetuating the various systems, sometimes unintentionally, that they are consciously trying to disrupt. But they are part of a system that can... It is ultimately harmful. Can cause harm to so many children. And so I think it's given them strategies for sitting with their own discomfort, for being able to have more compassion for children that they may not understand, or may immediately have a bias against.

**Doris Chang** (00:24:03):

And then we know that it can be very, very helpful for children themselves to have these practices as part of the classroom. And so some of our teachers are actually teaching it more with their students and talking about how it is creating some softness in the classroom relationships with the children. And giving kids some support and some tools to help them in school settings that can be very, very stressful. So obviously with everything online, it is a little bit more challenging to do some of this in the Zoom space, but teachers are increasingly more receptive to these strategies and tools.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:24:46):

Yeah. I mean, it sounds like you're really asking the teachers to become learners. There are intentional steps of that educational reform and shifting their belief system. And it's sitting with the discomfort. I love that you named that, the sitting with discomfort too, because I think that spans across all different kinds of professional capacity and just on the one-on-one human connection. So thank you. I want to shift the topic just a little bit to discuss bias, stereotypes, and harm that is inflicted upon community of color. Here we are four people of color in this conversation today, and it doesn't go unnoticed by me that the four of us may be seen as a potential threat to a viewer that's viewing this content. And what I mean by that is over the centuries, even as our nation has struggled to prohibit the most vile forms of exclusion and suppression, it's neglected to uproot that entrenched structural systemic racism.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:25:46):

This leads to distorted ways of sharing power and influence, how people of color are viewed and portrayed. And I was thinking what's the most current mainstream example that I can show of a stereotype or a portrayal of people of color. And it made me think of Meghan Markle's mom who just... Meghan Markle and Prince Harry were just recently interviewed by Oprah. And the way that the media portrays her African-American mom is this dreadlocked Black woman from the wrong side of the tracks. When in reality she's an educated social worker, she's an advocate for the elderly, and she's a yoga teacher. And the media names her as something else. And so it made me think about this shared common ground between the Black and the Asian lived



experience, particularly around historical and current violence and imprisonment. And so what does it look like for both of you to navigate wellness spaces, political and academic spaces as people of color, and why might it be important to explicitly name or identify racial and ethnic diversity in these spaces? And maybe I'll start with you first. Reggie,

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:26:58):

Thank you for the question. The blessing of my activist experience is that, and you and I have talked about this, I go into the wellness space and I'm like, look, I have no space for impeachment. So I ain't scared of you. You know what I mean? So sorry, sister, Becky, Karen, whatever. I'm not really scared of you because like I stared down the orange monster and held space for impeachment. And I mentioned that because contemplative practice has given me the space, and to bring Grant's song back into the room, to hold space for beauty and rage with equanimity. So I know that as I embody these practices in a plus-sized African-American male form, that it is disruptive, but it's disruptive in a way that causes opportunities for change. I teach Black youth via Zoom on Thursdays, which is pretty amazing.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:27:52):

And so I didn't even think about this, but the parents told me that the kids not only enjoy dinosaur yoga or we do yoga and the alphabet or those sorts of things, but huge Black dude doing yoga poses and teaching meditation to these kids is instructive, not just for the Asana, but just the messenger of the Asana. I forget that because I'm too busy being myself. And so the blessing of the challenge I would say is that it has given me boldness and I use "benevolent" a lot because I've been in benevolent, contemplative practice. Benevolent apathy, I really don't care if your feelings are hurt.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:28:38):

You know why? Because your silence has been violence to people who look like me, whether it be in the wellness space, the political space or those sorts of things. The last thing I'll share is I've been told on more than one occasion that I'm intimidating or that people are scared by you. And I was just like, are you scared by me? Are you scared of what you think that I am? Because I'm a peaceful, loving dude. This isn't jewelry, these are prayer beads. I pray all the time I grew up in the church. And so are you afraid by what society told you that I am? Or are you afraid of what I actually am

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:29:15):

Doris?

**Doris Chang** (00:29:17):

So, I grew up in a totally white town in Texas. And so like so many Asian Americans, I think there was an aspiration to whiteness. And so in terms of my own racial identity development it's taken me a long time to really see...So much I think about what it means to be racialized as an Asian American is really different than what it means to be racialized as a Black American. And to really shed the harmful impact of like the model minority myth that somehow you, we work hard and we can be as good as white people. And to realize like, "Oh, that actually I'm never going to be white." I'm never going to be white.



**Doris Chang** (00:30:06):

And I actually realized that quite late in life in college and went through my own journey of rediscovering my roots and all of that. But mindfulness has really been a crucial part of my journey to see that racial programming and to see how toxic it is. And to clarify for myself how sometimes my actions serve to maintain the status quo. And I've worked in predominantly white institutions my entire life. And so I know that look of like, "okay, we get to count you as a person of color, but you're not scary. You're going to just keep your head down. You're going to do what you're told. You're not going to cause problems." And that's the dominant story that people think of sometimes when they think about Asian-Americans in this sort of race conversation.

**Doris Chang** (00:30:56):

And so for me, it's really been about, about opening my mouth. Not silencing myself to conform to expectations. That if I follow them, I'm rewarded by white society, by white leaders, white administrators. And so I'm increasingly able to see how this script pulls me to respond in certain ways and it's really painful. And sometimes I go with it and sometimes I challenge it. And really increasing, I think seeing the importance of Asian Americans to rise up in fighting racism. To stand in solidarity with Black Americans and other Asian-Americans, who've been fighting this battle for generations. More and more of us, I think, are starting to reckon with our own understandings of what it means to be Asian-American.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:31:53):

Yeah. I love that you all, both touched on a shared experience and it makes me think about in the wake of these authoritarian leaders or just leaders in general, so our current political system and how it consolidates power, what are some peaceful methods that contemplatives can use to engage in civil resistance theory? How can we be citizens that work together to have more agency over what we are led to believe and how we are allowed to show up in the world? Do you have some suggestions on how people can do that?

