



MIND & LIFE

## Mind & Life Podcast Transcript Brendan Ozawa-de Silva – Embodied Learning

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**Opening Quote – Brendan Ozawa-de Silva (00:00:04):** *Embodiment has become a real big interest of mine. It's really about listening to the body—and it is trying to communicate with us. I think in contemplative practice, if we spend so much attention to the mind, that's a huge thing, but what is the mind? The mind isn't just "up here" in our heads, the mind is throughout our entire body and our nervous system. And I don't think we've paid enough attention to the autonomic nervous system, and the way it handles stress, and the way that it's always giving us information—that if we start listening to it, we can find out what it likes and be kind to it, and it's an act of self-compassion.*

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**Intro – Wendy Hasenkamp (00:00:45):** Welcome to Mind & Life. I'm Wendy Hasenkamp. Today, I'm speaking with contemplative educator and researcher Brendan Ozawa-de Silva. Brendan has been studying and teaching mindfulness and compassion for over a decade and has recently been focusing on integrating trauma-informed and embodied practices into his work. He's also served as the associate director of the SEE Learning program (that's S-E-E) developed at Emory University, which is an international k-12 and higher education social, emotional, and ethical learning program. Brendan shares a lot more about that in our conversation.

(00:01:24) I spoke with Brendan earlier this spring, and we covered quite a bit of ground. He starts off with his introduction to the contemplative world, and shares a fascinating practice from the Japanese tradition called Naikan. We talk about his experience adapting contemplative training to a variety of settings, including elementary schools. And he shares his thoughts on the capacity of young people, not just for compassion and mindfulness, but also understanding the conceptual frames that contemplative systems are grounded in. We get into an interesting discussion of what's missing in contemplative research, and Brendan shares some insights around how empathy and compassion are things that arise between people, not just inside of one person. And he talks about the embeddedness of researchers in the systems they study, and how we need to change our research to reflect that reality. Then we get into the SEE Learning program that Brendan has helped develop. We talk about its goals and application, and discuss trauma in the body and nervous system regulation (these are aspects of the curriculum), as well as the role of contemplative practice and forgiveness in healing. Brendan also reflects on common barriers to compassion, and how we often misunderstand what compassion really means.

(00:02:46) There's lots more in here as well, and also check the show notes for links to more of Brendan's work, including a number of freely available resources from the SEE Learning program. I so appreciate the various lenses that Brendan looks through when it comes to contemplative science. In this discussion alone, for example, we talk about Buddhist philosophy, quantum physics, cognitive science, anthropology, history, clinical psychology, and more. This, to me, is what this work is all about—

bringing all of these perspectives together to get a better understanding of our minds and how we can change them. I think this episode will be especially interesting to educators, but really to anyone who's interested in how contemplation can be applied for healing and well-being. OK, I hope you enjoy this conversation as much as I did. I'm really happy to share with you Brendan Ozawa-de Silva.

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**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:03:46): Well, I am so pleased to be joined today by Brendan Ozawa-de Silva. Brendan, welcome and thank you so much for being here.

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:03:53): Thank you so much, Wendy. It's my pleasure. It's a joy.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:03:57): I love to start by hearing some of the backstory from our guests. So I'm curious for you, how you got into the contemplative world and studying and teaching compassion and just your path, however you want to share that.

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:04:13): OK, sure. My path has been long and winding, I would say. But probably actually I can credit it to my wife Chikako, who's also at Emory, she's a professor of anthropology. We met at grad school in England. We were at the same college at Oxford, St. Antony's College. We became friends, we started dating. And she was showing me chapters of her PhD dissertation and it was on Naikan, which is a Japanese spiritual practice of introspection—remembering your past from the perspective of other people in your life (your mother, your father, brothers, sisters), and recalling what this person gave to me, what I gave in return, and what trouble did I cause this person. You do this for a week, 14 hours a day, you sit behind a paper screen and that's all you do. And every few hours the practitioner comes and you report to them what you've remembered.

(00:05:11) And people have incredible experiences. They remember so much, they start to remember by day three or four so much from their past, and it really transforms them. It can be very transformative, because people realize that they've received countless acts of kindness from others, and there's no way they would've survived or be where they are without that.

(00:05:31) So I was reading this and I was thinking, "Wow, this is really interesting." And Niakan is a practice that was secularized from Buddhism. The founder was a true Pure Land Buddhist who was engaged in very rigorous contemplative practice to attain enlightenment. And he wasn't very good at it, *[laughter]* so he had to keep trying, he kept failing. His wife was very good. She had a breakthrough, her first experience. He had to try, I think six, seven times. So when he finally had a breakthrough experience he thought, "Wow, this is so great." It was so powerful for him, and he felt such joy and well-being, compassion for others that he wanted others to do it, but he realized they might have trouble. So he created Naikan. And he simplified this complex Buddhist practice down to those three questions, which is still probably the most elegant contemplative practice I've ever come across, in terms of how profound it is and how simple it is, three questions.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:06:22): Have you engaged in it yourself?

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:06:25): No, I haven't been able to do the full 7 day, 14 hours a day thing, because you have to... generally, you go to a center and there are no centers in the US. So on our honeymoon, actually, we started our honeymoon in Vienna. And as a true scholar, Chikako wanted to start our honeymoon by visiting a Naikan center in Vienna. *[laughter]*

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:06:46): How romantic! *[laughter]*

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:06:50): And we went to one and the guy running it, Franz Ritter, a very nice fellow, when he heard I hadn't done it he said, "Oh, just stay here. You can just do it for a week." So I could have spent the first week in my honeymoon doing it. *[laughter]* But for those listeners of yours who haven't come across Naikan, there's not as much written in English as in Japanese and German, but there is some literature. There's quite a lot in German actually, and then there's a lot in Japanese. And it's a fascinating practice that we should study and practice more in the West, I think.

(00:07:21) So reading that, really... the light bulbs didn't go off, but those were the seeds. I thought, "Wow, it's really interesting what she's studying, and I never thought about Buddhism this way, or this sounds a lot more interesting than what I had encountered." And then she got a postdoc at University of Chicago, and we went out there. And I was finishing writing up, and we went to this new age bookstore in Madison, Wisconsin, and they had a copy of *Destructive Emotions: A Scientific Dialogue with the Dalai Lama*, edited by Dan Goleman and Richie Davidson I think. It was the transcript and the edited book of the Mind & Life dialogue on that. And I just picked it up and read it, and Chikako read it, and it blew us away.

