

Turning to the Mystics



Julian of Norwich

Julian of Norwich: Listener Questions
with James Finley and Kirsten Oates

Jim Finley: Greetings. I'm Jim Finley.

Kirsten Oates: And I'm Kirsten Oats.

Jim Finley: Welcome to Turning to the Mystics.

Kirsten Oates: Welcome, everyone, to Turning to the Mystics. In today's episode, we're going to be turning to the listener questions that have come in, in response to season six on Julian of Norwich, and I'm here with Jim. And Jim, we've had just some lovely questions come through for this season. It's good to be with you.

Jim Finley: Yes, two things. One, I was really moved by the depth of sincerity of the questions. And also it's very much they're path questions. They're the kind of questions that seekers ask, and I think that's what the teachings of these mystics are trying to open up these very questions within ourselves and how to live by them and so on. So just, yeah, we've got some lovely questions. Yes, beautiful. And we can only do a representative sample. We're going to do a selection that's representative of the caliber of the questions that ... They're all so good. We could go on and on with it actually with each one, so very nice.

Kirsten Oates: Yes. Absolutely. I think we both said we could take any one of the questions and do a whole episode on them, they're so beautiful. Yeah. And so I did just want to thank everyone who sent in a question. It's just an honor and a privilege to get to read them and I feel very touched by the stories and looking forward to your responses today, Jim. Should we get started?

Jim Finley: Yes.

Kirsten Oates: Okay. So the first one is from Bonnie and she says, "Would you comment on the shocking and vivid imagery of Julian's writings describing the passion, the intended effect upon the reader? I have difficulty reconciling these descriptions with her beautiful poetic message throughout the book. I have tried to read her works through, but become discouraged and disconcerted when I encounter such emotional language."

Jim Finley: Well, in part, her graphic description of the intensity of suffering is part of a cultural, historical spirit of the age she lived in, this devotional love for Jesus crucified and the cross. So she's part of her own cultural setting. That's where part of it comes from. The other part of it comes from the fact that in her near death experience that she had where the priest held up the crucifix is where she had her mystical awakening. And another part of it is to consider that her language of the suffering is shocking because it reminds us the crucifixion was shocking. It was extremely violent and brutal. So any attempt, we don't like to hear that or that bothers me, it should bother us because it's so deeply bothersome, it was so cruel.

The next thing is that her whole insight is that the intense imagery of Jesus's suffering is actually the infinite love of God incarnate in Jesus merging with and identified with our anguish. And so the cruelty in Jesus is the cruelty inflicted on all of us, and Jesus owns it. Jesus takes it on, greater love than this is no one that he lays down his life for his friends. So paradoxically, out of the very bitterness of the cross, we find that there's a loved one with us in the bitterness itself, which is the self experience of experiential salvation.

And lastly, I would think, you know that by their fruit you shall know them. And she's sitting in her hermitage and some of those eloquent, beautiful things that she says out of that. So it's almost similar to the light of the resurrection, unexpectedly shining out of the death of Jesus, and it's that love. And how often sometimes some of our graces that bless us to this day came to us in moments of darkness or pain or moments of in the darkness itself, we found something we never would've found otherwise about frailty and God's mercy and so on. She's so unique that way and the strange mixture of these two things, just part of her own path and what she was called to do.

Kirsten Oates: So this reconciling of the shocking and vivid imagery describing the passion to the beautiful poetry, you are saying actually just like the cross, the vision of the cross, which has both the suffering and the love and the beauty incorporated.

Jim Finley: See, I think the mysterious place for her too is what is the point at which the suffering within and beyond ourself is touched by the presence of God? See? And what is that mysterious place within us? Dying the inner death, merging with the suffering and the love that liberates us from the suffering. And so she's circling around this mysterious place in all of us, so yeah.

Kirsten Oates: Wow. The next question is from Margaret and she says, "I have experience with Julian of Norwich, an opening of my heart to all humanity, particularly those suffering day to day. It shows itself through many spontaneous pushes to love, help, and act that don't go through reason or thought, but a heart based or deeper even than that. Before this, I was very much afraid of the face of Jesus, crucified and suffering. But as Julian experienced this, and Jim explained, I find it is accessing a deeper compassion in me. However, moment by moment, how does one not be overcome by this suffering to be able to draw on the deep wellspring of love we are wrapped in as beloved of God as we get to know him in us?"

Jim Finley: Yes, I was just reflecting on this, what she's asking here. First of all, we're assuming something here, that we're being called to, invited to be a nonviolent, safe, protective person and honoring the wholeness of life and the mystery of life and the happiness of life. And then when suffering does occur, we're to do our best to lessen it, and, if possible, remove it, but in an inner peace, not dependent on the outcome of our efforts to do so because it's a peace of God on which everything depends.

And so at one level, suffering is suffering, and suffering is terrible. So to romanticize it in any way it really disrespects the suffering person. The only authentic response is, I'm so deeply sorry you are having to go through this, it's painful. And it's also risky because you can go under. You can go under despair, you can become bitter, you can ... it's risky business. We need to be very careful with this. But the other part of it is also true, that although suffering is terrible and we need to work at it, it's not just terrible and we learn things in it.

It's strange to me, a lot of what I've come to learn over time about God and so on, it came to me out of my trauma from the time I was three years old, a lot of it did. And when I sat with people in psychotherapy, I worked with adult survivors of childhood trauma who wanted spirituality to be a resource in their suffering. They would share these things, I'd walk with them and listen to them and sift it out. And at the end of the day, I felt strangely graced and grateful for the opportunity to be with people like this, the amazing resiliency of the human

spirit, see, to face what it needs to face, to walk through it and to be transformed by it, be transformed by it.

My oldest daughter's a hospice nurse, so all day long she admits people into hospice, sits by their bedside, talks to the family. And we have a lot of talks about it, how some cases are very hard, but how fortunate she feels, all that she learns from it. So there's a strange thing about compassionate tenderness that listens to and befriends and walks with the mystery of suffering, which really the presence of God hidden in it. While at the same time doing our best to be a nonviolent person that doesn't add to it and do our very best to lessen or remove it. It's a delicate, mysterious thing for us. It's so personal for each of us, I think.

Kirsten Oates: Yes.

Jim Finley: Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: And to be aware of your own limits, I think, this person worrying about becoming overwhelmed.