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:32:31):

So one thing I'll say - and Doris thank you for your sharing, I appreciate that because it brought to mind something else I want to bring on the last question - is that mindfulness practice, so there is a self-loathing that exists that we carry because...I went to Yale and I don't mention that to pat myself on the back, but I played the white game too. And then I realized y'all going to hate me no matter what. Oh my God. But what I learned through mindfulness practice, and this actually happened recently...So the brother who got shot in Ohio for carrying a sandwich outside of his house. And I even put this on social media. I was like, "I hereby no longer care what white people think of me, because you're never going to like me. You're never going to love me the way I need to love myself."

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:33:25):

Mindfulness practice gave me that clarity. Even if I work for Move On, even if I went to Yale, even if I worked for the White House - I've done all of those things - I can still get shot for carrying a sandwich outside of my house. I know. I hereby declare independence from caring what white society thinks about me and what that gave me is tremendous freedom to begin

loving myself with the fierce grace that is required to hold space in these environments that seek to destroy us.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:33:58):

So to answer the second question, there's no way that I could do my work either as an activist or as a teacher without grace. And so having fierce grace in a situation that seeks to destroy me gives me the internal compass and the internal fortitude to be able to withstand the withering, either passive or active, means to seek to diminish and to destroy. But grace allows me to stand there anyway and just kind of be like, "Okay, yeah, I know that you're sick of hearing me talk, but I'm going to keep talking and I'm going to keep talking from this loving space. And I'm going to keep talking from this loving space with this measured tone. And this measured tone can elevate if you keep, if you keep pushing this button." So mindfulness practice allows me to stand in this fire and to not be consumed by it, but to be nurtured by it.

**Doris Chang** (00:34:56):

I love that Reggie, to stand in this fire. I really resonate with that. I mean, I think that just speaking from my positionality. I've been trying to hold space in recent weeks because of the publicized incidents of racial violence against elderly Asian-Americans in this country. And holding space for so many Asian-Americans in my local community on campus. And really using contemplative practice to give people permission to grieve, to feel what they're feeling, to have self-compassion for themselves, just to give each other space to feel it all, right. Because I think it's in a busy world with the new news stories coming in all the time and feeling so pulled, I think we don't often give ourselves the space to feel the feelings and to sit with each other and hold those feelings for each other.

**Doris Chang** (00:35:58):

And that includes rage as you and Grant have talked about so eloquently. It's not just sadness, it's not just frustration. It is rage. It's real rage. And to have a place to put that and metabolize it and actually draw strength from it, I think is really what our communities need. Really every space that I'm in now, every healing space, whether it's therapy or teaching or these community conversations, I try to integrate some kind of contemplative practice because we need something to help us just hold everything that we're dealing with. And more and more people are receptive to it. And it's been something that I think is accessible to all of us. So just very great and grateful to have that in my pocket.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:36:49):

Yeah. I love that. You both talked about peace and diplomacy over war and hate. Can we be Buddhist, Christians, yogis, spiritual beings, and still be activists? How do we approach this work of expanding our social and environmental awareness? You talked a lot about speaking up and using our voices, maybe Doris, in your work of research, is there any advice that you can give to researchers of how we can do this? Still be the spiritual beings and still be powerful researchers and activists sharing this work, making systemic change.

**Doris Chang** (00:37:28):

Yeah. So many researchers I think are speaking up and calling out inequities. For example, in terms of who gets grant funding. There's huge disparities showing that African-Americans and Asian American researchers get funding, federal funding at a lower rate than white researchers. And so there are inequities all up and down the chain in terms of who gets hired, who gets promoted, who makes it, who gets tenured, who gets grants. And so researchers are starting to speak about this, to advocate for more equity to support scholars of color who were trying to do research that is often difficult to publish because a lot of the editors are also white and think research on race and oppression may not be that scientifically interesting. So I think that we are doing our own housekeeping, I think, within the scientific community to really do an audit of inequitable practices and trying to advocate for policy changes that might address them.

**Shankari Goldstein (00:38:35):**

Reggie, do you have any other additional practical ideas? You work with so many organizations. How do you go in and address top-down one-size-fits-all approaches of organizational and political systems? And how do you express what successful shared power and mutual reliance can look like for them?

**Reggie Hubbard (00:38:52):**

Yeah. Thank you for the question. I said this in an interview I gave the other day. So I grew up in the Christian Church. I got involved in politics and activism to make the world a better place. I didn't get involved in activism to pad my resume. I didn't get involved because I'm trying to be the first chief...I didn't get involved in it for that. I got involved to serve. I got involved to help people. And so Christianity, and my Christian upbringing forms the basis of my activism. Yoga has made me a better Christian because it's kept me focused on service, it's kept me focused on using the gifts of this body and this form in service to humanity. My Buddhist practice has made me a better Yogi, right? So like all Buddhist practice focusing on the present moment, focusing on the things that I've internalized and didn't even know.

