Obsession!   
Doug’s lecture 24/2/14

How do we move from infinite freedom to obsession? Emotion is not obsession. An emotion is a present interpretation of experience based on the past—liking or disliking based on past experience in the present context. Emotions are the honest way that we are in the past in the present. Emotions pass through and communicate something about where you are at. Watch and do not be moved by them. You are not afraid of it, but you are not attached and don’t want more. By avoiding it you’ve merely put it off. You will have to deal with it.

Thoughts are representations of the past —abstractions, meaning past experience filtered—in the present. (As you add emotions, you complicate things.)

You are trying to open up the future from the stuck past in meditation. Karma traps the free present into the karmic conditions of the past. Emptiness is conscious awareness stilling itself so it is in the infinite present. Conscious awareness contains infinite space in the infinite present. We want the greatest amount of freedom of mind with the most amount of flexibility. Whatever is taking that up is working against our nature.

Obsession is when an object of desire takes over the conscious awareness so that it doesn’t have the place to observe, to be mindful. The more taken up, the more obsessed, the more it can’t see it is obsessed because the place from which to observe in conscious awareness is lost when the mind is taken over. The degree to which obsession takes over the space of conscious awareness, what was a total potential goes down accordingly. As the gradation of obsession rises, you lose your ability to respond. This is dangerous because you lose the inherent wisdom, meaning the humanness to respond. The obsession is not in the object of desire, but in the conscious awareness being taken over by something going on.

Getting in control of conscious awareness to let go of the liking—thought by thought—is the only way to change it. But if you get it and attach to it, it forms who you are. Now you are in the process of limiting and you accumulate. This is called aging. Every time you attach, you drag yourself down.