

# **Kopan Course No. 33**

Teachings by Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche  
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## Lecture 1

### INTRODUCTION

Prayers.

Good afternoon. First, I'm going to recite the meditation prayer, which contains the essence of the whole path to enlightenment, the graduated path to enlightenment, the lam-rim prayer.

In the past, the meditation course was done under a canvas sheet, with bamboo walls around with simple cloth covered. It was an ascetic course, very renounced. Primitive or renounced—maybe altogether. It was primitive, so it had to be renounced. At that time, when there was very important topics happening there were planes passing overhead, big noises. They made big noises. Whenever there was a very important point, suddenly, a big noise. [RL GL] Suddenly there was big noise. Anyway, maybe we have to distract the pilots. [GL] No, joking. Anyway, so I think it is a miracle. [Airplane noise] [RL GL] But this time small one.

It is really a miracle, a great miracle to open our mind in this life; to open our heart, our mind. Not having a closed mind, a very fixed mind, with old concepts or culture, whatever. A mind not being like stone, iron, or something very closed which doesn't give any opportunity. Not like that. An open mind looking for new meanings, for a better life by making research or analyzing techniques. At least you even allow yourself to check, analyze, rather than living with an old, closed mind with its concepts or culture or whatever it is. Using new methods to at least giving yourself an opportunity to analyze.

Anyway, the methods to achieve peace and happiness, particularly in Buddhism—the way of studying Buddhism, the way it is planned—is by analyzing it, not just saying the words, not just having mere faith. That's the way Buddhism is revealing, whether it is Sutra or Tantra. Everything has logic, valid reasons. Every practice has valid reasons and a deeper way to understand through analysis and through realization. This is the deeper way to understand Buddhism.

One time, when I arrived in Boston in America, United States, the person who was driving the car was a student who is now the director of the Wisdom Publications, not the one who actually started it, Dr Nick, the Australian doctor who was a monk for quite some time, who was asked by Lama Yeshe to start the Dharma Publishing, to produce Dharma books. The present one, Tim, was driving car where he lives, Boston. So it's very surprising. I don't know how many millions of people there in Boston, I have no idea. Maybe a few million, I'm not sure. So from a materially well-developed city, from those millions of people, this one person came all the way from the city to Nepal, to Kopan. It is very surprising. I mean, if you compare all that culture, the material development, among those millions of people, this person came all the way. What decides that? What is it that decides that this person, this one person, comes so far to here, to Kopan? Anyway, I was thinking it was very interesting. I see that's very interesting point of life. Very interesting.

### HOW AMAZING WESTERNERS HAVE AN INTEREST IN BUDDHISM

Many years ago, when I was in Sydney, Australia—I think when I went to Australia the first time with Lama Yeshe, after the fourth course. Is that right? [RL] After the famous sixth course [GL] after the very famous sixth meditation course that is unforgettable. Many people attended that. I think there were three hundred at the beginning. What made it very famous is that that's the

course where there was the most number of people. I'm not sure but I think I spent probably two weeks, two whole weeks on the subject the *eight worldly dharmas*, and then suffering, of course! [RL GL] No doubt. And suffering. The eight worldly dharmas, of course, that's the cause, and then the suffering, the problem, what manifests afterwards, that what they create. Anyway, that's what made it famous. I think there was a Christian group in that course. I think a Christian group came. I think most of them left and went down to Kathmandu and used to gather in the restaurant, although a few came back after some time.

So, after that, Dr Nick and a few original Australian students who attended those early third and fourth courses invited Lama and myself to Australia to do a course there. When I was in Sydney I thought it was amazing, amazing. For the same reason: such a highly developed, materially developed country; their way of thinking, culture, totally something. And then, to be able to wake up, to be able to open the mind, to learn Buddhism and to learn this practice; to find interest in Buddhism. I thought it was amazing. It was a miracle. I mean, not everybody can do this. Those who come to meet Buddhism from their side, to learn and experiment—it's just amazing. It's a miracle I thought. That a mind from that society can open up like that.

Whereas, in the East, like in India or wherever, for hundreds of years in the environment Buddhism has been flourishing and practiced. You open your eyes and what you see is temples, holy objects, stupas and so forth. Even by opening your eyes and looking around, even physically, even the environment is like that, so it's not surprising. In Tibet, it's like that so it's not that surprising that people learn Buddhism. If you compared the West it's not surprising. It's surprising but, comparing to the West, it's not so surprising.

#### THE PURPOSE OF MEDITATION

The wish to learn Buddhism, to practice meditation, that is contained in Buddhism. This is opening a door, giving freedom to yourself, releasing yourself from the prison of wrong concepts, the prison of delusions, the prison of sufferings, giving freedom to yourself. It's opening door to liberation, that which is free forever from the entire suffering of samsara and, not only that, the great liberation, full enlightenment. It's especially opening the door also to *bodhicitta*, the ultimate good heart benefiting other sentient beings. It's opening a door, directing your life towards full enlightenment; to achieve that, to be able to do that, to be able to accomplish extensive benefit to the sentient beings, to liberate the numberless sentient beings and bring them in the peerless happiness, full enlightenment. When you start to meditate on generating compassion towards every single sentient being without exception, without discrimination, to every obscured sentient being, when you start to meditate to generate compassion to every living being, when you start to learn the great compassion and practice—it's a door to all that. The benefit is limitless like the sky, the benefit to be able to completely benefit all sentient beings; the benefit is limitless like the sky.

The meditation we are going to learn, that we are interested in brings a change in our life for the better. In short, the minute you meditate, it brings peace and calm, in your heart, it makes your mind tranquil, because meditation is like medicine. It is the antidote to disturbing, obscuring emotional thoughts, the negative emotional thoughts. When they arise, your mental continuum is disturbed. It's the opposite to peace.

Meditation transforms your mind into renunciation. In other words, it brings contentment, making the dissatisfied mind satisfied, and transforming the mind of painful attachment or anger into the mind of patience. And as well meditation makes the mind awaken, it brings wisdom, from the ignorance, it transforms the mind into a good heart, happy, peaceful and fulfilled. It makes you to see your life as meaningful, worthwhile. It transforms the self-cherishing thought

into this positive mind. This is real meditation. And this is what we should practice. This kind of meditation is what we should practice in our life.

What I was going to say, we should not be satisfied by just doing breathing meditation or by paying attention while walking or something. By doing some concentration that immediately calms down the mind or brings some peace. It's like you work very hard and then stop doing the work and take a rest. Or when you feel very hot you go in the shade and have some comfort. It's kind of similar to that. You should not be satisfied with just that, something which is just an immediate kind of quieting of the mind. From the noisy mind, it becomes kind of quiet. Our precious human life is not just for that. What I'm saying is our precious human life is not just for that. You should not be satisfied just with this.

If there's no ignorance rising, then there wouldn't be anger. The sicknesses, the chronic disease of the mind, attachment, the painful mind, these things won't arise. Therefore, we need to eliminate ignorance, from where all these disturbing emotional thoughts—and all those other roots and branches, the negative emotional thoughts, the delusions—arise, from where they're born. We should attempt to eliminate ignorance. We should attempt to make it impossible for it arise. To do that we must attempt to eliminate the negative imprints or seeds left on the mental continuum. We must attempt to cease it completely. That's what we should do. That's what we should do. If we don't want suffering, if we do not want problems, then that's what we should do.

If there's no ignorance, there's no mind unknowing about what I is, what mind is, the ultimate nature of the I, ultimate nature of the mind. The mind which is unknowing of all this—that is ignorance. Without that, there's nothing that we create. Death. We don't even want to hear the name of death in the West. In recent years people have started listening and waking up to learn about death, to help other people dying and also to learn about death. And also, to know your death, to learn about death, which includes your death. Then doing a meditation practice to make yourself prepared for death, to know what to do when death comes. When the enemy comes that make you ready to defeat, to overcome the enemy. So like that. Making preparations, making yourself prepared for death. To not experience death, to make preparations to be free from death, to overcome death, even if that doesn't happen this life, even if one didn't achieve that level of path where you can overcome death in this life, when you experience death, it makes you very happy. Even when death comes, even though you haven't overcome aren't yet free from death, if yourself are prepared through meditation practice, what Buddha has taught, it makes [you very happy at death time].

It leads to a much better life, where it is much easier to practice, where you can complete the path to enlightenment. That way you can be enlightened, such as in a pure land of a buddha, or to take a better rebirth, a healthier body, in the right environment where there is all the support or conditions to practice, and then continue to develop your mind in the spiritual path.

Then, from life to life you can go from happiness to happiness, to liberation and enlightenment. Therefore there is no fear. You have a very clear direction. You know where you're going. You have a clear direction, confidence, you know where you're going, so there is no fear. For that person, death is just like changing a dress. You take off the old dress and put on the new dress, the new fashion. [RL GL] So, at least there is no fear. There is confidence. You are full of confidence that you won't reincarnate in those suffering realms of hell, hungry ghosts or animals.