Jim Finley: Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: It's not helpful to the suffering person if you do become overwhelmed. So to recognize as human beings, we might have different limitations given our backgrounds-

Jim Finley: And let me add to that. That's a good point with trauma. I think for a traumatized person, one of the fears is they owe it to you not to let you get too close to them or they'll bring you down. See? And so if I'm a psychotherapist who works with trauma, the person is counting on me that I'm grounded in a depth of presence that can withstand the pain. And in that depth of presence, I'm grounded in it, it allows me to then ... I have one foot grounded in the presence, but I take the other foot and put it with them in the circle of their suffering, so it forms like a bridge like this. And so I owe it to the person and to myself to take care of myself.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: And so I have to interiorly back off or distract myself, be present, get peer supervision, I have to. And sometimes people who work with serious illness or work with ... this is secondary post traumatic stress disorder. You're traumatized by being in the presence of traumatized people. And so you have to be on guard and be very real about this and take care of yourself, and another so deeply personal thing.

Kirsten Oates: Yes, yes, yes. But how wonderful, Margaret sharing this spontaneous push to help and act and that's not going through reason, that feels very heart based.

Jim Finley: Yeah, it does. And also strangely ... and I think Dr. Martin Luther King or Mother Teresa of Calcutta, you just get the feeling. You see videos of Mother Theresa of Calcutta talking. She's such a deeply present, grounded person who working with the poorest of the poor, she's suffering all ... but she doesn't drown in it, but she

walks with it. And sometimes we're called in unexpected ways to family members and deaths and sorrow and to take care of ourself, then realize we're being wizened or made the wiser about how mysterious God's presence is in the fragility of our lives. And I think Julian very much is at the heart of that mystery.

Kirsten Oates: We have a question from Elizabeth and I'll read her question and there's some more context which will probably come out, but she writes a question. This idea of praying for illness was so contrary to my lifestyle of healthy eating, exercise and preventative medicine. I had a really strong emotional reaction to it." And so just wondering your thoughts on that, Jim, that it does seem odd that someone would pray for an illness, especially in today's day and age.

Jim Finley: It is odd, and she says that it's odd. She even says I-

Kirsten Oates: Julian does.

Jim Finley: Yeah. She says, I realize this is not your typical thing. And here's what I think about it, several things. One, it is odd. Secondly, sometimes we can be unexpectedly drawn in a certain direction. We can't explain to anybody, including ourself. See? But we're drawn there. And I think she was drawn there, especially when you see providentially, how she was radicalized in that really. And also how by the very fact she's so merged with that suffering, she was such a source of deep peace, and don't forget she was running during the Black Plague. People were dying all around and people were coming. She just knew ... it was just tragic, the death that she saw. And it isn't just that she brought solace to the people coming to the little window, centuries later she brings solace to us. And so by their fruit, you shall know them, by the beauty of the things that she says. She reveals the authenticity of this unusual carism or calling that she had.

Kirsten Oates: Yes. What was amazing to me about that part of the story is that she only remembered that she'd prayed that prayer after she'd gone through this near death experience. So it sounded like it was a very childlike prayer that what ... they didn't stick with her like she's praying that daily until it happened. It came in a moment of time, but in a way it confirmed the presence of God in her life from that early moment.

Jim Finley: That's a very good point. I think that is a big part of it. She was a young girl. And I think when we look back and see the things that we prayed for, thought about when we were 12 or 14, we never would think of when we're 30 or 40 or 50.

Kirsten Oates: Yes.

Jim Finley: And so I think you're right, there was a childlike quality, a naivete with a hidden truth in it. See?

Kirsten Oates: Yes.

Jim Finley: But it's not the kind of thing she would pray for older and wiser. She wouldn't but it is part of her autobiographical story in her life. Yeah, it's a good point, I think.

Kirsten Oates: Yes, and then speaking how that experience continues to help us today. So Elizabeth who wrote in that question, I don't know if you want to share, Jim, but tells an amazing story of after having this reaction to Julian praying for suffering, then became quite sick and ended up in a near death experience herself. Yeah.

Jim Finley: Yeah. Really, it's very touching here. She had this natural revulsion or whatever thing, especially she ended up in the hospital and realized she could die.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: And then she says, "With this illness, it brought me down deeper into the ocean, which is God, more than I could have ever known. See? And so she learned something, they're unexplainable and touching. That's why I think it's always good to be aware that whenever we turn towards mystical things like this, we always have to be sensitive to this. If we're exploring mystical consciousness, we need to be conscious of the state of consciousness we're in when we explore mystical consciousness. And if we're exploring it from the vantage point of our ego illumined by faith, see, it's like we're trying to get ahold of something that's ungraspable. And it's through our own silence and our own love and our own growth that dawns on us little by little as we're led by the beauty of the mystics teachings. We're led deeper into these intimate realizations that before had alluded us. I mean, it's always helpful to see that I think.

Kirsten Oates: Yes, yes. I love this part where she says, "For me this meant that to live or die, we are always held in God's infinite, loving arms, whether I am in body or in spirit."

Jim Finley: Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: And she was encouraged by that. Yeah.

Jim Finley: How I put it poetically, radically is that even if we burn to death, fire is trustworthy. Even if we drown, water is trustworthy. Even if someone carries us off and does terrible things to us, it's our brother and sister deeply broken and deeply confused. See? Because ultimately speaking, nobody dies. We're all eternal. See? And that's the mystical, we're trying incarnate infinity intimately realized and it's just this mysterious place where these paradoxical truths touch us in ways that baffle our own ego consciousness.

Kirsten Oates: Yes. Yes. I think too how sometimes you hear the thing or you read the book that was setting you up to be ready for the next thing. And how amazing that season six, Julian and this person had tuned in and then went through this experience that Julian was able to help her with.

Jim Finley: Yeah. Thomas Merton-

Kirsten Oates: And you were able to help her with, too, Jim.

Jim Finley: I know. Exactly. Exactly. And notice how when she shares this with us, it helps us because it's her life. It speaks out of her life. Thomas Merton once said in the monastery that ... reminded us that the word martyr means witness. And he said, "The martyr doesn't give up life. The martyr gives up having life and in giving up having it, it reveals the essence of life,

which is not for that-

Kirsten Oates: They never had it in the first place.

