ATR Meeting 28 October 2020

(First 17 minutes of transcript removed - conversation about the pandemic, businesses, and so on)

Kenneth Bok: Can you share the start of your spiritual awakening?

William Lam: also during recession right?

John Tan: No no, my journey starts way way before during recession, probably at the age of 15. So, we started, started from the "I Am". "I Am" is actually a direct experience, a direct experience of your own self, means your own consciousness. Means you directly authenticate, not not a kind of, means the authentication is direct. It is not through thinking, but through a direct authentication of your own consciousness. So, in, in the Buddhism of course, in India, Hinduism, there is the self inquiry. In Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Ch'an, normally they go by gong an (koans). It is trying to, to make you cease all conceptualization and then you have a leap, from conceptual mind, straightaway you penetrate and authenticate directly. So, so, when we are young, we don't actually experience things directly. The idea that how to experience things directly, we actually don't know how. So normally, we, we use our thought, there's always this layer of thoughts that prevent us from experiencing things directly. But we do not know. We don't actually know. So I was talking to, even, even after anatta, that is in 1997. You know after 30 years old. I don't actually know, I have the experience like direct experience, let's say of presence. I know that it is without thoughts. But you do not know that what, your experience is still very dualistic, means there is a subject and there's an object.

There's, there's a dualistic experience. Although experience of the presence is direct, when you are out of that experience, you still feel that there is the subject and object difference. It is only after, after 1997, that was probably another 15 years later. When contemplating the two stanzas, then I realized, there's the realization that there is no self. So when you realize that there is no self, that layer that divides, disappears. Correct? So when you say that, in seeing, this is just the seen, means that eh, there's no one behind, there's just whole, the appearances, the obvious appearances. When you say hearing, there's just sound. So what exactly is hearing? Hearing? Like, for example, now you say, I - hear - sound. So before we don't talk about, we talk about this, this, this action, this activity called hearing, what exactly is hearing? You're not doing anything, you just hear right? Correct? So hearing is actually a movement of intention, shift of intention, by let's say, I hear right? Actually, you say that suddenly, I hear, I hear something, it's just a shift of attention, right? Right? So, when you realize that there is no one behind, correct? There's no one hearing, and then there is just sound, that layer that is behind that is dividing, disappear.

So, you are, you experience sounds directly, sound. Ting! Tong! You see things you see colors and all these directly? You feel that now you feel directly, correct? So, you see through self or the background self. So, that is the first authentication. Now, but when you experience that, it does not mean that, it is not necessary that you see through the cause of self. What is the

cause that give rise to the sense of self, you may not know. So, it is a different, to me it is a different phase. You can spend, you can, your experience means in terms of experience, you can be non-dual, correct? And spontaneous and natural, but you may not know what gives rise to that cause? What gives rise to the sense of self?

William Lam: The ignorance.

John Tan: Yes, correct. So, there is the ignorance that causes it, but what exactly is it? You don't actually know and until we, this, this, this term called reification comes about.

Actually it is conceptual construct, correct? Self is just actually a construct, a conceptual construct. Means that, but then, then, when you go further phases, let's say from after anatta, you can have an experience without self, then after that, you know, the cause that give rise to the sense of self, but for example, you study the chariot analogy and you realize this idea of, of reification, correct? Then you begin not only to look at self, you also look at objects.

Yes, reification. So you begin to look at objects also, you don't just look at means that, what is self? Even self itself, the idea of "I", you have to learn. It is not reality, actually you learn this concept of "I" in self, you have to learn about it. Correct?

Kenneth Bok: But you see, so I hear the sound. But if I close my ear, I don't hear the sound.

John Tan: Yes.

Kenneth Bok: so the this, what I think is "I" is clearly linked to this body, right? I mean, this is the dividing line between my ego Kenneth and rest of the world. So that's when maybe, is that what you mean by reification, because, of course, there's so many things that aggregate together to the complex of I, right?

John Tan: Okay, the, the reification, this, this, this idea that you create something out of mental construct. If you go further you study, means from after anatta, which is more on direct experience. You don't actually look at this layer, these mental processes, this mental process. You don't actually look deeply into it, but once you look deeply into it, there is what we call the Madhyamaka where the, MMK *[The Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (Sanskrit:* मूलमध्यमककारिक*) or Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way, abbreviated as MMK]*, where they talk about it, where you see that is the big [debate] between, let's say we talk about Mipham and Tsongkhapa. When we talk about these two, first Mipham is of course based on Gorampa, the freedom from extremes, the other one - the Gelugpa is Tsongkhapa's thinking that there's no inherent existence right. So which one is correct? Which one is creating the reification of the self? Now let's say to the Gelugpas, it is actually inherent existence. To the other all the other schools, they are saying that as long as you have concept, as long as you have concept, you reify - means that you just have a conceptual view only, you actually reify something already. So to them, any form of concept is a reification. However, to the Gelugpas right, they do not think so, correct? So, they say it is the inherent existence, correct? That you are going to empty. So, these are

these are the two main differences. Let's say, for example after anatta experience right, you try to understand the cause of this self, so there's there's this two that you must look very deeply into it. Now when you want to look very deeply into it, then we try to use our anatta experience to understand these two concepts.

What do you mean by the cup is not empty of the cup, but it is empty of the inherent existence of this cup. This is what Tsongkhapa said, right? The cup is not empty of the cup. But it's empty of inherent existence. So the other is that the cup is empty of the cup itself. Okay, so there are these two schools.

Kenneth Bok: Sorry I didn't catch that. The cup is not…

John Tan: Ok, so I'll explain to you. So, so, now, there is what we call the anatta experience that you [points to Soh] have, and then there's this school that talk about this, actually it is not so important, but you you have to understand these two concepts, let's say this is the anatta experience that you have. So, you look at these two teachings. So, these two teachings say that the cup is empty of the cup, let's say Mipham, he says the cup is empty of the cup, why do you say the cup is empty of the inherent existence of the cup? You see, you don't have to say that. So when you empty the cup itself it means you you empty the entire inherent existence as well as the semantic meaning of the whole cup, right? Correct. Okay, let me give you an example. You talk about self, if you talk about self, self is easier to understand. So we look at these two schools. When you say that Self is empty of the inherent existence of Self. What actually do you mean? Means you're talking that there's this concept of self and then you try to strip off the permanence part. Then the unchanging part, something that's fixed, correct? So what happens to the self, if you strip off all these? That's the meaning. You only strip off the inherent existence of self.

The other one is saying that No. Totally the whole self concept is gone. You cannot even have the concept of self. That is called self empty of self. The entire conceptuality of self must be negated, alright? So, anatta belong to which one?

Soh: The other day I was saying it sounds like inherent existence.

John Tan: The other day you were saying that it is [the inherent existence], so I call you to rethink, right? I called you to rethink. Because, are you retaining certain concept of self or totally no self?

Soh: actually in the direct actualization [of anatta] there's no concepts

John Tan: there is no concept of self at all, correct? The experience itself that we have in anatta, is totally no self. So, actually it is more towards Mipham, you get it? But the other part, you only strip off the the permanence, the unchanging, the fixed non changing and permanence part, you try to strip off the inherent, correct? So, you are left with the conventionality of self, the meaning of self remains, you know? So, the vase, the cup, the cup still performs the function of the cup,

but you only strip on the inherent part, all right. So, that is the Gelugpas. They say something like that. But for Mipham, in the freedom of the four extremes, they say that No, the whole thing must be gone. That's what he meant.

So if you compare the experience right, that experience of no self, you are actually doing away with the entire concept of the self, correct? Your experience is like that right? Or our.. my experience is like that. Actually the whole concept of self is gone, the background self is gone. So, but what I disagreed, like I told you right, I said you have to look deeper into it, why do I disagree, because, you compare subject and object, if you were to, to deconstruct the whole subject, 65% of the journey of what that is being stated, you are actually experiencing that already, let's say 70… 70%. But then if you do the other way, you deconstruct object, you don't actually have that kind of anatta experience, it is just a 35% that is still there. So, if you actually deconstruct self, you you can actually experience things directly, you know. Once the whole background is gone, that layer that obscures is gone, you directly experience sound, you directly experience your sensation and everything.

William Lam: So, since I think a lot relies on the anatta experience, can you share with us a little bit more about the anatta experience?

John Tan: the experience, there are two. One of them is… I separate experience from insight. So, why? Because you can have an experience, you can feel spacious, you can feel free, you can feel oceanic. That's an experience. There is no insight, means you can't clearly see uh, there isn't, from the beginning there is no self. Seeing through that, that is the insight. Experience means, you experience something, correct? So anatta means that, to me, that time when I realized… I started from presence, means I experienced presence directly. So presence there's a taste, means it is very clear, transparent, vivid, without concept, and all that kind of experience. That experience itself is actually non dual. But post that experience, you just become dualistic.

William Lam: It's non conceptual.

John Tan: It's non conceptual. Yup. Okay. Presence is not conceptual experience, it has to be direct. And you just feel pure sense of existence. Means people ask you, before birth, who are you? You just authenticate the I, that is yourself, directly. So when you first authenticate that I, you are damn happy, of course. When young, that time, wah… I authenticate this I… so you thought that you're enlightened, but then the journey continues. So this is the first time you taste something that is different. It is… It is before thoughts, there is no thoughts. Your mind is completely still. You feel still, you feel presence, and you know yourself. Before birth it is Me, after birth, it is also Me, 10,000 years it's still this Me, 10,000 year before, it's still this Me. So you authenticate that, your mind is just that and authenticate your own true being, so you don't doubt that. In later phase…

Kenneth Bok: Presence is this I AM?

John Tan: Presence is the same as I AM. Presence is the same as… of course, other people may disagree, but actually they're referring to the same thing. The same authentication, the same what... even in Zen is still the same.

But in later phase, I conceive that as just the thought realm. Means, in the six, I always call the six entries and six exits, so there is the sound and there's all these… During that time, you always say I'm not sound, I'm not the appearance, I AM the Self that is behind all these appearances, alright? So, sounds, sensations, all these come and go, your thoughts come and go, those are not me, correct? This is the ultimate Me. The Self is the ultimate Me. Correct?

William Lam: So, is that nondual? The I AM stage. It's non-conceptual, was it nondual?

John Tan: It's nonconceptual. Yes, it is nondual. Why is it nondual? At that moment, there is no duality at all, at that moment when you experience the Self, you cannot have duality, because you are authenticated directly as IT, as this pure sense of Being. So, it's completely I, there's nothing else, just I. There's nothing else, just the Self. I think, many of you have experienced this, the I AM. So, you probably will go and visit all the Hinduism, sing song with them, meditate with them, sleep with them, correct? Those are the young days. I meditate with them, hours after hours, meditate, sit with them, eat with them, sing song with them, drum with them. Because this is what they preach, and you find these group of people, all talking about the same language.

So this experience is not a normal experience, correct? I mean, within the probably 15 years of my life or 17 years of my life, my first... when I was 17, when you first experienced that, wah, what is that? So, it is something different, it is non conceptual, it is non dual, and all these. But it is very difficult to get back the experience. Very, very difficult, unless you're in when you're in meditation, because you reject the relative, the appearances. So, it is, although they may say no, no, it is always with me, because it's Self, correct? But you don't actually get back the authentication, just pure sense of existence, just me, because you reject the rest of that appearances, but you do not know during that time. Only after anatta, then you realize that this, when you when you hear sound without the background, that experience is exactly the same, the taste is exactly the same as the presence. The I AM Presence. So, only after anatta, when the background is gone, then you realize eh, this has the exact same taste as the I AM experience. When you are not hearing, you are just in the vivid appearances, the obvious appearances now, correct. That experience is also the I AM experience. When you are even now feeling your sensation without the sense of self directly. That experience is exactly the same as I AM taste. It is nondual. Then you realize, I call, actually, everything is Mind. Correct? Everything. So, so before that, there is an ultimate Self, a background, and you reject all those transient appearances. After that, that background is gone, you know? And then you are just all these appearances.

William Lam: You are the appearance? You are the sound? You are the…

John Tan: Yes. So, so, that is an experience. That is an experience. So after that, you realize

something. What did you realise? You realise all along it is the what, that is obscuring you. So… in a person, for a person that is in I AM experience, the pure presence experience, they will always have a dream. They will say that I hope I can 24 by 7 always in that state, correct? So when I was young, 17. But then after 10 years you are still thinking. Then after 20 years, you say how come I need to always meditate? You always find time to meditate, maybe I don't study also meditate, you give me a cave last time I will just meditate inside.

So, the the thing that you always dream that you can one day be pure consciousness, just as pure consciousness, live as pure consciousness, but you never get it. And even if you meditate, occasionally probably you can have that oceanic experience. Only when you after anatta, when that self behind is gone, you are not 24 by 7, maybe most of your day, waking state, not so much of 24 by 7, you dream that time still very karmic depending on what you engage, doing business, all these. (John mimics dreaming) How come ah, the business…

So, so, in normal waking state, you are effortless. Probably that is the, during I AM phase, what you think you are going to achieve, you achieve after the insight of anatta. So you become clear, you are probably in the right path. But there are further insights you have to go through. When you try to penetrate the… one of them is, I feel that I become very physical. I am just narrating, going through my experience. Maybe that time… because you experience the relative, the appearances directly. So everything becomes very physical. So that is how you come to understand the meaning, how concepts actually affect you. Then what exactly is physical? How does the idea of physical come about, correct? That time I still do not know about emptiness, and all these kind of things, to me it is not so important.

So, I start going into what exactly is physical, what exactly is being physical? Sensation. But why is sensation known as physical, and what is being physical? How did I get the idea of being physical? So, I began to enquire into this thing. That, eh, actually on top of that, there is still further things to deconstruct, that is the meaning… that, just like self, I'm attached to the meaning of self, and you create a construct, it becomes a reification. Same thing, physicality also. So, you deconstruct the concepts surrounding physicality. Correct? So, when you deconstruct that, then I began to realize that all along, we try to understand, even after the experience of let's say, anatta and all these… when we analyze, and when we think and try to understand something, we are using existing scientific concepts, logic, common day to day logic and all these to understand something. And it is always excluding consciousness. Even if you experience, you can lead a spiritual path you know, but when you think and analyze something, somehow you always exclude consciousness from the equation of understanding something. Your concept is always very materialistic. We always exclude consciousness from the whole equation.

Kenneth Bok: It's sounds like those are things that you probably learnt when you are three years old right, four or five, you're just starting to experience the world without developing a sense of of neocortex effective functioning. So, it sounds to me like you're deconstructing your early early life basic model of the five senses that you were… three or four.

John Tan: More on the conceptual attachment, understanding things like why is this a cup, why is this called physical, why is this called self. There is certain experiencing, there is certain appearances, but why is it this, you see? That actually you are bound to this. So, we seldom inquire into it. Like, for example, you look at the chair and table, they are separated but why are they separated? You have to enquire. Why is the letter 'i', the dot and then the stroke, why are they separated? Why are they one? This is called 'i' right, when you look they are separated, but to you, you treat as a whole, right? So, it is due to conceptual designation. So you say that, when the plant is growing, growth, growing, right? You say this is the growth stage, this is the decaying stage. Then you ask yourself, why is this the growth stage and this is the decaying stage? Where is the line of demarcation? How do you divide? Why is this growing, and why is this decaying? What is that? When you are born, you have to die, so are you approaching death or are you living? So where is the line of…

William Lam: But those conceptual designations, are they taught to you, or is it part of your karmic structure? That means...

John Tan: It is both. It is both. Some of them is.. If you really go and investigate... First of all you have to ask this first, and you go through them. When you go through them, it is very difficult to explain how deep you are being conditioned, alright? The depth of being conditioned. You can deconstruct but you deconstruct first of all… it's still very surface. But how deep you are being conditioned by these entire idea and all these concepts, it is very very deep. It is very very deep. So when you go into it, like what you said, is it karmic? Or is it learnt in this life? So when you go, go, go very very deeply and you keep on challenging your conditions, you realize that some of these habits cannot be… you can actually understand, you can actually feel it, cannot be from these 20, 30 years and then you are so damn attached. You see what I mean? So it depends how deep you feel, and how deep you challenge and you experience yourself. So when you engage in the process of let's say overcoming ourselves… don't talk about business. Business I think we also think as deep also right, how to do this, how to do that, how to save every single dollar, right? But when you inquire into your own self, you have to be very sincere. I mean, you try not to lie to yourself. You have to be very very sincere, objective, and feel yourself. Why, how does this thing come about? Of course, you keep on practicing and keep on practicing and keep on practicing, it will go into your three states, this means that it will even go into your dreams. So I always tell people, I always tell let's say Wei Yu, don't think mystical. 日有所思，夜有所梦 (thoughts from the day are dreamt about at night), you get what I mean or not? You keep on practicing, you keep on practicing, enquiring, it will go into your three states, it will go into your dreams, there is nothing mystical about it.