Even when death comes, even when you're experiencing it, through meditation practice, making the mind more and more positive, sincere, good-hearted by developing the thought of benefiting

others, even when you are experiencing death, the end of the life, it is a happy death; it's not a scary death.

#### THE MEANING OF LIFE

What I'm trying to say, the essence is that you shouldn't just be satisfied with some short-term peace; a short-term quiet mind or something like that. This precious human life shouldn't be spent just for that. That's not the real meaning of life. That's not the real purpose of living, why we have taken this precious human rebirth this time, not just that.

To clarify, the real meaning of life is not even ultimate happiness, everlasting happiness, the liberation which is free forever from the whole entire suffering of samsara. Of course, that's so essential, so important to achieve, by ceasing delusion and karma, but still to achieve ultimate happiness, that great peace of liberation for oneself, that is not the real meaning of life. Even if it's ultimate happiness. Achieving that for oneself, even that's not the real meaning of life.

The real meaning of life, the real purpose of living, is making one's own life useful for others. Making one's own life useful for other sentient beings; to benefit other sentient beings. As I normally mention, as I normally introduce this way, one should make one's own life useful to others, to other living beings. In other words, to benefit others. One way is benefiting others, causing happiness to others, in this life. That is one. Of course that is short-term happiness. The happiness you're helping others have is short-term.

The more important benefit, service, to other sentient beings, is causing them to have happiness for all their coming future lives. You're causing beings happiness in all their coming future lives.

First, you benefit them in just this life, causing them to find comfort, to solve problems, like that—giving shelter, food, clothing, solving this life's problems. Causing happiness this life. Then next, the second one you cause them to have happiness of the future lives; all the coming future lives' happiness. You can see this service is much more important. All the coming future lives, so many lifetimes, all the cause of happiness to others.

More important than even this, as I mentioned before, the more important service than the second one: by ceasing the delusions, the disturbing emotional thought and actions motivated by that, karma, by ceasing completely the cause of the suffering which is within them then, that way, to liberate them forever. Make them free forever from all the entire suffering, all the problems—make them impossible to experience them again, so total liberation. Causing them to achieve total liberation.

This one is so urgent, that service to others. You can see how that is urgent. If you don't do remove the cause of suffering which is within them, they will continue to suffer. Whatever other method you do they will experience the problem again and again. Whatever is externally done, as long as the causes of suffering which is within them—the disturbing emotional thought, karma, the negative imprint which is on their mental continuum—if they are not removed they will experience suffering endlessly. The same problem will recur, whether it's starvation, sicknesses, whatever, again, again, if the cause is there it will recur. Therefore, the service we must do for others is to cease the cause of suffering which is within them.

That's why Dharma is so important, why practicing Dharma, why meditating is so important. Here we're thinking about helping others. Of course, that includes yourself.

It's important to be free from suffering, to practice Dharma to cease the cause of suffering; to see the cause of suffering. *How* that is so urgent. So that's what I'm saying. Before, my talk went here and there like this, kind of like water running all over the field. But what I was trying to say before was, this is important, the emphasis of what I was saying, this is so important: not just to sometimes stop anger or attachment from arising, that's not enough.

You must eliminate ignorance, from where all those other negative emotional thoughts come from that make you unhappy or bring you all the problems. To make it impossible to arise forever, the negative imprints or seeds should be completely eliminated. No external means can do that. No external means, such as doctors operating, cutting the body up—they cannot see the mind. Even by cutting the body they cannot see the mind. No operation can take away the negative imprint. That which gives rise to the delusions, that which motivates karma and then creates suffering—ignorance—cannot be removed by an operation or with a machine.

The only means to do this is Dharma, there is nothing else. In particular the wisdom realizing emptiness; by developing your wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, you remove the imprint of the delusion such as the ignorance, the seed, the nature of the imprint. So only this mind can directly see that. Therefore, realizing the ultimate nature, emptiness, is so essential.

Now you can see how that is the *most* important thing in our life, to meditate on that, otherwise it is impossible. How you can liberate yourself from suffering? How you can liberate others from suffering? Impossible. There's no way.

Then even the fourth one is the most important service to other sentient beings. That is to cease even the subtle negative imprint left by the ignorance, bringing them in peerless enlightenment, full enlightenment. The wrong concept simultaneously born, the grasping mind. While there's no I in the body, on the association of body and mind, while you cannot find it at all based on the association of the body and mind base, the concept, the grasping, strongly holds that there's the I there. There's the self there.

You're born with it, from beginningless rebirths, with this wrong concept, then the subtle negative imprint left by this delusion. By ceasing completely even this then, in that way, bringing sentient beings into the peerless happiness of full enlightenment. Sometimes it is translated as "fully awakened state." That is bringing the state that cessation of all the mistakes of mind, gross and subtle, then the completion of all the realizations to bring sentient beings to that. That is the greatest. Among all the service you can offer others, the fourth one is most important one. So in regards making your life useful to others, the purpose of our living, why we have taken this extremely precious human body is for what? Why do we live? What do we live for? Why we try to be alive? What for? Why do we survive? Why do we spend so much money to survive? Why do we provide so many conditions to be alive, to survive? Why do we take medicine, have operations, try to have a long and healthy life? What is a healthy life for? It *should* be for this: to benefit others.

So, what is it that path, the Dharma, that ceases even the subtle negative imprint? It is only by the wisdom realizing emptiness. To make it simple, it's just that. What is it that Dharma or path which directly sees that? It is the wisdom realizing emptiness. So with path, by practicing Dharma, by actualizing the path, method alone without wisdom cannot remove the delusion, the cause of the delusion, the seed. Even the subtle negative imprints cannot be removed. Whatever great other realizations you have, without the wisdom directly realizing emptiness, you cannot remove the delusions, including the negative imprint.

## EMPTINESS: HOW THE I EXISTS

I think it's time. I just mumbled. [GL] I went on and on. A good heart is very important. Loving kindness, compassion in daily life is extremely important. We have to make cause of suffering, delusion, never ever arise. We have to do that otherwise when we die and are reborn, we will experience all the sufferings of the six realms, on and on. No end.

As I mentioned before, I'll repeat again, we must remove the imprint of delusion. For that, we need to study teachings on emptiness, on right view. We have to realize emptiness. Not just what people call 'emptiness', not just any kind of emptiness, what people call 'emptiness', even Dharma books—what anybody call 'emptiness', not that. It has to be the right one. It has to be right one because only that attacks the root of samsara, root of the suffering, only one very specific wrong concept. There are not many roots of samsara; there's one typical, there's one specific ignorance: even though the I exists in mere name, merely imputed by the mind. It's not that the I doesn't exist. The I exists. It exists being merely labeled by the mind. That's how it exists. That's what the I is. That's all.

By realizing ultimate nature of I, after that, by realizing absolute truth of the I then, as a result, you realize the conventional truth of the I. You come to know how the I exists. You come to discover what is the I. That it exists being merely imputed by the mind. When you discover the I, this is how you see it. Everything other than that is a hallucination. Any I other than that, what we believe, what appears to us, is a totally hallucination, a false I.

So, therefore, there's a very specific root of suffering, ignorance: a concept. I'm not going to go into details. Twenty-four hours a day our mind continuously imputes this I. Our mind imputes the I.

Now, here, "I'm talking" or "I'm listening to Dharma" because I get the mind listening to the Dharma, I get the body sitting—so the mind labels, "I am sitting."

The aggregates, the association of this body and mind here at Kopan Monastery, so the mind labels, "I am here at Kopan." I'm doing the meditation course at Kopan Monastery. Twenty-four hours a day our mind labels this I: I'm doing this. I'm happy. I'm unhappy; on and on, constantly mind labels this I.

By depending on the aggregates which is the base to be labeled, because the aggregates exist, mind label the I, then depending what function they do the mind constantly labels "I'm doing that." The mind constantly makes up the label. Constantly.

The mind merely imputes the I. It merely imputed the I. As soon as mind merely imputes the I it should appear back to us 'merely labeled by mind.' It should appear back to us like that, as merely labeled by mind. That's what the reality is. So it should appear that way but it doesn't. When it appears back, right after imputation, it doesn't appear that way. When it appears back it doesn't appear back to us merely labeled by mind. It doesn't appear back to our mind as merely, labeled by the mind, but totally the opposite, as something else.