Jim Finley: Yes. We don't have it if we don't belong to ourself.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: We don't own our next heartbeat. And so this is this delicate realm that we're in as God draws closer and closer, I think.

Kirsten Oates: Another question, this is also from a person called Margaret. "Listening to your lived conversation has opened my being again to be able to fall into the energy and lineage of those previous mystics, our ancestors. I breathe easier certain no matter what, Julian has my back and we begin this journey together. This morning, I realize I'm being prepared to open my relationship with God in the most ordinary of things so that I don't keep looking over the wall for the way ahead when it is right there in front of me." Just wondered if you'd comment on that one too.

Jim Finley: Yes. Yeah. First of all, I think with Julian and all these mystics, see, in a way what it is that we're trying to take in here is this idea that the infinite love of God in a self donating act is infinitely giving the infinite love of God to us as our deepest identity. And so we can somehow handle being conditionally loved, but in unconditional love, there's no control. See? There's no control in unconditional love. And that being overtaken by love or have it wash over us and leaving us empty handed without explanations, I think this love is at the heart of the mystical experience. And so it does wash over us in a very forceful way, but often it happens in subtle, delicate ways in ordinariness. So there's something about watering the house plants or pouring boiling water for tea or lying awake at night in the dark when you can't sleep.

And there's the utter simplicity, just that you're getting out of bed in the morning and touching our feet to the floor, realizing that everything has about it a certain stature that can't be comprehended. Everything is the intimate simplicity. God's the infinity of the intimate simplicity of standing up and sitting down, and we're trying to be stabilized in that sensitivity, I think. Notice it's hard to explain this to anybody. People don't usually talk this way, but in our heart we find in the mystics good company. They encourage us to open our heart to be comfortable with such intimacies.

Kirsten Oates: Yes. I'm thinking of my dog this morning sitting, finding the sunlight coming through and sitting right in the sun, in the sunshine and looking so content. So this next question is from Sandra and she says, "Julian's radical withdrawal from the work a day quotidian realities which constitute much of human life both intrigues and perplexes me. Is it necessary to be separated from the world, her street side window notwithstanding, in order to draw closer to God? And if so, of what use is our mortal life? Why ward oneself off from creation if creation is kaleidoscopic shot through with God?"

Jim Finley: Well, let's say first that I think the way God works with the vast majority of us is God works with us and is present to us in our presence to each other, and our love for each other and respect for each other and helping each other and the relatedness of ourselves, father, mother,

sister, brother. That's why we have us, us, us. And that's true, but what's really interesting in the Catholic tradition is that religious orders like the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Jesuits, they all, as a commitment to God, a vowed commitment with a former ministry to the world, education, hospital work, parishes.

But what's also interesting about the Catholic church is with cloistered orders, they have no ministry. They go in and they never leave and no one's allowed in. So what's interesting is the Carmelite nuns are ... the priests of Teresa of Avila was cloistered. She wrote a book in the cloister. This assertion order that Thomas Merton belonged to, the Trappists, that I was in, was completely cloistered. No one came in and no one came out. There's also the Carthusian, which is an order of hermits, and there's the Camaldolese. There are people called to the solitary life. The hermit is one who lives alone for spiritual reasons.

Merton says it's only valid if they sense they we're drawing from the world at one level to be more deeply united to the world at another level. He said otherwise you need to leave. It's a calling. It's an unusual calling, but it is a calling for solitude that we're not just ... Jesus was asked, what's the first commandment? What's the greatest commandment? It is, what is out of all the beautiful things that you say, what is it, if we would line our heart with that, everything else you say would fall into place?

You said the first commandment is to love God, see, with your whole heart, your whole mind, your whole ... and then your neighbors as yourself. And so this solitary hiddenness gives witness to God to be a God seeker, bear's witness to the ultimacy of God. Priests of Avila, let nothing disturb thee, let nothing frighten thee. All things are passing, God alone, remaineth. Patience obtains all things. Why? Just be patient, pretty soon we'll all be dead. See? So patience obtains all things because God alone, remaineth, see, and who we are in God remaineth, and we express it mainly through each other. See? But there are some people who are called like Julian. It's a vocation, it's a carism, and the fruit of it is in the quality of her heart. Again, what a beautiful woman. What a beautiful present woman she was.

And I'd like to say something else too about all of us. In the midst of our family life, in the midst of our ministry or our service or our concern, there's a place within us. It's a hidden place that no one enters there, but God's there, and we're drawn into that place unexplainably. Even our reflective thinking self, it can't get in there. So there's a hiddenness in the set, like the axis of the turning world. It's utterly solitary, it's invisible to our finite eyes. And it's the hidden center from which all the interconnectedness flows out and from which makes interconnectedness possible.

And there's something about silent prayer or deep communion with God in silent and prayer that somehow enters into that axis. And we disappear from ourself in reflective consciousness, in deep meditative states. The stillness gets so subtle that we disappear from ourself in reflective consciousness. We vanish away from ourself and our reflective awareness of ourself because we're beyond ourself. And then when we return there, Priest of Avila says, "We don't know if anything happened in one sense because we weren't there, but we do because we emerge that we're different."

She says that, "One, we know that we were in God and God was in us. We know that our only will is to do the will of God. We're committed to that." And thirdly, she said, "We

emerge as a butterfly with tattered wings. This is not the beloved, this is not the beloved, this is not the beloved. That everything's infinitely lessen the beloved that alone fulfills me." But once I accept that, then this little thing is the presence of the beloved. This person who just walked in the room is the presence of the beloved. See? The sound of my own breath is the presence of the beloved. So I suggest there's a solitary hiddenness in the center of all of us. It's where art comes from. It's where poetry comes from. It's for radical-

Kirsten Oates: Where life comes from.

Jim Finley: Yes, exactly. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: So just to speak to Sandra's question, it sounds like it's certainly not necessary to be separated from the world to draw closer to God, but there's these radical expressions of ways to be close to God. And one would be the hermit representing this inner hidden place that we can find in God. Also, I know I've heard you speak about Mother Theresa or Martin Luther King. They represent these radical components of the personality that we might have small pieces of, that show it to its fullness.

