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CLASS TALK 11-5-17 I do not teach non-duality as endless bliss but as timeless/endless everything and nothing. To me the absolute is inclusive and exclusive of all that is. If you want abiding bliss look elsewhere.

Many people listening to this talk are either what we'd call non-dualists or people aware of non-dualism, a school referred to as Advaita Yoga. One of its chief promises or claims is perpetual unending bliss, freedom from fear, desire, true liberation. All I can tell you is I wish that for everybody. There are so many different people on the non-dual spectrum that I don't really look at it as a singular space of complete agreement and awareness. There are lots of different people who are spokespeople for this evolutionary step in human consciousness and they all have different ways to express their experience.

I can only speak from my own space, which is definitely influenced by, touched by, and connected to an awareness of all there is. But we are all, every one of us, connected to all that is. Each of us is a participant in the expression of oneness, of the collective whole. We are both part of it and absolutely the totality of it. Of course that makes no sense to a lot of people. But once you begin the journey into moving beyond ego-minded, ego-bounded identity, something starts to happen. There's an unfolding, or a flowering, or a sudden realization that you are not limited by your personality, your ego, or your story but that you are something free of all that. When people who begin that unfolding gradually discover one another, they realize that there are many different interpretations, different ways to give expression to the experience of totality and I think that can be confusing for people out there who are trying to find the one truth, the one expression that absolutely encompasses all there is.

I think many people decide for themselves that this particular person, this teacher resonates for them, and that's absolutely appropriate. Find the being, the form, the announcement, the clarity that you resonate with in some deep and real way. What you're looking for is a resonance that will begin to challenge, that will begin to inform your ego-minded identity in a way that makes it feel more and more comfortable in not holding itself together, in not maintaining a grip on its separateness. There's a certain kind of information that comes from certain teachers that make you go, I can trust this. I can give myself to this. And you will begin to try to do that. You will begin to try to give yourself over to the particular wisdom to a particular teacher's training or insight or ability to share.

Some of you will want to be with someone who offers infinite, endless peace and joy and happiness and all of those things. And I certainly would love that myself. But that's not my experience, and I have to teach from my experience, so if my failure to have infinite peace is a limitation for you, this is not a place you should come to because I see it differently. And I don't know if what I'm describing just let's call it a lower level of something that gets greater, I really don't know that yet. And if it is, then I'm a lesser teacher and you should go to a higher teacher,

somebody who has the awareness or the promise of awareness of something so transcendent that they can offer you the ticket to getting there.

The experience that's coming through here is evolving, definitely expanding on a daily basis. I call it a constant discovery. I'm not seeking it anymore, I'm not looking for anything, I'm not trying to find anything, I don't have an agenda, there's no I do have an agenda, it just keeps coming. And it keeps coming bigger and more remarkable, more complete, but it has no defining borders, it doesn't have graduation stages, it doesn't offer a PhD, it just keeps evolving.

The evolving is something happening within a field of being or awareness that is quite still and quite present. It is measureless, it is formless, it is uncontainable, and it is definitely aware of itself, but within that there is an absolute totality of being that is non-dual, meaning, it is everything there is. And that we, I, am everything there is. The totality, the absolute, the total invocation of everything that could be, would be, should be, is all in play simultaneously and it is not contained by a person. It is not containable. But it has within it beauty, love, tenderness, joy, awareness, spiritual light, and it also has within it: darkness, terror, evil, unconsciousness, doubt... it's got everything. And I don't know yet whether there is an escape if you will from all of that, because it's what you are, the totality. What there is is what I would call an embrace of, or an encompassing of that reality. There is nowhere to go, there's no where to run, there's nowhere to hide, you are the very thing you would be running from and hiding from. There is nothing to escape, there is only the taking it in and letting it unfold itself. And the person you are is such a minute element in it, it's so minuscule it just no longer matters. What you become is this indescribable knowing or being. And the word become is even wrong because you're already that. So what really happens is like a lighting up of the sky, it's a sudden recognition of your real true being. And it's never a total surprise because you've always known it, and yet the ego letting go of it is a release of unbelievable proportions.

There may be gradations in all of this, and there may be people who have arrived at a totality that really is so transcendent of the non-dual that they live in a place that is just the surround if you will, the state of being in which everything else manifests. And there may be a kind of state of absolute simplicity and peace and bliss, if you want to call it that. Certainly there are people who claim that and I have no reason to refute it. I always look at Swami Nityananda, Rudi's teacher, for those of you who know his story, it's a long strange story that has nothing but myth in it, but the reality is, that at the end of his life he had no need for clothes, he had no need for pretense on any level, he walked naked into the world and people dressed him because he allowed them finally to put on a loincloth. He never ate—they fed him. He was always fed. He would eat the food that was put into his mouth. He didn't do very much. He didn't need to do, he just was. He just was a being. Or let's put it more clearly, he was being itself in a body temporarily, but being.