## IGNORANCE AND THE SIX REALMS

How does that happen? How does that happen? Due to past ignorance, this concept grasps or apprehends that the I truly exists; it apprehends the way the I exists as not merely labeled by the mind. Which means existing from its own side. So that ignorance leaves a negative imprint on the mental continuum. Right after the mind imputes the truly existing I, the negative imprint

immediately projects that, it decorates it. Like we decorate the house, painting the walls or putting carpet on the floor, like that. The negative imprints left by the ignorance decorate, immediately project the hallucination that the I exists not merely labeled by the mind. Which means, there's something there existing from its own side, not just merely labeled. This hallucination of inherent existence is projected, this projection of not being merely labeled by the mind is projected *on* the merely labeled I. On the merely labeled I - that which exist; merely labeled I which exists; so on that, project this hallucination 'not merely projected by mind'.

This happens within the same continuation of mind. Because we don't practice mindfulness that the I is empty between the second before mind labels merely imputed I and the next second of that mind, because of not meditating on emptiness, on dependent arising, on existing in mere name—because we are no able to meditate in this way, we allow our mind to hold onto it. We let our mind hold onto the sense that this I is not merely labeled by the mind, that it is true, that it is one hundred percent true. That the way the I appears to us is not merely labeled by mind, as so we apprehend or to hold onto is as true. This is right, this is one hundred percent right.

Right at that minute, right at that second, that particular concept becomes the ignorance, the root of samsara; the root of all the other delusions, of karma, as well as all the sufferings. All the sufferings of the human realm: the suffering of rebirth, old-age, sicknesses, the worldly fears you meet, encountering undesirable objects, not finding desirable objects, our inability to find satisfaction.

Billionaires or zillionaires externally might be very wealthy but their minds are so miserable; there is so much unhappiness, so much dissatisfaction. A beggar might have dissatisfaction, but one who is unbelievably wealthy has nothing but dissatisfaction, unhappiness. The misery in their life is so much greater than the beggar. For example, when a deva experiences the five signs that death is approaching, they experience unbelievable mental suffering, like being in hell.

[All suffering comes from this.] Wars, killing and being killed by each other, all other problems, suffering in their life such as jealousy and so forth. Then the suffering of the hell beings, the eight hot hells and eight cold hells, the six neighboring hell and the ordinary hell suffering. Then the hungry ghosts, the pretas—the five types of hungry ghosts, the hunger and thirst and the other major sufferings, such as disappointment, tiredness, and three types of obscuration: outer obscuration, food obscuration, inner obscuration. There are so many sufferings. They cannot find one spoon of food for hundreds of thousands of years. Even a spoon of food, they cannot find. Even a drop of water, due to their heavy karma in the past life, being stingy, miserly, not making charity, they could not find even a drop of water for hundreds of thousands of years.

Then the animals, the realm we can see, their major suffering is being eaten by another one. Not only eaten by animals but also eaten by human beings on top of that. Then being extremely foolish, suffering heat and cold and being tortured and so forth.

#### THE DIFFERENT VIEWS OF EMPTINESS

This particular wrong concept that I explained before becomes the root for all these oceans of samsaric sufferings. Therefore, to eliminate this there's only one way. Even though there's many views called emptiness in the teachings, there is only one view that is we realize we can eliminate this ignorance. There are four schools of the Buddhist philosophy, and the fourth one, the Madhyamaka School has two [subschoools], Svatantrika, anyway, I don't remember the Sanskrit terms for those. Knowing the names in the Tibetan language is more useful. If one wishes to study the texts more intensively, then it is more useful to learn the Tibetan language. So, therefore, the four schools of Buddhist philosophy are: *che-tan ne-wa*, [Vaibhashika], *do-de-pa*

[Sautrantika], *lsem-tsampa* [Cittamatra] and *u-maṣa*, [Madhyamaka]. Then there's *rang-gyu-pa*, [Svatantrika] and *tang-gyu-pa* [Prasangika]. Only this second one, *tang-gyu-pa*, only with this view of emptiness [can we totally eliminate the root of suffering, ignorance.]

Because the I is merely imputed by the mind there's not even an atom existing from its own side. There's not the slightest thing existing, there's nothing. On the merely labeled I there's nothing there, not even slightest atom, existing from its own side. There is absolutely nothing existing from its own side. Only by realizing this, only with this wisdom, can we eliminate ignorance.

#### THE BENEFITS OF LISTENING TO DHARMA

I thought today is a very special day, Buddha's Descent from Tushita. I'm not going to go over that, descending from Tushita Pure Land. There are about seven special days of Buddha and today is one very special day. On this day, whatever virtue we collect is increased by one hundred million times. If you make charity of one rupee to a beggar it becomes charity of one hundred million rupees; if you make offering of one light, it becomes offering of one hundred million lights; one prostration becomes the same as one hundred million prostrations.

So any merit you collect today is increased by one hundred million times. Therefore, I thought to do the oral transmission of the *Heart Sutra* and then maybe few pages from the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*.

In the past, a great Indian pandit, Vasubandhu, *Lopon Niknyen* recited the Sutra text, *Abhidharmakosa* every day. There was a pigeon on the roof that used to hear whenever he was reciting this text. One day the pigeon died and Vasubandhu checked with his clairvoyance where the pigeon was born. He saw the pigeon was born to a family of human beings down in the valley, so then he went down, saw the child and he asked the family whether he could have the child.

The family accepted this, so he took care of the child, who then became monk. This child became an expert, he become learned in *Abhidharmakosha*, which he had heard in his past life when he was pigeon. In this life, when he became a human being, he wrote four commentaries on it. It was very easy for him to study *Abhidharmakosha* but when he studied a Madhyamaka subject, the teachings on emptiness, he found it hard. Why: because he didn't get to hear much on that teaching in the past life. So it's a question of how much the imprint is left on the mental continuum in the past, by listening to the teachings, and of which type of teaching.

As far as the Buddhadharma, Buddha's teachings, the great advantage here, even if you don't understand at all philosophical teachings, even if you find it very hard to understand, just by listening to it, the benefit of what you get is like the limitless sky. The benefit of what you get is like the limitless sky. In this life or the next life, it becomes easy to understand, easy memorize the words, easy to understand the meanings, and also easy to be able to actualize the Path, that which is contained in that.

Then these subjects, Buddha's teachings on emptiness, *Perfection of Wisdom* or *Gone Beyond Wisdom*, there's scripture path—the gone beyond wisdom path—then there's the nature—the gone beyond wisdom nature—which leads to the result—the gone beyond wisdom result. This ultimate result is the Buddha's wisdom, the dharmakaya. That is the real, ultimate perfection of wisdom.

The teachings on the perfection of wisdom, the Buddha's teachings that reveal emptiness, have made possible all the past numberless buddhas, all the present and all the future buddhas. They

have been made by this wisdom—the gone beyond wisdom or the perfection of wisdom—the wisdom realizing emptiness. All the three-times’ buddhas are born from this. All the bodhisattvas are born from this. All the arhats are born from this. And this perfection of wisdom is the one that liberates numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric sufferings, whose continuation has no beginning. Therefore, these teachings are unbelievably precious.

So think, “While I have all the opportunities to practice Dharma this time, having received this perfect human body, having met the Dharma, having met the Virtuous Friend who reveals the path of liberation, the path to enlightenment—during this time and before death comes, it is not sufficient just receive good rebirth next life, even for myself to be free, able to achieve liberation from samsara—even that’s not sufficient. I *must* achieve enlightenment. I must achieve full enlightenment to liberate numberless sentient beings from all the sufferings and bring them to full enlightenment. Therefore, I need to actualize the wisdom realizing emptiness, the perfection of wisdom. I need to realize this, therefore, I’m going to have oral transmission of this teaching, Buddha’s teaching.”

[Long mandala offering]

[Short mandala offering]

[Refuge and bodhicitta]

[Prayers]

One must meditate, concentrate on the sound, the words that I’m reciting as much as possible without distraction. And then also think, dedicate each word that you hear, “May this be the cause to actualize the meaning of the path in my heart, immediately, and with each word that I hear may I be able to actualize the wisdom realizing emptiness, immediately, in other sentient being’s mind when I recite these words or when I say these words to others.”

If you dedicate like this, I think everything’s up to the power of mind, the wish. So things can happen.

[Oral transmission: the *Heart Sutra*]

Just a few pages today, of the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*.

[Oral transmission]

So, about ten pages [GL], small ten pages. So I’ll stop there. Of course, if we continue, before we finish the course we might become liberated from suffering [GL] and become enlightened, then won’t be able to do the course. I’m joking!

It is said in the Sutra teachings, that ten eons’ of practicing charity, morality, the precepts, patience, perseverance, concentration, that that much merit is small when compared to listening to teachings on emptiness. So you see how much merit may be collected just by listening to the teachings, so much more what we collect right now. There’s much more than ten eons’ practice of morality, charity, patience, perseverance, concentration and so forth.