Jim Finley: It's not necessary to be isolated, to be one with color. If it did, 99% of us are in deep trouble because we're not isolated. You just think about this. That makes no sense. See? And so I think what's necessary is that we walk our walk as best we can to be faithful to what we believe in our heart, who God is calling us to be and to share it with others, and the substance of that is love. I think that's what's necessary and our conscience. Where am I at with this? Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: And knowing that someone like Julian did separate herself, that gives meaning to God and to her story. And even to, like you say, who we are in our deeper selves.

Jim Finley: Yeah. T.S. Elliot says in four quartets, a little gidding, to kneel where prayer has been valid, because these cloistered monasteries, people come here on pilgrimages just to be there where people give themselves to God and silence. They have a guest house there and Benedict has accepted guests as Christ and they want to come there just to be there.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: I'll share this. When I was in the cloistered monastery, they had a big guest house there and the Abbott would read letters that retreatants gave were there. And the Retreatants said it was in the springtime. He said, I was in my room inside. He said, I come here every year for seven days retreat. And I was in my room looking out over the orchard, which was in blossom, and there was a lay brother walking through the orchard carrying two buckets of water. And the lay brother stopped, put down one of the buckets, reached up, grabbed one of the branches, pulled it down and kissed it, let go of it, picked up the other bucket and moved on.

He said, That was my retreat. He said, I could have driven all the way down there, watched that, driven all the way back. My wife would say, How did it go this year? I would've said amazing. But he had to sit for a while in silence before he was able to see that. See, that's the thing. These things are happening all the time, all the time. We hear a child running past us on the street laughing or the wind blows. But we're so caught up in the externals of

everything, we miss this infinity of everything. And that's the holiness, and that's that's what the mystics are calling us to, I think.

Kirsten Oates: That's a beautiful story. Jim, the next question is from Zoe.

Jim Finley: Yes.

Kirsten Oates: And it reads, "What allows you to fully trust that God is, well, real? That in God we really do live and move and have our being, that life itself is not just a random accident resulting from molecules expanding in a vacuum and exploding to create a universe devoid of any outpouring of God's love for us to merge with? I ask this as someone who was moved to tears by what I experience as the absolute truth, Dr. Finley Speaks, or while reading the works of the mystics or while watching wind blow through leaves for that matter. In other words, I ask this not as a skeptic, but as a beginner filled with so much longing, it hurts."

Jim Finley: Yes. This is very good in a way. Thomas Merton, one of his passages, I put it in Merton's palace of nowhere, he said, "When people get on the spiritual path in the beginning, they have a lot of questions and they could look for someone to answer their questions, a spiritual director, and well they should." And he said, "But you get deeper into it and you begin to realize here, all along God's the one asking the question. And you don't know the answer to God's question. As a matter of fact, you don't even understand the question." He said, "We don't like moments like this, but it leaves us to wonder, like the rains fall from our hands. It isn't just the God's rule."

But see, like Martin Heidegger asking, he said, "There's certain moments in life, birth and death, looking up at the stars. See, why is there something rather than nothing? See, why is there something rather ... why is there anything at all? And Dan Walsh used to say in the monastery, "See, why is there someone rather than no one?" And I'm that someone. See? And so the interesting thing about the question, Rokus has learned to love the questions more than the answers because in the question, the heart is open. See? And the answer closes with the answer. See? See Meister Eckhart, he says "We tend to ask why, like everything's being explained," he said, "but we have to give up asking."

He said, "The rose blooms, But why does it bloom? It blooms without a why." See? He says, "You let a horse out in the pasture in the morning, it runs with all its might across the pasture. Why does it run? It runs without a why." See? It's the anarchy of the ineffable. This is why Dan Walsh stayed at the monastery with Don Scotish. In a way the love of creations greater than the love of the cross because the love of the cross had a reason, to save us. The love of creation had no reason. It was the anarchy of infinite love giving itself away. See? So it's like passing beyond questions and answers and living in quiet amazement, empty handed amazement like that. Yeah. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: And that sense of longing. I know that's a major theme for all these mystics, that the longing for God is God and that people on this path experience that deep longing.

Jim Finley: Exactly. See, because in a way, see, the self that asks such questions is the self that's transcended by God in coming to us unexplainably. And just like you said too, it just deepens the longing and you realize the longing is an echo, God's infinite longing for you. And the longing meets the longing. See? And in the midst of the longing, the longing

is consummated while it remains. And that's what's so intimate and subtle about these realizations. When we talk like this, we can recognize the poetic beauty of it. And we're struggling to put words to the unexplainable, but it's what our own awakening heart tastes, it seeks to live by. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: I thought that when Zoe writes about you speaking absolute truth, and I know I've heard you say many times, but if you listen carefully, I'm not really saying anything.

Jim Finley: That's right.

Kirsten Oates: But it is that beautiful poetic intonations of what is ultimately truthful and real.

Jim Finley: And so I like Martin Heidegger saying, "The vocation of the poet is to evoke the holding." It's transfactual, it's beyond the fact. It's an ungraspable substance of everything. And the poet's voice bears witness, the eye of the artist sees it. Turning to the Mystics will continue in a moment.

Kirsten Oates: Our next question is from Barry, and it's an easy one, Jim. "What is the point of this life?" I'll keep reading, the context is more complicated. "During many of the sessions, it is my understanding that Jim has taught that we have all been hidden in Christ since before the foundations of the earth. And that when we die, we will go back to being perfectly in God. And that in this life we may have glimpses of this unitive experience. I'm very much a beginner of the contemplative path and I love the beauty of the mystics and Jim's teaching. And I'm increasingly recognizing that God loves me with an infinite love, yet I have this nagging question of why pestering me from time to time."

Jim Finley: Yeah. Well, I was thinking about this. I think there's several ways to look at it. It makes sense that poetically, we're saying that from all eternity, God's contemplating us hidden with Christ in God forever. And since everything in God is God, then why to go to all this trouble to go through this big torturous thing to end up where we started before we were born? Gee-whiz, it's labor intensive, meandering around with a lot of ... it's not easy.

Kirsten Oates: A lot of pain.

Jim Finley: Yeah, a lot of pain.

Kirsten Oates: A lot of pain and suffering.

Jim Finley: What was God thinking? So one way to look at it is that who worked poetically, who God contemplates us to be forever in Christ is a capacity that becomes real by living it. You see? So in a way it actualizes itself living it. And so we're on this earth for a very short time, really. It's like when we're conceived and born, this infinite love exhales us onto the earthly plane. And in God's good time, God inhales, and we come back home. See? And during the short time from birth to death, we're here mainly to learn how to love. A life rich with love is rich with meaning. See? And we're really here to live out and incarnate the substance of love because God is love like this.