I cannot personally imagine myself walking around in a loincloth or without a loincloth. I cannot imagine waiting for you to lift a spoon to my mouth. My wife could never imagine having to do that unless I was in terrible shape. It's not the

journey I feel unfolding for me. It is a very human journey. The journey to becoming what is doesn't, for me, clearly lead to this space where people will simply sit at my feet and try to take the being and energy that I manifest and that I have zero interest in the world beyond being. It's not the journey I feel is unfolding for me. What's unfolding is a journey into a kind of responsibility, a responsiveness to the what is. There is still something here. It's a body, it's a mind, it's a persona, it's a personality, it's an ego, that still has form and shape in a world that is very directive. It says eat, breathe, sleep, I don't have to provide for my family the way I used to, but I still need to care for people, it says show up in moments like this, in a classroom setting where I can share certain elements of the journey that may be pregnant material for you, it may inoculate you, it may open you up, it may free you, it's hard to know what this description of the journey will do for you, but clearly I'm being told to sit here and share it because at some point something in other ego forms will see something in this particular ego form that is recognizable, relatable, and ultimately gets the message and the same things occur for you. There's this freedom, not into infinite bliss, but into infinite being, where there is positive/negative, joy/sorrow, everything all at the same time, and nobody there to say I want this or I don't want that this, this is good, that is bad, that's what kind of goes away. You're just it. You're it And every so often the ego comes back into it and goes oh my God, the awareness is so big, it's so potent, and your little tiny Self is so overwhelmed by the vastness of your real being that it just shrivels up again and you're back to what and who you are. But it doesn't get rid of the ego completely, until it does, until there's a point where it takes getting rid of the body, it gets rid of your mind, it gets rid of all of these things. But for a long period of time there really is this separate Self and there is the vast Self and you are very aware in the vastness of the singularity. It's one thing. One thing. And the ego is essential to it. The ego is not a mistake, it is not the enemy, it is not the bad guy. It can become a bad guy, it can become a conflict and a conflicting source; it has its fears, it has its needs for separation. So yes it can become an impediment in the path to profound awareness, but at some point in the awakening it finds its true space, which is to be one grain of sand on a beach full of sand. It's a tiny piece of a very big reality. Awakening does not necessarily destroy the ego as much as put it in its place.

We are here to serve the singularity of our being. And to the degree that we do that we are served back. We serve and it serves. It removes us, if you will, from having to be afraid, from having to think is this right or is this wrong? It starts to take that away and you start to feel that it can become nothing but what it is. You just start to accept in some profound way the reality of the moment. This is as it must be and should be. So when weird things start to happen and difficult things, when you see the world not moving where you want it to go, or where the ego-mind itself wouldn't want it to go, something steps back and goes, "But this is what it is. This is what is. What is my role in the what is?" Well, part of my role is to sit still, go for walks, take photographs, love the people in my life, share the journey, that's the role. That's what I've gotten out of all this. That's the role. And I try every day to do that to the best of my ability. It is an extraordinarily instructive experience. The universe comes at you or at this person all the time. All day long there is new information, wisdom, consciousness, appreciation, love, this constantly growing and expanding singular oneness. It seems to have no boundaries, no end in sight. It

certainly doesn't seem to just be about walking around naked in a state of total bliss. Not for this person.

If permanent bliss is what you want, God bless. I wish it upon everyone, because who wouldn't want permanent bliss? But for me, it's richer than that. Permanent anything seems to be problematic. What is permanent? I don't see anything permanent, personally. I don't see anything resolving itself into a singular happy state. It's just what it is. But I don't see that there's much of a person sitting around judging whether it's good or bad or right or wrong, what's happening is there's a kind of appreciation of the genius and the wisdom of the totality of what's happening. So you just go, "Oh." There is no Bruce that gets it. There is no one that gets it. By getting it I mean, "Oh, I understand it. Now it's clear to me." None of that exists. Many people in the non-dual world claim to get it, to have gotten it. And yes, there is a clarity, a life-altering awareness, and it is beautiful and it's part of the process—but there is more than that. I'm not saying that any part of the unfolding is inappropriate or wrong, it's not, it just goes on and on and on and on. And all a teacher can do is describe their particular space in all of this, their particular take on all of this.

