

>> So, let's just take five minutes, just to kind of put it together. What do we know? I'm not going to recapitulate the morning, so I want to add one piece, so we kind of see where we are now.

So, what do we know? So, we know something very, very shocking in this moment. It's so shocking, that I want to just kind of not lose it, kind of into lunch. So, we just did an exercise in which we actually tasted the quality of eros in genuine intimacy, when contact is made, when genuine we-space is created. Intimate communion creates eros. Intimate communion creates pleasure. And pseudo-eros comes from a kind of inauthentic communion. An inauthentic intimacy is pseudo-intimacy -- pseudo-eros, which is driven by the hungry ghosts, which is driven by some agenda which says, "I want to show up here. I want to be noticed. I want to get that attention, and I want to get that love. I want to get that love. So, I'm going to deploy that kind of special knowledge, that information, that power.

I'm going to break the genuine intimacy -- do you see what's happening? There's a genuine intimacy -- the secret was shared. That was a genuine intimacy. I'm now going to break the genuine intimacy, in order to share, to create a false intimacy. Everyone track that? We just added something. So, what actually is always happening is I'm actually the genuine eros and violating the genuine eros, in order to create a pseudo-eros. So, let's just add that piece, because that's always the way it happens. So, I'm giving up eros to get pseudo-eros. It's like, "Wow." That's a very powerful realization, when you actually get it.

And, then, you can go the next step, and the next step is, is that this giving up of the genuine eros, meaning someone shared with me; Peter shared with me a confidence, in our deep connection. We were sitting in his home, and it was 1:00 in the morning, and we should get there. And we're sharing this deep thing, and, then, I go, and I share it with Judy. So, we were in our deep space of trust between us, of eros, and I was trying to kind of curry favor with Judy, because I thought maybe she had some more books she would send me -- even though I haven't gotten the Talmud, yet. It's still sitting with Victoria, right? But I thought, you know, maybe -- so, I'm trying to curry favor with her, so I share that. So, I'm violating the eros between Marc and Peter to create a pseudo-eros between Marc and Judy, for whatever my agenda is. Or I'm just feeling the nothing that Lynn talked about, and I'm trying to make contact with Judy. And I'm not quite sure how to do it, so I share that secret.

So, look what happens. So, what I've done is I've not only violated the eros between Peter and I, I've actually created an ethical violation. It's an ethical violation of our space. So, look at this -- and it's so stunning, that it just kind of blows you away. We think that there's the erotic and the ethical, and that's pretty much how thought talks about it. Just like there's a split between eros and agape. There's no split between the erotic and the ethical. It's one of the most shocking realizations. It's a shocking realization --

Oh, there she is. I was just thinking -- I kept looking at that thing, "Is Nance okay? Is Nance okay? There she is, over there. She's okay. She's more than okay.

So, we've got that distinction between the erotic and the ethical, and everyone assumes that's a distinction. But it's actually not. See, every breakdown of ethics is routed in a failure of eros -- always, without exception. Now, when I wrote that the first time, in a magazine called *Tikkun*, as the cover article about a decade ago, I got so vociferously attacked. The cover article was called, "The Erotic and the Ethical," and it was about this topic. And it was actually the beginning of a kind of break. The idea,

to say that, was considered to be so heretical, just to put the erotic and the ethical together. But, actually, it's absolutely true. Check every ethical breakdown you've ever had -- there's a donkey smuggle. Eros is demanding its due. And when you feel somehow, erotically not full -- again, when I say "erotically," I'm not using it sexually. Everyone understands that? Your eros isn't full. Ethical failure always follows. They're completely, utterly connected. There's actually no split between them. And when your eros is full, when you feel erotically full, you're in fullness of presence. You're on the inside. You feel the yearning force of being moving through you. You feel your innerconnectivity with the all, then, you're spontaneously, naturally, profoundly ethical.

And, actually, all rule-based ethics will ultimately fail. That's rule-based ethics imposed by an external moral force were effective for a couple of thousand years of history, as a process of evolutionary development. We needed them. They were important. But, ultimately, in a world in which freedom reigns, everyone of them will fail. Because a rule-based ethic is ultimately weak. It's insipid; it's fallow and shallow. It can't hold, because eros will always overwhelm it -- always. If you haven't filled and addressed eros, the ethics always break down. But if you fill eros, and, then, the ethics, actually, spontaneously, naturally flow, as the fullest expression of who you are. And that's powerful.

And ethics begins -- and with this we end, with a story. Ethics always begins -- as Jeff said, and Shelly said, as they enumerated the covenant -- ethics begins when you're able to be fully present for another person, in a non-agended way. Your present for the sake of presence. And you're just present to receive whatever is there, in that moment. That's the beginning of ethics, and it's the beginning of an ethical relationship, as an erotic relationship. And eros is the fullness of presence.

It could be that I also want something from you. It's completely fine to want something from a person. There's nothing wrong with that. There's things that we want. But the person can sense in their core gut, "Does he love me because I'm giving him something? Or does he love me because he loves me?" And you can actually sense the difference, even if I'm giving him something. You know the exact difference. You just know it. Of course, there's exchange. There should be exchange. But the core of ethics is erotic presence.