(00:08:04) And then, we started assigning that in our classes. We assigned that for the first graduate seminar that we taught together, which was at University of Chicago, called *Religion and Therapy*. And I was just like, "Wow, this is amazing." Shortly after that, I read *The Monk and the Philosopher* by Matthieu [Ricard], who I think you just had on your podcast. And so those books kind of opened my eyes to the world of contemplative science, and I've been interested in it ever since.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:08:30): Well, you humbly left out some of your accolades, in that you have two PhDs, in fact—one in history, is that right? And then, one from Emory in religion?

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:08:40): It's not really an accolade, it's more like an embarrassment. *[laughter]* You know, doing twice what most people can accomplish a single time. So that's why I don't mention it usually.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:08:51): Well, I think it's pretty fascinating to have that much experience in multiple fields. And along the way, I'm actually curious if you have that lens of history on any of this field, or if that plays in, because I just think that's a fascinating intersection.

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:09:07): Well, I'm not a historian of contemplative science or anything like that. So I did my PhD on religion in East Germany under communism, so it was German history. My interest was in historiography because after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a West German historian called Gerhard Besier went in... When East Germany collapsed and Germany reunified, they opened up all the Stasi archives, and a lot of the state and police archives. So he went in and he found out that the church—which had been seen as a pro-democratic force, because a lot of the pro-democracy movement started in the church that led to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Leipzig prayer protests and everything—there were a lot of collaborators inside. Collaborators with the Stasi and with the state. So he wrote these giant volumes that were kind of exposés of the church leaders. And it was very devastating for many people within the church. He never talked to any of the people that he wrote about. And in some cases, he was actually wrong, because they used code names, the Stasi did.

(00:10:16) So, it was a time of great upheaval and I thought, "Well, what would happen if you went in and you looked at, not just the Stasi archives and the state archives, but you also looked at the church archives? Their recordings in these same meetings, and what if you talked to some of the church leaders, and not just the people on the state side?" So that's what I did. And historiography is still really interesting to me, because it's really about how as a scholar or as a scientist (because I think the same thing happens in science), we study other people as objects. And sometimes we don't take the time to really talk to them and understand them, and sometimes our work does harm. Anthropology, I think has gone through a similar thing—what happens when you write about other people who don't have a voice, or don't have the same power that you have? So that interest in historiography has stayed with me and the ethical issues around research.

(00:11:07) But then, as you said, I went and did a second PhD on the advice of my friend and mentor, Geshe Lobsang Tenzin, who is at Emory and runs our Compassion Center at Emory. He said, "Brendan, have you ever thought about going and getting another PhD, and focusing on contemplative science?" So I thought it was crazy, but I did it. And I think that has shaped me a lot, because I went from a pure humanities field, in history, to then most of my coursework was in psychology with our mutual friends, Larry Barsalou and people like that. So I was exposed to psychology and neuroscience for the first time and to running meditation studies, and all this kind of stuff. A completely different way of thinking. And that has influenced me a lot—and that suits me, I like doing interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary stuff.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:11:57): So is that how you ended up at Emory, through Geshe Lobsang?

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:12:02): No, I ended up at Emory because Chikako was on the job market. She got a tenure track position at Emory in the anthropology department. I got a postdoc at the same time in the study of religious practices. And we came, but one of the first people I met when we came... I started emailing people. I found out when we were visiting for our campus visit, the religion department had a little brochure and it mentioned Drepung Loseling Monastery, this Tibetan institution of higher learning that's affiliated with Emory. And I was like, "Wow, that's fascinating. There's an academic affiliation with a Buddhist monastery."

(00:12:39) So I sent an email to Geshe Lobsang, and he told me years later—I totally forgot about this—that I wrote just to the center address, you know, center@drepung.org. But he saw the email and responded to me, and I guess I introduced myself, and then he wrote back and he remembers thinking, "Oh this might be an interesting person to talk to." And it's funny because now it's 20 years, and we've been close friends and collaborators and work together on many, many different things, and he's my boss now. So it's funny how that happened. But yeah, and then, coming to Atlanta and starting to attend Drepung Loseling is how I became exposed to Tibetan Buddhism, which then became the main tradition that I ended up studying.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:13:23): So yeah, this takes us into the next chapter, I guess, for you, which is the training programs that were being developed at Emory through Geshe Lobsang and others to train compassion in secular settings, which you became very involved in. I know that you have worked in a lot of different settings, bringing compassion training to different groups—elementary schools, prisons, women who experienced domestic violence, and foster care settings. So I'm just thinking about all of the adaptation that has to happen through that, and the skillful means that you need to use to make these practices and trainings alive and relevant for these different groups and different needs. So I just wanted to pick your brain about that, since you are such a skilled teacher and adapter, I suppose. I'm wondering if there's lessons from that, if people are going to be trying to adapt programs to specific populations.

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva (00:14:24):** Yeah. I think that is kind of a passion of mine, is that we have this treasure trove of information, and practices, and theory about compassion in different religious traditions. The one I'm most familiar with is this Indian and Tibetan Buddhist tradition. And the challenge I think that we have nowadays is, how do we adapt that to meet people where they are? Because we can't expect them to become scholars of Buddhism, or become Buddhist, which is not something I would desire anyway.

(00:15:02) Also, our cultural world is so incredibly different. Even if we talk about Tibetans for example, their world is rapidly becoming different as it has modernized in Tibet, and as Tibetans in exile increasingly... it's just the way of things. So this world is a different world than the world that generated a lot of these practices. It's not a completely different world, we're still human beings, but it is significantly different.

(00:15:30) And I think that the advances we've made in bringing contemplative practices to more people as a resource that they can choose to use have really happened through skillful adaptation—Jon Kabat-Zinn and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction being the most obvious and perhaps most impactful example of that. It's really a work of genius to take these different traditions and repackage them in such a simple way, and not lose a sense of authenticity. You probably know Jon better than I do, but having met him and heard him speak, his commitment to authenticity is very powerful. His connection to this idea of dharma is at the center of what he's doing.