**Reggie Hubbard (00:39:48):**

So I used my yoga practice to filter through and sublimate or metabolize the things that no longer serve me that I've been internalizing. And so Christian root, yoga practice, Buddhist brain, right? So that's the way that I've been able to not only make sense of it, but that's just how my spiritual evolution has transpired. And with respect to organizations, I just go to folks. And so one of the most disruptive things I've been able to do is be peaceful. So you've mentioned that the name of my teaching practice is called Active Peace. Can you imagine on Capitol Hill, which is far from peaceful most of the time, to walk in with prayer beads out, Afro out, hella chill, how that's disruptive, right? One of the best compliments I've got my life was from Sister Ayanna Pressley.

**Reggie Hubbard (00:40:42):**

She said, "Brother, let me tell you something about you." I'm like, "Oh my God, what is it?" She was like, "You're so cool that when you walk into the room, the blood pressure drops." So in a world that is hypervigilant, hyper-focused, the presence that these practices have given me have been benevolently disruptive. And so with respect to top-down cultures, we all know that spiritual practices, an individualistic pursuit more or less. However, giving the space within the

organization for people to find their means of practice is probably the best gift that you can give them. So you may be a monolith, but if you, as a monolith have a culture of...Okay, so we're going to offer meditation. We're going to offer movement practices. We're going to elevate or venerate these things as part of our culture that you take care of yourself and here's a way to do it. So that is what I offer.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:41:42):

The last thing I'll share with respect to that is I've taught mindfulness and yoga and meditation to the DNC. I've taught it to the DCCC. I've taught it to political organizations in an election cycle. So that's super disruptive. So the monolithic organizations were just like, "man, we've got to figure this out." And the one way...And for those of you that haven't taken my classes. And this isn't a plug, but this is my style. I give you tremendous freedom. So we do some warm ups and we do a lot of things in community. And then once you're warmed up, what does your body need? What does your mind need? And I'll offer guidance. It's kind of my story, but not really. I'll offer guidance on what you need individually. However, the container is for all. And in that container, you do what you need to do for yourself.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:42:39):

Hmm. So good. You got there. I was like trying to pull it out and you guys got there and I'm just want to thank you. I want to thank you both so much for your time and your shared energy. I'm going to open it up for public Q&A. And I just want to say again, that you're both two of my favorite presenters to work with. Doris, I enjoyed working with you so much as a Program Planning Committee member. And Reggie, you always just bring so much positivity and so much fire at the same time, that duality, you spoke about it in some of your answers today. And what I took from you today is that we really need to take these learnings and talk about them openly and connect them to everyday practices that is prolonged over a long period, sustained without break and done in community to bring real change to systems. And I just look forward to learning so much more from you both over the coming years. I do want to allow for time for public Q&A to come in. So as we move into this open Q&A, please continue to populate your questions in the chat box so that I can ask them directly for you. But you also have the option of raising your hand and I'll pull you up through the Zoom features. I'll bring you up live and you can verbally ask her questions. So we'll just hear you. We won't see you. I'll keep my eyes open for those virtual raised hands and bring you up on screen. And then there might be a little bit of a quick transition time. At that point, I'll invite you to unmute your mic and voice your question.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:44:08):

And we do have a question here ready from Laurentu, I'm sorry if I said your name incorrectly. As an internal family systems IFS practitioner, how can we work from inside out, with our own parts, before even trying to go further and make change? Would you agree that more compassion to your own internal parts can bring more compassion and tolerance around us? And maybe I'll direct that one to you Doris, if that feels fitting.

**Doris Chang** (00:44:42):

Thank you so much for the question. I think it's actually the right question, right? What can we do first? We shouldn't expect that we can work out our stuff with our clients. That's not an

appropriate use of their time. So I think one thing that I've come to realize is so crucial is to learn about our own histories in this country. So much of what we think we know about each other is filtered through very biased telling of history. And so taking some time to educate ourselves about our racial history in this country, I think it gives us a particular lens and a particular starting point. I think the other part of the work is actually reflecting on our own biases. The stories that we tell about ourselves and each other. Being in conversation with other folks who can help you become and practice speaking about difference, speaking about race and racism. Because our clients will talk about it with us, if we are receptive to it.

**Doris Chang** (00:46:00):

And in our research, we found that so many clinicians shut it down. A client of color comes in and they talk about something that happened at work or at school. And because the therapist is so uncomfortable talking about racism themselves, they kind of steer that conversation to a different topic. And that really shuts down the client's experience. And it begins to reshape the therapy relationship into something that caters to the clinician's comfort. So we need to be in spaces where we can practice speaking about these things with each other, and we can get feedback about it. And so I'm really excited that so many of us are seeking affinity group spaces, to have these conversations. To share with humility our experiences and the difficulties we have.

**Doris Chang** (00:46:50):

So getting really comfortable in conversations about race. And then when we're with our clients to listen deeply to their stories with humility. Ask questions. Don't come in with your interpretation, just ask lots of questions and listen with an open heart. And then the last thing I'll say is to look for our common humanity. A clinician in one of our studies talked about...Actually it was a patient at one of our studies talked about her white therapist. She's a Latin woman, talked about her white therapist offering her some lotion. And it was a cold day. And she was so touched by that gesture of just seeing her humanity in her therapist. So let's look for our common humanity and ways to express that to each other.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:47:43):

Thank you, Doris. Love that. I'm always promoting that. Being seen. That concept of being seen and wanting to be seen. We do have a few people that have raised their hands. So Indie Rishi Singh, would you like to come up and ask your question?

**Indie Rishi Singh** (00:47:59):

Sure. First of all, I want to acknowledge all of you guys. Thank you so much for your perspective.

**Indie Rishi Singh** (00:48:03):

First of all, I want to acknowledge all of you guys. Thank you so much for your perspectives, your life, your journey, your tribulations, everything, you guys are exemplary human beings. And thanks for leading the way. I actually had a totally different question. But after listening to this conversation, I kind of like feel compelled to ask a more kind of philosophical one. I don't know if

you guys know what's going on with India. I am really confused. I'm American, but I'm also Indian.