Kenneth Bok: You're aware, it's like you're lucid dreaming?

John Tan: You can be lucid, you can be lucid dreaming, or you can practice in your dream also.

William Lam: So this practice, this inquiry, is it intellectual? Or is it deeper than intellectual? The process. This deconstruction, this enquiry...

John Tan: Intellectual. The process is intellectual. Yes, you keep on asking, it's intellectual. So you deconstruct, it's a process, is still intellectual, until you release, until you feel and you authenticate directly. So the concept will disappear[?].

William Lam: I see. And just now you say that through the anatta experience, if I remember you correctly…

John Tan: Anatta is actually something that is very ordinary, you know. It's not somewhere in wonderland. It's an experience that is very ordinary, except there is no conceptual overlay, it is direct, it is nondual, and you feel free. You just don't feel dualistic. It's just sound, definitely it must be something very ordinary, right? [You] always hear, right? All these colors that you see, correct? It must be something that is day to day, here…

William Lam: The only difference is 'you' are not there.

John Tan: The only difference is.. You see, there are two. One of them is, whether this experience is in this moment, [sound of motorcycle passing by in the background] just this, ok I hear now, correct? They vibrate until your whole body. It's so intimate, so direct, so intimate, right? Like just now hear the motorcycle right, you can feel the vibration, you hear the sound, you feel the vibration until your whole body, this is what I call total exertion. You walk, everything is so intimately linked together, seamless. But your mind divide them, constructs. Like for example I sit, this entire sensation of sitting now, is just a whole sensation of just sitting, correct? Sit… is just the sensation of sitting, your buttocks touches the chair, right? Now, this sensation is a total exertion of everything coming together as this sensation, sitting. But if your mind divide, then you'll say, your buttock touches the chair, all that kind of thing, you divide the whole thing, but it's just sensation. When you walk, there is just the sensation of walking, your foot… but when you describe, your foot touches the floor, correct? Then all sort of things, you describe the whole thing.

But what exactly it is just at that moment is just sensation of walking, one step, then another step, then another step, then another step. So, when you are into that sensation of walking, just that, just do one step, one step, you somehow… this is what I call total exertion, just walking, correct? You can feel… somehow you just, you can feel the sensation, somehow you understand that when Buddha walked, and begged, it's the same sensation as this sensation as this sensation that you are walking now. So you can feel wah, when he go and beg that time, the bowl, is in total exertion. So total exertion I always say is always beyond time. Somehow you just feel it, and then you link everything together. Like you say, Dogen, when he was rowing the boat. So, when you write, like for example last time when I write, suddenly you can feel that the whole lineage is being… just, you feel that you are being linked to them, this whole total exertion is being linked into this moment of let's say your drinking the water, this is what I call total exertion. After anatta, somehow you'll get into that. Some people don't, I… to me, it's quite natural, I think to him [Soh] it's also quite natural. Into total exertion. That in walking, there's just this walking, and this walking becomes the whole universe participating… and this is not even just this across space or across time, it is beyond space time, means that you can actually link

to… of course it's not born out of imagination, you just feel it, you are linked even to…. everything is participating. Means the future, the past is also participating at this moment, this is called total exertion. Just now like I said, you walk, you keep on walking, and step by step, somehow you can also feel you're linked to 2500 years ago, Buddha begging, you suddenly got this feeling, it's the same walking, this is what I call total exertion.

William Lam: In total exertion, what is the conceptual view about you and you, you and me, is it all one? Space, time and individuality, is it all one?

John Tan: You see, total exertion… let's say you talk about Buddhism, as long as you have concept you are in ignorance. So, total exertion there are two things. One thing is you feel seamless, you feel immense. But there is diversity. There is diversity. That is the feeling of total exertion, which is a bit different from those, uh… Means, the diversity remains, but there is seamless or intimacy with everything, even the past, into this action. Either action of walking, or in an action of sitting, or in an action of drinking. You have this what… [drinks water]

William Lam: So just now you were saying, you are trying to investigate why is there a cause of the sense of self. I don't know if you actually explained that part. You were saying you were trying to investigate why is the cause of sense of self, right? So, did you find anything?

John Tan: First of all your thought and definition is a concept, a conditioning that built up this sense of self. That means you have to learn, you know, it's not reality. So it is just a concept that is being reified that is unquestioned. Just like you go through the Madhyamaka that time, you don't go through ultimate analysis, you thought that it is real, but when you investigate, you subject them to ultimate analysis, you realize there's no chariot that is out there. Correct? But we don't think that, we're carried by the chariot, but when you investigate, where is that? Then you find, it's not outside, it's just a construct that we feel so real. So you somehow, going through the process of investigation, you begin to understand how the conceptual mind affects us. And, our language affects us… that the language actually define our experience. You say that the lightning flashes, then you say, the lightning flashes… then you think, think, think, actually the flashing is the lightning, correct? Then you say, the lightning flashed, the flashing itself is actually the lightning, but the language itself, because we are so accustomed to the language…

Pam Tan: Subject-object

John Tan: Yes… No, this is not subject-object. This is actually agency leading to an action. So it is agency and action. And action does not actually require agency. So when you say the lightning flash, actually the flashing is the lightning. So when you train your mind, like you say this [Soh] is anatta bot right? When you keep training your mind and keep deconstructing, the lightning flash, the flashing is the lightning right? Then you say, I hear sound… in hearing there's only sound, correct? There is no I. So your mind… if you keep on doing that, you train yourself, after that experience you realize how language defines your experience, then you start deconstructing, because it becomes lesser and lesser, there's no two parts right, there is no

flashing and there's no lightning, because the lightning is the flashing, so you deconstruct one, then you keep on deconstruct, then you just experience directly, because you deconstruct the whole language process. If you go through the process of deconstruction, that's how I feel, you just have to do some Vipashyana, some meditation, some mindfulness, with this training itself, you will be able to have direct experience. Because, your mind is trained to eliminate all these, there's no three parts, there's no two parts, there's just that. So you keep on practicing this, with…

William Lam: So are you saying, deconstruct it to get to anatta experience, or are you saying use the anatta experience to help you deconstruct?

John Tan: No, with the experience itself, with this refinement, your mind is used to deconstruction. You keep on deconstructing. Like I said, the lightning flashes, or you say hearing, or you say the wind blowing, you won't fall into the trap of all these… the summer goes, the summer comes...

Angelo Gerangelo: Hey guys, how are you?

Soh, John Tan: Hi

Soh: How are you doing?

John Tan: Where are you now? I see you…

Angelo Gerangelo: I'm at the hospital now, I just finished the C-Section, just brought a life into the world. How is dinner?

All: Congratulations

John Tan: What time is it now?

Angelo Gerangelo: It's 6.30 in the morning.

John Tan: That's a good thing about technology. We can all be together.

Angelo Gerangelo: It's amazing. So this is Pam's apartment?

Pam Tan: [speaks in background]

Angelo Gerangelo: Hi Pam, thank you for hosting. Who else arrived in video?

Nafis Rahman: I did[?] It's nice to meet you in person, finally. And John Tan, Soh, everyone else, thank you. For the first time, it's really exciting to meet others with similar ideals and practices, it's really exciting.

John Tan: So tell me your experience. Soh told me that you also had an experience that deconstructed the self.

Nafis Rahman: Yeah, I'm focusing on total exertion or universal oneness. I like the term universal oneness because it feels more what I'm experiencing now. Not like Advaita but like Buddhist. It feels like I'm connected to the universe and everything else at the same time. Like I'm connecting to this video, I'm connecting to every single molecule, atom, even even the grass on the road. And I don't want to talk too much about this, because I'm still mastering it. I want to read the book that Soh recommended, because I still haven't… because I was so busy with other pursuits, unfortunately we had this long discussion online on Advaita vs Buddhism, so were stuck with that for a long time. So, I really want to finish this book. When I started experiencing Maha total exertion, I thought I was hallucinating, to be honest. I thought I was hallucinating.

Angelo: {laughs}

Nafis Rahman: ...realize it was a proper insight. I thought that, you know, I wrote the anatta post because I thought I was stuck in advaita or something, then I post… …[Soh said] Dogen has it, Zen has it, …[I haven't] explored Zen in the past. I was always focused on Madhyamaka, Nagarjuna… focused on deconstruction basically, so I was focused mainly on that.

John Tan: so you see, the idea of deconstruction like just now I was talking about, like Mipham [say] it's empty of the cup or empty of inherent existence of the cup? That's how I come to this topic, total exertion. In total exertion, obviously it is also deconstruction. You actually deconstruct, but then the diversity is being maintained. So how can the diversity be maintained?

Kenneth Bok: What do you mean by the diversity?

John Tan: Diversity means the cups, the things, everything. They don't collapse. You don't have to collapse into one, at the same time you do not have to say that you don't know anything. Means that you are free. … there is deconstruction... ...correct? The conventionalities are being maintained. This is why I asked the question. These two, which parts belong to which? So I asked, anatta, that is the whole idea of self is [emptied], ok? The cup is empty of the cup. The whole idea of the cup is gone. The idea of cup is totally eliminated, nonconceptual. But in total exertion, correct, the idea of the cup is being maintained, but it is being deconstructed. That's why I disagree, of course I didn't say, I didn't write about that… ...actually deconstruction does not require you to say that the whole meaning and the whole idea of that construct is gone. You can deconstruct like in total exertion. Obviously total exertion do not require you to say that everything must be gone. In fact, everything is maintained, correct? But they are deconstructed. Then, you feel the immensity, the intimacy and everything.

William Lam: and yet you feel the diversity, right?

John Tan: That's what I'm saying. So, I was asking this question, I was asking you right, which is which? Of course, I didn't want to tell you the answer, I want you to think through your experience. In anatta, which one does it belong to? And is it wrong to say that you deconstruct the inherent existence only, and then you can remain the conventionalities? And Mipham and Gorampa say it's nonsense, this is the worst of the evils. That's Gorampa. Sorry, Mipham doesn't say that, Mipham has a very great respect for Tsongkhapa. In fact Mipham says Tsongkhapa is in full emptiness, not just the partial emptiness. He said that. He said Tsongkhapa taught the student like that, but the student doesn't understand him. But I'm trying to say that no, actually there is nothing wrong with retaining the conventionalities, because we have this experience of total exertion. And if you investigate into total exertion, conventionality is not totally discarded, yet inherent-ness is gone, otherwise you cannot… [fuse?] ...everything into one total exertion, correct?

So what I'm trying to say is, I may be wrong, but there's definitely this experience of total exertion, many people experience it post anatta. So you can deconstruct just the inherent-ness and retain the conventionality, and this can be experienced as total exertion, because the conventionalities are retained in total exertion. That's what I'm saying. But in the case of the self that is totally gone, it's like the vase is empty of the vase, because the total idea of the self, we see through it, we've seen through, it is gone. So after studying that, of course now I don't study so much, I just read through to authenticate to see how my experience, how I understand those teachings. We are not talking about who is right, who is wrong, who is higher. I'm saying, we cannot, it is quite naive that a practitioner or a sage like Tsongkhapa doesn't understand non-conceptuality or freedom from extremes. I find that is quite ridiculous, correct? He must have already experienced that, for him to put forward this, there must be some valid points about it. That's why I said I have great respect for the teachings of this [Tsongkhapa].

Of course they may not mean total exertion, but in total exertion the whole diversities, the conventionalities remain, but there is deconstruction. And in total exertion you don't feel self. Do you feel self? You don't feel self. The inherent-ness is gone, but the diversities remain. And the conventionalities also remain. So what is that? It is actually like what I said, the cup is empty of the inherent-ness, but the cup's conventionalities remain. For us especially, for me especially, I look more deeply into it because it is in line with my own experience. And I do not agree that Tsongkhapa has not experienced non-conceptuality. What I believe is that it will be different. Like, in the first stage, for example our primordial stage is that… it's before conceptualization. Correct? Before that, there's no concept. He says that, then you go through a phase where you make use of concepts, you use concepts, then the third phase is you go through a deconstruction, but you say that this deconstruction is not returning to the first one. He say that it cannot be. He say that it's something that is… ... it's not that he doesn't know, it's stupid to think that he doesn't know. He say that you go through this phase, then you go through conceptuality, then you go through deconstruction, but after deconstruction it's not the [same as the first], it's not exactly that you cannot retain conceptuality. So what it's trying to say? It will be different. So what is the experience? It depends.

William Lam: Means total exertion?

John Tan: I mean he may experience differently. But in one of our experience and one of our insight, total exertion, there is no sense of self, there is no sense of inherent-ness. The conventionalities are being retained. So, to me, it is possible. It is not impossible that you have to be totally non-conceptual.

[1:16]

William Lam: Actually, all these are being guided by the two very important experience anatta and total exertion? How do you get there? Because, actually, you had experience you explaining on words, people can only get it so much because actually it is an is an explanation or expression of that experience, right. So, how do people get those important, one is presence again, second is anatta, third is total exertion right. So how do you get to those experience?

John Tan: Actually, total exertion I don't know how I got to that. I just somehow, after some probably some time. I just feel it.

Speaker1: [01:16:30] I see.

John Tan: [01:16:31] I see. I just feel it.

Speaker1: [01:16:34] It just happens.

John Tan: [01:16:35] Just everything feels intimate with everything.

Speaker1: [01:16:37] Was it a result of the construction work, you think? Or it just. Maybe something loosened along the way? Drop off? No.

John Tan: [01:16:45] No. The deconstruction work is later when I penetrate.

Speaker1: [01:16:48] Yeah, exactly.

John Tan: [01:16:49] Sure. Then I start to compare with my experience, and I see that. Yeah, definitely. It's a deconstruction. There is no sense of self yet conventionality remains. In fact, I've been searching for books in, uh, in, in. Reading up, trying to see how, uh, the Tibetan actually define this experience. Is there any similar experience? Yeah. So I only find this as. The in in this Gelugpa, where they retain the conventionality. Yet there is deconstruction, right?

Speaker1: [01:17:34] Right, right.

John Tan: [01:17:35] I only find it in this one. So when people say [negative things] about Tsongkhapa, I am

Speaker1: [01:17:39]

John Tan: [01:17:40] always very unhappy.

Speaker1: [01:17:41]

John Tan: [01:17:43] Because unless you can tell me that that there is no such experience. But obviously there is, right? Right. But it may not be what, of course the Gelugpas think lah. They may have other experience because they focus on the negation part. But when you negate just the inherent ness. So what is that when you retain the conventionality? What is it? What is it like? But way before that we already experience it. The total exertion. And the there is no self. There is no inherent-ness. Correct. Everything seems [what?] The conventionality of everything into one exertion remains.

Speaker1: [01:18:21] Right? Right.

John Tan: [01:18:22] So? So I've been trying to find out what, where is it being described in other things. In Zen there's a lot.

Speaker1: [01:18:28] Oh, right. Right, right, right. Okay.

John Tan: [01:18:32] It's everywhere.

Speaker1: [01:18:34] I thought you read widely, across all the strands. Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana.

John Tan: [01:18:38] Probably. Malcolm, not me. [probably only one of the thousands of it?] But I like to to find out more about my experience. I don't read them because I want to follow this and that. So I don't want, I don't want, I have my own path so I don't want people to disturb me in fact.

Speaker1: [01:18:58]

John Tan: [01:19:00] To read and then understand. Yeah. And try to go forward I clearly know. I knew where I am supposed to do in the next place. So what am I supposed to do after certain.... Because you go, you've gone 30 years of the journey. So somehow you will know where is your next destination. Correct? So you cannot say I give up the 30 years for just because somebody said [don't want?]. Right, right, right. So from presence to anatta all these, to all these, to all these, then you, you will know where you will land. Where are you supposed to to to be. Yeah. But you wouldn't say because somebody said then. Yeah, I think somebody were to fly in front of me and then say something. I would say, let me continue first.

Speaker1: [01:19:55] Yeah. Have you had past life recollections? Is there about your.

John Tan: [01:20:01] There are some some events, but you will not know. Never know whether it's true or not. When you dream in certain places. The color, the what? You see the the idea that. Everything you still need. Certain. There's always this element of faith that when you take up Buddhism, you have to believe in rebirth. Mm.

Speaker1: [01:20:39] So you say you didn't know how you get to total exertion stage. What about anatta? Is is there something people can do to.

John Tan: [01:20:46] Yes.

Speaker1: [01:20:49] So what are the things you think they can do?

John Tan: [01:20:52] So in anatta, actually even you practice uh, practice vipashyana. You practice bare attention, yes. You also can get to that, but somehow you need something to trigger you to look in the direction that there is no self. Oh, yeah. So don't think too mystical.

Speaker1: [01:21:31] What about Non-buddhists? So you see, you spend some time with any other kind of spiritual teachers that you find.

John Tan: [01:21:37] Taoism.

Speaker1: [01:21:38] Taoism.