By leaving the positive imprint by listening to the teaching then, sooner or later, to quickly realize preparation to realize emptiness. Sooner or later you come to know, you discover what you are;

you see what you are—the ultimate nature of I, the ultimate nature of the mind. Definitely by just listening to the teaching on emptiness, what you have just heard, by leaving the positive imprint on the mind, that definitely brings you to enlightenment. Definitely this imprint manifests by actualizing wisdom realizing emptiness then gradually, definitely, able to be free forever from the whole entire suffering of the problems, however, the oceans of suffering of samsara.

#### DEDICATIONS

I'll stop here and from time to time maybe continue. Today is very auspicious. Due to the power of the time, the special time, it creates unbelievable merit. You collect unbelievable merit just to start today.

[Mandala offering]

Please dedicate the merits we collected—past, present, future, by oneself, by others—to actualize bodhicitta, ultimate thought of the good heart, bodhicitta. Also all the happiness, success for oneself, for all living beings; to be generated within one's own mind, one's own family members, and in the mind of all living beings without delaying even a second. That which is generated may it increase.

[Dedication prayer]

And then, also, the merits to actualize the wisdom realizing emptiness within one's mind, in the mind of others and that which is generated to be increased.

[Dedication prayer]

Due to all the past and future merit collected by me, that which exists but does not exist from its own side, may the I who exists but does not exist from its own side, who is totally empty, achieve Buddha Shakyamuni's enlightenment, which exists but doesn't exist from its own side, that which is totally empty. And lead all sentient beings, who exist but do not exist from their own side, who are totally empty, to that enlightenment which exists, but doesn't exist from its own side, that which is totally empty, by myself alone, who exists, but do not exist from its own side, who is totally empty.

[Dedication prayer]

So thank you very much and good night.

## Lecture 2

### THE BODY AND MIND ARE IN THE NATURE OF SUFFERING

Good afternoon everyone. The other day I meant to recite the meditation prayer that contains the essence of the whole path to enlightenment. Generating that in our heart, that's the real transformation of the mind. Transforming our mind in this path, in lam-rim, the steps of path to enlightenment. This is what we can really call the spiritual path. Having the determination, the attitude that is fully determined to be free from samsara or the circling aggregates which are in the nature of suffering.

In relation to us, that is mind that experiences loneliness, depression, fear, all these problems, and the contaminated seed of disturbing thoughts; all these emotional thoughts. Because it is contaminated, our mental continuum—with all these seeds of disturbing thoughts—is contaminated. That's why all these negative emotional thoughts continuously rise and torture us. They constantly torture our life, our own life.

Besides that, there's the body, which is in the nature of suffering, which experiences so many problems, so many diseases—not only cancer, not only things that frighten us by hearing the name. After going to hospital, having x-rays, or whatever, when the doctor tells you that you have cancer or diabetes [RL], you think “I have diabetes.” [GL] It's good to bring it out. [RL] Diabetes or cancer or whatever, when you hear the name you get frightened. When you hear the label given by the doctor. When you hear the label you get frightened. Even if you don't have the disease, you are afraid that you might get it if you don't exercise—if you don't do the billions of exercises that are advertised on the TV [GL] and you don't buy the hundreds, the billions, of machines that you can pull you this way [GL] that makes ups and downs, [GL] or putting the machine on your belly to tighten your belly, for a big belly hanging down to go back. Anyway, I'm joking. However, doing billions of exercises—walking, running, so many billions of things—to not get these diseases such as high cholesterol, heart attack, diabetes or cancer, all because of fear. Fear causes you to do all these billions of things, to learn many exercises, to do yoga, and take tablets.

Having a body, which is in the nature of suffering, is why beings has all these sicknesses; as well as all those other problems such as old-age. The body, these aggregates, experiences so many problems, this body is the container of all the problems of this life and the foundation of the problems of future lives. This is what's called samsara, this continuation. Even this gross body does not circle to next life. What circles to the next life is the mind, the aggregate of the mind. Then it is endless, even if it is reborn in the formless realm, where there's no body, no form, only consciousness. The aggregates that the formless being has, on which the mind is labeled, on which the I is labeled, the aggregate is only the mind. There's no substantial form body. Other than that, the continuation of this life's consciousness goes to the next life and takes another form, which again is in the nature of suffering because that rebirth is caused by the contaminated aggregates of body and mind which are in the nature of suffering. Why is it in the nature of suffering? Because it is caused by the karma and delusions.

So, as I was talking about the other night, that particular ignorance of the I, that very specific ignorance that of the I that mentioned the other night, is the very root of the samsara, of the whole entire suffering—of the suffering of rebirth and death and all the problems that are experienced between those two.

It is this particular ignorance, not just any ignorance, this particular ignorance that I introduced that night, that is the one which creates death. This is where death comes from. It comes from this wrong concept, not knowing what the I is, not knowing what mind is, not knowing the ultimate nature of mind. This is where we reincarnate again and again from. This is the ignorance that creates old age. All these things, all these problems are its creation.

Why do these aggregates, why does our mind have to experience suffering? Why does our body have to experience suffering? Why is it that when we pinch our flesh we experience pain? Why do we have to experience pain, why not bliss? Why not great bliss? When you fall down, why not feel great bliss? When you knock your head on the door or on the floor, why not feel great bliss? Why suffering? Why pain? Normally, I say this is the proof that there's reincarnation. When you

pinch yourself and you feel pain that proves there's reincarnation, that there's a past life. You're born with this suffering. The suffering that you experience at birth, in the mother's womb, when the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg. Suffering didn't only start after you came out of your mother's womb. Suffering started inside. There's the experience of suffering inside. Also, when the baby gets born, when the baby comes out of the mother's womb – I don't mean every time the baby cries. I'm not saying that. It's not because the baby is experiencing such bliss, unbelievable bliss, and then crying! It's not that. [GL] When the baby comes out of the mother's womb, it cries, it makes a noise. Anyway, I'm not going to imitate the noise. [GL, RL] It may not come out properly. So that doesn't mean the baby is experiencing unbelievable bliss and can't stand it and then cries. It's because there's something undesirable being experienced. Because of that, it cries.

Suffering doesn't only start outside when the baby comes out. The suffering of this life started when the mind took place on the fertilized egg. That is the definition of conception; when the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg.

In Australia some years ago when I was travelling by car from Sydney to Queensland, or I don't know now—I don't remember exactly—we stopped on the road, at a hotel or motel. On the TV there was a show, a lot of debate among the doctors. There was disagreement about the definition of conception because in the West, I'm sure they are now getting more educated, but death, beginning of the life and end of the life is not clear in the Western culture. Rebirth is not clear. There is not clear education on that. And the education of death is not clear. There's a big hole, there's a dark hole, those two parts of education: beginning of the life and end of the life. Because those two are not clear, there's a big, dark hole. Because of that, the life between is not clear and that's why the education of the mind is not clear. Even the life between, what is mind is not clear. I found a psychology book, quite a number of years ago in America. I think it's supposed to be a good book. I didn't read from the beginning to the end. Like many Dharma texts [RL] I just opened here and there. [GL, RL] However, my feeling is that it didn't seem to come to any real conclusion to what is the mind. There were a lot of examples. It went on and on and on and even at the end didn't seem to be concrete explanation of what is mind in that book. However, I think it's progressing. Still, in the Western culture, in the science of mind, the understanding of mind is not complete yet. The full understanding of what is mind is not complete yet. It's on the way.

#### THE ENLIGHTENED MIND

In Buddhism, it is explained by omniscient one, not somebody who is still analyzing or somebody who is still studying, but somebody who finished studying. Somebody whose mind is fully awakened, and then he explains it. There's not the slightest thing that mind doesn't know. There's not one single ignorance, not one single obstacle to directly see all phenomena. There's not one phenomenon that the mind does not see, does not discover. So, there is a difference here in who explains about the mind. In Buddhism the mind is explained by the omniscient one, the one who has purified his mind completely of all the defilements, both gross and subtle defilements—all the obstacles that obstruct the mind from directly seeing all the phenomena. It's like the dust that covers a mirror, but once it is completely cleaned they can get a full reflection. Clear. No obstruction to the mind. Everything—both gross and subtle—has been purified, he can see everything directly. This is the proof of the potential of the mind, that it can purify gross and subtle obstructions, all of them, that blocks the mind from directly seeing all the past, present and future, every single phenomena that exists.

Therefore, even the very basic texts are completely correct explanations that came from Buddha about science of the mind in Buddhism. All the definitions from very beginning, starting from

what is mind, then going into details, are correct. Even in the monasteries, even young monks who are beginning to study philosophy, if even they don't fully understand the real meaning, at least they have an intellectual understanding of the correct definition of what is the mind. It is clear from beginning what mind is, what body is, and how they are totally separate, totally different phenomena. However, in the West, there's huge argument among the doctors, a huge debate about the definition of concept. That's what I saw on TV.

As a mirror not obstructed by the dust becomes clear and able to give reflections, so the mind doesn't have the obstruction of the substantial phenomena. It's clear and, because of that, then it can know the object, which is formless. The mind, which is formless, colorless, shapeless and clear, which is not substantial has no obstruction of phenomena and, because of that, it can know the object.