And Dan Walsh used to say in the monastery, "We all want a meaningful life, but what's the meaning of meaning? See? And I think in the depths of love is the meaning of meaning."

It's a meaning that cannot be explained, but it is to be lived and shared as best we can, with all our heart. And there's something divine about that and it's something fruitful. It's the mystery of the human experience really. And yeah, I think it's like ... at least that's one way to understand it.

Kirsten Oates: That's really helpful. Yeah. I like the way you ended that because you're not really saying the point of life is, but that the mystery of human life finds its meaning in love.

Jim Finley: Yes. Meister Eckhart says, "Why do you love the truth?" He said, "Because of the truth. And why do you love life? My word, I don't know, but I'm glad to be alive. See? And Thomas Burton once said, "The one who wants to die and the one who's afraid to die must admit the same thing. They've not learned how to live. In learning how to live, you don't want to die, you're not afraid to die, and therefore the life is the mystery of God. Actually, the mystery of life is the mystery of God incarnating itself as us in our internal nothingness without God.

Kirsten Oates: Yes. There'd be no one to ask that question, what is the point of life? There's be no one to recognize the point of life. Yeah.

Jim Finley: Seriously.

Kirsten Oates: I see. Yeah.

Jim Finley: Also, I'd add another thing to it, in terms of the mystics, is that the point of life is to realize that we're the beloved. That is that God so needed to have someone that God could completely give the infinity of himself away to, and that person is you, it's me. And so the purpose of life, we'd put it this way, is to realize that, however that's given to us through intonations in our heart, whatever. And then to give ourself in the love to the love that's giving itself to us. How we give ourself to our own body, our own mind, our life, our family, the world, to God, and the reciprocity of love, see, this destiny is fulfilled.

Kirsten Oates: This question from Kevin, I think is a good follow on from that question from Barry. And you've said in a previous podcast, it's the way God made us. It's a setup. I think that God made our heart for God only, but we can't achieve what we're made for on our own. We can't achieve it and so it's this setup.

Jim Finley: Yes.

Kirsten Oates: So he's just asking you to expand on that.

Jim Finley: Another way I'd put it is that to know that the deepest issue really is not who my father thought I was, who my mother thought I was, or my siblings or my classmates or my boyfriend or my girlfriend or a husband or my wife. The real issue isn't who do I think that I am? Can I join God in knowing who God knows and calls me to be forever? See? And that's the setup, see? You are the beloved. It's who we are because God says so. See? It's who we are and it's invincible. It's the invincible preciousness of ourself, is that in us it belongs completely to God, and that's the setup, see, which is the love nature of ourself. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: Beautiful. Okay, I think we're getting into some questions that are going to ask about some more practical applications. So this one is from Tanya, and she says she's a therapist working

with trauma. “ ... and I have my own trauma to grapple with. Thinking in terms of parts of ourselves, like traumatized parts mired in shame and protective parts in fight or flight and Merchant’s point of nothingness untouched by sin and illusion has been very helpful to me and others. In recent years I’ve noticed how Julian seems to have a sense of parts too, as seen in her frequent reference to Trinity, or I saw, I thought, I had, I lacked. Or while in her illness she vacillated quickly between great joy and great anguish, and she learned she is loved in both. What are your thoughts? Can Julian help us attend to parts of ourselves and maybe even to parts of God and thereby help us heal?

Jim Finley: Yes. I’LL answer first in terms of therapy, then how it applies to spirituality and they’re related to each other. I want to give a simple example from say, someone who suffers from the long term internalize effects of childhood trauma or abandonment. And so in the interior is one way to help a person find their way through that is to say there is within them the internalized perpetrator who tells them very shameful, shaming things about themselves, that they don’t matter, they’re no good. And really it’s the internalized voice of the perpetrator. The sad thing is there’s a traumatized child part inside that believes every word, believes every word in the timeless inner world of the unconscious they carry within themselves, their traumatizing, internalized family.

So the idea of therapy would be that the adult in therapy with God’s grace confronts the internalized perpetrator. It’s not true what you’re saying about this child, it just is not true. You’re a liar. See? You’re a liar and you’re not wanted here. The adult says, I will not passively sit back and listen to you talk to the child that way, because how’s the child to believe you as the adult if the child doesn’t see you standing up and protecting them from the voice?

Then you turn to the childlike part with God’s grace, like Thich Nhat Hahn I see you, dear one, and I’m here for you. See? And don’t listen to that voice for input about who you are. Listen to me because God’s speaking through me about how lovable you are and how I cherish you. And by doing that over and over and over and learning to internalize it, see, is one example of how this can get sifted out.

At the spiritual level, where it continues, when it comes to this mystical awareness and so on, is there is that in us that knows this, which is why it touches us. When we listen to it, it’s not just beautiful, it’s beautiful because it’s true. And so the very fact that we resonate with it bears witness that we’re already being drawn into it, and then there’s that in us that doesn’t know it yet. And the part that doesn’t know it yet is the part that still gets reactive, the part that still believes that the present situation I’m in and its outcome has the authority to name who I am, et cetera, cetera, cetera, cetera.

And so our task is to endlessly ... the part that knows it is to endlessly circle back and be there for and with the part that doesn’t know it yet, to be endlessly tenderhearted toward the part that’s still halfhearted, still doesn’t faithfully meditate, see, still gives into resentment or self-loathing or whatever. And that tenderheartedness toward the part that doesn’t see it yet is Christ’s consciousness, is really God speaking through us and adds us to the wounded part which is salvation. And then as we intra-personally within ourself carry out that task, we ensure it with other people because everyone’s a unique addition of the same dilemma, because everyone’s walking around exiled from the preciousness of themselves and believing, falling prey to the illusion that there’s nothing but the self things happen to, et cetera, et

cetera, et cetera. So I would answer in those ways, I would respond.

Kirsten Oates: And would you also say Julian can help us with that in that she brings forth that Christ consciousness and the voice of Christ? So sometimes we don't know how to find that voice inside ourselves. And so if we are reading Julian and all shall be well just resonates with that sense of God's voice, we can read that to the child. We can bring Julian's voice in to help us.