John Tan: [01:21:40] Tao te ching. Taoism actually is depending on three main books. One is the Tao, Tao Te Jing, Zhuang tzu nan hua jing, and then Lieh tzu chung xu jing, these three, uh, 道家三点 (three points of Taoism?) is very very important. So you want to go into Taoism means Tao Jia (the house of Tao). Taoism is divided into Tao Jia (house/school? Of Tao) and Tao Jiao (the religion of Tao). Tao Jia is more on the Zhang Dao Lin（？）. So the the Tao Jia, the philosophy of Tao Jia, you have to focus on these three【books】and also you must read Yi Ching. That's very important.. Teaching is a true Chinese to us. Chinese have spent some time in Yi Ching. Whether you like it or not. All our thoughts are affected by Yi Ching, from the Martial arts. Medicine. Calendar. Philosophy.Anything. Anything you can name. Our culture.

Speaker1: [01:22:46] Right right right.

John Tan: [01:22:48] Everything is affected by this idea in the Yi Ching. So it affects all the philosophy. So you have to learn about Yi Ching. Then if you really want to go into the Chinese philosophy and, and then the Taoism, then, um, Taoism in fact, is very quite similar to to to Buddhism, but it is not as elaborate because the eastern way of learning and the Western way is quite different. Right. Yeah. The. Actually in Taoism. They also don't have the concept of essence. It's I don't know how the Western translate it. Essence is not. It's not the main thing to them. Substance. Essence and all this. To them the universe and is always in transformation, right? So to them, transformation is more important. Change and transformation. So they study the patterns of transformation. But [wu xing xiang ke xiang zhen zhi li】you know it's always

xiang ke xiang zhen that's more important. They are talking about the transformation, the interaction and all this kind of thing. They are not looking at at the essence of anything.

Speaker1: [01:24:07] Do Taoism talks about the transcendental. That means beyond the appearance, the the more subtle aspect of things.

John Tan: [01:24:16] Taoism is...

Speaker1: [01:24:17] Grounded.

John Tan: [01:24:18] The transformation of Qi but Shen, Shen is actually. There are many different definitions of Shen or Qi also. Qi zhi zui.... Nothingness is, uh, is a different thing. It's like like negation and total in, in uh, total negation. Jing, qi, shen, shen is like qi zhi zui wei shen, means the the most subtle aspect of qi is Shen. You can have one definition, right? Then qi is actually not something. See, if you go and ask all around they there are many definitions, just any kind of movement. Your blood move.

Speaker1: [01:25:03] Uh, your uh.

John Tan: [01:25:04] The water that you drink, they, they move right in your body. All these are movement all around this world is called Qi. So you have to sense the movement, sense the vibration, sense the qi. You can call it energy, anything. So is this this transformation. But Taoism is very, very much into no agency. Already called Wu Wei. Wu Wei is actually Actionless action. So in order to be Actionless action, you cannot have the agency, means that the self must be gone. Yeah, yeah. So Wu Wei is actually no self, in action. In, uh, in in the Chinese when they teach. Right. And how the West teach is different. Like they teach you to play music, they just wind[?] Only just five notes. Correct. Then you go and feel it yourself. Use your heart to go and feel.

Speaker1: [01:26:06] Right.

John Tan: [01:26:07] Right. Their Wu Xing is also quite different one. Mm. It's not like outside material thing, solid thing. They feel with their... It's a total exertion feeling. I spoke to one of the Geomancy very old person. He say Earth, then he stepped on the earth. He stepped on earth. He say this is Tu, Tu. Tu and I are one [seamless exertion]. It's like together one, you know? So it's like. It's like total exertion. It's like when you feel the sensation of earth, it is a whole feeling.

Speaker1: [01:26:41] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [01:26:42] Speaker1: It's not Earth.

Speaker1: [01:26:44]

John Tan: [01:26:45] It's the whole feeling. You yourself. And this feeling together. That's called Earth.

Speaker1: [01:26:51]

John Tan: [01:26:58] Tu, firmness.

Speaker1: [01:27:01] Right right right right.

John Tan: [01:27:02] To be firm.

Speaker1: [01:27:03] Of.

John Tan: [01:27:04] Stable. So stability. So it's a whole feeling. So in in in in in Yi Ching, the human, earth and the heaven is always in interaction, constantly in interaction. So in in... For us right. We have the Shi Chen. Gan Zhi is. Is every two hours. The thing changes. Tian gan di zhi [too fast...?]. Which means we divide time into this. Yeah. Correct. So the 12【？】. So every two hours change. Every five days they change. Every 15 days. That's why our Chinese New Year. 15 days. Right? Yeah.

Speaker1: [01:27:58] Right. According to Moon.

John Tan: [01:28:00] Yeah, according to the JieQi. So the the everything keeps on changing. And then there's the Bazi outside, then the Bazi within us. Then they keep on interacting. They calculate. So the Chinese way of if you go into it, it is. Very intimate one with everything around you. They classified into these five elements, but the five element is and the five elements are, are constantly interacting. Yeah. So they are always in in interaction. They are not talking about certain substance. This idea is quite alien to them if you talk to the the older generation, older, older generation. When I met my first, in fact, I was uh, uh, saw this, uh, Gaoshanzi is one of my teacher in, in Taoism that now didn't visit me for about ten over years already. But we eight, nine years ago before he suddenly he stopped visiting me. But we have been in. In what? When he tell me that time and he taught me that time [shao kang jie mei hua xin yi？】 a person approach you. In what direction? Wearing what color, according to li gua, li gua means to come out gua through that color, li gua means to come out gua through that feeling itself. But of course, there is certain structure that you have to learn.

Speaker1: [01:29:28] Right, right, right.

John Tan: [01:29:29] So it is it is in constant interaction with the surrounding. Right. So when, uh, somebody asked him, uh, uh, what he said, think of a number, then he start calculating. Then if you calculate wrongly, he say you go back again, you don't have yuan [conditions] with him.

Speaker1: [01:29:48] Didn't Taoism have this thing called wu ji sheng tai ji?

John Tan: [01:30:07] Wu Ji to me is actually a later development to me.

Speaker1: [01:30:10] Oh, that's a later development to me, right? Because it actually is enough.

John Tan: [01:30:15] Actually there is no Tai Ji, [too fast]. In the idea of... this ying and yang is is there in the very beginning.

Speaker1: [01:30:29] Yeah.

John Tan: [01:30:29] It's the interaction. Is that when you are, you are. When he's not differentiated, it's called Taiji.

Speaker1: [01:30:35] Yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [01:30:36] When you differentiate the movement, you say it is Yin Yang.

Speaker1: [01:30:40] Mhm.

John Tan: [01:30:42] So. So the human actually understanding these patterns saw these patterns correct. And the sage follow this pattern. So sheng ren zhe zhi. So the the the sage observed this pattern. And then they follow the pattern.

Speaker1: [01:31:02]

John Tan: [01:31:08]

Speaker1: [01:31:10] Yea yea yea.

John Tan: [01:31:11] Yea.【The ancients'] Wisdom is very very deep. Yea. You study into the what? Very very deep.

Speaker1: [01:31:16] Right? Right.

John Tan: [01:31:16] You look at all the Chinese history.

Speaker1: [01:31:18] No iPhone. No, they just look at the star. Then, they got this insight, suddenly got all this insight. Come on. The oracle bone. The oracle.

John Tan: [01:31:27] Bone.

Speaker1: [01:31:31] Yeah.

John Tan: [01:31:33] They say actually there is a very good video cartoon. You should go and watch if you are interested in Yi Ching. Uh, go and watch. There's, uh, there's, uh, in YouTube. You can watch.

Speaker1: [01:31:43] Yeah. Oh about eating. Eating. Okay. There's a.

John Tan: [01:31:46] Video cartoon. One cartoon. Then they explain the Jie Qi. the numbers comes before gua. Shu is before gua, then before gua there is chu【？】When you walk in, you see very, very few people know about her tu. the jiugong the magic numbers. You know the magic square. And, uh, the her tu.

Speaker1: [01:32:14] Okay.

John Tan: [01:32:15] So how, how numbers and the meanings of this, how the number transform. Right. And then map it onto the kua or what is quite interesting that video is one of the explanation. Okay. If you are interested you can look into it.

Speaker1: [01:32:34] So a lot of fascinating things hidden that we cannot see.

John Tan: [01:32:38] I know of one, uh. I think most of you may have heard of him, you know. Uh, I Tong the principal, you know. Right. He's a very popular. He got nine times cancer. Eh no, you know, he got nine times, 9 to 10 times, uh, chemotherapy and chemotherapy. Haven't die yet. He's a great believer in Yi Ching.

Speaker1: [01:33:04] Oh.

John Tan: [01:33:05] So we can lah, I we I spoke to him before. So he's very particular like he he will. He. Let's say five is for the five number. Number five represents stability. Uh, so he wants to think of stability. He actually. He actually visualized the number five.

Speaker1: [01:33:25] Or power.

John Tan: [01:33:28] Of five. Number five is what color or something?

Speaker1: [01:33:31] Uh, so.

John Tan: [01:33:32] He of course he learned qigong.

Speaker1: [01:33:34] Uh.

John Tan: [01:33:35] We learn qigong. Then he went to nighttime therapy. Now you.

Speaker1: [01:33:42] Must be working. Uh.

John Tan: [01:33:46] You see? Two. Two. Two. Two. Stressful. When he was the principal of that time. Yeah. I Tong is such a popular school.

Speaker1: [01:33:52] The school of finding money.

John Tan: [01:33:57] He's very popular, you know.

Speaker1: [01:33:58] Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah. Let me use it for stock picking. You don't use. The second riser to check the Bitcoin price. Yeah yeah yeah. Take the. When is the next halving. Is it.

John Tan: [01:34:22] Yi Ching is Cannot be used for those, although Yi Ching is used for pu, pu means every time there is changing in the Chinese uh uh arts. Five arts, we call it su. Su is min. Su min is seldom change.

Speaker1: [01:34:45] One uh.

John Tan: [01:34:46] Who is every time change one uh, correct. So ming gu san shang means means you do meditation in mountain san xiang, means fen xiang, mian xiang.

Speaker1: [01:34:56] Uh.

John Tan: [01:34:57] Then e is e su. Min [....]. These are the five arts of the Chinese.

Speaker1: [01:35:04] They can change or.

John Tan: [01:35:05] All originate from Yi Ching.

Speaker1: [01:35:08] Yeah.

John Tan: [01:35:09] Then in ming li, it's is in astrology. In astrology, there are different levels. Uh, in astrology there are different levels. Um, the ba zi, the ziweidoushu that you all see is based on all based on xu xing. Xu xing means not real stars or imaginary stars. Oh, those ziweidoushu is the lowest level. Every you see the the what calculation. Right. Yeah. It's that's the lowest level. The higher one is called zipingguiming mean, which is bazi. Uh, the the highest one is called taiyushenzhu. Uh, that is the highest using shenshu, numbers. And then pu is based on YiChing means it's not based on mingpan. It's pu is based on on things Keep on changing. This moment what will happen will be cup. Drop will the cup not drop, then you pu. Mm. When You walk will you fall or not fall. It's called moment to moment changes. Right. Then there is this daokangjielang, meihuaxinyi? qimendunjia, and all these. So when you go into it it's whole new world, I tell you. I am very familiar in uh, I'm more and more familiar in, in Taoism [than in Buddhism?].

Speaker1: [01:36:32] Yeah. Because you did a lot of studies on it.

John Tan: [01:36:35] My all this. I think you need a PhD to talk to me.

Speaker1: [01:36:38] Oh, you you are very. You are very interested in it, huh? Oh, last, last time.

John Tan: [01:36:45] I am very, very familiar, went pay a lot of money to give teacher. Oh, yeah. Tiguan, challenge people in astrology.

Speaker1: [01:36:55]

John Tan: [01:36:57] Means I challenge other countries. Other countries.

Speaker1: [01:37:00] Um, international astrology competition. There you go. In Singapore.

John Tan: [01:37:08] For example, your astrologer. You from Singapore? There are some people that you have to meet.

Speaker1: [01:37:12] Oh, really? Really like quite like like something.

John Tan: [01:37:18] Then there's a peace and the peace Center. There's a, uh, selling books. No, uh, no, actually not really. That selling book one, uh, the boss one is actually very popular in... [the circuit]

Speaker1: [01:37:30] The circuit, and, uh. Oh, I always.

John Tan: [01:37:33] I always want to Tiguan, challenge you.

Speaker1: [01:37:36]

John Tan: [01:37:40] Go and calculate lor Take your son as an example. So calculate. Calculate is mingpan, say mother relationship no good, that kind of thing lah. When young time, do a lot of nonsense.

Speaker1: [01:37:49] Man tak chia

John Tan: [01:38:04] Yeah. Man tak chia. But his is a bit different. His is energy work. Yeah. Energy work more on the Qi. But astrology and Yiching is different. It's more like a study of the different. It's not on the energy practice. But energy is also part of it. It comes from the same philosophy.

Speaker1: [01:38:31] There's a lot. Some sex sexual stuff.

John Tan: [01:38:34] Uh, yeah. Xingmingshuangxiu

Speaker1: [01:38:41] You call the.

John Tan: [01:38:42] The da xiao zhou tian, ren du er mai, the micro and macro cosmic Orbit pass. Renduermai, then Shouxiangyang, then quan?shoutian... means Circulate the whole body circulation. Circulation of whole body means that your thoughts, your intention, you go through every single point, right? You go through every single point right until you can go through smoothly your all, your whole body. Then after that they release. They release. Then it's san fa qi ting[?].

Speaker1: [01:39:21]

John Tan: [01:39:21] san fa qi ting is not kundalini, in the Chinese, the [qi go to the crown], then lian dao han chin[?] then that is the highest.

Speaker1: [01:39:31] Uh.

John Tan: [01:39:33]

Speaker1: [01:39:43] So.

John Tan: [01:39:44] In Taoism. We also got something like Rainbow Body where there's Yang Shen, there's yin shen, there's yang shen. Yuan ying already, they develop this yuan ying, they call it the yang sheng. And then you develop this yuan yin they call the yang shen. Then the yang shen is the one that you know. They will say lah, they can jump here and there, go through the wall, fly here and there. All types of nonsense lah. It is the yangshen. So in Taoism they also got that kind of practice. Yeah. Then there's a particular sect that actually practiced this. Like you say the what? Mantak Chia is also practicing that, but I don't know which sect. The teacher... I never read his book before.

Speaker1: [01:40:42] This is. The dark (room) retreat. Very interesting. Like you are in the dark for three weeks... ...

Speaker2: [01:40:45] Hinduism also has. Actually dark retreat quite common leh. In a lot of, different type of...

John Tan: [01:40:58] If you go to the jail, they put that. Do you think that you you think solo, you think that you want, but actually they they hallucinate. You know, they see a lot of things. So they are not they are not alone. They feel....

Speaker1: [01:41:15] ...

John Tan: [01:41:16] They are not lonely. They are flying somewhere.

Speaker1: [01:41:16] Not lonely yah. (laughs)

John Tan: [01:41:17] Different ah. I saw your Facebook picture. you do yoga also, right?

John Tan: [01:41:30] Yah lah I do yoga lah. To me it's just exercise ...

Speaker1: [01:41:40] When you started to do self enquiry, it was the Taoist master that taught you to do that, right?

John Tan: [01:41:46] No. The Taoist master is. When I got problems, I go and ask him. Seek his guidance.

Speaker1: [01:41:56] The before birth, who am I? That question was given by him? So it is something like awareness teaching?

John Tan: [01:42:00] That (inquiry) was given by him. Actually he doesn't teach awareness teaching, but the... It's very difficult to to find. A similar term like Presence. It's there is no direct translation of Presence, to me, in Taoism one, it's just how you authenticate your Shen (Spirit). Even...

Speaker1: [01:42:32] I think there's a post about Taoism that is about Awareness teaching also right? I think, uh, forgot. What's the name?

John Tan: [01:42:38] Tan. Tan something, right? Yeah, but I don't know whether.

Speaker1: [01:42:42] It's the same.

John Tan: [01:42:43] It is the.

John Tan: [01:42:48] Actually in Later. Later. Men pai (sects). Uh. There are they there are they try to incorporate probably the awareness teaching. Awareness teaching.

Speaker1: [01:42:59] Okay.

John Tan: [01:43:00] But I don't think it is the original teaching. But of course in later stage there are a lot of. Uh. Different men pai (school/sect) talk about awareness teaching, incorporating, uh, like The Secret of Golden Flower. They incorporate the inner light.

(John Tan also wrote at another time:

“Yeah Tyler Jones had discussed with me quite some time when I was in fb.

The Taoist approach to understanding energy, or qi/prana, is deeply rooted in the concepts of yin and yang five elements (2Y5E). It's a comprehensive system that considers the interactions

between human beings, the earth, and the heavens, all within the framework of time and space. This perspective is seen as a universal principle that applies to everything.