However, the body, that which is a substantial phenomenon, is totally opposite. It has a different nature which doesn't have those functions. It does not have the quality of knowing the object.

In the case of Buddha then that's different, that's exceptional. There's no resistance. Every atom of Buddha's holy body can do the function of mind. Even every single atom of the holy body can see directly all the past, present and future of all the existence. For Buddha it is exceptional. Every atom sees totally. For us, the body cannot do the function of the mind. And conversely, the mind cannot do the function of the body. They both have different functions. There are limitations in the actions of mind and limitations in what the body can do. For Buddha it's not like that. It's beyond the body and mind what we have. The nature of the qualities is beyond us.

However, I'm not sure, even before becoming a Buddha according to Tantra, Highest Yoga Tantra, even before becoming a Buddha whether there is something preliminary like that which has that quality. I don't remember exactly.

Just going back, why this body and mind is in the nature of suffering, why they experience so many problems is because, as I mentioned before, when we sit down, if we're not careful how we sit down, there is pain. Even when we lay down, if we're not careful of the position of the body, it is easy to get pain. As I mentioned before, even when we pinch ourselves like that, there's pain. The body is in the nature of suffering. That's why the mind/body is in the nature of suffering like this, why it experiences suffering—because the cause of these aggregates is not pure.

EMPTINESS: THE IGNORANCE OF WHAT THE I IS

This body/mind came from impure causes: from karma and delusions, from the very root, ignorance, the unknowing mind. We don't know what this I is, even though twenty-four hours a day we talk about I, I, I. As I mentioned the other night, we continuously think of I and there is unbelievable concern about the I. There is so much fear something's going to happen to this I. We live with the fear that something might happen to this I. Then somebody asks, "What is I? What is that I that you always think about twenty-four hours a day? What is that I? What is it that you're so concerned about, so worried about. What is this I that you are so afraid something will happen to? What is that I? Where is it?" If somebody asks you, there is no reply. People like me, ordinary beings, cannot say. There's no reply.

We believe in this I twenty-four hours a day, in our whole life, from birth to death, without examining what the I is that we believe in. Twenty-four hours a day, day and night, from birth to the death we believe there's this I in this body. There's this I in this body. It's not in the toes, not in the fingers, not in the nose, not in the mouth, not in the brain, not in the stomach, not in the

legs, but somewhere down below the neck and before the kaka [RL, GL], somewhere there above the kaka and below the neck. When it is not examined, we believe a hundred percent that there's I, somewhere there. Twenty-four hours a day, day and night, from birth to death, for our whole life we believe this. Anyway, up to now, for us, up to now.

But the minute you analyze that thing that you normally believe to be there, to be a hundred percent real existing I—the minute you examine where it is exactly, when you examine whether it really exists or not, you cannot find it. When you analyze, you cannot find that I. When you look for it, you cannot find it anywhere from the tip of the hairs down to the toes. You cannot find it anywhere at all.

Through meditation, through analysis, through valid reasoning, what you discover, what you realize is this. The body is not I, the mind is not I, even the association of body and mind together is not I. It is not the I because that is the base to be labeled “I.” That's the base to be labeled “I.” If that's the I, why you should place a label on that? Why you should label “I” on the I? What is the purpose of labeling “I” on the I? If the base, the association of the body and mind is the I, if that is the I, then why you should label “I” on the I? That doesn't make sense. Then as it is mentioned in the Madhyamaka teachings, it becomes an unceasing, unending regression. Then you have to label “I” on *that* I. Then on *that* I you have to label “I.” It becomes endless. There's no meaning to that, no purpose.

#### EMPTINESS: BASE AND LABEL, CHILD AND NAME

Another example is when a child is born there is the base. The aggregates, the association of the body and mind, are there. Because of that, because this base is there, the parents made up the label “Peter.” Before the parents made up the label “Peter,” if that aggregate were already “Peter” then what's the meaning there? There's no purpose, doesn't make sense for the parents to label “Peter” onto Peter. It doesn't make sense. Then, again, they would have to label “Peter” onto that. The aggregates are Peter already, then the parents label “Peter”, then they can label “Peter” on that Peter. Then again they have to label “Peter” onto *that* Peter. So it's endless.

“Peter” is labeled on the base, which is not the label “Peter”. “Peter” is a label on the base of the aggregates, which is not the label “Peter.” So there's a big difference. The aggregates are the base to be labeled “Peter” and “Peter” is the label imputed relating to that aggregates, that child's aggregates. So they are two different phenomena.

Exactly the same, the association of body and mind is the base to be labeled “I.” I is the imputed phenomenon. The I is the label and the aggregates of the association of body and mind are the base to be labeled.

They are two different phenomena. The aggregates—the association of body and mind—and the label “I are not one. But they do not exist separately. The aggregates—the base—and “I”—the label—don't exist separately but they exist differently. This is what we have to understand. The base aggregates, the association of body and mind which is to be labeled “I” and the label “I” itself are not one, but that doesn't mean that they exist separately. They don't exist *separately*. They exist *differently*. That's extremely important to understand.

This gives you a totally different view. It's a kind of release, like a knot released. It gives a total different view. When you see that the label "I" and the base to be labeled, the aggregates, exist differently then, just from this understanding, it is clear that there is no I besides the body or the mind or the body and mind together, but those combinations are not I. There's no I on the aggregates but that doesn't mean that there's no I. That doesn't mean that there's no I. I exists. There is I. That understanding comes. You're able to differentiate the I, the self, the label and base—you're able to differentiate.

#### EMPTINESS: LABELING THE TABLE

Like the table. You're able to differentiate the table and the base of the table. In your view you see the base. The base is what? This side, that side, all the different sides, all the pieces of the table that are put together and the function to put things on top. So that's the base. That is the base to be labeled "table". After seeing that—these pieces put together, their function to put something on top—after seeing that, that causes your mind to make up the label "table." So now you can see the differences – the base and the label "table", they're different, they are two different phenomena. They don't exist separately but they exist differently. So you're able to differentiate label and the base—the label "table" and the base of it.

Even with this example you get the idea. It becomes clear. *This* is not "table," *this* is not "table." Any part of this is not the label "table." Nothing of this is "table." Even all together it's not the table. It's the base to be labeled "table." By seeing that, then you label "table." It's the base. It's what causes you to make up the particular label "table." So that's the base. You see the base first. After that then by seeing that, then your mind makes up the label "table" then you see table.

Firstly, you see the base. Secondly, after your mind has labeled it, then you see the table. You don't see them together. You don't see table first and then see the base. Not that. That's totally wrong. Not even together. There's no way to see together. You see the base first. By seeing the base first—that which functions to put things on top—then causes your mind to make up, to choose this particular label "table." Then you believe it. After your mind imputed and you believe in that, then there's appearance. There's the table. Then with appearance of table, you see table.

Even here it is clear. In reality, the label "table," the table that your mind imputed, is not any part of the table. This side is not table, that side is not table, this is not table, any part is not table. You can even understand it from the ordinary language, "part of the table". We say "part of the table" meaning it's not the table. This is not table. Any part is not table. So even all together, the group, the whole collection of parts that function to put things on top, even that is not table. So when you see the base and the label "table" are different, you're able to differentiate. When you're able to differentiate then you get idea there's nothing—even all together is not table. The "table" exists nowhere. There's no "table" on this. Now, here, I'm talking *on*. Before I was talking whether this *is* table. Now, here, I'm talking *on*. There's no "table" on this. There's no "table" on this. Anywhere. On any part there's no "table." On any part there's no "table." Here I'm talking about the label "table." The label "table" doesn't exist here, not here, not anywhere.

So, therefore, the table which exists is what is merely labeled by your mind. That's how it exists but, even that, you cannot find on this, on anywhere. You see? You cannot find anywhere. So, therefore, how is an inherently-existing table possible? A truly-existing table, a table existing from its own side, a table not labeled by your mind? A table not labeled by mind, which means, existing from its side. That is totally wrong. That is *totally* false. That exists nowhere. Not only on this, it exists nowhere. Therefore, that appearance, that belief, is wrong. That kind of appearance

of “table” is totally false and that belief is a totally wrong conception because when you look for it, what you discover is it’s totally non-existent. But the merely labeled “table” exists even though you don’t see on this base. Here, there, anywhere, you can’t find it, you don’t see it, but it exists. There’s no other reason. There’s no other reason. Only because there’s a base, that’s it. Only because there’s a base, that which functions to put things on top, which can receive the label, which can receive the label “table” is there. So that’s it. That’s the only reason there’s “table”. So, the merely-labeled “table” exists. There’s no other reason why it exists. It’s only because there’s a base. That’s it.