So, her name was Sara. Her name was Sara, and it was the mid-nineteenth century, and she was from a kind of orthodox Jewish home. And as most people were, in the [00:07:31*] in Europe -- a.k.a, if you've never studied history, remember *Fiddler on the Roof*? Kind of, from that moment. And Sara, somehow, had found her way into a convent. Now, religious pluralism is beautiful, and world spirituality is stunning, but in the mid-nineteenth century, coming from the [00:07:54*], finding your way into a convent, wasn't a very good thing. It just wasn't good. And, so, Sara -- Sarala -- is in the convent, and her parents are besides themselves, and they happen to be -- her father is the [00:08:01*]. Her father is kind of the wealthy patron of the city. And, so, he's hiring all the people he can hire to get Sarala out of the convent. One, because he loves Sarala; and two, because it's a great bushe. It's a [00:08:09*]. It's a great shame on the family. "Now, how could it be, that our Sarala, that we've raised -- we sent her to every good [00:08:15*] school, and she's been dressed modestly. What must this say about us?" And I think we're familiar with that phenomenon. So, everyone goes to talk to Sarala. Sarala is so uninterested in talking to all of her father's people, and she just throws them out, and she goes, "I'm becoming a nun." Whether she was interested in becoming a nun or not is completely unclear -- highly unlikely -- but she was very interested in saying, "Fuck you," to her father. And the best way to

do that, in like 1843 -- or whenever it was. It was actually a little earlier. The story is actually more like 1750, 51; actually date the story properly. -- was to join a convent. So, finally, the word comes to the Baal Shem Tov, the master of the good name; the great founder of the Hasidic Movement, that Sarala, the daughter of one of his [00:09:09*], one of his disciples, is in a convent. And he's got to do something. So, Baal Shem Tov says, "It's okay. Just leave her there. It's fine. Just leave it to me; it's fine. Just, please, don't do anything. Just leave her there." So, six months goes by, and no one comes to visit, and she's surprised. They've just left her there. Then, one day, the Baal Shem Tov comes, and he makes his way to the convent, and he sits outside the convent, behind a tree. He just sits down. He sits the whole day. Nightfall comes, and he sleeps there. The next day, he just sits behind the tree, about a hundred yards from the convent, sits there the whole day. Nightfall comes, he sleeps. Now, the third day, he's just sitting there. I mean, if you would look at him, he's waiting. And as the sun sets, on the third day, she comes like bursting out of the convent, and she says, "Where are you? Where are you? Chutzpah! What are you doing? You have no right." And he says, "I'm waiting." And she looks at him and says, "Thank you." You know, thank you for waiting. And she becomes one of the great, righteous, feminine, Hasidic hidden masters. And her disciples ask her, close to her deathbed, what happened? And she says, "You know, I was in the convent, and I really wanted to say fuck you to my father." She probably said it a little differently, but this was really -- "my anger at my father." She had an enormous amount of awareness. And all my father's people came to try and get me out, and, then, they stopped. And when they stopped, I felt something, like why did they stop? Something was going on. Six months went by; I didn't know what it was. And, then, one day, I felt like someone is actually waiting on me. I felt someone like waiting on my desire. And I could feel it. And I was, "Who is this person and where are they from and why are they here and why are they in my space?" Just, the whole day, I was just furious. "Who is this person?" And the second day, I just felt again -- I felt this deep waiting, and I was angry, but I was curious. Like, "Who? What it is?" My curiosity all day, "Who's the person?" I just decided, no, I'm not going to give into it. But, by the end of the third day, I just felt the purity of the waiting -- the absolute purity of the waiting. And my heart opened, and I tried to get angry for one last second, but it just wasn't true anymore. And he looked into my eyes, and I said to him, "Thank you for waiting."

You know what that's like? When someone is waiting on my desire. They're just fully -- fullness of presence. To love each other is to wait on each other's desire, fully. When that happens, that's eros. That's pleasure. Your heart explodes, and all ethical failures come from a failure of eros, which is really a failure of pleasure. That's a failure of pleasure, at the core. So, as we're going to rework our ethical transformative vision of the world, we're going to do it through the one place which is actually the hidden, pivoting point. It's actually our point of influence. It's actually the place of leverage, which is pleasure. Because it's a breakdown in pleasure, pleasure eros, which creates all collapses of ethics. Addiction is but one form of the collapse. Addiction is an expression of pseudo-eros.

So, we're going to begin, entering into the voices of pleasure, the maps of pleasure. And, as Brad said, we haven't even begun to -- slowly, and the process of study -- and with this, we go to lunch -- and in lunch, let's hold the practice. We're participating in the evolution of love. We're reweaving a Dharmic map together, for our generation, in this time, bringing together the best of the great traditions; the best of neuroscience; the best of psychology; the best of psychosexual understanding and weaving it, seamlessly, into a new Dharma, which is a Dharma of love. It's to participate together in the evolution

of love, by weaving this Dharma, and, then, putting this Dharma in the world. So, in lunch, we hold the intention, not only as Jeff said, “Where am I in this place,” but “I’m part of this Sangha, and I’m participating in this Wisdom School, to bring wisdom down and to participate together [00:13:53*], for the sake of the uniting of all the fragmented sparks of self and other and world, into a larger whole and a vision of the patterns that connect. And the way we’re going to do it, is we’re going to reweave the pleasure map. Wow.

Have a beautiful lunch. So, it is. Amen. A deep bow to the God in the center of the circle.