In Taoism, the dynamic exchanges between the yin and yang and the 5 elements (2Y5E) of an individual and the (2Y5E) of the environment and (2Y5E) of space and time, are believed to influence one's spirit, health, and astrological destiny. 2Y5E is the common denominator, therefore, a profound comprehension of the **I Ching** and the **Yin Yang Five Elements (干支) ** is essential for those seeking to delve into Chinese practices such as alchemy and meditation.

Imo the practice of Taoist alchemy is intricate, much more elaborate in terms of the energy system than the 5 elements of tibetan, that is y I do not delve into vajrayana buddhism to understand energy aspects. However the two systems of 5 elements do not tally so no point trying to integrate them, I have wasted quite some time trying to do that.

That said, taoism lacks a direct method for realizing one's radiance and the pointing of how the conventional obscures and confuses the mind. It wasn't until Buddhism was introduced to China that these concepts were somehow integrated. The Secret of Golden Flower address a bit on the part on primordial consciousness but it was a much later development in taoist practice and was significantly influenced by Buddhist philosophy, particularly the concept of primordial consciousness.

Taoism philosophy does not contradict emptiness and dependent origination of Buddhism, in fact it complements very well the teachings. However from liberation perspective, we do not need to delve too deeply into the energy system imo, the deconstructive path itself is enough; more direct and to the point.

The way of natural state in fact was addressed in Tao De Jing from very beginning (even before buddhism) but the part on mind's radiance and how de-construction of reified constructs led to realization of appearances r just one's radiance is a most important insight that can turn one's understanding and path upside down if we understand correctly but was entirely missed out in taoism. We won't be able to understand the natural state without this crucial insight (anatta). However we do need some pointings in the right direction on the spontaneous and effortless path of our primordial nature -- the natural state by some qualified masters. It is a path most misunderstood but most crucial for unreserved opening.”)

Speaker1: [01:43:24] Okay. Okay, okay. Interesting last time. No internet. All these people can, like come up, come up with all this thing, then. Then mix together a lot of time. Yeah, maybe they got a lot of time. They can. They can do spiritual. Yah. They, they get fat by doing spiritual practice.

John Tan: [01:43:43] Just like, I think there's the Tibetan. Right. When you associate with the master. Mm. So they, they got certain experience in also in, in Zen they also the same thing. They just didn't disclose. Only they didn't talk about that. In Taoism, Also the same thing. Yes.

When you are with the master you are constantly those really there one you will know one. Yes. Um. I know a few. I know a few. That the. When I was young that time. Those are very you when you keep on associating with them. You they because of their daily work and daily activities you know one. Yeah. They, they, they somehow they, they, they exhibit all these type of things. Right. So it's not just uh.

John Tan: [01:44:40] Just wild imagination. Right, right.

Speaker1: [01:44:42] Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [01:44:44] When you associate with them. For us, because we didn't associate. We always think of this and think of that. Right. Associate with them so young. Associate with them. Associate. Then there's this thing. That's why you see all those rich businessmen, they they always follow.

Speaker1: [01:44:58] Yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [01:45:00] Yeah. So they are not... come on lah, they have gone through all these. Call them to to spend so much money with all these. Those they, they have one.

Speaker1: [01:45:11] Yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [01:45:13] Even, uh, some of the masters, the Taoist master that I know when I was young, they, they are not for the money. Not like the what? There are people that want to build very rich one. Want to build miao (temple) for him? Want to donate a temple? He also doesn't want to. Then calculate. Calculate. Mei you yuan (no karmic affinity). Sorry, don't want. It's like that one. Gao Shan Tze, my master, he won't go and accept one.

Speaker1: [01:45:42] You mean the businessman? Go to them for for advice?

John Tan: [01:45:44] Yes, yes. Many businessmen. Very, very rich one.

John Tan: [01:45:46] Very rich.

John Tan: [01:45:54] Uh, but the the thing is that. Insights in all this are different.

Speaker1: [01:46:04] Yeah.

John Tan: [01:46:05] You know of Ming Shan Shi Fu? Ming Shan Shi Fu is one of my master. I call him teacher of course, but not because of what.. means, there is no insight and there is no wisdom. He's not into this. But he's into meditation.

John Tan: [01:46:26] So he burn away his finger. One he chop, chop away his his ear. So he he got no ears. He take out his ears. They he wears (specs?) Ku xing shen (ascetic).

John Tan: [01:46:41] Then he walked barefooted. Barefooted to, to to Thailand, you know, uh, barefooted walk to what you know. Then when he reached that place. It's san bu yi bai (three steps one bow). To build the whole the cave, up. So the time when we are the disciple, that time we go there. Wah! Cannot, cannot tahan (stand) one you know. You you just follow him. Stand up, kneel, stand up, kneel. Peng san (faint) already you know. Then you take one brick by one brick and build the whole temple up.

Speaker1: [01:47:23] Karma yoga.

John Tan: [01:47:23] Then he drop away his leg, the (filament)?

Speaker1: [01:47:28] Uh.

John Tan: [01:47:28] Then he nian, maha nian (great mindfulness) Then he chant, chant, chant. Then you burn the finger. One finger not enough, he burn another one. You must know, you burn ah, you chant.

John Tan: [01:47:38] You, you you chant and you burn. You burn until the whole thing. Tomorrow he got headache, he got fever and all sorts of thing, you know? Come back, do again. That's the difficult part. Ya. No. He put clay soil and clay. Then he dian huo (light the fire) then he nian jing (chant sutra). Ming Shan Shi Fu, very popular one. He got a few... After. After his death? Probably a few years ago. Few years ago. All gone already. Then we try to build a temple.

Speaker1: [01:48:09] Taoist monk or Buddhist monk. Uh, Theravada lah?

John Tan: [01:48:17] Theravada one.

John Tan: [01:48:22] Of course we respect him as our teacher.

Speaker1: [01:48:24] Yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [01:48:26] Then that time he called me to go, uh, go and visit Sai Baba, then I say, that's why I say. I say master, that's side. Got war, you know. Then you say. Then you say. You know my whole family. You say you all are scared of death. You all stay here. Then he go himself.

Speaker1: [01:48:45] Wah, power, this guy.

Speaker1: [01:49:06] It's from Nafis.

John Tan: [01:49:07] [reading comments]

Speaker1: [01:49:18] Ah, yes.

Speaker5: [01:49:22] Yeah, yeah.

Speaker1: [01:49:25] Yeah. Okay.

John Tan: [01:49:26] Don't record lah, this type of.. [laughs]

Speaker1: [01:49:28] Very rare mah, very rare you come out of cave. [laughs]

Speaker2: [01:50:01] He opened it, you know. Yeah. So?

Speaker1: [01:50:09] I can help you tomorrow. Better today?

Speaker2: [01:50:12] Okay. Okay.

Speaker1: [01:50:14] Okay. Uh. Comes from. Thanks. Thanks. I'll get. I'll get.

John Tan: [01:50:37] It's very difficult to recall. There's a question about how to. How to penetrate from anatta to total exertion.

John Tan: [01:51:03] One way that time is. To contemplate on the interconnectedness of things. You will end up in total exertion.

John Tan: [01:51:19] This is what Nafis is asking. So when you get to the the the phase where you are able to do without the sense of self, it will be good to to contemplate on on the interconnectedness of things. So when you contemplate, let's say, when you hear, uh, how actually if you are feeling it directly, like for example, just now the motorcycle. Right. It's not just the sound, but feel how they link to the vibration of the whole body. Mhm. And your, your whole body means your eardrum, your heart. So you keep on having, contemplating how this whole whole... Process is linked together, you'll get total exertion. The experience of total exertion, mini one, means a small scale, but you if you keep on practicing and practicing, correct, then even driving a car, walking and you will be you will very naturally, you will go into total exertion. Then to the extent that when you start reading, let's say certain texts, um, like with Dogen or when you read, let's say the Buddha's one, somehow you just. Don't know why. You just get connected.

John Tan: [01:52:47] Then you can feel the whole chain, like the whole lineage comes to you. Mm. Yeah.

Speaker1: [01:52:53] Once it happen, is it permanent, or is one of those things that you do do it again and again?

John Tan: [01:52:59] No, no need one lah. But even like that, you are in total exertion.

Speaker1: [01:53:04] The whole universe. Mean. I mean, of course you read the text, so you feel like what? It just make sense.

John Tan: [01:53:12] It's just. No. Yeah. What it makes sense. And. And is as if you are linked to them. You know, just somehow you're connected to them. Yeah, it's just a feeling only. Yeah. That's what the total exertion is like. You. Even to the past. There's even those videos by YouTube that I send to you, right? I say go and watch. He's talking about the whole universe. Then he see that the the possibility of you even to exist without that. So we see that that. Billions and billions of years in even a single atom now is in all of us. Yes.

Speaker1: [01:53:59] Star dust

John Tan: [01:54:00] Yeah, correct. So in all of us. So somehow you feel the link even a few hundred billion years ago. So somehow you get connected? Yeah. That is also total exertion, where you lose your sense of what, and then everything comes into play. The linking.

Speaker1: [01:54:21] M'hmm.

John Tan: [01:54:23] So you just have to contemplate all these kind of things. You will get into it, especially when you lose the sense of self within.

Speaker1: [01:54:33] Right. Right.

John Tan: [01:54:34] Then it becomes very easy to.

Speaker1: [01:54:36] Very easy to to.

John Tan: [01:54:37] To get intimate with everything. Yeah. It's not that after anatta, you become Superman.

Speaker1: [01:54:57] Yeah. Do you think after total exertion, there is more deconstruction to be had? Maybe. Maybe not. I don't know, just.

John Tan: [01:55:06] I think it's a matter of.

John Tan: [01:55:10] How deep you embrace your insight into your daily activities and into the three states. So. If you go into your.

John Tan: [01:55:24] I have not gone to, of course 24 by seven, but in normal waking state. Okay. Occasionally, not not not often, we go into the the three states where your dreams are not karmic, means not business like. Correct. You find yourself practicing inside? Practicing sometimes you yourself giving teaching. And then you yourself suddenly enlightened of the meaning of that. You don't even think of it. That kind of thing. Like even for example like Tsongkhapa, talking talking about the inherent existence of. Freedom from. From what? The

inherent existence right? Linking with total exertion, also comes from during dream. That somehow in normal circumstances I don't feel the link. But when in a dream that time you don't know why you can link them.

Speaker1: [01:56:30] Yeah.

John Tan: [01:56:30] So it is, it is, it is. I do not like to to associate this with anything mystical. It's just you just treat it as. Because you thought of the question and maybe you thought of it deep enough. It goes into your three states. Into your dreams

Speaker1: [01:56:49] So [three states are] total exertion, anatta, and?

John Tan: [01:56:55] No no no no no no, means. Waking, dreaming and deep sleep.

John Tan: [01:57:01] So what I meant is that to go into the dreams. Right? You. Because it's not anything mystical. It's because you. You practice, you go and go into it. And it is during that moment is very, very clear, very, very clear. And you understand something that is that you don't understand. That you don't understand. And you find meaning, meaning that you don't usually find when you think about it in normal waking state, but don't know why, in dreams you somehow it becomes very clear. Then when you wake up, you better write down because you will forget.

Speaker1: [01:57:34] Yeah, I actually work with my colleagues who I see a Jungian therapist. I see so so there is that that the unconscious is trying to speak to you in dreams.

John Tan: [01:57:44] Normally is, I will just. I do not want to hold on to anything. So when it comes to review, these are occasional occasional when they go very deep and somehow in, uh, you, you become very clear. That's why I believe that the dream practice sometimes is good. Uh uh, but it's not for me. Not suit us. You let it be natural. And when they enter, it becomes very, very clear.

Speaker1: [01:58:17] Yeah. Yeah.

John Tan: [01:58:19] Where it is not karmic lah, means it's nothing related to your business or anything, but more towards your your practice. Yeah.

Speaker1: [01:58:27] So it's lucid.

John Tan: [01:58:30] Okay. Lucid. Not in the sense that I can control it. Of course, there are dreams that I. I know that I'm dreaming, but that one is. I do not know.

Speaker1: [01:58:37] Yeah, yeah yeah, yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [01:58:39] I do not know. Like, I practice uh, that time where, uh, let's say. Passing through walls, where in my dreams I actually practice going through the wall, means I penetrate the wall. Correct? And the ghost chasing of the me. Then somehow I run and I penetrate the wall. When I penetrate the wall, I can feel the, let's say, the wall. All those.

John Tan: [01:59:10] All those like electricity and energy and all this when you penetrate them. So then after you penetrate them all, then you find, eh, am I in a dream? Correct. That's not so possible in real life. So then you suddenly you realize, oh, I'm in a dream.

Speaker1: [01:59:27] A lucid dream.

John Tan: [01:59:28] Ya. Then you realize that you you are actually dreaming, right? Right. Then you practice in your dream. Right?

Speaker1: [01:59:34] Right. Right.

John Tan: [01:59:34] Right, right. So this is. I don't think there's anything special.

Speaker1: [01:59:39] Mhm.

John Tan: [01:59:40] Uh, and I think that if you, if you were to practice you can actually have certain control which I believe this even this I do not practice. I don't need practice. They just naturally happen. And then you just aware that I'm in a dream. Something.

Speaker1: [01:59:58] Right. Right, right. Yes.

John Tan: [01:59:59] There's also time that when I go in somehow when I practice um Vipassana at that time I touch the floor by touching the floor in, in my dream.

John Tan: [02:00:12] So I touch it, then I feel the sensation, then I know that I'm in a dream. Correct. Right? Then I meditate in the dream. Mhm. This is this.

Speaker1: [02:00:23] This is inception, You meditate inside then inside You meditate inside. [laughs]

John Tan: [02:00:34] This is nothing special.

John Tan: [02:00:35] I think many people because you are so into you keep on reading, keep on practicing. Keep on reading. Right. Unlike now I also dream of my business.

Speaker1: [02:00:49] So depending on your waking state you're interested in what.

John Tan: [02:00:52] So I said, ri you suo si ye you suo meng (as you think in the day, so you shall dream in the night). So when you are young at time, right. You you keep on practicing. Especially after Anatta, there was a period of few years. Mm. Very very into it.

John Tan: [02:01:05] Very. Mm. Very intense practice. Oh no. Not much different from a monk.

Speaker1: [02:01:13] So so formal meditation is it. Practice is formal meditation.

John Tan: [02:01:17] Meditate, eat, meditate, all sort of things lah.

Speaker1: [02:01:18] Okay k k.

John Tan: [02:01:19] Walk, walk, walk, along the street. You meditate.

John Tan: [02:01:24] You, in the park You meditate. You go to work at time time. Got time that time you walk below, you also meditate. Makan finish, you also meditate.

Speaker1: [02:01:33] Yeah okay. Okay.

John Tan: [02:01:35] So it is because you are too engaged already.

Speaker1: [02:01:39] Right? Right, right. Then becomes part of your system already. Now you sleep. You also meditate.

John Tan: [02:01:45] Walk walk walk, go to the carpark I also feel it, I walk also feel it. So when you are very intense into it, it will go into your three states. Even in your dreams.

Speaker2: [02:01:53] Have you encountered situations where, you know, obviously, the business can be very dirty? Uh, situations always very dirty. So. So you think about your karma and, like, what? What is your practice in. How does it inform your business? Like, are there certain things you do.

John Tan: [02:02:23] Always very dirty. First of all I do not want to link business with religion. Because I'm not a teacher. So you have to be very clear cut. So there are people that will suggest to you. Do T shirt, do chain (?), do whatever things, why not [start?] all these. So first of all I don't want to get associated with [these]. So if you are talking about teaching with respect, let's say the teacher, you make a proposition.

Speaker1: [02:03:01] Um.

John Tan: [02:03:02] You try to propagate the teaching. So you just do your part. Then in business you try not to deviate. From what from? The basic.

John Tan: [02:03:18] Morals. Unnecessarily. And in fact 99% you don't have to. In most of the cases, you do not have to. Correct? To the extent that because why do you need to to do that is in business. It's just business, correct. You don't have to go to the extent of hurting the other party. it's a business deal. You want, you take it, you don't want, don't want lah. Correct? You don't need to go to the extent unless you go into politics. You mean with politics? wah, a lot of things. So you always try to help. Um, your sometimes I, I try not to give. try to give leeway. But within tolerance. Within tolerance we will. You shouldn't go beyond. But the person made a mistake. Uh. Not something very big, but of course it is a breach of agreement, a breach of trust, breach of director's responsibility. So do you want to sue him? Correct. So if he apologize already, then you look. You think he's sincere? Then you give way. you try to tell your partner you shouldn't sue him lah.