**Indie Rishi Singh** (00:48:27):

And I'm having so much issues over the past few months with how the media has completely ignored and there isn't solidarity with what's going on in India, even though we're like the same Brown people. And there's incredible violence and hatred happening in India within just the Brown community itself. And I'm also feeling totally just abandoned by so many spiritual communities and yoga communities that are not reaching back out to India and finding out how they can support human rights violations.

**Indie Rishi Singh** (00:48:57):

I mean, so many people practice yoga, but don't ever like, think about, "Hey, how do we help out India? India might be also going through some crazy racism and crazy social terrorism." But anyways, that's a whole nother conversation. But my question to you guys is as I've been studying that and trying to reconcile with how I feel about that and how I don't feel solidarity with my Black brothers and Asian friends here, there isn't this solidarity that we're coming together, this problem is now a global problem. So my question to you guys is I'm noticing a lack of mythology.

**Indie Rishi Singh** (00:49:31):

What gives me incredible resolve is I have such connection to the Sikh philosophy, the Sikh mythology, it helps me, galvanizes me to show up every day and be strong. But I noticed all across the board, what's up with mythology? It seems like there's like a mythless-ness. And so I want to ask you guys, do we need a new mythology? Are the old ones too antique? What's going on? How do we come together with a unified mythology that works?

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:49:59):

It's a big question. Go ahead, Reggie.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:50:04):

Blessings on the question and solidarity for the struggle. Part of my lived experience has to offer freedom in mind, body, and spirit for all oppressed peoples, whether it be systemic or personal, right? So I just want to put that out there. And my yoga journey is from the Indian philosophy, but also from the Kemetic and also from other aspects of the yoga experience as well. So I just want to put that out there. There are different paths from yoga as well. But with respect to the mythology, real talk, sometimes we've just got to create a new story.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:50:37):

One of the things that I've done through my lived experience, through my activism is start to speak because they've tried to silence Black and Brown voices forever. And so part of the reason that there is no mythology is because they put their either boot or their knee on our neck, rest in peace, Brother Floyd, or like they silenced us through oppressive policy or oppressive systems.



**Reggie Hubbard** (00:50:58):

And so now that there's a little bit of wiggle room, like I took a vow of silence because I started talking like three years ago and haven't shut up. So part of the reason that we don't have mythologies is because they told us not to speak or forced us, incentivized us not to speak and kept us separate from one another. So I know that from my lived experience, as I've started speaking out more, as I've stepped into the seat of the teacher more, as unapologetic, I mean, look over my shoulder, we got Marvin and Roberta, like I'm about as Black as it gets. And without apology that gives people a little bit of a, "Whoa, this brother's doing it. I can do it too."

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:51:37):

So we need to create new stories. We need to pass away old myths. And so bringing the rupture and repair ideology back into the conversation. We need to disrupt and rupture narratives that have been suppressive, destructive, and disgusting for quite some time. And in so doing put forth narratives that are rooted in our authentic experience and compassion, and then share it widely and broadly, incentivizing people to live their authentic story.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:52:08):

Thank you, Reggie. I'm going to bring up Mindful Littles. I'm going to unmute you. If you can ask your question.

**Travis Groth** (00:52:18):

Thank you for having me. My name is Travis Groth. I've actually interacted and received blessings and teachings from Brother Reggie before. I haven't had a chance to tell him in person this, but he is now considered one of my chief mentors and teachers in my training. I'm almost done with my 200 hour. That's where I met him in a lecture recently that he delivered for us in a Satsang, it was wonderful. So just wanted to get that out there. And thank you Doris for your work.

**Travis Groth** (00:52:50):

Working for Mindful Littles, we are non-profit that works with mindfulness, social-emotional learning, and yoga and service learning projects for youth K through eighth. One of the things in this disrupting narratives thing, a question that just got raised actually is informing my question now, because I couldn't quite get it out. I've been struggling with... I'm loving the "Christian root, yoga practice, Buddhist brain" reference to identities showing up that Reggie presented earlier because we are so caught up in having to be secular in our approach.

**Travis Groth** (00:53:28):

We are often working with rural communities now, especially trauma-ridden communities. Paradise, California is one, with their fire community. Now we're down in Fresno. And they're predominantly though white, middle class, working class communities. I ended up in an impasse in my practice and development and offerings, trying to find that secular approach. And because even talking about the word "spirit" can be problematic. In yoga we can't even say "prayer hands", we have to like say, "Just bring your hands to your chest or your heart." Right? So it's always like loaded and there's like a backstory because of all these other prevailing narratives about what religion and yoga practice and spiritual practices, contemplative practice is.



**Travis Groth** (00:54:18):

So my question is, what are some ways, especially in... this could go to either one of you, Doris or Reggie... into bringing research to really bolster efforts. We do a good job in our curriculum we've created, but I think we're missing some opportunities because I'm now in a place where I'm not running into communities of color to try to help. Although I would love that, but I don't know if that's my exact path in life. But I'm now finding myself in communities that are lacking color. And I have an opportunity, right? To start to raise awareness, expand people's consciousness and shift consciousness. And I want to do it in a way that's... I don't know how to do it. That's why I'm asking the question. I don't know how to do that in a way that I'm not like dropping spiritual non-secular ideas on communities that may or may not be ready, and actually sometimes are upfront not ready for something like that outside of a Christian perspective, or even not even a religious perspective at all.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:55:14):

Thank you.