(00:16:14) So that is very encouraging and I think we need more of that, because it's not that the core ideas of compassion and empathy and so forth are radically different, but the way we reach people has to be different. There's a sense nowadays that I'm getting, I don't know if you have this, but people who have been watching this field for the last 10, 15, 20, 25 years, there's a sense that it hasn't necessarily reached the potential that we thought it would 10, 15 years ago. Not that it's not growing, and more people are discovering mindfulness in other practices and compassion, but that when I look at the research studies that I've been involved in, the results are somewhat disappointing. The amount of time people practice is sometimes horrifically low. You know, we've run studies where the amount of practice time that the subjects are engaging in practice (because they're reporting it) is lower than the practice time in their actual session, like once per week, the guided meditation, because they're not attending every session. So their at-home practice seems to be less than zero, which doesn't seem possible, but just because they're missing sessions.

(00:17:25) So that means that we're missing something, right? That somehow, something's being lost in translation. And having worked with different groups, when I went to the prison, it taught me that I needed to understand trauma. When I worked with Brooke Lavelle, our mutual friend, going to elementary schools and middle schools, that taught me that we need to, and she taught me, that we need to adapt these practices into very accessible, embodied activities with children.

(00:17:57) So embodiment has become a really big interest of mine. Embodied pedagogy, active learning, engaged learning, using games, using theater, using activities, getting people up on their feet, moving around. It doesn't all have to be on the cushion. The cushion is one possible thing, right? But first you have to connect with people. And I think it's a lot easier to connect with people when they're actually engaged in doing something. We remember experiences, we don't remember words that are not connected to experiences. So just talking at people, which is what I used to do a lot—and what I'm doing right now *[laughter]*—is less effective than trying to create an experience with someone. So I think

the embodiment aspect and the trauma-informed aspect have been two major things that I've learned and that I'm interested in continuing to explore.

[\(00:18:50\)](#) – *musical interlude* –

**Wendy Hasenkamp** [\(00:19:16\)](#): I definitely want to dig into both of those with you, because I think they're really so central to the kinds of transformation that contemplative work is aiming towards. I did have one question before we go into those about just working with children, and your work with those elementary school children. I'm curious as to your experience with younger children and their capacity for these states or qualities of mindfulness and compassion. And if you see differences from adults, and if you have thoughts on why that might be or... Yeah, just your reflections on working with young people.

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** [\(00:19:55\)](#): Yeah, I love talking about that. So I have to put in the plug for the podcast that I'm launching, which is called *Mindful Dialogues*, because of my cohost Kitty Graham, who is a student at Emory University. She's an undergraduate. And in 2008, 2009, when Brooke and I were starting to go to these schools, she was a student in one of the classes, one of the first classes that we taught that we visited for about half a year. So she was six years old in that class. And this was the very first time we had tried to adapt Cognitively-Based Compassion Training (which was developed for undergraduates and adults) for 5, 6, 7 year-old kids. So we had to break everything down.

[\(00:20:42\)](#) And a lot of people, when I would mention what we were teaching and trying to do—because we weren't just teaching mindfulness, we were teaching mindfulness, but we were also teaching perspective-taking, perspective-taking for bullies, self-compassion, compassion for others, equanimity and impartiality, interdependence. And watching for risky emotions or destructive emotions as they arise, catching the spark before it becomes a forest fire, all these kinds of things. And some of my friends and senior colleagues would hear about this and say, "I don't even think a five or six year old kid is actually developmentally able to do that. The brain isn't even developed. They haven't even developed like metacognition yet. So how can you do these practices? Resting the mind in its natural state, mahamudra. This is crazy."

[\(00:21:35\)](#) And then, some adults said no... So I remember I was telling the president of Emory University once, at the time Jim Wagner, about what we were doing, and I was telling him about the interdependence exercise. And even before I said anything about what we found, he said, "Oh I bet those small kids get that even faster than adults." And I said, "Yeah, I think they do, but all these people have been telling me, 'You can't even teach that to kids.' But we found they do get it really quickly. Why would you say that?" And he said, "Because they're dependent on other people for everything. They can't even tie their own shoelaces without somebody else. They're aware of how dependent they are on others. They don't have this illusion of independence that we have as we grow up." And I was like, "Yeah, I never thought about it like that."

[\(00:22:22\)](#) So we did all those things and then now Kitty reached out to me 12 years later, and then we've been in communication the last couple years. And she was a student in my class with Geshe Lobsang that we co-taught last semester, which was amazing. And she had this idea to do this podcast, that we're doing. And one of the first things I asked her, I said, "What do you remember from that time when you were six?" And she said, "I remember catching your emotion when it's just a spark, before it becomes a forest fire. And I remember the interdependence exercise we did, that was mind-blowing. And I remember Brooke reading the Whatif story by Shel Silverstein, the "what if" mind. You know, what



if this happens? What if this happens? You know, how we have to catch our what if mind. And she remembered the mindfulness practices because she used to go home and practice mindfulness, and teach them to her mother and grandmother at home, to her family. And on and on. She remembered so much.

[\(00:23:21\)](#) Then at the end she said, "You know, I don't think there's anything that children of that age can't take in from these practices—that adults can, but children of that age can't—because they're going through all these things emotionally anyway. They're experiencing them. So to be given practices, and a vocabulary, and be shown that in the classroom is so valuable." So I think that being reconnected with Kitty has, in a way, restored my faith in these practices *[laughter]* that I was starting to lose from just doing research and looking at numbers.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** [\(00:23:58\)](#): Yeah, that's interesting. I've thought for a long time about the research and, as you say, I would say across the field, results are mixed. And it's not what the media made it out to be in the early days—of this panacea, and every study has these amazing results. Although there certainly are benefits that have been found again and again. But I've thought for some time that perhaps that's because we're not really measuring the right things. We're not looking at the outcomes that are the things that actually change in people's lives, which are inherently much harder to measure, from a scientific perspective. So just on that note, do you have thoughts about, if we could measure different things, what kinds of things might actually be more meaningful and consistently changed from practice?

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** [\(00:24:53\)](#): I think that's a great question, and I totally agree with you. I think that we need to change the way we're doing the research, methodologically. Part of that issue is around measures, we need better measures. And part of the issue is I actually think there are even more profound ways we could change the methodology of how we're studying things. And then, the other side of it I think is that we still need to improve our programming, which means continuing to try to push towards meeting people where they are. Because our engagement levels are too low. If we have practice times that are so low, and if we know that at the end of the study, most of the people who, even if they did practice during the study, stop practicing after the study, then that's a problem in our teaching. That's a problem in our programming. That's not a problem with the science or the measurement. So I think we should handle it from both sides. I think we need improvement on both sides.