John Tan: [02:04:40] So you you don't deviate. Because of something. But like, uh, when you agree on something, let's say you do an investment, right? Then suddenly there's Covid. Covid you know then in your mind you will think evil but they have already prepared. So because you haven't signed but he already left his job. Let's say you left your job already. Then there's a Covid situation. The whole world is in a terrible mess. You still won't go into this investment. But the guy left his job already.

Speaker1: [02:05:11] Because the moral dilemma

John Tan: [02:05:15] You give him the wrong impression that.

John Tan: [02:05:18] Give him the impression that you will support him. So what are you supposed to do. Don't invest or you are going to invest. Yeah.

Speaker1: [02:05:26] Moral dilemma.

John Tan: [02:05:28] So in this case, you can tell you will still invest. Correct. Uh, let me give you an example. Uh, recently. Very unlucky. I have to invest in a tour agency. But nobody expects.

John Tan: [02:05:49] A Covid situation. Will come. Right. So. When when you talk to the person that at that moment you actually agreed to invest. Because he wanted to do something, let's say, to expand, uh, from, let's say from Halal to what in tour agency to expand into what. So he engaged also do a lot of things already, get manpower and all sort of thing, then covid comes. Are you supposed to invest or not invest?

John Tan: [02:06:26] So so company wise, definitely I cannot personal wise, I will still invest if I think that it will not harm me, I will still invest. But I know that sure gone case one lah, sure die one lah. Because it's going to be two years later. So it depends you see. It depends, then, um, let's say assuming you say that you're going to make a donation during a very bad time. Then will covid come. (?) Let's say when you agree. Uh, let's say that. Okay? You you you want to be one of the founding members to propagate, let's say, Buddha's teaching. Come out a

kindergarten. For teaching Buddhism. Then, covid comes. Very painful to need to donate. Let's say ok, 50k, what are you going to do? To donate or not to donate? So these are the things that you whether you want. To mix it with your business or not. So you have to be firm on your in your. Direction. Every day. There's their challenges, every single day. Yeah. So you can say, okay, I don't want to eat too much. I don't overspend. Anyway, you're not going to go out, right? So save save, save. Then go and. Yeah yeah yeah yeah. So in daily activity, you try. Try to maintain this then. You will not give it, then your mind will be very clear. You will not be easily swayed.

Speaker1: [02:08:17] What about something a little bit more challenging? Like you go to a certain country to invest in a business, you go to give bribes and all that. That's part of the way they do business and all that. So something something like that, how how would you approach something like that?

John Tan: [02:08:32] I also do the same thing is it is how well, you know, how well you know, the culture and the business. Uh, giving bribery to me is nothing wrong in a third world country within tolerance. But uh, in China you do a business. Correct. Yan and jiu (tobacco and alcohol). and two (?). Definitely you have to do. So when we go and do the, the, I sit on the board of several listed companies last month. In (PRC?). I sit in the board. They have investment or in several of the listed companies. Last time when I sit. In the board. They invested in overseas. In overseas. And many times there are these types of issues. Internal audit. When they audit, they say they show me two books. Mm. Yeah, I say I'm an independent director. Supposed to make the decision because these are a non-executive decision. Are you going to reject or not to reject? So my question to them is which is it within tolerance? From what I know within Audit standard, let's say within how many percent it is allowed.

John Tan: [02:09:48] You agree lah. If it is beyond certain, what ah? Then you don't agree, right? This is what I told them. But you called me to sign, I will not sign lah. {laughs}

John Tan: [02:10:06] So the main thing is, uh, in third world country, if you want to go into third world country. Correct. There's always this sort of thing, can't be helped one. What are you supposed to do? You have to sang xia da tong one. In Indonesia, we go into, uh, uh, Middle East, right? They call you to wait few days, few 24 hours. You sit down there, they don't want to see you. Then come back, you know. That kind of thing unless you da tong right. It's like that one. Can't be helped.

Speaker1: [02:10:44] True.

John Tan: [02:10:45] I, uh, in in the ohana[?]. Sometimes you also must know the culture. You know, certain country, the culture. You go and da tong, they keep on coming back to you, you know. Hey, I need this. I need this again.

John Tan: [02:10:58] But in, let's say, in certain country, you know, you know, you give they actually do the work.

Speaker1: [02:11:03] In fact that's the norm i

John Tan: [02:11:06] In certain country, You know if you give, the culture, the people will actually do the work. But in certain country, you give, they will come back to you and you give until you are scared, you know.

John Tan: [02:11:20] So in business is you you try to moderate. You must know these are the norms. If you insist that you last time in Singapore. Productivity. We try to implement certain things. Productivity, you know. Uh, in Indonesia. Then in Indonesia, they tell us what. Eh, we don't want productivity here, you know? Your thing doesn't work.

Speaker1: [02:11:48] (Laughs) Oh my goodness. Yeah.

John Tan: [02:11:54] But in in current Covid is actually a different thing in this Covid situation. Uh different magnitude. It's it's a eye opener. Uh that when you come to testing. I invested in scientists. Our company invested in scientists. We come out the testing kit. In fact she's one of those that actually uh. Caution the Singapore government MOH before the happenings of the [Covid]. So she actually came up with testing way before. So she come out the own testing. But when you deal with third world countries, the testing. We. We believe in our testing key. And we try to tell them that these are the procedures and that you definitely have to, you know, MOH, when wanted MOH. They we got a lab during the testing lab where you do swab you have to go to the lab. We got a lab. So the you have to go through so many steps to get approved, you know, and our approval can take about four months and still haven't approved. You know, we still scared, haven't approved, uh, audit your process audit everything audit the machine audit everything lah, then, give you testing until one stage everything is being approved? correct. Everything being approved. Then they found out that there are other cases that your testing kit must also test for cross reactivity, they call it. So we have actually have to buy bacteria from US.

Speaker1: [02:13:22] To test.

John Tan: [02:13:23] To test the cross reactivity.

Speaker1: [02:13:26] Right.

John Tan: [02:13:27] So all this we document down. Then we are going to help let's say Indonesia very bad ah, for example. Then we tell them, you know you have to test all this. They bo chap one you know. But this involve life right. But. Or in any other countries. They may not be like Singapore like that, but you are then worried that what happened is not just money, because what happen, you suka suka one, but. Because they can get don't know what kind of grants from the government or whatever thing. They may not observe it.

Speaker1: [02:14:01] Correct.

John Tan: [02:14:02] So we will still do it then. You feel a bit bad. You feel bad? What happened? So it comes to this type of thing? Of course. Then it's very difficult to.

Speaker1: [02:14:11] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:14:12] You on one hand you wanted to sell them the testing kit. On the other hand you know that they are not interested. They are not so interested in that in the probably in the testing procedure.

Speaker1: [02:14:25] Right, right.

John Tan: [02:14:26] Correct. Right. And they just want to earn the money. But are you going to do the business or not going to do the business.

Speaker1: [02:14:31] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:14:32] So you have to make a decision. Correct. So you you know that you earn the money. You shouldn't be very, very happy. Uh, you lose money. You also don't quite. But this when in business, of course it becomes. I believe in, even in temple also. We face this type of issue when we want to view. But let's say one of the biggest statue in Asia. So. This is quite something that is very sad. Then, uh, probably the temple. They themselves quarrel, you know.

Speaker1: [02:15:10] Yeah. Is to be.

John Tan: [02:15:11] Credited.

Speaker1: [02:15:12] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:15:13] Who got the credit?

Speaker1: [02:15:14] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:15:15] Who should be responsible for the whole thing? They created a whole mess of it.

Speaker1: [02:15:19] Yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [02:15:20] So all the disciples are become every day settling this type of nonsense. Politics, all sorts of something. Then when you do it that time, you really don't feel like doing it.

Speaker1: [02:15:31] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:15:31] You really don't feel like... you bring business into religion.

Speaker1: [02:15:35] Yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [02:15:36] You bring politics into it. But. It's everywhere. Yeah. So you have to deal with that. How do you maintain your, your integrity and what this kind of thing always happens. Correct. Especially when you involve in the activities of the society. Um they always got this type of problem.

Speaker1: [02:15:58] Right.

John Tan: [02:15:58] Like even our art festival for Buddhism. Correct. We uh some of them ask for donation. When they go and ask for donation. You know about se jie (world of sensual desire) all these kind of things, the show.

Speaker1: [02:16:12] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:16:13] So the he's trying to depict let's say the true sight of what. You know, you all watch, the se jie (world of sensual desire), that one meditate for nine years. Then they go and carry him out, right? As if he's enlightened. Then later he saw a girl. Then everything changed. Correct. So he, he this person let's say is something like that. So he asked for a donation. Let's say ask for donation for Singapore Buddhist Society. The shi fu donated. Then they go and produce the show. Then go and put the name Singapore Buddhism donated this. This one donated donated. A lot of people complain. How can you produce this stuff?

Speaker1: [02:17:03] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:17:04] Of show right. Mhm. You didn't vet through. You didn't vet through then you donate. Then it created a big hoo ha.

Speaker1: [02:17:10] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:17:11] Then you create a big hoo ha. They create a big hoo ha then subsequently nobody else will donate. Nobody else will donate.

Speaker1: [02:17:22] Yeah. Correct. Yeah.

John Tan: [02:17:25] Then what happened? How are they going to survive? Yeah. All these a group of people. All this group of young Buddhists that are, that has the passion to, to bring out the culture of Buddhism. But you are restricting him to a, something that is very.

Speaker1: [02:17:44] Found PC politically correct?

John Tan: [02:17:46] Yeah, that's politically correct. But you know that it's not true that there are such he just want to [fan ying] correct or not?. So he made such a small mistake then it's not given a chance anymore. Yeah. No chance. Nobody want to to to even or even dare to

associate. So how. Yeah. There's a group of people that is doing free, you know, contributing. Probably very intelligent, very intelligent. Uh, putting a lot of effort over ten years. They build up then suddenly gone.

Speaker1: [02:18:20] Yeah. Everything gone.

John Tan: [02:18:22] So how are you going to help them? I'm not going to help them. So these are the things that you have to.

Speaker1: [02:18:29] To.

John Tan: [02:18:32] To, uh, to face if you got the ability, you want to help them, but you're against everyone against what they say. What do you want to help them? But to you, if you say you don't want to help them, because frankly, I think that they are not wrong. And I think, frankly, they should be given a chance. But then you say that. Shouldn't. Then the whole group. There are ten years of effort. All gone.

Speaker1: [02:19:03] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:19:04] All gone. They want. So what are you going to do. So if you say that, okay, you agree to help. Then the thing will continue. Correct. So you have to make a decision whether you want to do that or you do this. So you must be firm. This you must be inside your mind. That you do whatever thing. Your nian is not firm, nothing will succeed. Correct? So you have to be firm.

Speaker1: [02:19:36] And your conscience must be clear lah.

John Tan: [02:19:37] Your conscience must be clear... and []

Speaker1: [02:19:38] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:19:39] So you make a decision, say, okay, go ahead. So you will support lah. But there will be things come in. People will say...

John Tan: [02:19:52] So these are the things. Yeah. So it's not free from actually everything is free. Yeah. But what I believe is you have to be very firm in your decision. Your mind must be very clear and not to be swayed. So internally, if you think that you are not doing wrong, you just proceed as long as you don't harm other people.

Speaker1: [02:20:16] [Amma] asked a question, what is mindfulness of [?].

John Tan: [02:20:23] To me, post anatta to me it's like being totally. Non-conceptual already. That's why the other post anatta means you're being totally non-conceptual. In fact, uh, being raw in attention in, uh, like like practicing, uh, raw attention and mindfulness. Mindfulness,

means it's not just noting, because you note about some. Depends on your teacher. Some teacher tell you to note about the three the the, the impermanence and all sort of things instead of just noting, noting, noting, noting your sensation then, until that some people teaches uh having raw attention. Being raw in what. Okay. Birds chirping. This is your sensation of your feet touching the ground, all sorts of things. Being raw in attention. You keep on doing, doing, doing, doing, doing. But in after anatta. This becomes natural. Before that I hate doing it. Wah, damn siong (fierce), must note ah.

Speaker1: [02:21:35] Right right right.

John Tan: [02:21:36] So when you meditate your teacher teach you. Right. You go and sit down there and note. How long can you note? But after anatta it becomes very natural. In fact you like to note. Your feet touching the ground. Correct? Your breath. And you note every sensation. It becomes natural. But daily life. This. This is the easy part. Like post anatta right, you do all this? This is the easy part. That's why I always tell you those things that I tell you. Like the question that you ask, right? Those are the difficult part. The the politics. How do you maintain. These are the difficult part. Correct. You do business. Correct. Your staff, all that kind of thing, you know.

Speaker1: [02:22:36] Which is actually I ask a question before on the forum, which is. To these two questions. Related. One is somebody like you who has investigated the self so deeply. Why would you want to then go and do business right to engage the world? That's the other way to ask the question is what good does going to investigate all this do to your life? Is there any practical, uh, for lack of a better word, a practical benefit to having anatta and total exertion? What does it do good to you running a business. And the other way to ask it is if you are into all this total exertion and all that, why do you want to go and deal with all this rubbish of the world? (laughs)

John Tan: [02:23:31] Itchy backside lah. Actually, I think we just need minimum, uh, spending. Um, we don't have to earn too much, but. Assuming you're married, you got kids. You want your child to be better, right? You wanna leave something for them? Mhm. Seldom do we actually think of myself. Normally you think for your family more. Right, right, right. You always think of family. You always think of your kids. You always think of what? So you you you find that you. In order to relinquish yourself from your duties. All this. Samsara, in a samsara world right, would still have to do your part. But when you engage in this type of activity. You can treat it as a kind of mo nian (hard training) and also practice. Right, right. So this is the hard part. When you are, you are free from. So I say the the thing. That's why I always believe why I say to, to to let's say dreaming. Right. What your dreams are always karmic is because of your attachment. But then if you can maintain and then practice in this area, your dream should be free.

Speaker1: [02:24:45] Okay.

John Tan: [02:24:46] Not just... That's why I say when you when you xiu (practice) what you see in the society, that is the way to make to go to the third stage. (three stages: waking, dreaming, deep sleep)

Speaker1: [02:24:58] Okay. Yeah. Okay. Okay.

John Tan: [02:25:00] The self that should be relinquished at this engagement and activities.

Speaker1: [02:25:08] Is.

John Tan: [02:25:08] The key, uh, to free yourself up from the karmic dreams. Uh, this is what I believe.

Speaker1: [02:25:15] Karmic?

John Tan: [02:25:17] Means you dream a lot of nonsense. Your dreams are come out also of thing.

Speaker1: [02:25:20] As a.

John Tan: [02:25:21] Condition. Very samsaric dreams instead of practicing related. So if you can. If you can relieve yourself from this in this engagement, I think it will work. And I think I'm slowly feeling which you take. A long time to practice and to realize.

Speaker1: [02:25:45] Right, right, right.

John Tan: [02:25:45] So it is this engagement to me is what that really help you to relieve yourself? Uh, even when you are unconscious. It is this type of engagement. So Anatta is just the. Just the beginning. Then you go into it. You can feel it also when you are not being affected.

Speaker1: [02:26:17] Is very easy. We do in a cave. Why you (give yourself) such a hard time?

John Tan: [02:26:18] Of course we can lah. That's why I support the (movie) se jie (world of sensual desire) mah.

John Tan: [02:26:27] Then I say, these are the realistic parts. These is the really the xiu xing (practice) one. This is the real [stuff], zhen shi de dong xi. When you meet a girl, then your saliva start drooling the whole floor mah. So this is the real, real xiu xing (pracitce) one. The self that is being. You see, it's very difficult to say that only in engagement. Your self start popping up.

Speaker1: [02:26:52] Right, right.

John Tan: [02:26:53] Not just the background you know. Yeah.

Speaker1: [02:26:55] Yeah. Yeah.

John Tan: [02:26:55] Your. This condition should start. You never know. You thought you have would come. But then only when you engage...

Speaker1: [02:27:04] Scold you on the road or whatever you like.

John Tan: [02:27:06] Scold you on the roat, that one that one is okay. But then the main thing is, um, like last time when I was in U.S. studying, um. Economics. Economists are always is demand and supply GNP. What is the how much is the GNP? Uh, the, you know, pro life. Right.Pro life and and all this. So my teacher asked. Um. Are you pro-choice or are you pro-life? Oh. So you see now let's say. We go. Let's say you go for those, uh. Traditional attire or something like that. Abortion. Should you do it or should you not do it for the economy? Sir, it's. Why not? It's a matter of GNP.

Speaker1: [02:28:04] All right.

John Tan: [02:28:05] How much?

Speaker1: [02:28:06] How much?

John Tan: [02:28:07] We ask the student. Ask the student. So my prof. Ask the student. How much do you think? Uh, can I pay you out of this?

Speaker1: [02:28:16] Oh. Value of...