**Travis Groth** (00:55:14):

Sorry if that was a lot.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:55:19):

It's Okay.

**Doris Chang:**

I mean, I can start off by saying, thank you so much for your work. It's amazing what you're doing. What's coming to mind is some principles from cultural adaptation research, which is a way that we take interventions that are created for one community and we try to adapt them so that they reflect the needs and the values and challenges of another community. And so in a way, the history of yoga and meditation in this country has been this series of cultural adaptations. And I think one piece of that involves really understanding what that local community cares about. What are the problems that they see are crucial. And is there a way that you can take what the science says about meditation and yoga and other contemplative practices and present that in a way that speaks directly to the local community concerns. So I think in a way it's about really knowing your audience and being able to talk about the research in ways that directly addresses the things that they care about.

**Shankari Goldstein:**

Do you want to add to that, Reggie?

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:56:29):

Yeah. Thank you, Brother T for the kind words, you trying to make her brother blush and cry on camera. Thanks for that. No, I would say that, and I'll speak from my lived experience, if you had told me when I started practicing yoga, that I would be offering meditation on Capitol Hill, I would've laughed in your face. I would have been like, "No man, that's good. I'm cool." So the ministry that shows up for you is the one that's given to you, right? So this is the one you've

been given. Blessings on the ministry that you've been given and in that, whatever you need to do to render it in a way that is both authentic for you and received by them is the practice, right? So I'll give you a perfect example. If I were to show up on Capitol Hill talking about, "Hey, love and light, Reggie here." They would be like, this brother has lost his damn mind.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:57:20):

I have offered the practice on the Hill and with operatives and in a way that is received by them. And that's all been read by activists, which is not the studio paradigm. So I've had to adopt and adapt the practices that have worked for me in the environment that I've been given. It's on the job research, right? So I'm like, "Okay, so this works for me." If I come in and talk about love and light, they're going to be like, "Yikes." And so what do I do in this moment that gets across to them? And what has happened over the course of the pandemic over the past year- I can't believe I've been teaching online for a year - but what has happened over the course of the past year is that a system has been created that speaks to activists and busy people and non-traditional yogis, and first timers, and those sorts of things that makes the practice accessible, which is in keeping with the research and the spiritual and liberatory benefits. But is not too much, you know what I mean?

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:58:23):

Yeah. Thank you. Thank you both. We have probably time for one, maybe two more questions, but I want to get this one in. This is from Francisca. First of all, thank you. The three of you have spoke about systemic problems. Systemic racism is one example. Another is our relationship with the environment, which is clearly not working. And non-white humans are usually the first ones to feel the deep effects of that relation. So there's a need for dramatic change, a systemic change. How do you think such a change can be put into practice? And I think this relates more to environmental issues and the climate crisis.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:59:05):

I need you to repeat that.

**Shankari Goldstein** (00:59:08):

That's okay. So you three spoke about systemic problems. Systemic racism is one example. Another is our relationship with the environment, which is clearly not working and non-white humans, so people of color are going to feel those effects first, right? So there's a need for a dramatic change, a systemic change. How do you think such a change can be put into practice? And I'm assuming that they're connecting it to the environmental crisis and the climate crisis and any advice you have around that.

**Reggie Hubbard** (00:59:41):

You have a couple of thoughts on that. So gratitude for the question. And again, if you've ever taken a silent spell, language is hard sometimes. So sorry for that. One is that, and I teach this regularly, is that the human being is the only individual that thinks of themselves outside of the natural order. So yikes. We as practitioners, as people, we need to remember that we are part of nature, not above it, right? So I think part of our environmental understanding is meta M-E-T-A. We are part of nature. We come from this nature, we will go back to nature.

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:00:21):

And when we realign our acquaintance with that writ, I think that's one start. The second start is that we have to be a little bit more pronounced about how the mismanagement of nature is impacting us. So people like myself who is activist and teacher, I go into halls of Congress or power and speak about this and say, "Hey, so your inability to come to an understanding of how to create policy that helps all of us is actually killing people. And if you don't want to hear it, that's okay. I'm going to continue to tell you this." Right?

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:00:59):

So people like myself need to speak up. And I think what we all can do is remember that we are part of nature. Nature is not something that we... We don't need to reacquaint ourselves with it. We just need to remember that we're part of it. You know what I mean? So that subtle shift in perception, rather than thinking you are the master of nature or some crazy Judeo-Christian priest, say "No, we're not the masters of nature. Nature is the master of us." And so as such, that has allowed me to be a better steward of the environment, that has allowed me to be a better steward of my body, which is a natural emanation. So that subtle shift in our personal relationship is one thing I think we could do.

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:01:39):

Secondarily I think that boots on the ground, organizing and creating collective consciousness about this, and demanding that shifts happen is how we need to do this. The pandemic has shown us that the norms that we used to live by never served in the first place. And so there's an opportunity over the next several years, I would say, because as we reemerge from the pandemic, people are going to be like grasping to figure out norms. And so the last thing I'll share is that I was on a call with a teacher friend of mine recently. And he was like, "No one knows what the new norms are." I'm like, "We get to create them." Right? So in a time where people are scurrying about seeking what once was we get to create what is in alignment with natural law and a better service for all.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:02:30):

Thank you, Reggie.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:02:31):

Doris, if it's okay. I just want to make sure one more person who has their hand raised gets their question in. So I'm going to bring up Jerome Friedman, if you're still there. Would you like to ask your question?