What's so incredible to me is that there are so many people out there doing just that. And there are so many people doing it so beautifully. And every one of them, everyone out there who has found a voice for this inexpressible thing, it is a remarkable gift to the world. And I think one should pay attention to anyone who speaks to you. But I can only tell you as I've said earlier in this talk, the version that I can give you right now does not address the thing that I have yet to stumble upon, which is uninterrupted bliss, abiding bliss. It's just not the way it works here for me. The way it works for me is something that truly is non-dual, it's bliss and not bliss continually, inter-folded in one another in a way that is unknowable, and yet you want to bow down to it. That's all I can tell you. You just want to bow down, literally in my case, I have this urge endlessly to just lie down on the street and just say thank you. That's all I know. That's my journey. It feels like Being recognizing itself and falling to the ground in overwhelming wonder in the unspeakable revelation of what has always been. My journey is thank you, period. I can't promise you beyond that. I can lead you, this voice can lead you to a place of extraordinary gratitude where you feel enormous love and joy and beauty and sadness and loss. You know the drama of the human experience and feel compassion for people not knowing because you lived in a space of not knowing. I can promise you that you can arrive at a place where all of that is one ongoing truth.

I know I speak about it a lot, but I think I just need to be clear for people, if you're looking for a doorway into permanent anything, especially bliss, this is the wrong door. Find another door. There are people who offer that and perhaps authentically offer that. If you're looking for a doorway where you don't have to wear clothes anymore and people feed you and you can walk around where your body is of no meaning or value to you, I don't think that there is anything wrong with that, it's just hard to come by in our culture. In India they allow that. Or have allowed that. In America, not so good at it. There are people who do something approaching that. They are in mental institutions, maybe. They're sitting on the sidewalk

begging for food. You never know perhaps if they're truly an expression of God consciousness. You don't know. But we don't treat people who are knowers of God, knowers of oneness, expressions of oneness, with that much respect, unless they're teaching, sitting down and trying to share this thing. All I can say is they deserve respect, they all deserve respect. Every one of you is a teacher in the making. Every one of you is an expression of the exact same thing I'm talking about. That truth ultimately comes through and it expresses itself in exactly the way it needs to through you. Some of you will be articulate, some of you will be inarticulate. Some of you will give hugs that will change the nature of other people's lives. Some of you will listen in ways that nobody else listens and people will feel heard. Some of you will walk around the street and beaming a certain kind of quietude that people walking by you will suddenly understand and feel. Each one of you has a gift in your own sensibility, in who you are. Finding that is everything. You all kind know what it is you can do and do do and you do your best to deliver it. Some of you better than others.

There is a real problem however in that a lot of people have ego-mindedness which creates a war zone between you and your Self. That's the real reason one meditates. How do I get past the war with myself? How do I get past the fact I don't like myself? That I feel guilty? That I feel fearful? That I feel doubting, that I don't trust, that I don't believe, that I hate people—how do you get past that stuff? That's something some teachers will help you with and some teachers may not help you with. Some people will tell you it's all in your mind, forget it. If you can do that then you're free of it. But for a lot of us that stuff is so entwined, the war is so permanent, it's been so engaged for so long that not liking yourself makes it very hard to sit still and find the peace that can come with real deep quietude and surrender.

So this particular teaching accepts the idea that people are in war zones, that people bring all this stuff to the table. And the whole idea of this teaching is to help you find a place that gets quiet, still, disciplined, open, joyful, peaceful, and then it helps bring this additional energy into you so that you can begin to taste these inner joys. It's a process. We don't just walk around in a state of quietude knowing these things. We need to learn them, to work at them. That's what I loved about Rudi's teaching, it wasn't sitting in a monastery and waiting for something. It was living life and knowing that the thing you have waited for is happening right now. It's all right there. This is the soup. This is the delicious soup. It really is delicious and it's spiced in so many remarkable ways. It has bitter, it has sour, it has sweet, it has salty, it has everything, it's so good and it tastes exactly how every individual wants it to taste. You will taste the flavors you hunger to taste. We're a soup kitchen free of charge. Nobody has to pay for it. There's not even a long line. It's just come sit and here you are. Taste your joy.

Everyone who comes here is still in a body, still has issues, still has minds, still has drama, still has family, still has stuff to do—and so because your spiritual work is this real life work, we're just trying to help you through the journey. That's all we're doing. Those who want to free you from the journey, God bless, it's probably a wonderful space to arrive at. And if I ever arrive at whatever that is, I'll share that with you. But for the time being you are dealing with a limited entity named Bruce

who knows that he is one with everything but still has a personality that wants to interact with and serve everyone. So that's what we're doing here and we'll keep doing it until nobody shows up or the universe frees this Bruce character from non-duality. We'll see when that comes.