Jim Finley: Yes. What's really interesting about Julian this way is in the long text, which she wrote out for years later, thinking it through, there's a long section. I forget what she calls it, the faithful disciple or something, who wants to do at the master's bidding and falls into a ditch and et cetera. She spent a lot of time on it really. And she spent a lot of time on it because she said it was a dilemma that presented itself to her heart and she couldn't answer the dilemma. See? And so I think a lot of solitude is like that. We're presented with something within ourself like a riddle. See? And we ask God for help and we walk with the riddle and we listen to the riddle and then the answer comes not as an answer, but as a light that shines out of the intimacy of the search itself. It's like a quickening or a realization of something.

Kirsten Oates: So she's a wonderful role model for that whole process, Julian.

Jim Finley: She really is. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah. Yeah. That's beautiful. Yeah. Okay. This question is from Brian. "Do the mystics have suggestions on how to deal with difficult feelings in the body in a somatic way? I'm sure lots of listeners struggle with this aspect of emotions."

Jim Finley: There's several things. When I would lead retreats, there would be silent retreats. So the meals would be in silence, there would be 20 minutes sits, silent meditation, prayer before each conference and so on. And then people wanted to speak with me one on one. They could talk with me one on one, we would talk. And what happens is that in the unguarded vulnerability of just sitting, suffering arises. And sometimes you would often ... it was either unde with trauma or trauma that they're presently working on, but in the [inaudible 00:50:07] it rises up. Sometimes it's unprocessed bereavement, the death of a loved one, and it comes welling up. It also happened to people sometimes doing body work, getting a massage, and when they get a massage they start sobbing and the body releases this pain. So a great thing-

Kirsten Oates: Sometimes in yoga class too, things like that. Yeah.

Jim Finley: Yoga also does this too. I know we're using words now because we're talking about it, but that's the power of practice. Real practice is we sit ... how I put it, when we sit very still, like say bear attention of the breathing or a word like I love you or Jesus mercy or whatever the word is, we sit with it, there's a descent. We can feel ourself undergoing a kind of descent where we're dropping down into a deeper awareness of and oneness with deeper dimensions of the intimacy of ourself as we sit there.

Now, the infinite abyss-like love of God is the abyss like we're descending down through into God, but we have to pass through the layers of the internalized pain which we hold in our limbic system or in our body. And so to really live a deeply contemplative life is the befriending of the body. I mean, tender towards the body and noticing where you hold the

pain in your body, where the tightness is and breathing into it and working with it. It's very bodily this way, it's very present.

Kirsten Oates: It's interesting with some of the mystics like Theresa of Avila and Julian, that they had also very somatic experiences that led them into God. And I know Theresa suffered with a lot of body pains and strange occurrences and things like that.

Jim Finley: She did. And actually what I think it is, Hammurabi talks about this too, that works with women mystics, but I also see it in working both with trauma and mystical union. I think what happens in a way it's because these people are more in touch with their body than we are. See?

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: It's not really true. I mean I think there are some people that don't have nearly as much of that in terms of pain and so on. But I think sometimes people ... one zen master once said there are 10,000 worlds and I've traveled through them all, and thousands of them are hidden in our body.

Kirsten Oates: Yes.

Jim Finley: And so while we walk with the pain and listen to the pain and bring the pain to God, it becomes part of the union with God. Again, it brings back to the mystery of the cross, which Jesus hung there in his body.

Kirsten Oates: Yes.

Jim Finley: And the other side of it is, notice when you read the poetry of John of the Cross with Christ, how sensual it is. It's so sensual, and it's very physically present.

Kirsten Oates: Yes, and that came out of an agonizing experience in his body, a very physical experience. Yeah.

Jim Finley: And it's like roomy when the death of Shams, and he starts swirling around the pillar and all this love poetry starts coming out of the anguish and the strange place for suffering and infinite love, the alchemy of it. It's very mysterious really.

Kirsten Oates: And Jim, what I'm hearing in your answer to is that the deeper we go into these pathways, the more we integrate all these aspects of ourselves so we become more integrated in our body. What our body has to offer becomes more integrated with what we know and understand. It's not just a spiritual or mental path, it's a physical path. It's an emotional path. Yeah.

Jim Finley: Yeah. It's like my body embodies the love that's uttering it into being, so that my body is the embodiment of God's presence, which is incarnation. It suddenly occurs to me now, I'll show this. I was in therapy with someone who's getting married. He was engaged or going to get married and he had a withered hand. He had a deformed hand and he was having panic attacks because when he would get married, as he and his new bride would walk down the aisle, everyone would see his withered hand, and he'd hyperventilate, he couldn't ... He was so

shame based about his hand. It's very often very good to be aware of our body and listen to our body and beliefs about the body and the healing of harsh or unloving attitudes towards our body. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: Was he able to get married?

Jim Finley: Oh no, he did actually.

Kirsten Oates: He did.

Jim Finley: Yeah. He worked it through and she helped him. She came in with him and helped him and it was very healing for him. She accepted it and he accepted her acceptance and we extended it out from there, so yeah. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: Beautiful. Well, I really appreciate Brian's question because I think that's so important just to highlight that, not to be surprised by pain and trauma coming through the body as people learn to meditate or go deeper into your teachings.

Jim Finley: And this is also relevant with age because old people ... you look in the mirror, you're not going to the prom this year. You know what I mean? There's no beauty contest headed your way, but there's a certain beauty in the elderly body, especially the elderly body of the deeply loved person. It has his own kind of beauty, a beauty of fragility. There's something, I don't know, very holy about it really. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: Yes. Yeah. Yeah, that's lovely.

Jim Finley: And also, the body of the beloved ... when I sat with Marine while she died, to sit at the body of the one who's just died, it shows how mysterious the body is. Anyway, that's-

Kirsten Oates: That held something, but not every everything.

Jim Finley: Exactly. Exactly. So anyway, good question, very evocative question. Very good.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah. This question is from Lowe.

Jim Finley: Yes.

Kirsten Oates: And it says "I'm in corporate sales and in the day to day grind of growing a business. In Julian's style with a window to the streets, would you invite Jim to speak to the implications and applications for the grind on the streets?"

Jim Finley: Yes, Cheryl, I think a lot of people work with a grind on the street. The corporate world is not a contemplative setting. It's deeply competitive and there's a lot of ego in it and stress and so on.