[\(00:25:46\)](#) But with regard to the measures, yeah I think we need better measures. I'm very interested in performance measures. So if we really think that compassion and empathy are skills that are being cultivated, so many of our research studies are not actually showing whether people are actually cultivating those skills. We're seeing like, can it be used as a treatment for depression or anxiety or other things? But are people actually getting better at these processes of compassion, being compassionate and being empathetic? And what does that really mean? How do we break that down?

[\(00:26:17\)](#) I was with my mother going to a hearing test, because she was getting a hearing aid (and she has one now and it works well, so we're very happy with that). But I just went along with her, and I'm so glad I did because... we went to this little lab and there's the audiologist. She puts my mother in a booth and my mother gets headphones, and they're playing different tones. And because I'm a musician, I was just fascinated by this—they're playing tones at different frequencies and then asking her, "Can you hear this? Can you not hear this?" And they're increasing and decreasing the volume. Then, on the basis of that, they're creating a graph to see the level of her hearing loss across each band of the frequency spectrum. Then, she says, "Your hearing aid is going to be calibrated to this. So this is the diagnostic tool,

then this is also the way we calibrate the hearing aid to fix your hearing loss. The different frequency bands will be boosted by different amounts."

(00:27:14) And I thought like, "Wow, it's such a simple and yet sophisticated way of doing it. And do we have anything like that for empathy, for compassion, for forgiveness?" We have nothing like that. And I know you graphs and you like models [laughter], so I thought this might appeal to you. Because I was watching this and I'm like, "This is incredible." And she's got a little computer program and she's moving the slider up and down based on what my mother's saying. And then it's like, "Boom, we've got it." You know? So I think we could do a lot in that area. We need more imagination.

(00:27:44) But I also think that... and this is going to be harder to put into words. Chikako and I are starting something at Emory, we're starting a lab, it's called the Social Empathy Lab. Originally, it was just going to be for undergrads, but now some grad students want to be in. Now, some other faculty are like, "We want to [join], it sounds interesting."

(00:28:04) But the idea is that, so often we study empathy, compassion as kind of individual states or traits or whatever, within a single person's mind. We don't explore it so much as something that arises between people, and among people. And I would be very interested in methodologies that try to get at that. I think that the reason Chikako is starting this lab with me is because she has a strong intuition as well, that anthropology, which has always been the study of other cultures and difference...

(00:28:38) You know, anthropology is in a bit of a crisis right now because they're wondering what the future of their field is going to be, especially cultural anthropology, I would say. (Probably not everyone will agree with that, but a lot of people would agree, I think.) And they're becoming very interested in what ethical anthropology means. Because anthropology is a discipline of going off and studying what used to be called "primitive" people, Indigenous people, and then translating that back for the West basically. That's been done, and it had its colonialist past and everything. But what does the future mean? So she's very interested in dialogical anthropology. Like, what would it mean to co-create knowledge that is based on mutual understanding, not on an individual scholar being the controller of knowledge production and dissemination, which is inherently a power imbalance.

(00:29:32) So I was thinking more about this and thinking, "Well, you could say the same thing about psychology and neuroscience." Like, the study of empathy as just the study of other people's states of empathy is already missing what empathy actually is, which is something that arises between people. And the scientist isn't outside of that. I was thinking also about His Holiness's interest in quantum physics. When we were developing SEE Learning, our K-12 and higher education program, at every meeting practically, the Dalai Lama talked about quantum mechanics and quantum physics. And we were very confused. I was extremely confused. Like, how are we going to teach this to kindergarten kids? I don't get it. (And I still don't get it, to be honest.) [laughter] But one of the things I think that he's really interested in, in quantum mechanics, is this idea that, at least in his view and the views of others, quantum mechanics shows us that our study of reality, and our study of objects in that reality, involves us as the scientist or as the observer. We are also part of the reality. We and our understanding is part of the same reality that we're studying. We're not outside of that, and we can never be outside of that. So what does that mean, to fully embrace the fact that we are inside of that? That we are part of that system.

(00:30:53) And I was thinking, since this is the Mind & Life podcast, I wonder what Francisco Varela would've thought about that, because he was very interested in neurophenomenology as I know, and I



know you're interested in that. But neurophenomenology is another thing that I feel like has not, in any way, achieved its potential. But to me, maybe that's because it still is being approached in this objectivist way. And I just wonder what it would mean for science and for scholarship and research, for us to take seriously—especially when we're studying things like empathy and compassion—our own embeddedness in what we're studying.

[\(00:31:30\)](#) I think that's the forward direction that we have intuited we should go in, but methodologically, we're still trying to find out how to do that. So the Social Empathy Lab is to explore that. How are we studying each other and ourselves collectively, as a community? And starting from there, before we launch our research projects on how we're going to study other people. And when we do do that, how do we involve them in the research meaningfully, not just as objects of the research, but as subjects?

**Wendy Hasenkamp** [\(00:31:59\)](#): I really love that. As you've been speaking actually quite a bit of this conversation has been bringing to mind Francisco Varela and his ideas—even what you said originally about your study of history, and including the subjective perspective of the people who are being written about, or stories that are being told. So I can see that thread really runs through your work in so many ways.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** [\(00:32:22\)](#): What you're proposing is a really radical shift in science, in how we think about science and research. And I couldn't agree more that we need to be moving in this direction of understanding embeddedness, interconnectedness, and weaving that into the methods, which is a real challenge. But I love that you've started a lab to dig into that. So I'm really excited to hear where that goes.

[\(00:32:49\)](#) – *musical interlude* –

**Wendy Hasenkamp** [\(00:33:10\)](#): You mentioned the program SEE Learning, which I know you've been really involved in for many, many years. So that's Social, Emotional and Ethical Learning. Can you give us just an overview of that program and the goals there, and how it's unfolded?

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** [\(00:33:27\)](#): Sure, absolutely. SEE Learning as a program, the impetus for it is really the vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for bringing secular ethics, what he calls secular ethics, into education. And by that he means the cultivation of basic human values—compassion, empathy, forgiveness, self-discipline, generosity, and so on. He has been promoting that for a long time and wanting people to do that, because he sees education as the most effective way of bringing these values into society, I think for multiple reasons. Most people go through some form of education, and also we tend to be more receptive to things like this when we are children and growing up. So developmentally, it's a crucial time and an opportunity to reach people.