**Jerome Friedman** (01:02:42):

Okay. So basically I loved what Reggie just said about the environment and being part of nature. My question revolves around being an elderly - I'm 81 - an elderly white Jewish Buddhist. And it's actually the first time I've had a chance to ask this question and I'm a little nervous to ask it, but I think I've done a lot of work on myself over the years. And I've practiced with Thich Nhat Hanh for 35 years now. And I'm trying to figure out how we can tell at what level our racism

exists. In other words, I have a good feeling that I have a good relationship with other people of color.

**Jerome Friedman** (01:03:58):

My daughter grew up with a girl whose mother was Japanese. The person who basically saved my life from bladder cancer was a Chinese physician. And I just feel like I'm pretty wholesome with regard to racism. But I don't know how to judge my position, on a scale of 1 to 10 or a scale of one to five. I would like to know if you have any scales about this and any way of communicating your level of racism, because I think it's an important part of white supremacy to understand where you really are.

**Jerome Friedman** (01:04:55):

You know, Because there's the level of, "Hey, I'm white, I'm protected. I'm a very evolved person, so to speak." But it just puzzles me. Do you guys know of anything that can give you a feeling for that particular question, of how do you rate your racism and know when you're cured? I also experienced some racism when I was a young boy, because I was a Jewish young boy and schools had white teachers who somehow didn't like Jews. And so I experienced that as a child. I haven't experienced that recently, but I feel like I'd like to know if you have the scale or some way of determining that, because I'd like to be free of all racism, thoughts, but I'd like to hear what you have to say. I really appreciate your talks. Thank you.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:06:26):

Thank you so much Jerome. And thank you for being vulnerable enough to share that question. And maybe we can also invite Grant back in to be a part of the answer if he wants to. And I'll just open it up for the group.

**Doris Chang** (01:06:40):

Thank you so much for that question. I feel like everybody should be asking ourselves that question. So thank you for your humility and the offering. As a researcher, we have lots of ways that we try to measure our racism. They're not perfect. They're problematic in a lot of ways, because even though we might be able to report what our racial attitudes are, what it doesn't capture is the way in which it's just kind of seeped into our entire consciousness, right? The sort of the invisible, the unconscious parts that make us feel close to some groups and feel distant from other groups that allow those stereotypes to pop into our head as we're walking down the street passing each person.

**Doris Chang** (01:07:31):

And so there are some tools, the implicit association test is one that is used sometimes to try to understand some of those associations we have. But the real question is really, I think, can we acknowledge that we're all a little bit racist, if not a lot racist, right? And that is true for all of us who live in the world because we're such a globalized, hybridized world at this point that like we cannot escape the story, this harmful story about our racial hierarchies with whiteness at the top. It is in all of us to varying degrees and harmful to all of us, whether or not we realize it.

**Doris Chang** (01:08:16):

So I think that the other thing is really looking at our behavior, not so much just what's in our mind because our minds are tricky places, messy places, but to really be asking ourselves really every moment are my actions perpetuating racial inequities, or are they dismantling those inequities? And every moment we have an opportunity to make a choice in our actions, regardless of what thoughts are in our minds. So I'll just leave you with that thought.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:08:54):

Thank you Doris. Did you want to add to that Grant? I see you're both reaching for it. I'll let Grant go first.

**Grant Jones** (01:08:58):

No, no. I'm happy to add to that. Doris, thank you so much for that beautiful answer. And yeah, I feel very aligned with so much of what you said and particularly, I think what I want to zone in on is racism as a feature of consciousness, which I feel like is so important because I think what that does - I think it does two things. I think it, one, necessitates the clarity that Doris brought us into of the reality that we are all conditioned by racist systems, period. It just is what it is. And then I also think it is an important orientation around racism because it also provides one with room to realize that there's never an end to being done. I think part of your question Jerome was almost, "I want to be free of racist thoughts."

**Grant Jones** (01:09:54):

And I too have the same desire. And also realizing that these things, this frame, the story as Doris put it, is all the way down and all the way up. And the depth of the history that has been literally beaten into all of us, that hurts all of us, is so deeply rooted that I don't see... for at least I'll speak for myself. The freedom that I look for is not freedom from the story. It's the space to realize that the story is happening. And for me being able to create that space is where I find the freedom within my movement around white supremacy. Because white supremacy is here, it happened. It's here, it's around. Why people are never going to, like Reggie said, white people are literally never going to... I'm never going to be white, Doris said I'm never going to be white.

**Grant Jones** (01:10:51):

It's just what it is. Like, I'm never going to invert this hierarchy or dismantle it in this lifetime, but yet I can see that a story's happening. And in that site, in that edge, that's where I personally find the freedom that I can grasp in this life. And for me, that's where that edge lives. It's realizing that consciousness all the way down creates these stories and will continue to create stories. And yet we can continue to create space around the way that stories arise in us. And so for me, getting that orientation around this monumental story structure, this massive ego structure that we happen to create, I would say, I would give that as an offering to you. And seeing the story there, there can be a lot of freedom and a lot of dismantling that can happen within that.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:11:44):

Reggie.

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:11:45):

Blessings on that brilliance, Doris and Grant. I really appreciate that. And what I would say, just to be mega spiritual about it, as someone in the midst of contemplative practice, Brother Jerome, we're never going to be free from racism.

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:12:01):

And in that we get the opportunity to offer compassion to ourselves on how we interact with norms that have been visited upon us, and that we may be attached to without even knowing that we're attached to. Compassion practice is key. The awareness that we're never going to... I mean, racism exists in Black and Brown cultures. You're light-skinned. No. You're not. All this stuff, it's everywhere. The term "high yellow"... All this crazy stuff that has been visited upon all of us because of that. So we will never be cured of racism writ large as a structure. We can however, be cured of our attachment to the norms through increasing awareness, through contemplative practice. So offering, your courage in stepping forward, love and grace for that, because I know so many people who identify as white, don't ask the question.