John Tan: [02:28:18] Because in economics, is is. Yeah. Is the the per capita income and the GNP, if you generate 50,000, over 50,000, you should be able to do it. All right. So then what about then you say, no, I will not do it. So what about 100 K. They say no, I want 200 K. Uh, so you say, what about 400 K? So you give, give, give, give until is there a price for it or not.

John Tan: [02:28:44] What about 1 million? What about 10 million? 100 million. Well then then you start thinking, is it. Are you a pro choice? Or are you a pro life?

Speaker1: [02:28:54] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:28:56] So is there economic value being attached to it? Yeah. Yeah, that kind of thing. So the, the the thing is.

Speaker1: [02:29:06] Um.

John Tan: [02:29:07] When you come to that. When you when you can say that no, I won't be affected. But when people present you with their... then you kalang kaboh right, wah.

Speaker1: [02:29:16] Yeah, temptations right.

John Tan: [02:29:25] 100 million ah? Maybe I give once lah, just once. Then I'm a 100 million (?) man.

Speaker1: [02:29:29] Right? Right.

John Tan: [02:29:30] So the. The thing is, only when you engage, then.

Speaker1: [02:29:36] You will know.

John Tan: [02:29:36] Then you will know.

Speaker1: [02:29:37] It's easy. Never say never. Easy to say in theory lah.

John Tan: [02:29:41] Tell Wei Yu right.

John Tan: [02:29:43] Of course use your mothers and parents money do donation, never mind right.

John Tan: [02:29:59] [Until] your self,

John Tan: [02:30:01] Your sense of self start creeping out, even post anatta.

Speaker1: [02:30:08] when you are faced with all these.

Speaker1: [02:30:11] Sure. Okay. So you put yourself there to xiu ah.

John Tan: [02:30:20] No no, actually I don't lah, ... Itchy backside...

Speaker1: [02:30:22] Yeah. Yeah. So in relationships as well I mean the relationship with.

John Tan: [02:30:26] Relationships is something. Something damn difficult to [?].

Speaker1: [02:30:31] But you said no self mah, no self then no problem. How come no self still got argument one meh?

John Tan: [02:30:39] Uh, what about your, uh, your kids? Let' say 12 a.m haven't come back. Kalang kaboh already. Then 1 a.m.. eh, never happened before you know. 2 a.m lah.

John Tan: [02:30:53] 3 a.m. you start calling already. How come you...

John Tan: [02:31:08] So you.. difficult to overcome. So, my wife, the other day, telling me. Your son haven't come back yet you know.

John Tan: [02:31:14] I'm thinking, why ah, 2 a.m.. correct or not. You call the friend or not, you also will dan xing (worry) one right.

Speaker1: [02:31:27] Yeah. So when you do business pre anatta and post anatta, got difference or not. Does it help.

John Tan: [02:31:41] I mean initially from the perspective how I feel ah. Business wise I don't actually feel it.

Speaker1: [02:31:48] Uh okay.

John Tan: [02:31:49] Means even in this Covid I lost a lot of money. Yeah. Yeah, a lot of thing. A lot of not only personal loss, a lot of money, a lot of things to answer. Sure, sure. I just treat it as. Part of.. part of working life.

John Tan: [02:32:03] Then the wealth that I lost I say, okay, it can come to you, you can lose it. Means that in this part, probably.

John Tan: [02:32:16] I'm more, what ah. I think I have sufficiently overcome, but I won't anyhow spend even in, let's say, donation or whatever, because everything has its place. Yeah, just like in I Ching. In I Ching, to I Ching, jiu wu zi zhun. Jiu wu zi zhun means, you know jiu? Jiu represent yang(?), wu means the fifth place. In I Ching, the Gua got liu yao, got six lines. Position is very important. Even the emperor can only be at the fifth position. So Jiu wu is already zi zun, the supreme. When you go to the number six, Liu Yao, it's going to be Fu already, you're going to drop already.

Speaker1: [02:33:04] Oh, balance.

John Tan: [02:33:05] So my position is very important.

Speaker1: [02:33:07] Okay.

John Tan: [02:33:08] So everything has their own position. Yeah.

Speaker1: [02:33:10] At the own time and place.

John Tan: [02:33:11] Must be must have their position.

Speaker1: [02:33:13] Yeah yeah yeah yeah. So can be more chill lah, post anatta?

John Tan: [02:33:22] Don't know whether it's due to anatta or not, probably it's due... yah lah.

John Tan: [02:33:27] (?)

Speaker1: [02:33:31] Fair enough.

John Tan: [02:33:33] I say what do you expect. I see, uh, just recently they say that we're expecting, uh, 15% return on ROI. I say, come on, ROI is always 15% is always a dream. I say you can make it. Let's say 4 to 5, uh, 5% or 6% is considered very good, right? So you don't I think you talk about 15%. We all know that's the dream. Yeah, right. Unless you strike a lottery. Correct. You if you say a small amount, let's say invest, let's say uh, 50,000. You want to earn 100% it's possible, 50,000 mah. Yeah, right. Yeah. But you want to say 50 million? Yeah. Or let's say 500 million. How you want to do it? You know, 100%. 500 million. Joke lah. That's why people is saying that. Okay, I buy a very big, big piece of land. I go by square feet, I buy hotel. Hotel Capri is only for 4% only. 4%. You see? Laugh already. And we have two hotels and 2222 resorts in Maldives only 2%.

Speaker1: [02:34:35] So low only.

John Tan: [02:34:40] 2% only. Correct. So the the the the thing I said, it's not logical that you want to look for 15%. There's no 15%. That's a dream. So I dare to say them.

Speaker1: [02:34:53] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:34:55] So is your experience lah. I won't get bothered by this thing.

Speaker1: [02:35:00] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:35:01] But I'm quite like like all these kind of things I would be bothered.

Speaker1: [02:35:04] Right, right right.

John Tan: [02:35:05] Should I do this. Should I do that. You know.

Speaker1: [02:35:08] Mhm. Mhm. Mhm. Mhm. Yeah. Right. Then sometimes the self will come out.

John Tan: [02:35:18] Will definitely come out one. Unless you are... That's why I say only when you are [insight?], when you do engagement. You must engage in the activities.

John Tan: [02:35:26] Then your... They meet condition they will come up, then you know whether have you overcome.

Speaker1: [02:35:32] Yeah yeah. Yeah. True true true. Yeah. I have some friends who are Bhutanese monks. Also, sometimes they come to Singapore. Then I bring them out to eat and all that. Sometimes I also tell them what the problem is. Since they are young to now. They all have. They have been is monks. Then they have been revered. So they never had, you know,

uh, you know, things that challenge them in life. So it's easy for them to say, be happy, let it go or whatever. Whatever. Some, some.

John Tan: [02:36:06] Is really, uh, really. It's okay. There's one that, uh. Rinpoche.

John Tan: [02:36:19] You know, in Taiwan when you are a sang si (guru), wah they kneel in front of the floor, bow to you. Then he, uh, say, he got and tell his master. He said, I don't want this type of life. Then he go to the mountain to xiu xing (practice).

Speaker1: [02:36:40] Hermit lah?

John Tan: [02:36:44] No. Hermit. There is actually a temple but very high in the mountain.

Speaker1: [02:36:45] Actually.

John Tan: [02:36:46] You climb up, you also cannot breathe. It's very very high. So they go eat is jin jialat one leh, nothing one. Then they don't have money. They want to build let's say school... wah they must spend money, go and take the bricks, go and collect all the all those bricks that people doesn't want to go and build the thing. Then they go and ask for donation, all that kind of thing. So when let's say you go down from the mountain, they give up all the life, let's say in Taiwan, where everybody pray to him, all that kind of thing, he go and do this type of thing, then collect money, go and collect often. There's a lot of people lost in the jungle, all a lot of kids. People threw.

John Tan: [02:37:33] Their babies or abandoned their babies. Then they go and collect. They go and feed them and go and go and build, uh, schools for them. So they they go and do this type, you know, they, they, they don't want that kind of life. They go and do this. Then they [?], they ask for donation. So when the let's say you go and visit them, then they take the vehicle up, right then, then suddenly they saw that one is the xing tu (follower), the xing tu. Then suddenly a xing tu the house are on, on fire. Wah. He he really. You can see the compassion one, you know. Wah! Really, really. You can really see the compassion one. That's why I say um. It's really into them already where they open up, you know, it's just become just part of them.

Speaker1: [02:38:26] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:38:26] Yeah. They don't feel it. They don't feel it's hardship. It's it's just totally compassionate. So it's not.

John Tan: [02:38:38] This is not fake. So that's why I say you are with the teacher.

John Tan: [02:38:44] it's different, they demonstrate these type of things.

Speaker1: [02:38:48] Yeah. Yeah.

John Tan: [02:38:49] So for us because we are su ren (common men).

Speaker1: [02:38:53] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:38:54] So to them, they demonstrate through their the depth of their...

Speaker1: [02:38:59] Yeah. The heart is open.

John Tan: [02:39:02] That is the. The higher level of anatta.

Speaker1: [02:39:07] Mhm. Mhm.

John Tan: [02:39:09] So and there are many Tibetan teachers are like that.

Speaker1: [02:39:15] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:39:16] It's not one. Yeah. You can really feel it. That's why the xing tu (followrs), when they donate, they really put it a lot of effort because they, they, they, they see the effort of the master.

John Tan: [02:39:35] Somehow, sometimes you think the... I... I do not want the. Like, for example, you are sick. You don't go and see [doctor]. Then you say okay, okay, okay, okay, okay. Now you kena bacteria, then you die. So this is the thing that master actually got a certain problem, and then died.

John Tan: [02:40:01] So there are masters. There are really can see from the depth of their heart. They really don't have self one. Really don't have self. Then they say, uh, let's say. If. They say that, my xiu xing (practice) is not until liu tong (six supernatural powers), I do not know if there is a pure land. If there is a pure land... I will say, please save you first, then save me.

John Tan: [02:40:34] It's really from the bottom of their heart.

Speaker1: [02:40:36] Mhm. Mhm. Mhm. Yeah. Mhm.

John Tan: [02:40:41] We are not like that. Definitely I'm not like that.

Speaker1: [02:40:52] (Laughs) But never mind lah, you can still help a lot of people out of the internet.

John Tan: [02:40:58] No not me, Soh, Soh...

Speaker1: [02:40:59] Soh is proxy proxy only lah, he's the proxy network, the anatta bot (laughs)

John Tan: [02:41:14] What I think is... Anatta is... You authenticate your living presence. Gives you certain understanding. Beyond that is very personal. And. When it comes to things that are so personal is very personal experience. You cannot use logic. You cannot use whatever thing to to. To explain. When you authenticate the living presence, then you go further and go further. You understand more and how it opens up your mind is depending on how you challenge view. And. Once you penetrate. Deeper and deeper and deeper. Of course, you have some experiences. To know about the meaning of your existence. There are some advantages. Correct. Like uh you were to ask me do you believe in rebirth. To me that's very silly question. Of course I believe lah. Correct. But I tell you that I believe because I what I experienced it, then you said you really experience it? I say, no lah. It depends on individual. Correct. Like like uh Buddha is telling you you know. This time, uh, this year, ah. I was like that. Don't know, three lives ago, then probably 20 lives ago, like that, like that, like that. Like Sim Po (Sim Pern Chong), he is very clear, this this this thing happened. (Comments by Soh: I shared some details of Sim's past lives in https://www.awakeningtoreality.com/2018/07/on-supernatural-powers-or-siddhis.html)

John Tan: [02:43:24] So there are people that are able to do that. Correct? So those very vague ones, we do not know.

Speaker1: [02:43:35] Mm. Yeah. So where does. If there is no self, where does volition and free will comes in into this whole picture?

John Tan: [02:43:49] No, no self doesn't mean that, uh. That's what I say it's the agency and action. You do not need agency to have the action. It is just our language structure that tells us that you need that.

Speaker1: [02:44:02] Right.

John Tan: [02:44:03] Always. There's the intention, there's the volition. There's all these. You do not need a self to have volition.

Speaker1: [02:44:10] You do not need a self to have volition?

John Tan: [02:44:13] No. Because you're thinking an action requires a self to initiate.

Speaker1: [02:44:19] Yeah yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [02:44:20] So that is due to the structure of your language. Correct. Like the body contains some sensation. The body doesn't contain sensation. And it gives us just like the other day, the question. Yeah. Um, that. That. How do you feel without inner and without outer and without inner? Because you always feel because the language define your experience and you think that there is your body contains sensation. But then when you deconstruct the body, yeah, yeah, you're just left with sensation. That's right. You do not have a container ship. There is no inner. You just feel they are simply present.

Speaker1: [02:44:58] Right.

John Tan: [02:44:59] Correct. Sensation is just presence only, zero dimension.

Speaker1: [02:45:04] Right? Right.

John Tan: [02:45:05] So it is it is this structure that keeps on. Defining this structure. Actually, um, define your experience. Shaped your experiences.

Speaker1: [02:45:18] So I see you deconstruct the senses because you realize the senses is not...

John Tan: [02:45:24] Deconstruct the mental construct.

Speaker1: [02:45:25] Yeah. So the senses are not don't belong to us, person or self. In the same way, the volition also doesn't belong to itself. You can have volition without a self.

John Tan: [02:45:38] Yes. It doesn't belong to a self. The volition itself. If you say, is the self. What you conventionally state as a self, this belongs to that as if there's a they contain it, they they possess it, they, they what, they don't.

Speaker5: [02:45:57] Like is the lightning and the flashing.

John Tan: [02:45:59] So you see through it, you see you see through this construct that causes dualism, that causes. So your experience becomes non-dual. So you see through it, you see through it. You don't have a dualistic view. You don't have an inherent view.

Speaker1: [02:46:15] Right. It also, it doesn't mean that if you deconstruct the self, you realize that there is no such thing as volition. There is there is volition is just that it it is just like, you see.

John Tan: [02:46:27] There is. Just like you say, feeling.

John Tan: [02:46:31] There's feeling. Uh, correct. There is sensation. There is colors. There is sound. Correct.

Speaker1: [02:46:38] Right, right.

John Tan: [02:46:39] The other deconstruction is you deconstruct the meaning, the semantic, the meaning that is associated with the word. (?) free

Speaker1: [02:46:48] Sure, sure, sure.

John Tan: [02:46:49] So these are the two things. One thing is you even deconstruct the meaning. Besides the permanence and everything, right? The behind reality. The other one is deconstruct the meaning and then you are free.

Speaker1: [02:47:01] Right.

John Tan: [02:47:02] So there's one. This is non conceptuality.

Speaker1: [02:47:05] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:47:06] The other one is total exertion where you maintain all these conventionalities yet you are free.

Speaker1: [02:47:14] Right, right. Hmm.

John Tan: [02:47:17] So there are these two.

Speaker1: [02:47:26] Wah, a lot of homework to do. (laughs)

John Tan: [02:47:36] Also got time go and practice. Somatic exercises. It is important for deconstruction because just like fear.

Speaker1: [02:47:51] (?)

John Tan: [02:47:54] Exercises, yoga or whatever thing. Because just like. Like breathing. Breathing exercise. If you got fear, you cannot. You may be able to to to talk yourself out of your fear. But you can just simply do breathing exercises.

Speaker1: [02:48:19] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:48:20] Right.

Speaker1: [02:48:20] Mhm. Mhm. Mhm.

John Tan: [02:48:21] You will by by by merely breathing. Deep rhythmic breathing.

Speaker1: [02:48:27] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:48:28] Right. Then down. You will get rid of the fear. Let's say you got stressed. You know, you learn the qi gong right. Shake shake shake shake shake your hand. So your blood. Let's say you flow. Flow to your heart. Your stress. And you feel your heart (?). Right. So you try to tell yourself, hey, don't stress. Don't stress. Don't stress. No stress. Stress, stress stress. Right. But you just. You just. Put down your hand. Then you just vibrate your hand. Then

you take deep breath. You vibrate. Right? So your blood flowing down. Right. Feel the sensation of your body. So you just do it.

Speaker1: [02:49:07] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:49:08] You won't have the stress. Just by merely doing that. It is better than you telling yourself.

Speaker1: [02:49:17] Not to stress.

John Tan: [02:49:17] Not to stress.

Speaker1: [02:49:18] Stress. Mhm.

John Tan: [02:49:19] So you must know that. That is not the only way. That's not the only way. By feeling your qi. Or by feeling your breath.

Speaker1: [02:49:31] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:49:32] Correct. You are able to get rid of your fear. You're able to get rid of your stress. And that is immediate, very tangible, very tangible. No bullshit.

Speaker1: [02:49:46] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:49:46] Let's say you find you heart feeling what, straight away you put out your hand and you shake, vibrate. You will just get rid of it. So these are the things that are very tangible. No need to bullshit. It will give you a (?)

Speaker1: [02:50:02] Right.

John Tan: [02:50:04] It is very difficult to exercise your internal, your organs and how to make them strong.

John Tan: [02:50:10] So you there are few ways.