[\(00:34:23\)](#) And he has a very long-term vision of that. I remember what turned me on to the idea and the reason why I've been so involved is because I read a transcript of a meeting. I was actually transcribing the audio of a meeting he had. So the Dalai Lama was talking about how, if we do research now on basic human values, then we could introduce them into education in 10, 20 years. Then 20, 30 years from that point, we would see children who had grown up their entire life having been exposed to this. And then we would see the leaders, the world leaders that they elect. And then 20, 30 years from there, we would see the society that would be created.

(00:35:05) So it was this 100-year vision that is a very "systems thinking" way of thinking about it. He has a whole theory of change in his mind that's very sophisticated, that recognizes that part of the reason we have the problems we have is because we keep electing the leaders that we do, and that is because of our own level of awareness. So I just thought that was a beautiful vision.

(00:35:27) And what we've tried to do in SEE Learning is to bring what His Holiness felt was missing in modern education. And that was really talking about these basic human values, and the skills that go along with cultivating them. So SEE Learning is... we used it as an opportunity to try to bring many different strains of education together—mindfulness in education, bringing compassion training into education, systems thinking... a lot of these ideas we got from Daniel Goleman and Peter Senge. But also we drew from nonviolent communication, peace studies, peace and conflict transformation studies.

(00:36:04) There's so many wonderful things going on in education, but people don't always know how they're related to each other. So we spent the first several years creating the SEE Learning framework to show how they all fit together, that we can think about the cultivation of ethical discernment, and bring ethics into social emotional learning by having the personal dimension, the interpersonal or social dimension, and then the systems dimension. And we have to think on all three of those levels. So then we developed curricula for that, and we worked with partners, teachers, educators in the US and abroad, and created curriculum at all the different grade levels for k-12, which are now out there. It's a free program, it's being translated and been translated to many different languages. And then we rely on our affiliates around the world to implement the program. And we have a research arm as well.

(00:36:59) We were very gratified when Daniel Goleman, who's one of our advisors and who was one of the founders of the social emotional learning (SEL) movement, he called it SEL 2.0, and he said specifically because it brings in the elements of compassion and ethics on the one hand, and also systems thinking, which were two things that weren't really being done much in SEL.

(00:37:19) But a third element, and we touched on this earlier, is it's also a heavily trauma-informed program. Another consultant for us was Elaine Miller-Karas, director of the Trauma Resource Institute. I became connected with her after I started teaching in prison and realized I needed to know more about trauma. She and her team have developed these very easy to use body-based skills. And by learning to reregulate the nervous system through these simple sensory-based skills—like pushing against a wall, drinking a glass of water and noticing the sensations, grounding practice, resourcing practice—really attending to the information that our bodies are giving us all the time, our nervous system is giving us, and using these body-based and sensory-based practices to create calmness and safety in the body. That is so powerful as a preliminary practice to meditation or other contemplative practices.

(00:38:15) So I found that in working in prisons, and I also found that working with kids. To try to teach them yoga or mindfulness meditation, a sitting meditation, before they've regulated their nervous systems is asking a lot from them. Because if they're very tired and they want to sleep, or they have all this energy in them and they want to run around, to just get them to force themselves to do something like that generally doesn't work very well. So those body-based and sensory-based trauma-informed practices actually form the first body chapter of SEE Learning, unit of SEE Learning. And they've been extremely popular.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:38:56): That's awesome. I am so glad to see this program integrating trauma-informed perspectives because I don't know, just over the last few years I've really come to appreciate

the centrality of nervous system regulation. Just like you say, at a very fundamental level, we operate based on safety or threat. That's a really primary thing that we're always attuned to.

(00:39:22) You were saying that your interest was sparked around trauma from working in the prison system, and then you began integrating that also in your work with young children. And I'm just thinking about, traditionally in psychology, we think about trauma like "capital T" trauma, which there's even a list of the things that are considered to be traumatic events. And I'm just wondering with all your experience in teaching this and engaging with different folks using that lens, where do you draw the line on what is considered "traumatic"? Because it seems to me that it can be a lot more than just those really big, capital T trauma events, depending on the nervous system that's involved. So just would love your reflections on that.

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:40:09): Yeah, that's absolutely right. Well, we're already in a way coming at it from a different angle because, as I mentioned, SEE Learning has this whole unit on trauma and resilience-informed practice. And we also use that term "trauma and resilience-informed" to show that we're trying to take a strengths-based approach. And also to show that it's universal. That just like you said, dysregulation of the nervous system because of perceived threats or sensed threats is a universal thing that happens all the time. It's just a part of our life.

(00:40:47) Sometimes we use the word adversity rather than trauma. Right? We all experience adversity. And yeah, there's big T trauma. And then there's little t trauma, which is like, I'm afraid of dogs. So every time I see a dog, or I hear a dog barking, or I walk through a dog park, then my nervous system reacts to that, and I feel fear or anxiety. And I have to recognize that that's there. It's legitimate.

(00:41:10) And then, also there's C trauma—cumulative trauma or collective trauma. So when my community, my people, the history of my people, whatever has suffered, or there's just continual small microaggressions, these little things that kind of build up over time, that this actually also over time can impact my nervous system, and has effects that are very similar to big T trauma. So I think this larger view is very helpful. Once we take this lens, then we see that this can help everybody. Even people who have no problem meditating and love to sit down and meditate, still when they learn these practices, they find that they can be useful.

(00:41:57) You know, I remember coming back on a flight from India with Geshe Lobsang Tenzin, who meditates I think three hours a day. He grew up from a relatively young age studying these practices and everything, so he has to be considered a pretty expert meditator. (Even though of course he would never present himself that way.) We were talking about these things in India, and I was talking to him about the practice of how if one part of your body is feeling uncomfortable or in pain, you can shift to a different part of your body that feels better. Just, instead of our mind always going to the source of irritation, shift to just someplace that feels better, even if it doesn't feel good, a little better. And I said—we were just about to take this 12-hour plane ride back from India—I said, "I often do this on the airplane, because you know can feel very uncomfortable on the airplane."

(00:42:47) So we got on the airplane, and we were not sitting next to each other, we flew over. And I was trying to do this, and I started scanning my body and I got quite alarmed, because my feet were very cold on the plane, you know, sometimes that happens, these international flights. And then my body was scrunched into this tiny seat, and my left hip hurt, and my right knee hurt, and my arm hurt, and my head hurt, and I had a headache on one side of my head. And I thought, "Oh my God, I'm not going to be able to find any part of my body that feels all right!" *[laughter]* I was becoming more alarmed doing this.