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:13:02):

So you asking the question, in my mind, is a step toward freedom. Because you could have been like this, because a lot of people do that, but you offered the question, so you're seeking to heal, which to me is a path towards freedom. And the last thing I'll share is that one of the blessings of these stories of my elders, and gratitude to you, dear elder, for sharing your perspective at 81 years old. Our job in this life is simply to carry the ball forward. You may not score, but your job is to carry it forward. So can you be a little less racist? Can you be a little less this, can you be a little less attached to these norms, and in so doing, can you give people permission to follow the same path?

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:13:54):

Thank you all. Wow. Grant, I had a question for you. In every conversation we explore access to mindfulness, to find joy in the face of these challenging times, and we can witness our states when we experience fear, anger, trauma, and beyond racism, which we've definitely tackled today, and it's a global health crisis. We're facing another looming mental health crisis in the face of the pandemic: isolation, loneliness, potentially another year of hybrid lockdowns and social distancing. And it leads me to think about the work that you're doing. Can you share a little bit about your research and your life's work, which centers around the development and implementation of liberatory tools for underserved populations?

**Grant Jones** (01:14:41):

Yeah. That was a beautifully put question. Thank you so much for asking said question. And, yeah I would love to speak to it and I could obviously speak forever, so I'll try to keep this bounded, let's say. But yeah, I guess to start, I hold some formal positions within this world. I am a third year as Shankari mentioned at beginning of this session. I'm a third year clinical psychology PhD at Harvard, and I also am a co-founder of the Black Lotus collective, which Shankari mentioned is a collective that seeks to center the liberation and healing of individuals with historically marginalized identities. So Black, Brown, queer folk, trans folk, folks with disabilities, et cetera. And for me, I think that work, just to make it very simple and kind of as we



alluded to along this entire session, the work always starts with me, like really, really making sure that I am well.

**Grant Jones** (01:15:46):

There's so much complexity. Even the question that you named, we have a pandemic, there's a mental health crisis, there's all this stuff to solve. There's like... We're about to go maybe two more times, there's so much, and it's so easy to think about the scale of the number of things that need to be solved and to complexify, especially being involved in such heavily intellectual practices. It's very, very easy for me to abstract myself into oblivion. And I'm sure the folks maybe on the panel can relate to that as well. And so I think for me just to make it really, really simple, it comes back to actually, am I okay? Am I literally all right? I actually... It's very easy to do, especially in the spaces within predominantly white spaces that I navigate, to have that question go totally out the window.

**Grant Jones** (01:16:41):

I mean, there's so much to do, and there's so much exciting work to take on that it's very easy to forget to ask the question. Not only like, am I okay and that to just make it even less violent, like how okay am I? When I think about liberation, like liberation is joyous, it's spacious, it's buoyant in the face of all things like, am I vibrating there because if I'm not, then what am I actually giving to people if I'm actually not feeling that for myself? And so for me, it comes to being extremely rigorous about that question. Can I access this every day? No matter what's happened can I try? If I can't access this today - I can't access buoyant spaciousness, even in the midst of all things, what can I access?

**Grant Jones** (01:17:23):

And let me make sure that I'm accessing something, something spacious. Because again for me, I think in approaching this work, I have to be extremely clear about the fact that again, it's very easy to have this question escape us. It's very easy to take the work, externalize it, and then do it. Especially again, being able to exist in the spaces that I do exist at Harvard. I know that I have an ability to just like externalize work and go. Especially to survive within systems of white supremacy I've just kind of had to learn and know how to do that. And at the same time, in so knowing, I also know how easy it is to have a loss within that process, the loss of self, loss joy, loss of life, loss of all things that feel holy and good and righteous.

**Grant Jones** (01:18:20):

And so in answering your question, I think for me it really, really goes down to am I doing this? Am I doing the work for me? And then trusting that from there all can flow. I really, for me, so many people are going to... This question is going to come to me and it has come. And it comes in so many different forms, in so many different forms of work and it's a stressful-ass question. That's stressful. How am I going to solve it? That's stressful. I don't know. So for me, I just get super basic. For me, it just really is the matter of getting like hella basic. Am I doing my practice? And then like really letting the rest of go. Because the world again, really, really wants us to be complexified and really, really wants us to be confused. And so for me, just making sure that I'm clear on my work and I'm moving the ball forward just a little bit is what I have for this life. Getting again, very, very simple with it. That's my answer for you.



**Shankari Goldstein** (01:19:19):

And there's that radical authenticity. Well, I'm going to close. I have so many more questions that I wish we could stay, but I know this will not be the last time that the three of you are in space with Mind & Life community. I have no doubt. So I'll close with our signature question that we always ask to all of our presenters at the end of each episode. And that is what is one action step or insight from today's conversation that you think really stuck with you, resonated with you, and that you might kind of take beyond this space and carry out into your life. And that goes for the participants as well. What's something that really stuck with you that you can take from this conversation?

**Doris Chang** (01:20:08):

I'm sitting with Reggie's statement just about being unapologetically who you are. I think that that's hard for a lot of us. You see the rewards of conformity and the rewards of playing by the rules. And that's really radical. And I think it takes a long time to get there, to feel okay with that. And so I think just being authentic and having some pride in where you come from and who you are is to me maybe the most powerful thing we can each do, especially as people of color in particular.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:20:54):

Grant.