Kirsten Oates: Competition.

Jim Finley: Yeah, a lot. And so if you're a contemplatively grounded person, let's say you're on a path, here's some things that helps me. There's people who've done work with this, the spirituality of the workplace. So here's some things that have helped me with it and I work with is one,

let's say you're at a meeting and there's conflict going on trying to resolve something. And you're sitting there and you're aware of the dynamics in the room. And so you sit there and you ask yourself this question, what could I say and how could I say it in a way that would make some contribution to helping us get to the point we're trying to get to, to achieve our collective goals here?

And another thing is, you're sitting there and you're going to see somebody for a meeting, someone's going to come in and see you. And just take one minute before you let them in. Just take one minute to sit and be aware that when the person comes in, you want to be honest with them and real with them, but attentive to them. Maureen, my wife, when she was younger, she worked international sales in a cosmetic company in New York, and she was on the executive board and they would have these meetings. And the chairman of the board, the person in charge of the whole thing, when he announced he was going to retire, some people on the board cried. It isn't just he was so bright and worked so hard, but he was so present. He was like the soul of the place. He was a presence for the corporation like that. And so this is God's presence in the workplace, and yeah.

Kirsten Oates: Jim, what would you say or what would Julian say? Just talking about the fatigue and that it's hard to find space to connect with God in the grind. And I get tired and I don't pray every day and I can get short with my children or my spouse or my friends because I'm tired, it's hard.

Jim Finley: A mystic, we might do some sessions on a Simone Vai, this Jewish woman, this intellectual had these mystical experiences of Christ and so on. And she was so moved by the poor, she worked in the factories right alongside the people and she would come home and she talked about the holiness of exhaustion and how many people are exhausted at the end of the day just to stay alive, just to feed their family, and somehow participating in exhaustion. So one can be quietly attentive to the exhaustion and listen to it and do your best to listen to your body and not push it beyond where it can go, in so far it lies within your power to do so.

And at the same time where there is exhaustion ... because sometimes you are doing more than is good for you, but you don't have the ability to stop. People are depending on you, people are ... so this is a very intimate thing, really, like God's presence infused to one's exhaustion and how to be contemplatively present to it as carrying its own lessons. Also, that your suffering doesn't belong to you. It unites you with the exhaustion of humanity all over the world. You know what I mean? It unites you to them and so on. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: Lovely. Thank you. This is a question from Christof, and he's coming from Germany and he says, "In the time of Julian, mankind was not able to waste goods and make the temperature higher. Jim, what would Julian say to me today if I were to go to her window? Can we still have hope and would I hear her say, All shall be well? Or have I to let go my expectations, a lot of humans will die and I have to accept it? Or is God's love also with us when mankind crucifies oneself to the cross? Is the good news that some humans will survive and life goes on forever?"

Jim Finley: Yes. I was thinking about this about ... So if Julian we're here today, say we would come to the window today-

Kirsten Oates: Yes, and he's really focusing on nature and climate change. [inaudible 01:01:48] the questions coming from that.

Jim Finley: So here's my sense of it. One, I think she would say this, at least it's what I'm going to say, I think she would say it, about our present age is that we have a certain intelligence, a secular based, mechanistic, scientific, empirical, technological intelligence that allows us to manufacture things that serve short term goals, such as in transportation, for example, automobiles, airplanes, and not to mention atomic weapons. And unfortunately we lack the moral, emotional and spiritual intelligence to be faithful guardians over these things, and that's our dilemma.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: That's our dilemma. You can literally watch the ship sinking before your very eyes, see, and they just push right through. You see this happening in a number of different levels. This is our dilemma. And so I think really with global warming, for example, it's possible that many people are going to die actually, and all shall be well ultimately because it's also something that's true. There are those even now who are bearing witness to how urgent this is and they're in the fray to be a force to stop it, and society changes. I'm having an image right now in Iran, with the women in Iran taking the veil off and could possibly bring down a tyrant. And some of them, they don't care if they're going to get killed, they're going to do it anyway.

So the Black Lives Matter movement, never give up hope until something wells up out of the human family and not just stop something but transforms it. And I think the world's always been like this. There's always been forces of darkness. With Jesus, it was the Roman empire and certain forces in his own ... Jesus is a Jewish mystic, own forces, but not to be bitter or disheartened or cynical, see, but to be reality based and stand in the love and do what you can do to be a force for the good and know you're not alone in that, and that's how God works through history. I think I would answer that way, I think.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah, that's really helpful. It reminds me too of one of the earlier questions of how do you not get overwhelmed by the suffering? Because I think someone like Christof who feels the pain of climate change and the pain of what mankind is doing or not doing, yeah, these are hard things to bear when you do have that moral, spiritual recognition of ... Yeah.

Jim Finley: Yeah, there's something else. Thich Nhat Hahn has in one of his essays on a full path about eating and he says certain things ... some person on the spiritual path might be ... no, there's certain things on TV that you shouldn't watch. There's certain things on the internet. They shouldn't get pulled in because you can tell it's not good for you.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: It's shallow. What I mean is you can just tell it's just so tribal lock and force and ignorance and it just disrupts your sensitive soul. It doesn't mean you're not sensitive to the suffering, but because you are sensitive to it, you don't get dragged down in the cul-de-sacs that don't go anywhere. And we need to be careful about what we read and what we watch and what we share and keep an eye on ourself.

Kirsten Oates: And that all will be well really is the mystery.

Jim Finley: It is.

Kirsten Oates: It's the good news, but it's the mystery. We can know in our hearts all shall be well, but we don't really know what that means in terms of outcomes.

Jim Finley: It doesn't, and the mystery of the cross also is, by human standards, things weren't looking good as she was saying, seriously. And so all shall be well doesn't mean that there will not be cataclysmic pain, but it does mean ... this is what I think the mystery is when Jesus rose from the dead, he rose with his wounds. See? It's the eternity of the cruel, conquered by love, see, completely overtaken by love. And even now it's overtaken by love. And we're trying to drop down Julian and the mystics are trying to help us drop down to that level who are being unexplainably sustained and loved in the midst of the unresolved.

Kirsten Oates: This is a question from Lorraine, and she says that when her dog hears our voices, he goes and lays down.

Jim Finley: That's nice.