(00:43:18) But then I suddenly realized that I had this headache on the left side of my face, and I thought, "Well, if the headache is on one side, then the other side automatically feels better. It doesn't necessarily feel good, but it has to feel better." So I shifted my attention to the other side of my face, and the instant I did that, I felt my body starting to relax a little. And then I noticed, okay my shoulders are starting to relax. Okay now my legs are starting to relax. And then you shift your attention to the parts where you notice that relaxation, and that creates this cascading effect. Then, before I knew it, I fell asleep.

(00:43:51) So we land in the Atlanta airport and I see him, and he says, "Oh Brendan, on the plane, I was doing that technique you were talking about." He said, "I started looking through my body. I had some pain in one part, so I started looking for some place that felt better. But then I found all the different parts of my body hurt, and I couldn't do it." And I was getting... I wasn't sure what to do. And then he says, "Then I found my eyelids—I had no sensation on my eyelids. So I focused on my eyelids, and I started relaxing. And then I fell asleep."

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:44:24): That's amazing! *[laughter]* Practical tips for international travel.

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:44:29): Right, right. I use this going to sleep sometimes too—finding the part of your body that feels comfortable. So it's not just about trauma, I guess, it's really about listening to the body. And the body has a mind of its own. That's one of my favorite sayings now, which I'm sure somebody else made up. But that's the thing that I say all the time, the body has a mind of its own. And it is trying to communicate with us, so we have to listen to it.

(00:44:58) And I think in contemplative practice, if we spend so much attention to the mind, that's a huge thing. But what is the mind? The mind isn't just "up here" in our heads. The mind is throughout our entire body and our nervous system. And I don't think we've paid enough attention to the autonomic nervous system, and the way it handles stress, and the way that it's always giving us information—that if we start listening to it, we can find out what it likes, and be kind to it.

(00:45:25) And it's an act of self-compassion, because our body is... another way I talk about it is it's almost like we have a little child, or a little animal inside of us that doesn't speak yet. So it can't understand words. You can't just tell it, "We don't need to worry about this." It doesn't listen to you. Like, how many of us have lain awake in bed—we're trying to tell ourselves, "I don't need to worry about this. I don't need to worry about this. I need to sleep." And our body's like, "I don't care. I'm worried about this. I can't understand what you're saying."

(00:45:58) But then we do something that helps our body calm down. We comfort it in some way, by touching something that's soft, or thinking of something, or listening to some music that makes us feel calmer or happier, drink some tea with honey, or something like that. And then our body starts to relax, just like you would comfort a small child. So I know for myself, up to 10 years ago, I never paid any attention to learning about what my body wants, or what it needs or what it's trying to tell me. So it can be quite liberating to explore that.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:46:31): I love that you're integrating this into this really wide-ranging program. Thinking of the Dalai Lama 100-year view, that is really powerful. I wish that I had learned about my nervous system as a child. I can't imagine the changes in my life, or the things that would be different in my life. So that's fantastic.

(00:46:50) One other question on trauma. Just wondering if you bring a lens at all on intergenerational trauma—thinking beyond one life, but historically. Does that enter into the picture at all?

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:47:01): Yeah, absolutely. When I was saying the big T trauma, little t trauma, and C trauma—and that C can be collective or cumulative trauma. The collective side of it I think has to do with that, our collective memory and our sense of identity. I think that's very powerful.

(00:47:22) I mentioned SEE Learning also draws from peace studies and conflict transformation. And if we look at the field of conflict transformation, Johan Galtung, who is considered the father of peace studies in some ways, and we drew from him in SEE Learning, and I had the opportunity to meet him twice when he came to Atlanta, which was nice. He has these different steps towards building to positive peace, not just the elimination of fighting and conflict. Sometimes we think of peace as just the absence of war, and it's not, or the absence of violence, it's not. It's the presence of relationships and institutions and a culture that ensures the continuation of peace. And the first step (he has several steps leading to that), the very first step is what he calls trauma conciliation. So you have to acknowledge the harm—people have to engage in a process of healing that allows them to move past the harm that has been caused, not forgetting it. And forgiveness is involved in this, and a process of inner reconciliation.

(00:48:23) So Richard Moore, who's a good friend, the man that the Dalai Lama calls his hero, his personal hero. He's from Northern Ireland, he's thought a lot about his own personal story of forgiveness, because he was shot and blinded when he was 10 years old by a British soldier (he's Catholic Irish). But he later grew up, he never had anger towards that soldier. That's why the Dalai Lama calls him his hero, because of his incredible ability to practice forgiveness and acceptance. And then he later met that soldier and befriended him. But he thinks about forgiveness not just in an interpersonal way, but also collectively, about the situation in Northern Ireland, where conflict has been raging and there's a colonialist history that goes back 500 years. At the heart of that is collective trauma.

(00:49:14) Moral injury is another term that's very helpful in moving us away from the medical idea of big T trauma and that kind of thing. Moral injury—when you think about what was done to people who you consider to be your ancestors, your people, they're like a part of you really, and you're a part of them. And you think about the way they were oppressed and the way they were treated. And then you still see signs of that today—you see injustice, you see inequity. Then you will experience moral injury. And it definitely impacts your nervous system. It impacts your emotion regulation, your perception of yourself and others. So it's something that has to be addressed. And I think contemplative practices have a lot of potential in helping us bring about that kind of healing.

(00:49:58) – *musical interlude* –

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (00:50:17): From all of your work and training compassion in so many different settings, I wanted to get your perspective on the barriers to compassion. I think, as we've been talking about, nervous system patterning is certainly a big one that many of us carry for all kinds of different reasons. But I'm wondering some other barriers that you may have come across that make it difficult to get to these states of compassion.

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (00:50:44): Yeah, I think it's a great question. And I love the way you framed it, because we do have these inner barriers that could be held onto by our nervous system. But then we also have a lot of conceptual barriers. So I think misunderstanding what compassion and empathy is—

just a lack of understanding of even what these terms could mean and the role they play in our life—I think that's one of the biggest barriers.