**Grant Jones** (01:20:58):

Yeah. Again, I think for me on the theme of being simple, like deepen, period, deepen into this, deepen into showing up as this. And I think for me, it's just to follow along of what Doris said, not receiving rewards is super hard. It's so painful. The amount of practice that it takes to be able to stand within a sea of people and literally receive hatred, and literally receive disdain. And to be able to stand upright, do it day after day, that is so hard. It's super hard. I want to be able to do that. I want to be able to do it as seamlessly as I possibly can in this life so that I can invite other folks into doing the same thing. Because once we all start doing that, we all can dismantle the stories that we tell ourselves about what actually makes us valuable. And we can actually embody that feeling of true sight and true feeling, true life and true liberation.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:22:16):

Beautiful. Thank you Grant. Reggie, closing thoughts?

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:22:21):

Every time I engage in one of these formats and forums, I am reminded of the simplicity of the human experience and that we have so much more in common than we give ourselves credit for. And what specifically sticks with me is the courage of my Brother Jerome's question and the heartfelt - So when you offer from yourself, from a place of vulnerability, did you see how all of us responded? All of us responded in care and concern and mutual uplift. So for me, the lesson is when you offer from vulnerability in sangha, in sacred space, which the goal of practice for me is to create sacred space everywhere I walk. And so when you offer from vulnerability in sangha

it creates opportunities for collective uplift. So creating sacred space through vulnerability and then mutual uplift from that sacred space.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:23:20):

Thank you, Reggie. Yeah. Beautiful comments and reflections being shared in the chat. We'll capture all of these for each of you and share what really resonated with our audience. I just want to thank all of you, all three of you again presenters, once more, and I want to close with a few closing reflections of my own. Our conversation today was such a deep exploration of how mindfulness and contemplative practice has manifested in our speakers, deeply entangled personal and professional lives. Their benevolent practice has helped them uphold emotions of rage and beauty equanimously. And it has helped them rupture and disrupt imposed social and personal narratives of conformity and self-loathing, that prompt us to behave and believe in certain ways. It's helped them be brave to generate benevolent apathy in the face of hatred and be more compassionate.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:24:11):

So I'm encouraging all of us to move forward, ask questions, self-educate more about our own histories, our own biases, and listen with an open heart. We really got that from our three speakers today. So let's look for that common humanity, be brave, create new mythologies and narratives. And in Reggie's words, let's stand in the fire and not be consumed by it, but rather be nurtured by it. So thank you all once again, and we will be gathering together on Wednesday, April 14th for our sixth installment of Inspiring Minds. And we're going to be joined by John Kabat-Zinn and Amishi Jha, two more of my favorite people, with a live performance by Barbara Bogatin. And the theme will be the role of attention and awareness in an era of misinformation and digital seduction.

**Shankari Goldstein** (01:24:57):

Registration is currently open for the April event through the Mind & Life website. And thank you again so much. Gratitude to our Mind & Life team who always works fearlessly behind the scenes and continue to stay connected to Mind & Life as we move forward in these challenging times. After such beautiful reflections, I want to move into a guided meditation practice with Brother Reggie, maybe two or three minutes of just some contemplative practice. And then we're going to close with a beautiful musical offering from Grant. So thank you all.

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:25:29):

Well thank you, Sister Shankari. Thank you all. Thank you, participants. Thank you, Doris. Thank you, Grant. Thank you production staff. One of the blessings of being a recovering jazz musician is that you get to riff, right? And so I didn't really have a meditative plan, but Brother Grant gave me the rubrics, I want to thank you for that. So I want us to close by simply asking us the question: Are we okay? Right. So find your tall seat, whatever that is, bearing in mind that your posture could be laying down. Whatever's most comfortable for your physical form. Take shoulders back and down, shine the heart forward from which we can have a vulnerable, meaningful experience. Feel your feet on the ground and spend a moment just feeling your feet on the ground. We went through a lot of conversation today, a lot of dense subject matter, which can be kind of heady. So feel your feet on the ground.

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:26:27):

And hearkening back to the wisdom shared, we are part of the natural order. So if our feet are on the ground, we can find roots, strength and then from that roots and strength rise up and be flourishing. Springtime is almost here in the Northern hemisphere. So from this sense of grounding, notice where the breath is in the body. The breath is an indicator of how we are in our physicality and in our spirituality. So notice the breath and ask yourself, am I okay? And then based on that answer, begin to take an inhale through the nose if comfortable. Exhale out the nose at whatever pace or cadence which would make you more okay.

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:27:14):

Inhale through the nose, exhale out the nose again, with whatever cadence will allow you to be more okay, and will allow more joy, goodness, and righteousness to emanate from your physical form and from your heart. Keeping shoulders back and down, softening the eyes if closing the eyes is uncomfortable for you. Maybe four or five more breaths again with the simple cadence and guidance breathing to the depth which would make you more okay. With each exhale, soften the shoulders, maybe the face. Soften the mind.

**Reggie Hubbard** (01:28:06):

Grounded in the feet, comfortable on the seat, open in the heart. Three more breaths, please. Deep inhale through the nose. If comfortable, exhale out the nose, in through the nose, exhale out the nose. Last one, deep in through the nose, exhale out the nose, bringing palms to heart center, pressing into the palms, finding strength in the midline. Bowing head towards hands as a gesture of reverence. Not only for the time we shared together but for each of our shared humanity. I bow before you would love grace and gratitude. Ashay. Namaste.

**Grant Jones** (01:29:00):

Thank you so much, Reggie, Doris, Shankari. For all the beauty that we shared and for the beauty just now. I was going to introduce this final offering, but I think the title actually speaks for itself in the midst of our conversation. This song is "Emotional Freedom". I hope you all can find a little bit of space through it.

(Singing)

Thank you all.