Kirsten Oates: Is that because we're soothing?

Jim Finley: I would hope so. I was also on a pilgrimage with [inaudible 01:07:00] to Rome for the mentally challenged, developmentally challenged from all over the world came there. It was a very moving experience really. And I took this young woman there who was maybe mentally ... she might have been 12 years old, I guess, she was an adult. And I stayed in touch with her and she said, "I have your recorded talks and at night when I go to bed, I turn it on." She said, "You put me to sleep every night." And sometimes people, when they're listening to my talks, I put them to sleep. It's just so soothing. It's hard to stay awake. So you never know.

Kirsten Oates: Oh, that's lovely. So Lorraine's just mentioning that she can feel this beautiful integrated presence with God, but then when she visits, I think it's her family, it's hard to maintain that sense and she can feel discouraged. So with Thanksgiving coming up, it's probably a good question for many of us about to be back in our family systems.

Jim Finley: Yes, especially if the topic of politics comes up.

Kirsten Oates: Oh, gosh.

Jim Finley: Here's my thoughts, here's my thoughts on this. It depends. Sometimes in a state of quiet or sensitivity to what's explicitly mystical or sensitive, sometimes we can lose that even in a good family setting because everyone's talking all the time, buzzing. So if that's a situation, that's also a modality of God. That's ordinary people being who they ordinarily are with each other, it's blood. You know what I mean? It's just, there's that and it has its own holiness to it. You go with the flow and you move back and forth across these realms.

If however, there's a family history where there was trauma in it, and especially if some of the people who acted that out on you are still there and they never really admitted it, acknowledged it, it sometimes can be insensitive to things they say. You have to ... and

they're not acting out, they're not being abusive. You go there and you wrap yourself in white light and just do your best to be present to them and such is life.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: And if they are acting out in different ways, maybe you can't go, maybe. You have to think out what's best to be true to yourself. And so it depends, but I think that's normal.

Kirsten Oates: I have another scenario. This might be relevant to someone, but there's those times when you don't behave in a loving way to your ... like something they say you react to. Even if you're wanting to say, that wasn't kind of you to say that to me, but instead of staying calm and present and in a loving voice, you can get reactive or defensive and ... Yeah, and then-

Jim Finley: Yeah, it's a situation I'm personally aware of, of this person, their spouse's family believes that God sent Donald Trump to save America.

Kirsten Oates: Oh, wow.

Jim Finley: And they're really into it. And so the issue is they're not acting out, but she acts out. I'm like, you people are all driving me crazy. And so sometimes we're the ones, we can't hold it in.

Kirsten Oates: Yes. Yes. That's it. Yes.

Jim Finley: And that's complicated too. Sometimes you have to apologize, but sometimes it's good to be truthful. What we're trying to do is model with each other how the fact that we differ does not stop us from being one with each other. See, that's the problem. It's become so divided, so intensely partisan in an unproductive way. The fact that we don't agree with each other doesn't at all mean that we don't have a sense of love for each other.

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: And if we could model that with each other, it takes a level of maturity and groundedness. And so anyway, things-

Kirsten Oates: That's a beautiful note to end on. I just think it doesn't matter that we disagree with each other or even at times have little reactions to each other. That doesn't mean we can't love each other deeply and I think that's a beautiful note to end on.

Jim Finley: Krista Tippet, one of her programs, she interviewed the official rabbi for England. I didn't know England had an official rabbi. He represents all the Jewish people in England, the UK. And Krista Tippet pointed out to him, she said, "A lot of Jews in England are angry at you because they think you're too liberal. And he said, "Well, yes." He said, "But who are the people we really get angry at, where we yell at each other. It's the people we love." You may be irritated that the neighbor isn't polite or your boss isn't. And because just beneath the pain, see, just beneath the anger is the pain, just beneath the pain is the powerlessness to be understood. See?

Kirsten Oates: Yeah.

Jim Finley: You would want the rabbi who represented you to understand how you feel and understand

you. And when we don't feel understood, instead of getting vulnerable and expressing the pain, it comes out as the anger. And he said this part of moving along together to listen to the anger, to work with it. And so I thought it was a very good point really.

Kirsten Oates: That's lovely. I think another point you make around these kind of topics is to be compassionate towards ourselves, so it starts with us. So if we're reactive and we regret it, there's no point doubling down on ourselves with shame and anger towards ourselves.

Jim Finley: Yes.

Kirsten Oates: It doesn't help because we're trying to relieve ourselves of that kind of reactivity so we can practice with ourselves first.

Jim Finley: Some of these people in therapy, they'll disclose this thing about them and they'll blurt out, say, I hate this about myself, I hate this about myself. And the thing is, this is really true sometimes, sometimes I can say, I feel I'm not safe to be with. I'm not safe to be ... because there's a split off, broken part, the thorn and the flesh. The things I want to do, I don't do. The things I don't want to do, I do, and I ask God to remove the thorn. God said, leave it there. That's where you learn to depend on me, and the thorn is your teacher. Thomas Merton once said in the monastery, he said, "Whenever we fall and fall short of our own ideals, especially if someone saw it and we get discouraged, we should always meditate on discouragement. It reveals the secret agenda, the holy me, see, how you or you or you could do something like that, but moi? See? And we're infinitely love broken people, every one of us really. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: And if we could just bring that into our own heart, then we might be able to offer it to others more fully. Yeah. Well, Jim, this closes season six. I think it's been a wonderful season with Julian.

Jim Finley: Me too. It was really good; very, very lovely. And I know in January we're going to pick up with Meister Eckhart, which will be great.

Kirsten Oates: That's exciting. Yes. Yeah. Thank you. Well, have a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas and New Year.

Jim Finley: Same to you.

Kirsten Oates: Turning to the mystics will be back-

Jim Finley: Yes, and the same to all the people that are listening and watching this with us. Blessings, blessings, blessings over the holidays for everybody.

Kirsten Oates: We already have our Christmas gift, getting to be a part of this community.

Jim Finley: Yeah, it's true.

Kirsten Oates: Thank you, Jim.

Jim Finley: Thank you. Yeah, thank you, Corey, too. Yeah.

Kirsten Oates: Thanks, Corey. Yes, thank you, always. Thank you for listening to this episode of Turning to the Mystics, a podcast created by the Center for Action and Contemplation. We'll see you again soon.