John Tan: [02:50:15] You can think of visualization, or you can just use your breath to exercise your internal organs like your nei zhang and nei li (internal organs and internal strength). Correct. So you practice that.

Speaker1: [02:50:30] Mm.

John Tan: [02:50:31] You practice that, it's not only good for your health. Your mental and what is will help also.

Speaker1: [02:50:38] Mhm. Mhm.

John Tan: [02:50:40] The whole body is very karmic. You don't know why suddenly you are stressful. You don't know suddenly why. You are what. And you think that you can use your mind to just psycho yourself out of that means you haven't feel very stressful yet lah.

Speaker1: [02:50:58] Right.

John Tan: [02:50:59] So you can instead, if you were to have a certain art.

Speaker1: [02:51:02] Yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [02:51:03] A certain art to to relax yourself, to train yourself. It will help. And whether you are able to find the relationship between your breath, or your prana. And your mind.

Speaker1: [02:51:22] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:51:23] Nobody can explain to you. Trust me. Your teacher can tell you, tell you, tell you. You won't be able to understand, how energy is related to mind and your body. You yourself have to feel it. It's your own body, and you cannot. You cannot tell. Uh, until you practice. Like for example, um, even the doctors that I know, so many doctors, the specialists, every I know hundreds of them. When I talk to them, they can tell you from experience, not their experience.

Speaker1: [02:52:02] Yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [02:52:02] From they they seek, but they don't actually know what happened. Like I got slip this right. So they check check check check check check check check check check check check check. Then you see the unless you go for MRI. They say, they don't think I got slip disc you know, may be other problem. But why. Because I have been doing yoga mah. I've been doing yoga. So somehow I still feel the pain. But I can control it. The pain. Now this tells us that your body, even the top specialist also cannot tell you. They can't tell you one.There is no way they can tell you. Only you yourself should feel it whether this or that.

John Tan: [02:52:44] So understand your whole body. Understand your body. Understand that besides using your mind, your mental thoughts. Your body is very important. Go very deeply. Your body is a whole universe. Go deeply into your body. Understand your body. Understand your breath. If you got time. No time. Of course. But it is a joy to actually. To, to learn how to feel the rhythm of your breath and how to control your breath to get rid of your stress. Then, together with certain pose, it will help you. Yeah. Now you won't feel it because you are young, all of us are young. But my age like that, I can feel it already, you know. Correct. Not enough sleep. Sometimes I do work. Right. You do one day. Last time when I was young. I'm able to do it. Few days don't sleep. Right, bring tooth brush to go and work one you know, do until next morning. But when you are old, you try not to sleep a few days. You cannot tahan (withstand). You rush

your work, right? Do proposal right. You have to do proposal. Rush rush rush rush two days never sleep. Feel like dying, right? So. Then you when you are, when you didn't have enough rest. Your stress builds up very easily one. So your your body you know, so you is very important. You learn a technique. Then you slowly you'll understand. You understand that. Oh I have to do this. I have to do that. But just that day you show me a book that doing deep breathing about Taoism. Yeah. You see the correct. Uh don't know what Hinduism or what I tell you. You breathe through your chest. Right. The Taoism tell you breathe through your, uh.

Speaker1: [02:54:45] Diaphragm or diaphragm and all that. Yeah.

John Tan: [02:54:48] So which one is correct?

John Tan: [02:54:51] How you manipulate your your breath, your prana or whatever you call it. Is only you yourself know. Correct. You, you you breathe through here. You know how to keep, let's say your breath. Or you breathe through your stomach. Both will work.

John Tan: [02:55:14] Both if you do it correctly. Will be will able to work. Will be able to accumulate strength. Will be able to accumulate. Will make you come ease your mind. There's a lot of things.

Speaker1: [02:55:27] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

John Tan: [02:55:29] So understand your body. Understand, uh, your body. Understand your breath. Then you will slowly. Uh uh. Enjoy. Correct. Even your finger. Yeah, right. Stretching here. Stretching slightly. An extended stretching. Is his stretching extended? You just stretch further. Only a bit. You raise your hand, you raise further. This will help you. Then if you all think that this is good right, you all should go and explore yourself. This one nobody can teach one. But people say, uh, you do like that, you do like that. To me, it is your own body.

Speaker1: [02:56:17] You become self-aware after a while? You're sensitive enough after a while to you know how.

John Tan: [02:56:24] The body is actually a miracle. Until..

Speaker1: [02:56:26] Yeah, but you can sense it yourself.

John Tan: [02:56:28] Yeah, of course we have to sense it. Correct. You have to sense it. Like, for example, you practice, um, many problems, let's say my body in certain angle, certain twisting of the angle, certain angle. You you are able to overcome that. Then you have to know your body. It's not his body. It's. Yeah. My body. Correct. So you you have to practice it. Like for example, I can say let's say you got nose block here. Correct.

Speaker1: [02:56:57] Always morning got sinus one. Some people say you don't know what lah, drink... Correct. But the hard way is to me is I can feel let's say for example, you put your leg behind your head, your whole channel is open.

Speaker1: [02:57:16] Right, right.

John Tan: [02:57:17] Yeah. But is it true?

Speaker1: [02:57:19] Mhm.

John Tan: [02:57:19] But this is not in books. I've read so many books it is not in books. You know. Nobody explain that way. I read the benefits of it. I read the what, what kind of thing. What will happen. Nobody explain that way but it just happen to you.

Speaker1: [02:57:32] Mhm. Mhm mhm.

John Tan: [02:57:33] Right then you do this ten times. 20 times I have been doing it for probably a thousand times. Correct. Good practice every day. The the thing is, it is like that. They open it up according to your body, but not according to any text, any books. So to me, it is just how your body opens up.

Speaker1: [02:57:59] That is because you... And you're aware. A lot of people do their... they are not aware, they are not sensitive.

John Tan: [02:58:05] So that's why that's why I always tell him you have to be mindful of your body. Don't just go for the pose. Don't just go for the pose. You have to be mindful of your body.

Speaker1: [02:58:14] Right? Right. Yeah.

John Tan: [02:58:16] Yeah. So those people, they are mindful and study their own body. So in fact. You have to go into it to... Don't just always think of mind. Mind and body. Conventionally of course we separate. But then when you practice, all these are very very important. So this is what I find. Um. People that over emphasize on just the mental aspect. The analytical aspect actually miss a very big part of it. Correct. Then if you really practice then you understand that eh, the body actually. There's a mean, there's a huge area. The huge area about it. Then how can there be no link? If you talk about anatta that can do all this right, that can have that kind of presence, right? Why? Why can't you practice just using your body? That's why in yoga, right? They also can have Kundalini and presence.

Speaker1: [02:59:22] Yeah.

John Tan: [02:59:23] So when you go into that, then you realize it. So very if you if you are lucky, you are able to find the relationship.

Speaker1: [02:59:31] Actually the Tibetan Buddhist does that. They have uh, exercises for the energy system and all that. Initially I also was very curious, like why, you know, you are talking about spiritual stuff. Then why are you. Tehn actually it helps. Yes, because once you clear your thing, it helps you.

John Tan: [02:59:50] Yes, it's very important to... I can tell you this is definite that you, uh. What what what they say is, is true. But you will have to go into it.

John Tan: [03:00:03] But you can look for a master or teacher or whatever thing. Then you go into it. But you can also simply just being mindful, sensitive yourself and understand. But you need to go through proper don't go and injure yourself. Body is very important.

Speaker1: [03:00:22] Actually it's true. Because, uh, I realized that when I, after I, I do because I took up some pranayama practice. That means breath control and all that. Then I could meditate stronger. So there must be something there. Yeah. Maybe probably align your energy balance or whatever they, they do, BUT

John Tan: [03:00:45] Actually, prana is just your mind. Whether you understand... Prana is just your mind. Even your body sensations. How you all understand is depend... whether there is a [?] or not.

Speaker1: [03:01:02] Mhm mhm. Mhm mhm mhm.

John Tan: [03:01:07] Body is very important. You can open up your body by opening up your mind or vice versa. You can open up your body and you open up your mind.

Speaker1: [03:01:20] Mhm. Mhm.

John Tan: [03:01:22] Both ways. So. The the some of them that teach them how to use your body and your breath to open up your mind. Those are, in fact, good. Good teaching. Those people that just go one way by emphasizing mind to me is not [the way ?]. Only when you go into it you understand. So don't just sit, think.

Speaker4: [03:02:03] I just started doing yoga.

John Tan: [03:02:11] Feel your body. Feel your what... And circulation is important. Try to. Circulation. Your body must (?).

John Tan: [03:02:23] Cardio. Cardio is important unless you go for exercise. Swimming is important, but we don't have time. Your inflammation makes your body tight. So if your body is tight, you cannot do very well with yoga. Because your body is tight, inflammation...

Speaker1: [03:02:37] Right.

John Tan: [03:02:40] So you see diet helps a bit, but is actually your circulation that reduce your inflammation. So when you swim or you do cardio, actually your blood circulate. When you circulate, there is not much of inflammation. And when there's not much of inflammation, you feel more presence bright and very focused. So this and practice of meditation is the same. Somehow they are linked. It's good to practice. He's a bit lazy.

Speaker1: [03:03:21] Okay, you must start yoga class already. We will ask Pam. Can every week come here for yoga class? (laughs)

John Tan: [03:03:31] Pam is doing yoga.

Speaker1: [03:03:33] ...

Speaker5: [03:03:35] Uh, real yoga sometimes. That's why I met him. I met her on the side.

John Tan: [03:03:40] You're talking about her or him? You point at him.

Speaker5: [03:03:45] ...

Speaker1: [03:03:46] You. Same yoga class.

Speaker5: [03:03:48] ...

Speaker1: [03:03:57] But the Hatha yoga.

Speaker5: [03:03:59] Uh, that that was hatha yoga... Basic.

John Tan: [03:04:01] And they actually you go for whether true yoga, real yoga or whatever thing, they don't actually practice, uh, Hatha or whatever. It's just yoga only. They mixed all around. Astanga, hatha and all these together.

Speaker1: [03:04:16] Right.

John Tan: [03:04:16] So they only teach you the basic moves. But you have to be aware. Of yourself.

Speaker1: [03:04:28] True. Yeah.

John Tan: [03:04:31] So Pam you also do yoga?

Speaker6: [03:04:32] Yeah, but it was because of my spinal problem.... ...I went for spinal fusion with rods and screws.

Speaker1: [03:04:41] Wow.

Speaker6: [03:04:42] Because I, I cannot use physio or anything to. It's already very bad. Oh. Misaligned a lot. Oh. Then you press on the, uh, spinal canal. So the spinal canal is very, uh, damaged already. Mhm. Then, uh, the whole leg for eight years actually. Wow.

John Tan: [03:04:59] Yeah. My my my my my my my numbness until toe one.

Speaker6: [03:05:06] Yeah. So it's the l4, L5 is it.

John Tan: [03:05:09] L4 L5 may be 2 or 3 maybe. Maybe few places. When you old... But it can be cured one lah. Degeneration. You need to build your muscle. Not only your stretch, not only your core, your whole body. Actually even your here if you are rigid and tight, let's say your shoulder, right? It will affect your body behind already, so you cannot actually relax yourself. If even your shoulder is tight, your shoulder, your waist and what is tight. So for your case, huh? It's like my case. Like that. So you got eight years of pain? Uh. Mine is. I spend probably 30 minutes i will feel the whole numbness until there is no pain. So there is. There is pain. There is numbness, right? But numbness is not pain.

Speaker1: [03:06:02] Right, right, right.

John Tan: [03:06:03] So mine is numbness.

Speaker6: [03:06:06] Is like the the nerve is dead like that. No feeling.

John Tan: [03:06:09] Yeah. The the the pain is last time is very painful.

Speaker6: [03:06:13] Mhm. Mine is so intense crying.

John Tan: [03:06:15] Yeah. So but you can adjust. You can, you can adjust and then you can build your muscle. You need to build your, your muscle.

Speaker6: [03:06:21] But I don't think I can wait for the building.

John Tan: [03:06:24] Don't think of uh what. Think of.

Speaker1: [03:06:28] Slowly. Yoga is a journey, and it's like tortoise like that. Don't think one day you can stand two fingers or.

Speaker6: [03:06:38] It's a bone problem is not psychosomatic. And it's not really.

John Tan: [03:06:41] Yes, but it is. It is your muscle. Is your muscle that in the what? In fact, the pain specialist is my good friend. Um, I spoke to him many times, so he tells me there is the the. Your slip disc is a lot. Even if the the the disc slipped, correct. There's a slipped disc. You

shouldn't feel the pain. It's your muscle is not holding your body. Okay, so you must actually build your muscle also. Also, not just the stretch, okay? Not just the stretch. You need your muscle.

Speaker2: [03:07:19] But in this case, it's really impinging on the nerve, you see?

John Tan: [03:07:22] Yes. Correct. Mine also impinging on the nerve. Yeah. So that's why it is numb until my toe mah. So when I stand while the pain is really very painful one. But that was many years ago. Now I still feel the numbness. I still feel the numbness, but I can do a lot of nonsense.

Speaker1: [03:07:39] So is the yoga that actually really helps you?

John Tan: [03:07:43] Uh, partly yoga. Partly. You are very mindful of the thing. So your shoe, everything is what... You put in. So you put what you put whatever thing. And then even I tell you, your hunger will also cause you pain.

Speaker6: [03:07:54] Also coughing or sneezing. Yeah.

John Tan: [03:07:59] So if you say you cough and sneeze, you feel the pain, your muscle of your core and your hips, you didn't give it up already. You have to go and give up last time when the because you will come a time where you are damn afraid. Then you didn't do it. You didn't do it. Then your muscle weakened. So then that aggravates the problem.

Speaker1: [03:08:28] Yeah, yeah.

Speaker6: [03:08:29] I still have, even though now I'm fine. But the degeneration continues because I'm aging. So you won't get better. We'll get better on the rest of the this will.

John Tan: [03:08:39] Won't get better one. So you you build your muscles and then you do your jing mai, your stretch lah. You extend your your tenon lor your jing mai. So they yi wei (change position) lor. They will yi wei.

Speaker6: [03:08:49] Understand. Thank you. I believe it.

Speaker5: [03:08:54] Someone asked, uh.

John Tan: [03:08:56] Eh, why you? Oh, yoga is anywhere find a good teacher lah. Go with you also can. So to call you .... really go and practice.

John Tan: [03:09:18] But for you Pam if you really have a problem, you should tell the teacher you have problem. So certain exercises are not suitable for you.

Speaker6: [03:09:47] But they don't really care, these these teachers, they also still pressed me that I want them. Don't touch me. Here. They ask you.

John Tan: [03:09:55] Don't do it. Yeah, because they don't know. They don't know, they don't know. You have to be aware of your body, but you must put in effort. Trust me. You must put in effort to build your your core muscle and as well as your feet and everything. Because it's the slip disc. Your here, l4, L5.

Speaker1: [03:10:19] L4, l5.

John Tan: [03:10:20] Yeah. In fact, you can stretch from L3 to L5. Yes, the one right. This part is not just your that part. Don't think it is that part that affect your. Your whole leg numbness or what? Your neck and your shoulder. The stiffness of your neck and your shoulder. And what actually affect your whole thing, you know. So if your body and your neck and your body cannot relax and it's not flexible. Correct. You will feel the stress and pain. So I take many years to realize so I can actually do yoga split. I can do the the duo para(?) And put the both legs, you know. Right? Behind. I can do split. I can do whatever thing somehow I cannot, I cannot solve the problem. So one day I realized that the the stiffness of my neck and my shoulder. So I start relaxing and start practicing for. For what? Then I realized it helps, you know, to lighten the stress I have on my back. Then I begin to realize, hey, it is different, you know? In fact, it is not just here, you know? So my focus cannot be just here, relaxing here, building my muscle here. It is a whole body that you have to do from the neck.

Speaker1: [03:11:54] Down, even the shoulder down.

John Tan: [03:11:56] Yes. Actually your neck affect the. It's like. It's like it's like if you were to build, let's say a house the, the building you put the if you, your, your building is senget (slanted).

Speaker1: [03:12:08] Yeah yeah.

John Tan: [03:12:08] Your the last piece of your (?) will crack you know.

Speaker1: [03:12:12] Stress you know. Yeah.

John Tan: [03:12:13] Because on top all come down. So you must learn how to.

Speaker1: [03:12:17] Even lighten the top.

John Tan: [03:12:18] Lighten the top then your posture (?) Yes your stress is actually distributed. Your body is actually linked together. So you don't just practice your a certain part only then your certain part actually your body will compensate it. Then worse.

John Tan: [03:12:35] So you practice. You must you must be mindful. You must be mindful. And your body I tell you, can do miracle one.

John Tan: [03:12:45] You won't be able to to to understand until you do your body. It's a it's a miracle that time I got. I don't have only slip disc on my back. I got three different types of slip disc.