So, now, we can do exactly the same analysis here as with the I. Ever since I brought up this subject... I didn’t mean to talk on this again. My topic become like the mad elephant running everywhere! So now, since I brought up this issue, I ran into this subject, what I want to say is important. When you look at the table, in our view, the two are un-differentiable. The label “table” and the base are un-differentiable in our view; we cannot see these two as different. When we look at the table there’s a table there. There is a table on the base.

#### EMPTINESS: THE OBJECT OF REFUTATION

When the label “table” and the base which is labeled are un-differentiable by the mind, then this is what needs to be seen as false, this is the object of refutation, *gak-chak*. For somebody who is able to see the *gak-chak*, who is able to see the object of refutation, this explanation fits. You can see there’s “table” on the base. You see that. It appears to you like that.

This un-differentiated label and base is how we normal people see the table, and that is what needs to be refuted, that is the object of refutation. What is refuting object? We see the base and the table as un-differentiable in our view. It looks un-differentiable. So that’s *gak-chak*, the object of refutation. Because we don’t see the difference, and because that un-differentiated nature is false, we need to analyze this and overcome this misapprehension. The base and label “table” as un-differentiable is the object of refutation. That is a false table. Anyway, in your perception you’re seeing that but it is false. *That* table doesn’t exist. The “table” that you see as un-differentiable from the base doesn’t exist. That’s false.

When he taught the Seven Points of Thought Transformation in Drepung Monastery, His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s Guru, His Holiness Ling Rinpoche, explained the object to be refuted, what is called in Tibetan, *gak-chak*, like this. I think, this explanation is according to the people who are unable to recognize the object of refutation, who don’t recognize it. His explanation was about those who are unable to recognize what object of refutation is, for those who see the two as un-differentiable.

That’s false. It’s not un-differentiable. It’s differentiable. They exist differently. In reality they exist differently. Therefore, our perception of them being un-differentiable is false. That doesn’t exist. Seeing a “table” on the base is also false. This is the object to be refuted.

What I was going to say is this. It’s the same thing. In your perception there is the I on these aggregates. Besides the belief or the appearance that there’s an I inside this body, besides that, there’s I on these aggregates, the association of body and mind, the base. That is the object to be refuted, what in the Tibetan language is called *gak-chak*. There’s the I on these aggregates. The I appears like that. That is the false I. That is totally non-existent.

That is the same as His Holiness Ling Rinpoche explained. In your view the aggregates—the association of the body and mind—and the label are un-differentiable. That’s the false view.

That's totally non-existent . That's totally empty. That's totally non-existent and that's totally empty.

So as I mentioned, the table which exists, it's the same here. Because there are the aggregates, the association of body and mind, then mind merely imputes the I. That is the I that exists.

#### EMPTINESS: IMPUTING TRUE EXISTENCE ON THE BASE

I think maybe at this stage I'll stop there. I think it's better to talk more about karma than emptiness at the moment. It's just some introduction, to get some idea what is false in our life, and what is truth. What is false and what is truth in our life? In our view what is false, what is the truth? What's reality? What exists? What doesn't exist? Actually, this is the most important subject to learn, to study, to meditate, to realize. The reason why we are suffering, why we have to die and be reborn is because of being ignorant in this subject: what is false and what is truth. Not knowing this.

What is the fault that we have in the perception, in the view of our mind, in the reality, the truth that exists. The I which doesn't exist is the false I. Not knowing the I that exists, I that doesn't exist. Not knowing this; being unable to realize this. This becomes the root of all our suffering. When you're unable to realize the false and truth of phenomena, when you're unable to discover this, when you're unable to differentiate this, to differentiate between the false and the truth, that becomes the basis for attachment to arise for that object. Because you're unable to differentiate false and truth of that phenomena, on that basis, that hallucination, then attachment, anger and all these emotional thoughts arise. You already have this huge ignorance, and again you build up this huge hallucination, where you are unable to differentiate the false and truth of object. You believe the false—the real “table” on the base. In your perception there's a table on the base appearing to you; a table un-differentiable from base.

There is the I on the aggregates, there's the I in this body. This hallucination covers the reality, as I mentioned the first night. By the mind seeing the I as the aggregates, if somebody asks, “What are you doing here?” you reply, “I'm meditating” or “I'm listening to Dharma.” The mind thinks the body sitting in the meditation position or the mind reflecting on the path to liberation and enlightenment, is practicing the antidote to overcome delusion.

However, seeing the body sitting in meditation position or the mind doing meditation or listening to the teachings, seeing the aggregates doing these functions, the thought makes up the label. That thought which sees the aggregates doing these activities, makes up the label, “I'm listening to Dharma.” “I'm meditating.” “I'm doing this and that.” So the mind merely imputes the I. Then there's a projection, a hallucination decorated on that, of an inherently-existent I, a truly-existent I that never came from your mind, was never labeled by the mind. This comes from ignorance, the negative imprint left on the mental continuum.

#### EMPTINESS: IMPUTING BEAUTIFUL

The merely-imputed beautiful body is an example. This projection, this hallucination is decorated on that. Immediately, a projected ‘real one’ appears from there. This merely imputed ‘beautiful body’ comes from your mind Your mind imputes this by seeing the hair done like this way and nose this way, ears this way, then one's own mind merely imputes “beautiful.” The idea of having muscles on the body makes it good, beautiful. [RL GL] I thought the monks had muscles. [RL] The arms having big—what do you call? [GL]—big muscles. [RL GL] Big muscles around the body—here and there, here, here [RL GL] All these big muscles, anyway. Due to culture, what a society believes to be, beauty, you follow to that and you believe that.

You're told what beautiful means: blonde hair, this shaped this way, this shaped that way. You're told this by other people in the culture, by society. Then your mind merely imputes "beautiful" onto a body like this and then, immediately after that, that negative imprint left by the ignorance makes this hallucination of real beauty appear to come from its own side. It appears to be never made up, to never be created by your mind. So this hallucination came from your mind, negative imprint. Then, on top of that, after you put the reason, then attachment comes. After you have merely imputed "beautiful" and believed in that label, seeing it as beautiful from its own side immediately attachment arises. As I mentioned the other night, it's the same: immediately after you have merely imputed this inherently existent beauty, real beauty, real in the sense existing from its own side, never labeled by the mind, this is there.

Now, to repeat again: due to culture, society, what they believe – such as the color of the hair or the shape of this body—in some cultures having muscles is beautiful, in others it's being skinny— due to society, culture the mind merely imputes "beautiful." Then you believe in your label of that desirable appearance. The appearance comes the second after being merely imputed, then there's this projection of inherently-existent beauty which appears you to have nothing to do with your mind—it never came from your mind, it was never labeled by your mind.

Then after that projection or hallucination mind get attached. Then it becomes painful. Suffering, which is the nature of attachment, is difficult to separate from. Grasping. So that's extra suffering. Already the suffering of that hallucination, that hallucination of inherently existent beauty and believing on that that's true—that's already the biggest suffering. That's the biggest suffering. That's the foundation, then, on top of that, attachment.

We can do the same analysis with anger. First there is the merely-labeled "bad." The way the person acts towards you or thinks about you, your mind imputes that as "bad." It's merely imputed. Right after that, you believe in that, you believe in your label. Then there's the projection of inherently-existent "bad." Put on that "bad" merely-labeled by mind, a "real bad" appears from its own side. It looks like it never came from your own mind, it was not merely labeled by your mind. It appears like that. Then, on that, you get angry. Anger, which means to harm, arises. So there's a whole evolution. Before the anger rises there's a whole foundation you created there: first, the merely-labeled, then projection of an inherently existent "bad," then anger arises.

There are so many hallucinations. There are so many hallucinations piled up. Now, you can see totally that it doesn't make sense. After all this analysis, you can see now that our life is like this, totally caught up all this hallucination. Then on top this hallucination, all these emotional thoughts like anger and attachment arise. They are totally childish. They have no meaning. All this is total nonsense. It is not only nonsense, but it tortures you. It makes you suffer. All these wrong concepts, all these projections—you're overwhelmed by them, trapped in these hallucinations. So this is the fundamental suffering. That's how we're suffering in samsara like this.

So we need to wake up. We need to wake up by realizing emptiness, by meditating on emptiness, by studying all the teachings on emptiness. We need to study the whole path. We need to study all the five paths to liberation – called the five paths to enlightenment. As I mentioned the other night, to be free forever from all this hallucinatory minds, all these delusions. To be free forever, we need to cease totally not only the gross negative imprints, that gives birth to the delusions, not only that, but even the subtle negative imprint by studying the whole path to liberation and enlightenment. By listening, reflecting and meditating. By doing these three, the whole path to

enlightenment, which comes in two: method and wisdom, which ceases all the gross and subtle defilements. As I mentioned before, the gross and subtle negative imprints which give rise to delusions and subtle negative imprints, that which obstructs our mind to directly see all past, present, and future phenomena.