[\(00:51:08\)](#) I was talking to a colleague of mine, Amy Richards, we share an office. She works for the SEE Learning program on the research team, and also works in global health. And we were talking about Paul Farmer, who died recently, and is a legendary figure in the area of global health. And he's really respected so much for his compassion—starting hospitals around the world and raising awareness for the needs of the marginalized, of the poor. And there are a lot of tributes to him going around how praising his compassion and impact that he had. And Amy said, "Well, it's interesting because I had the chance to ask Paul Farmer a couple of years ago what he thought about compassion, and the importance of compassion in global health and public health. And he said, "Oh I don't like it. That's not what we need. We need justice. We need to go out and [do these things, et cetera, et cetera,] not just feelings."

[\(00:52:07\)](#) Dr. David Addiss from the Task Force for Global Health guest visited my class last week, and he talked about this, about understanding the near enemies of compassion. Pity, a kind of sympathy that looks down on other people or that's fleeting. And that's the way a lot of people see compassion. In Northern Ireland with Richard Moore, he invited the Dalai Lama to talk to a group of people working on development education, which means education around global poverty. And they weren't interested in the idea of compassion, because for them it's a justice issue.

[\(00:52:39\)](#) So the language of justice, of human rights, these kinds of things, people understand that and they get very fired up—yeah, we need to do work. You talk about compassion, it sounds like it's soft, it's an emotion, it's fleeting, it's like pity. You know, that's not something you can build an ethical system on or you can use to justify the good work you're doing. That's not an engine for social change, right? But I think the reason why they respond that way, and the reason Paul Farmer did, is because they have one understanding of compassion, which is that understanding—pity. But of course, compassion can be understood in many, many different ways. Compassion as Roshi Joan Halifax and others have said, is having a "soft front and a firm back."

[\(00:53:23\)](#) Compassion is absolutely consonant with justice. In fact, without compassion, why would we even work for justice? Why would we even see the value in human rights? So there's a much deeper meaning of compassion. Sometimes people say, "Well, what's the relationship between compassion and health? Does compassion make you healthier? Does it not?" That kind of thing. But without compassion, we wouldn't even have survival as a species. Without maternal care, without the care of our young... No mammalian or bird species would even exist without compassion. So we forget that that is also compassion. And in fact, that's the fundamental ground of compassion.

[\(00:54:01\)](#) We think compassion is just about kindness, like you know, when I buy my coffee, I say thank you to the barista. Okay, I mean, that's nice, but compassion is so much bigger and more fundamental than that. And people are not seeing that. People don't see that, they don't understand how our entire societies would fall apart without compassion. So they neglect all these things.

[\(00:54:25\)](#) I was at a conference of scholars and scientists about compassion, and the question came up, "Can you think of a compassionate teacher, a teacher who you had who embodied compassion for you?" And some of the participants couldn't think of anyone. So then I thought of how, in the Tibetan tradition, it's said that one of the most compassionate people in your life is the person who taught you to read and write. Because if you think about it, literacy is not something we just learn on our own. We



have to be taught, no matter how smart you are, you don't learn to read or write on your own. And where would we be if we couldn't read or write? But you know, how many of us can remember the person who taught us to read and write? And do we see that as an act of compassion? Well, it's so central to our well-being.

[\(00:55:12\)](#) So once we take that lens, then we can look back and say, "Actually, yeah, if I understand compassion in that way, I can see I've received countless acts of compassion, and I'm constantly seeing it around me. And our whole school system is filled with acts of compassion because lots of people are becoming literate." But if I don't have that lens and I look at the school system, then I only see problems. I see what's wrong. And I look at society and I think about what's wrong with society, and it's horrible, and it needs to be fixed, and we [should] just tear it all down because it's such a disaster. But that's because my understanding of compassion is too narrow.

[\(00:55:47\)](#) And I think that is a problem also that we have right now, is that a lot of young people, I'm worried, are growing up being taught to look at all the problems, and not see the countless acts of compassion that are also there, constantly around us. And if we only look at one side of the picture—they're both important, but if we only look at one side—there is a real chance that we fall into despair and hopelessness, and that we lose our sense of needing to work together to improve things, which is also at the heart of compassion.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** [\(00:56:18\)](#): It strikes me also that getting a real handle on interdependence and developing that lens is also part of what you were saying. I think it organically engenders compassion if you really understand that we all depend on one another, and the entire planet. So I love that the SEE Learning program and all of the work that you do is systematically bringing that awareness to so many people.

[\(00:56:46\)](#) Well, I know we're coming up on our time, and I know recently you said you've transitioned into mainly just teaching, and you've been thinking of some unique approaches to how you teach. Do you want to share a little bit about that before we wrap up?

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** [\(00:57:01\)](#): Sure. So I'm teaching a class called Compassion in Human Health. I guess in a way, I'm trying to experiment with the class, along the lines of what I mentioned with this Social Empathy Lab is—what is it like to really see the experience of taking the class as part of the learning, not just the content of the class, not just the content of readings. So we're in a theater classroom, so it's an acting studio, so half of the classroom is a pit, and we sit in the pit in a circle. And it's a no technology classroom, so there's no screen, you can't show PowerPoints, it's very hard to lecture. So I've never really lectured in the class, and we've never had a PowerPoint in the class. And we have experiences, we do activities, we do a lot of group work, a lot of pair work.

[\(00:58:01\)](#) Usually, our class starts with two students giving a personal statement, where they talk about who they are, where they come from. It's very open-ended, they talk for about five to seven minutes, and then they take questions (if they're willing to, which everyone has been). And through that, they have created an environment that is really a very open space, a safe space. So when we have a guest visitor, they come in, they sit with us in the circle. And twice I've asked the students to go around, introduce themselves to welcome the visitor and say one word that they associate with the class. And they say things like open, therapeutic, empathy, non-traditional, vulnerability.

(00:58:45) So I think that again, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, when he talks about secular ethics, there are three sources for secular ethics—science, common experience, and common sense. And I feel like in the world of contemplative science, we've really stressed the science. We're quite good about the science. But I'm very interested in what he means by common experience and common sense.

(00:59:11) We had Richard Moore come in to visit the class (not in person, he came in virtually from Northern Ireland) and he talked about his story of forgiveness and his understanding of forgiveness. And I think it was really impactful on the students, because it's an extraordinary case of forgiveness. And it doesn't just apply to the soldier who shot him. He applies that to everybody, because in his mind, forgiveness is a gift you give yourself. He said, "Why would I allow somebody else to have control over my own happiness and my own mental state?" Which is amazing when you think about it. When he said that, I got another little glimpse of why he's the Dalai Lama's hero. Because the amount of mental strength you need to have, and self-confidence, to say, "No, I'm going to control my mental state and my attitude. I'm not going to let you control that. So you can attack me. You can say all sorts of bad things about me. You can lie to me. But I get to decide. You're not going to live rent-free in my head."