QUESTION: Rudi talked about his teacher, I don't know a lot about Rudi's history, but being kind of difficult, that he was the only one who could really unfold him. For you, is there such a person or an action, or what does that look like for you?

BRUCE: You are complicated. I don't feel tested by you as much as how do I do this? How do I break through some of the particular forms and densities that you bring to the table along with unbelievable vast energies and capacity for love and for effectiveness in the world? You are a conundrum on some level, which I love. I really love it. You test me. And so does everybody in this room, basically.

How does one break through all of that? Now Rudi, his teacher really was making very big demands on Rudi and they were very difficult and Rudi was a tough nut to crack and he really cracked him to the point that Rudi said, "Okay, I'm done, goodbye." But his teacher above that who was also his teacher, Rudi only met him once and he got the download, he got what needed to be given and he became Rudi, a teacher, someone who had a direct connection from his teacher into his psyche and made him a teacher and made me and other people teachers and that reality is still working. It's these beams of light, rays of light, that go into the complexity of every universal form that I see, which are called people.

If I was to figure out, how do I find a way, and it's not intellectual, there is something happening, when I sit with you I can see all the ways you are fooling yourself, avoiding this reality, trying to get into the dance without having to pay the price, you're very brilliant. You're very brilliant at finding ways to move around all this. My job, should I care to take it, and I do, is how do I make this other? How do I get in there and fool you or trick you or lead you or inspire you into something where you finally go, "Enough of this stupid dance. Enough of it. I don't need it anymore. It's an old personality, it's an old coat that needs to be thrown away. I can go get something else. Time to wear a new coat."

That's all I'm trying to do, get rid of the garbage. Rudi used to say he was a big garbage dump. You can throw your garbage into him because he could grind it up and turn it into fertilizer, which he would spread on everybody. That's what he did. I really get that. We take the garbage. But you have to be willing to give up your garbage. You have to be willing to let it go. And it's so interesting, when I'm working with you, I'm starting to see like the last little tendons that absolutely will not let go of your personality, your idea of who you are, it's like you'll let go of everything but this. Not this one! This is the one thing I won't surrender! I won't let go! And you don't even know you're protecting it. And how do you deal with people's sort of unbelievable urge to keep this thing in play when it's the one thing they really need to let go of because it keeps them from oneness. It separates them from oneness. And so the trick is to go in there and find—when a wire is that tight and that held, how do I loosen the bonds of that? There are a lot of ways to do it. You can tickle people from the back, you can bring a sword and cut it, you can start

unraveling it so that it goes slowly enough that the person isn't totally threatened by the fact that this thing is starting to not hold anymore, when the center won't hold. There are so many things you can do. And if you've been sitting like I've been doing for 50 years you start to go, "Oh, that's the way to do it. Oh yeah, that." It's like a doctor who practices five hundred surgeries, they know a little bit about what they're doing. That's sort of what's occurring here. There is no Bruce brilliance, I'll tell you that, there is just an awareness that is instructing this mind/body thing to help you in its way, unravel and undo this thing. I'm attempting, and I may not be as good as Rudi was at it, but I'm certainly learning, how to go in and do the thing that needs to get done—or help do it.

The only problem is it needs to come from two directions. There has to be the universe is working on you and you showing up saying help me. You have to be part of it. You have to ask, seek, knock, and it will come. So that's your job. So if you show up here that's a big statement. So there are two things to showing up here. One is actually being in a chair or sitting on the floor here, that's one. The other is when you do that, then go, "Okay, help me. Please help me." When those two things come together help comes. It is unbelievable. If you want a true miracle in life it's that miracles occur. They come through based on your availability and you become helped. You will become free. If you had known Bruce 50 years ago, that Bruce would not be sitting here probably without the introduction of and the intercession of Rudi and a lot of other teachers and a lot of other people who helped make this possible. It's still becoming what it's becoming, but it is something that was not in the offing. It is a result of two things at work. Bruce looking and the universe delivering. The seeking and the finding coming together. That's what's needed. You are part of that process for me and I am part of that process for you. We are a singularity working together to make something remarkable happen, which is to free you from being the person you imagine yourself to be. And it's happening. It's happening one thread at a time, but that's okay because I have time and you have time and we'll do it. We'll unravel this thing and you will feel, "Ahh, this is better than what it was." And maybe, totally throw the whole package out and realize you never needed any of it. You can just be this very free, vast, infinite totality, which you've always been anyway. It's a nice place to get to. That's all I can tell you. I think I'm selling that message pretty hard, so when it occurs, and in some ways it has, but you'll know and you will go, thank you. You just become a walking thank you. It's a good place. I recommend it.

Thank you.