So this way of meditating, of analysis, is extremely important. You see it's baseless. All the, in our daily life, what makes our mind unhappy, what makes us to suffer with these wrong concepts, with all these hallucinations and believing that they're real. So based on all this, it's baseless. Our problem, you can say that our problem has no base. Here, I'm not talking that there's no root of suffering. I'm not talking that. Here I'm saying our problem is baseless. All the phenomena is empty. It is not like the way it appears to us. In reality it is empty, baseless.

I think I will read a few pages again. Only a few. [RL]

#### THE BODY AND MIND ARE IN THE NATURE OF SUFFERING

Going back to what I started to say, this body and mind is in the nature of suffering because it is created by karma and delusion. One thing I started but left out is at the birth there's suffering. At conception, the mind takes place on the fertilized egg. Whether there's happiness, whether there's suffering, however, that first experience is the result, that is the causative phenomena. After mind takes place on the fertilized egg, suffering happens, whatever that you experience. Let's say suffering. I think it depends on the level, depends on who is reincarnating. For that being in the womb I'm talking about, whether there's suffering rebirth or whether there's bliss depends on the level of the mind of the person who is reincarnated: how pure or impure that mind is.

That first experience of suffering or happiness—whatever it is—is the result. That is a causative phenomenon. That is a result. So it should have a cause. That happiness, that suffering, the very first experience in the womb, that should have cause. The cause should exist before the result. The cause of that happiness or cause of that suffering should exist before the result, they cannot exist together. It should exist before. A specific result and the specific cause of that cannot exist together. That particular result and that cause of that, those two cannot exist together. So, before there's that suffering or happiness, when the mind first took place on the fertilized egg, since that is a result it should have cause. Since that's causative phenomena it should have cause.

So because the cause must have existed before that, that means, by that sense, there was a past life. The cause of that happiness is virtue; the cause of that suffering is nonvirtue. However, if it is not an aryan being—one who has completely removed delusion and karma—if it is an ordinary being born under the control of delusion and karma, then that's suffering. The feeling, the very first feeling when the consciousness takes place on the fertilized egg, that is a suffering feeling. The person's mind must have existed before that to create that product, that feeling in the first moment of conception.

It was the past life's delusion, karma that resulted in that. That's why I'm saying by pinching our skin, when we feel pain, that proves, that shows reincarnation. That's why I'm saying that. That shows reincarnation, that there is past life.

If we don't get liberated from samsara in this life, if we don't get liberated from the cause of samsara—delusion and karma—in this life then, again, we have to reincarnate, to die and be reborn. Therefore, this feeling of suffering also shows future life. It not only shows past lives, it also proves future lives.

#### THE PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO LIBERATE OTHERS

So what I was saying before, there's real spiritual practice, spiritual development. What we should understand is the real one, the mind total determined to be free from this samsara which is the nature of suffering, and determined to develop bodhicitta, the altruistic mind to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings which is based on great compassion. It is the mind that feels unbearable, seeing how other sentient beings are suffering. Just as you suffer, numberless other sentient beings are also suffering in samsara. Seeing this, then feeling unbearable compassion towards them. Then transforming the mind to having these realizations and also realizing emptiness. This is real spiritual development or practice, transforming the mind like this, having these realizations. Then, based on that, you follow the tantric path.

Then think, "The purpose of my life is to free the numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric sufferings; the oceans of humans' sufferings, the oceans of suras' and asuras' sufferings, the oceans of hell beings' sufferings, the oceans of hungry ghosts' sufferings, the oceans of animals' sufferings—to completely liberate them from all these sufferings of samsara, including the cause, karma and delusion, and bring them to full enlightenment. That is the real goal of my life. That is why I am born this time as human being, why I have taken this precious human body this time—to benefit others, to offer this service. For the success of that, I must first myself achieve the omniscient mind. That depends on ceasing gross and subtle defilements. And that depends on actualizing the wisdom realizing emptiness. That is the only thing that can directly cease the delusions, the defilements, including the negative imprints.

"With the support of bodhicitta, the method, then this wisdom can directly cease even the subtle defilements, the subtle negative imprints."

#### ORAL TRANSMISSION OF THE *DIAMOND CUTTER SUTRA*

"So, therefore, I'm going to take the oral transmission of the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*, Buddha's teachings on the Perfection of Wisdom from where all the numberless past buddhas were born, all the present buddhas have been born and all the future buddhas will be born. From where all the bodhisattvas have been born, from where all the arhats have been born, that which releases all the numberless sentient beings, including myself, from all the oceans of samsaric suffering whose continuation has no beginning.

[Short mandala offering]

[Request to turn the Wheel of Dharma]

[Rinpoche confers *Lung: Dorje Chupa*]

So here it is talking about how powerful this teaching is. So *Ganga* means, one meaning is the River Ganges. There are four famous rivers in India. My understanding from the texts is that all four rivers came from Mt Kailash. The River Ganges is a huge river, very long, flowing near Varanasi. Another meaning of *Ganga* is "ocean." So here it says 'world'; in a "world equaling number of sand grains of the River Ganges" means uncountable number of sand grains, because this river is so huge, so long.

So, worlds equaling the number of sand grains of the River Ganges. So, if the men and women living in all those worlds, that many number of worlds completely fill up that many worlds with the seven types of jewels—diamonds, gold, silver and so forth—then make offering to the buddhas—not just one buddha but all the buddhas—they create that much merit. However, if

you memorize or say just four words of this text, one verse which is four words, and then you explain it to others, you create merit, good karma, good luck, that is unbelievable, it is much greater than the previous one, far greater. The merit of a man and women in those worlds, filling up all those worlds equaling the number of sand grains of the River Ganges with seven precious jewels and offering to all the buddhas is small compared to this one. Memorizing one verse of this text, which is four words, and explaining it to others, the merit is uncountable; it is much greater than the other one.

[Rinpoche continues with oral transmission]

Then it says, if you recite even just one verse, which is four words, from this text, the place where you recite this becomes a holy place. That place becomes a holy object. So that means now we're reading here, this text that we're reading here, this place is transformed into a holy object, it becomes the same as a stupa, a statue; even the place becomes a holy object.

All the devas, human beings, suras and asuras all respect the place and make offering to it. It is like the places where we go for pilgrimage, such as where the Buddha became enlightened in Bodhgaya, or where great yogis had high realizations and achieved enlightenment. We go to those holy places or caves and make offerings and say prayers. The place where you read this text becomes a holy place to all the devas, human beings, suras and asuras. So there is no question if somebody receives this text, writes this text, memorizes this text, reads this text, keeps this text—even just keeping this text and trying to understand meaning of this text, there is no question that in that place, there's a buddha or guru there.

[Rinpoche continues with oral transmission]

This time twenty pages, starting from the tenth page then up to thirty.

[Mandala offering]

This meditation can especially be done, in the break time, after sitting meditation. If you practice mindfulness in this, this will be extremely powerful and good. It's real science. It's learning about one's own mind, learning about your life.

#### THE EMPTINESS OF THE A

It's basically what I mentioned before. Maybe just this way, maybe it's just a simpler way to start, to process to see emptiness, to process to see the truth. One example that I normally give, to understand how what we see comes from our mind, is when you learn the alphabet in kindergarten. At the beginning the teacher who introduces you to alphabet, for example, writes it on the blackboard. First there is one line like this. Then he draws a second line, and then a third, so it becomes a design. At that time, you're not told it is an "A." You're not introduced that this is an "A." It is just like this—some lines like this that you see there. That's all that you see. At that time you don't see that this is an "A." You don't have that perception that this is an "A." You just see the lines like this.

After that, the teacher or whoever, instructs you that this is an "A." Then you believe what the person tells you. You believe in that. Then your mind makes up the label. The mind that sees this makes up the label "A" and then you believe in that label. You believe in your label. After that then there's appearance. Only after that, then there's appearance of A, but you no longer see it as an appearance of "A" but as a real A.

If you don't believe in your label I don't think that you will have appearance "A." But, anyway, you can analyze. You can check. You put a lot of labels then you check with your appearance. You check your label is "gold" when you have appearance of gold. [RL, GL] You have ten dollars that you label "a billion dollars." "I have billion dollars!" Then you check! [GL] So it's easy; in just one minute, just one second, you become a billionaire. [GL]

Anyway, after you believe in your label then you have appearance of "A" like that. After the appearance then you see "A," then you see this is "A." Until you see that this is an "A" there's a whole evolution there that takes time, starting from your mind seeing this line then making up the label "A"—starting from there. And, before that, you were told by somebody and then you believed in that. Therefore, you can now see where the appearance of "A" came from; it's a creation of you mind.