(01:00:11) So that is experience, that's the experience of a human being. He's just sharing his experience. He's not saying everybody should do this, everybody has to do this. He's just saying, "This has been my experience and it's been positive for me. Forgiveness has been a positive thing for me, and I wouldn't have been able to achieve what I have achieved if I didn't have forgiveness."

(01:00:29) So I'm very interested in common experience, and I'm very interested in common sense. So what is common sense? Like, if we have a bunch of undergrads together in our classroom and we explore... They have never been given a definition of compassion or empathy or health in the class. I've never said to them, "This is what compassion is. This is what empathy is." So how do they know what it is? Well, they're human beings, and they're already 19, 20, 21 years old. And we get together and we talk, we talk about situations. We act out different situations, we use different activities. And then we explore empathy as human beings. What do we understand from this? And through that, I think they develop inductively, a very, very rich and varied understanding of what empathy is. That's a lot better than giving them a definition, and then putting that on a test or something. (There are also no test or quizzes in this classroom.)

(01:01:22) So this class was an experiment for me. Like, if you actually led a class this way, very inductively, very much through activities, very much through interpersonal learning, communal learning, does learning actually happen? *[laughter]* Or is it just party time? And I think that it's one of the best classes I've ever taught. I think it's amazing. One of the groups of students... They're now doing their group projects, one of the group projects is on the class itself. Because the student said, "We want to actually study this and share this as a resource for other faculty, for the administration."

(01:02:00) So I also have SEE Learning to thank for that because working with all these educators, all these school teachers, working with young children, really taught me how to do that, how to teach in a different way. So I'm really grateful to all of them for changing me, as an instructor.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (01:02:22): That sounds amazing. (I wish I could take that class!) I'm thinking back from your earlier comments about research and science and the approach... And then you just said there's no tests and quizzes in this class, and you're curious to see whether learning happens. So I'm wondering how will you evaluate that, in the absence of test scores, which would be the traditional way? How are you approaching knowing whether learning is occurring?

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (01:02:50): Yeah, I think the final projects will be interesting, because they have to produce something for our class, and they also, one of the things I asked them to do... The provost at Emory, Ravi Bellamkonda, he's very interested in student flourishing and student well-being, and re-envisioning student success. What is student success? Not just getting the job and having the money or whatever. That's one version of success. And if that's your version of success, fine. But is that it? So this class was actually proposed to him as part of his larger initiative in human flourishing. So I told the students what that means is that, since he is kind of taking ownership of this as part of his initiative, he's going to have to listen to you, what you say at the end of this. So I said for each project you'll write a one-page executive summary, and it will go to him. So maybe we'll see from him whether he thinks they learned anything in this class. *[laughter]*

(01:03:49) But I also think... the question you raise, I don't really have an answer for that. What does it mean to have rigorous learning in a context like this, that's heavily experientially-driven? Where you can't fall back on the typical papers and quizzes and tests? What does evaluation mean in that context? You know, I guess if you're the professor, you have a responsibility, you're part of a system, so you have a responsibility. But at the same time, you also have a responsibility to think critically about the system that you're part of.

(01:04:19) And I think Emory is a great system, and I think higher education is great, and liberal arts education is great. I'm a big fan of liberal arts education. It doesn't mean it's perfect. And right now, the constant evaluation of students and the constant testing, and the way that we're approaching understanding and learning—we're doing a lot of things that don't make sense in our current world. We're living in a world where we're carrying around with us these devices that have access to the best libraries in the world. We have unprecedented access to information that is unimaginable, and yet we're still having students memorize stuff and fill out stuff on tests. There's something wrong there. And we haven't really thought enough about the question you raised, which is, "What is evaluation, and what does it mean?"

(01:05:08) The other thing is, and we talked about this in our class, there's a thing I think it's called Goodhart's law—which everybody should learn about in research methods, but I never did—which is that when the measure becomes the goal, it's no longer a good measure. So the measure in education is grades. It's supposed to be measuring learning. But the instant that the student realizes that what they need is the grade, that's all they carry with them and that's what helps them to succeed, then it's not a good measure of learning anymore, because they're going after the grade. And we have created that system. So basically they're going to do what maximizes their grade, not what maximizes learning. And those two can actually be in conflict with each other. So what are we doing about that? I don't hear enough people thinking about this. We should think about it.

**Wendy Hasenkamp** (01:05:56): Well, I love the way you're thinking about it. And there may not be clear answers yet, but I really appreciate you living into the question in the ways that you are. Thank you so much, Brendan, for all of your amazing work and your contributions to this field. I'm so excited by the ways that you're challenging our conventional ideas, and keep looking with this critical lens and asking really important questions. So, I appreciate you and appreciate the time that you've taken today to be with us.

**Brendan Ozawa-de Silva** (01:06:26): Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity, Wendy, and I appreciate all the work that you're doing at Mind & Life. As I said at the beginning, it was Chikako and also Mind &

Life through that *Destructive Emotions* conference that got me interested in all of this to begin with. So it's an organization that's always been dear to my heart, filled with people who are also dear to my heart. So thank you for letting me just go on and riff on your show for a while. *[laughter]*

**Wendy Hasenkamp** ([01:06:52](#)): It's been a pleasure.

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**Outro – Wendy Hasenkamp** ([01:06:58](#)): *This episode was edited and produced by me and Phil Walker, and music on the show is from Blue Dot Sessions and Universal. Show notes and resources for this and other episodes can be found at [podcast.mindandlife.org](http://podcast.mindandlife.org). If you enjoyed this episode, please rate and review us on Apple Podcasts, and share it with a friend. And if something in this conversation sparked insight for you, let us know. You can send an email or voice memo to [podcast@mindandlife.org](mailto:podcast@mindandlife.org).*

[\(01:07:28\)](#): *Mind & Life is a production of the Mind & Life Institute. Visit us at [mindandlife.org](http://mindandlife.org), where you can learn more about how we bridge science and contemplative wisdom to foster insight and inspire action towards flourishing. If you value these conversations, please consider supporting the show. You can make a donation at [mindandlife.org](http://mindandlife.org), under Support. Any amount is so appreciated, and it really helps us create this show. Thank you for listening.*