John Tan: [03:12:59] Thoracic slip disc I also got, until I cannot breathe. So then cervical I also got cervical is even worse than your disc. The back. When you got cervical slip disc. Plus your. The l4 l5. Let's say you got C two C1. There's your cervical. If you got these two together, you can't even meditate and sit like that.

Speaker1: [03:13:31] Uh.

John Tan: [03:13:32] I once kena.

Speaker1: [03:13:33] Earned.

John Tan: [03:13:34] The due to some reason and kena my slip disc that time. I still got my slip disc (?). Then I kenna cervical. When I kenna cervical, I can't even meditate you know. I can't even put my hand like that. They. I put like that for five minutes. Numb numb numb numb numb numb numb. And then become pain. Just like your leg, right? Become pain, you know, so I sleep, I cannot sleep, I walk, I cannot walk, I eat, I cannot eat, I can't even meditate. So how.

John Tan: [03:14:06] So I tell myself in nine months I cannot cure, I'm going for operation. So I start reading. Start asking my friend. Start talking to my doctors. Dangerous or not? Uh. Do cervical. You say cervical is not as dangerous as what they tell me? All sort of things. So say can do. Say the pain cannot tahan (tolerate) on. So they let me take all those painkiller, Ativan and all that kind of thing. Painkillers, sleeping pills, all sort of thing, I don't want to take. Because when you take sleeping pill, I cannot feel the pain. You cannot feel the pain. You don't know whether you're okay or not ok. Then you groggy mah. So I, I go for.

Speaker1: [03:14:51] Um.

John Tan: [03:14:52] For about probably nine months. You know, I wake up.

John Tan: [03:14:57] I sleep only about two, two, three [hours]. Because I cannot sleep, instead, I keep on keep on practicing my cervical.

John Tan: [03:15:07] It's very pain initially, but the movement is very, very slow. I try to detect which position is good for me, so I start reading. Then I ask my friend, my doctors.

Speaker1: [03:15:19] Um.

John Tan: [03:15:20] Then slowly, slowly I'll just align. Then cure in four months.

Speaker1: [03:15:24] Self-align!?

John Tan: [03:15:25] You'll get back one. They will actually get back. But... but you need to go for the therapy first, then the therapy. But you. You need to be mindful.

Speaker6: [03:15:34] Is this my slip bone.

John Tan: [03:15:36] Or your slip bone?

Speaker6: [03:15:37] Sleep bone I cannot use, uh, what physio

Speaker1: [03:15:41] The bone I see.

Speaker2: [03:15:42] If I don't do surgery, it's going to slip over and I'll get tyla(?).

Speaker1: [03:15:47] Yeah.

John Tan: [03:15:49] So your your your bone slip. Yes.

Speaker6: [03:15:52] Yes the bone slip. Stage 35%. Stage one.

John Tan: [03:15:56] Due to what reason?

Speaker6: [03:15:57] I think, uh, my work. Uh, I carry suitcase. We are in the travel business. Travel luggage. The planet traveler. I even as boss. I go warehouse and back because I'm very hardworking, very driven. So I pack then nesting, nesting throughout so many years. I do that. I think the posture and (?)

John Tan: [03:16:19] Then your bone cannot take the stress, correct?

Speaker6: [03:16:25] Uh, no degeneration or degeneration. Yeah. Degenerate. Uh, the posture not good. It it leads to, uh, the bone slipping a little bit. Then when degenerate, it slips more.

Speaker1: [03:16:39] Oh

Speaker2: [03:16:40] Disc doesn't hold properly. Yeah. So it's not like slip disc, it's different, slip disc will actually will dry up (?) and then it's okay. Even you got uh, what you call that hernia aging will dry it up and then it will self heal.

John Tan: [03:16:57] Then you got one thoracic must be very careful. This one will cause a pain. The cervical and what?

John Tan: [03:17:08] It controls your arms. And then.

Speaker1: [03:17:09] Yes.

John Tan: [03:17:10] But when you got thoracic slip disc. You have to be very careful. You cannot breathe.

John Tan: [03:17:19] That one is very serious. That one is very serious. So even after that.

John Tan: [03:17:26] When I got my neck. I say I go for nine months of (?) I self cured.. When I thoracic, even a few weeks.

John Tan: [03:17:38] They will go back. It's not so serious. They will go back. But because of the thoracic slip disc, I cannot breathe, you know.

Speaker1: [03:17:46] So serious ah, cannot breathe?

John Tan: [03:17:48] Yeah. The pain stretch your your your here, the the that part must be very careful then you I feel the the breath got issue.

Speaker1: [03:18:00] Uh.

John Tan: [03:18:03] Don't go yoga or do exotic. One pose without... Treat it as a journey. The thoracic one is because I did something wrong. [yoga?] Even with guidance, even with guidance. But. But even with guidance. You see, even you got guidance. People that teach you. They do not know your limit and your age.

Speaker1: [03:18:33] Yeah.

John Tan: [03:18:34] Correct. They don't know. So that's why I say they cannot just press it down. Correct. Then if you are those always want to go for the extreme(?) One. You want to push yourself extreme. You will injured one. Like for example one inch let's say you you want to put you pull another inch you will tear or whatever thing you.... Don't go for that. Always go according to your pace.

John Tan: [03:19:00] Okay. Yeah, always go according to your.

Speaker6: [03:19:02] And understand your body.

John Tan: [03:19:03] Understand your body. Breath is very important. Breath. I don't know how to tell people. Breath is very important. You can never exercise inside. You cannot exercise.

John Tan: [03:19:17] It is only through your breath, you can exercise inside, through your rhythm, through your holding, through your whatever thing. Then you can. Breath is very

important. So if you practice that time, go with the rhythm of your breathing. It give you strength. By holding your breath. You know that we can do more push ups. You give you strength by relaxing your your breath. You can relax your body. So there are so many things about your body.

Speaker1: [03:19:47] Mhm. Yeah.

John Tan: [03:19:49] Okay lah I think it's getting late already.

Speaker1: [03:19:52] Yeah. Thanks so much. Yeah. Thank you. Great session.

John Tan: [03:19:56] When young that time, don't don't don't waste your life. Understand your body.

John Tan: [03:20:05] Because, old age. You will understand.

Speaker1: [03:20:10] Things start breaking down.

John Tan: [03:20:12] Your body deteriorate every moment. Every day. Never work, gets worse. The nonsense that you eat that is one of my bad habit. I like to eat nonsense. That goes into your body. Uh uh, will cause harm. Uh, so although I control, I try to relax and control. Correct. But it will harm your body. So the only thing is, we use other ways to help our body. And our body is very, very important. Only when. I go a few times, I thought jialat, maybe must live a whole life like that.

Speaker1: [03:20:52] Oh.

John Tan: [03:20:54] And then later stage when you when you overcome it, then you treasure your body a lot. Then you really put in a lot of effort to study your body. Only when you have problem. Then you understand. Eh, mind and body, body is also very important, but you can find the connection between your mind and body. Then your yuan fen (conditions) is there already.

Speaker1: [03:21:19] Yeah.

John Tan: [03:21:20] The connection with mind and body is what that will open up. And in fact, you can treat your body as mind. Actually just treat your body as mind, that is. You all can understand then that is very good. Open your body... You open your mind also. So you want to relax your mind, you relax your body. So mind and body is just... I don't know why they go and separate it.

Speaker1: [03:21:53] Conditioning

John Tan: [03:21:58] Your body and mind is not supposed to be separated. It's just a misunderstanding. Don't know how we brainwashed by...

Speaker1: [03:22:07] Yeah.

John Tan: [03:22:08] By what? The mind and body is...

Speaker1: [03:22:10] The modern. Western science? Yeah.

Speaker6: [03:22:15] Yesterday I sowed for everybody. A small gift. You know me, I enjoy. (?) I love you a lot. (?) I see my daughter's wedding. With you. (?)

John Tan: [03:22:31] Okay. Thanks, thanks.

Speaker6: [03:22:32] These are. These are all special shape. It's not the ordinary. So it's for people who wear specs. It will not forget the.

Speaker1: [03:22:41] Costello. Costello.

Speaker2: [03:22:43] I thank you.

Speaker1: [03:22:46] Vegetarian and vegetarian. Yeah. Yeah.

John Tan: [03:22:50] Pam you're also vegetarian?

Speaker2: [03:22:52] No But I try to eat less meat now.

John Tan: [03:22:56] No, I'm not, but I, I try to to control. Try to control. Uh, because I take a lot of porridge. Normally. I take a lot of the the, um.

Speaker6: [03:23:07] Yeah. Me too.

John Tan: [03:23:08] Yeah, it's very healthy.

Speaker6: [03:23:09] When I was young, I always, um. Yeah, it's very healthy. Um. Um. Yeah.

John Tan: [03:23:16] So I forced.

John Tan: [03:23:17] Myself, uh, I don't force myself, but I try to.

Speaker6: [03:23:21] As a child.

John Tan: [03:23:22] And then. Then exercise lah, when you're old, must exercise your legs.

Speaker6: [03:23:34] True.

John Tan: [03:23:35] So later will have a problem while walking. So you all must...

Speaker2: [03:23:42] Toa Payoh very aged estate, then got a lot of old ... the way they walk, so cham ah, look at them。。。

Speaker1: [03:23:47] Yeah.

Speaker2: [03:23:48] Real life and they don't want to go operation also or they cannot afford no insurance.

John Tan: [03:23:55] I tell you what? I went for my heart. Cost me 70,000.

Speaker1: [03:24:01] Bypass.

John Tan: [03:24:02] No. Stent. Actually, don't need one. But My specialist tell me eh John, we go together.

Speaker1: [03:24:09] Go together got discount ah (laughs) why go together

John Tan: [03:24:14] Then actually I think think, necessary or not, he say, the central that one, got danger one lah. Say go together. Then I say ok lah. Then we go.

Speaker6: [03:24:27] Your specialist also need to go stent？

John Tan: [03:24:31] Actually I tell you, most of them they will have blockage until 70%. Even the central, central artery. 70% is nothing. You can take medicine.

Speaker1: [03:24:42] Oh yes.

John Tan: [03:24:44] Then I go for the bio one, I go for the bio one that they will dissolve inside. They will dissolve. I don't like to take medicine. Not say（？）Very good, very bad. In fact, if we can, uh, I'm not biased lah because, you know, I know so many doctors... Go for the Chinese one better.

Speaker1: [03:25:02] From somebody who who is in the Western medical.

John Tan: [03:25:09] If you can you go for the Chinese medicine. I ask the Chinese doctor. Eh I say coronavirus, right? I say the coronavirus, what is coronavirus to you. They say they don't have this concept.

Speaker1: [03:25:21] Liang Liang. Too heaty, take liang teh can already.

John Tan: [03:25:21] They don't have the the virus. To them it's just the yin yang zhi tiao(?). So they still use the same. It's just more. More serious. Evil winds enter (?). And then that's why

they don't know what? Don't know what Tang (soup?) Can cure. Do you know Chinese cure (?) Them to prevent them from going to the to the worst.

John Tan: [03:25:45] Actually because it is those your mucus becomes very sticky. So you cannot breathe. So even before you get to that stage, right. They actually.

Speaker1: [03:25:55] Clear it.

John Tan: [03:25:55] Clear your all these things. So to them is the same concept. You see it's evil winds enter (?).

Speaker2: [03:26:02] ...

Speaker1: [03:26:05] ... Two two concept is just balance out of balance. Yeah.

John Tan: [03:26:11] But the the the Maipo.

Speaker1: [03:26:14] Uh the wah wah.

John Tan: [03:26:15] The Maipo. Huh? Is you depending on the stage of the person.

John Tan: [03:26:21] Are is really more. What? No, is is how huan xi or (?) Then they feel. Then they give you the medicine.

Speaker1: [03:26:31] Different one is MRI machine, uh, like that? Well, I can see everything in my.

John Tan: [03:26:39] In my eyes. I just went for MRI. Go and check all the thing every few years. I will go for it. Actually, no good, but is to check my whole body. Yeah, to go for for MRI. Mri is every damn thing they can actually see. Uh, now if you check early. You because Singapore is is prevention preventive care. I went to Vietnam. Uh, to go and see the transport minister, the the transport, uh, hospital. Sorry. Transport hospital. The minister invited us, so we we we we went down. My all my doctor. We went in. We go into the doctor, go into the hospital. Right. We go and see all the patients. The doctor came out. Tell me John, 99% they will die. It's only until the critical stage. Then they go in, then they go to the hospital. Already going to die. It's not the preventive type. So when they tell our doctors, Singapore doctor to actually set up. Uh, something there. They want to put their name. They damn scared you know. No. They say no, no, no, we don't want to put our name there.

Speaker1: [03:27:51] Then there's too many people.

John Tan: [03:27:54] Because a lot of people, they cannot cure.

Speaker1: [03:27:55] They cannot cure. (laughs) bad reputation

John Tan: [03:27:57] So they say that we actually bring across to them. Say that if you want to do it now, this idea of preventive care. You must you must have the the concept of preventive care before you get into this stage. Go check out already. So we we try to sell them this preventive care until like that. So we go go go and see. The doctor I don't know I'm not a doctor. So you see you see they come in and say how I say can can help them. They say 99%, most of them are gone case. So they. So you cannot wait until that stage then go in. We must learn how to do preventive care.

Speaker4: [03:28:44] Yeah.

John Tan: [03:28:46] Okay. Late already.

Speaker1: [03:28:48] Do you remember? Do your yoga. Tomorrow morning wake up go and do

John Tan: [03:28:58] I tell him ten years already.

Speaker1: [03:29:00] Are open.

Speaker6: [03:29:03] I really enjoy this meeting so much.

Speaker1: [03:29:06] ...

Speaker5: [03:29:25] ...

Speaker1: [03:29:27] Well, they are different time zone. Right? They can.

Speaker2: [03:29:30] I thought you were joking there.

Speaker4: [03:29:33] Thanks so much.

Speaker1: [03:29:36] Yeah. Thank you so much for your thanks.

Speaker5: [03:29:39] Thanks for joining. Thank you.

Speaker1: [03:29:43] All right. I will show off my mask and show off my mask.

John Tan: [03:29:47] People gathering this Wei Yu shouldn't go and do (?) wah! Then go and record!

Speaker1: [03:29:58] You recorded that? Yeah.

Speaker5: [03:30:00] Oh. It's four hours ah.

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John Tan: How you're able to overcome attachment. Go and ask yourself. The red color. There is attachment box(?)... Is the color with the box. So you see. There cannot be color. Red color. If... The color cannot be at the box there right. It is must be dependent on our consciousness. Right. And our consciousness depending on... It is a whole dependence. Correct? it's a whole exertion. Then there is color. So the color is not actually with the the box. So are all all other attributes. So this entire understanding of attributes and the object that contains an attribute is not true. Correct or not? So if there is no attributes that is being attached to let's say the object right? Then how can cause and effect take place this way. That affecting the object. There is no object per se what. Right? So how does it affect the object when there is no object per se. And there is no attributes that are being attached to the object.

Speaker2: So the attribute and object is the same thing.

John Tan: No not not not not so much of the same thing. It Is because ah we have in so far analyze and understand things in such a way that we always exclude consciousness. As if the things are existing as separate, separate and of itself. Correct. But where... There is no witness that is there and there is no just box that is there. So when you start deconstructing and deconstructing the object, right? And then you start looking into production and cause, right, you know that this type of common sense, cause and effect is very naive way of understanding things. Correct. So you, you, when you start de con deconstructing and you deconstructing all these things, start doing all this right, then later stage, you know that they there, there is a functioning. Things still function, but the way that we ascribe cause and effect and all this. That's why Buddhism is there is no cause and effect, there is dependent origination. There is no cause and effect. So, so the the way that we ascribe and we think that things work in this way. They don't work in this way. Correct. So by doing that it is very gradual, unlike anatta that we, we have a direct experience, this type of deconstruction, deconstruct the object you deconstruct later, the cause and effect. Then your idea of production, you deconstruct part by part, right? Yeah. Over five years, ten years, maybe 15 years, huh? Somehow they lose their grip on you because you are able to deconstruct. Correct. So you say that. Oh, I don't feel cause and effect, actually bullshit one lah. You must deconstruct.

Speaker2: Then you.

John Tan: Gradually. Over time… where the impact of that belief that all along you are being conditioned that way loses its grip. Then slowly they just don't have impact on

you, but they have other impact. There is functioning, you will know, so you understand somehow you understand because they they don't cloud your they don't cloud your understanding you see. So it's not that suddenly you just understand. Hello? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. On my way.

Speaker2: ...

John Tan: So I tell people, don't say that you actually can deconstruct and everything is gone (?). Or maybe we don't very very (?). You see through self, the effect is very strong. But deconstructing of objects, cause and production, cause and effect, production, takes time one to for the impact to...