All appearances are like this, up to a "Z." All those appearance that you have, that you see, all came from your mind. From morning after we wake up, that one day, whatever we see is all the appearance, coming from your mind. All these forms here—whatever appears: the temple, the statues, the ceiling, the pillars, all these flowers, these colors—whatever appearances we have, whatever we see, all came from our mind.

Whatever we see, whatever appears to us, all came from our mind labeling. "This is a pillar." "This is a ceiling." "This is a flower." "This is yellow." "This is red." "This is a clock." "This is a mug." Everything came from our mind labeling—everything. Trees, sky, clouds, grass, road, car, people, everything you see, all these appearances came from the mind. Friend, enemy, stranger, bad, good, beautiful, ugly—it's the same; they originate by mind labeling them as such.

#### MEDITATING ON HOW ALL OBJECTS ARE LABELED BY THE MIND

Whatever you hear with the ear sense, the object of the ear sense, is the base. And, because this is there, then your mind label "sound." The object of the ear sense is the base. The mind perceiving that makes up the label "sound." "Sound" is the label and that one is the base, so, again, there are two different phenomena. They're in a different shape but when we don't analyze it looks like they're one. That is the false view, the wrong view.

That's the way to meditate on the emptiness of the sound—how the sound doesn't exist from its own side. It's merely imputed by mind. So, again, your mind makes up label "sound," "bad" and "good," whatever, and believes in that. However it appears, the mind sees it that way. After labeling, it believes in that, then you hear a bad or good sound, like that. So, it came from the mind.

It's the same with smell, taste or tangible objects. It's the same. Everything that appears to you, what you smell, taste or touch came from your own mind originally by imputing. The very start is your mind labeling. It started with that. So, therefore, within each twenty-four hours, whatever there is in your world, your six senses, the views—what you see, what you hear, what you taste, what you smell—everything came from one's mind. The logic is that. The root is that everything starts from your mind, first your mind labeling. By seeing the base, your mind labels and that's how things start.

So, the first thing is to meditate like this. When you do a sitting meditation, do it like this; when you're walking around, practice awareness like this. See how everything comes to the same thing—how you see the person as beautiful, this one as ugly—how it all depends on what kind of label your mind puts on it, including enemy or friend. It's the same, it all comes from your mind.

All these appearances and *how* you see them, it's the same. How you see them depends on what kind of label you put on them. What kind of label you put on it then that's how you see it. So, while you're walking around practice the awareness of seeing, hearing, touching and smelling in this way. This is a very important meditation.

#### EVERYTHING COMES FROM THE MIND

This also helps to understand karma. Whatever happens in the life came from karma. It especially helps to show the process, how things do not exist from their own side; how things are empty. To go into emptiness, to see the truth of the phenomena—it become process for that. So this is very important. Even to do meditation like this even for one week like that is so good, so powerful, so good. And then you know that your twenty-four hours of life experience – like this: depending on what kind of label you put you see things that way.

If you put negative label you see negative, then you have unpleasant feeling. You put negative label by your mind you see negative. When you see negative then, when it appears negative you see negative, then you have unpleasant feeling. For example, your mind puts this label “enemy” what a person harms you and you see it as bad. Then it appears that way. You see it that way. Then, when your sense contacts the “enemy” you get an unpleasant feeling, unhappiness. You get unhappiness.

Your mind puts label “enemy” and you see the enemy. When you see enemy then you get a negative effect, an unpleasant feeling, unhappiness. This person is not making you upset. Now you see the analysis, this person is not making you upset. Who is making you upset is your mind. Your mind is making you upset. Your mind, your concept, is making you upset. Your concept is making you depressed. That's the whole point. With this way of meditating, you come to realize, actually, that object is not what is disturbing you. It's your mind. It's your impure concept. Your mind is disturbing you. Your impure mind is making you unhappy. That makes you depressed, unhappy. The negative, impure mind is that one that gives you suffering, that gives you problems.

If your mind was pure, correct, with pure thoughts and positive labels, then you would see things as positive, as good, and you would have pleasant feelings that would makes you happy. So being happy also comes from your mind. So here's the key of your happiness. Your mind becomes your key for your suffering. Your mind becomes the key for your happiness.

It depends on what kind of label you put on things—whether you put a negative label on your life situation, on the objects, or a positive. Your mind becomes like a TV channel, showing a bad movie or a good movie. Your mind is like that. So that's how in the daily life, happiness, unhappiness, ups and downs, it all comes from your mind. It's your mind. Your mind is doing that.

Your mind is bringing your life's ups and downs. So if your mind is always positive, only putting positive labels, everything is “good,” then everything that appears is good. Everything that you see is good and you have always pleasant, always happiness. Whatever happens to your life, you always have happiness. Even if you have cancer you have happiness. Even if you have AIDS you have happiness. Even if you are dying you have happiness.

Through meditation, your mind becomes the path. As you put a positive label on everything, you see everything positively—death, cancer, whatever problems you have. Through meditation, not just emptiness, but especially bodhicitta—compassion toward other sentient beings, thought

transformation—makes everything positive, so you see everything as positive. You have happiness. No matter whatever problem you encounter you have happiness.

So this is how you transform your problem into happiness, including death. Especially with bodhicitta you use your death to achieve enlightenment. You use your death to purify your mind. You use your death as a path to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings. With bodhicitta, everything is like that. Death does not become suffering, the cause of unhappiness. Taking a positive way, using bodhicitta, experiencing death with bodhicitta it only positive. You use the death experience to achieve the path to enlightenment, to cease all the defilements, to achieve all the perfected qualities, to liberate numberless sentient beings to bring them to enlightenment.

I think this meditation is very important. Maybe can try one of those sitting meditation but most important when you're out, when you're not doing sitting meditation, at that time, practice this. Especially during these weeks, put much effort in practicing this mindfulness—in your room, outside; to practice mindfulness as much as possible like this. It is extremely useful. This way you can see, even with this meditation you can see, as Buddha said, that you are the enemy to yourself, you are the liberator to yourself. It depends on what you do with your mind. You can create a hell realm, also, you can create enlightenment. It all depends on what you do with your mind.

[Dedication prayers]

Thank you very much. Thank you.

GURU DEVOTION IS THE ROOT OF THE PATH

We'll recite the *Foundation of All Good Qualities*.

The Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism meditation that we're trying to learn, to practice, is taught by kind compassionate Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. This method, this path, is revealed by kind, compassionate Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. This is the medicine given to you; it is prescribed by a doctor and you're taking it. You rely on the medicine that means also you rely on the doctor. It's the same here: this method, this meditation practice that we are taking an interest in learning and trying to practice, is for a better life. So, even without talking about the big aims like liberation or enlightenment, a better life is just a simple way. To have a better life, this is revealed by Buddha so, naturally, we rely upon Buddha. Naturally we take refuge in Buddha. As we take refuge in the meditation, the meditation practice, this path that is revealed by Buddha. As we rely on this, naturally, we rely on the Buddha. Naturally we already have taken refuge in Buddha as we rely on the methods revealed by Buddha, the path to liberation and enlightenment.

This is the path [RL] to the happiness, liberation and enlightenment that we want to learn, we want to discover, to actualize. As we rely on this, naturally, we rely on Buddha. Naturally we're taking refuge in Buddha, so, therefore, as well as all the lineage lamas. From Buddha this teaching has been handed down all those who have actualized the path. From Buddha handed down to our root gurus. So, naturally, we're relying upon all them who passed the teaching from one lama to another lineage lama, passed down to our root guru. So, actually, we rely on all of them, the founder, the present Buddhadharma Buddha, then all other lineage lamas.

So, therefore, here it involves asking them to grant blessings for oneself and in the mind of all the sentient beings to purify the obstacles.

The main obstacle to purify is ignorance, the mind which is unknowing of the ultimate nature of the I, the ultimate nature of the aggregates and all phenomena. And then, also, purifying the wrong conception, which is the obstacle that blocks bodhicitta, which interferes with us actualizing bodhicitta, the altruistic mind to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings. To purify these very basic wrong concepts, the main ones are these two. From Tantra, what is to be purified is ordinary impure thought; ordinary impure concepts and appearances [pause] and gross mind—the impure subtle wind and mind. Then to actualize the wisdom realizing emptiness, the fundamental path of Sutra: the wisdom realizing emptiness and bodhicitta. Those two are main ones. From Tantra, the method and wisdom path, such as the clear light illusory body, then to achieve the result, the buddha's holy body—the rupakaya—and the holy mind—the dharmakaya. That is the goal to be achieved.

When we ask to receive blessings, the blessings contain all this. The meaning of blessing is this: one's own mind to be transformed so mind becomes the dharmakaya and body become the rupakaya. That transforms the mind into the whole path to enlightenment, the path of method and wisdom, and then the goal, the dharmakaya and rupakaya. The meaning of blessing contains all that. From the root of the path to enlightenment - what Geshe Tashi explained yesterday and today, about the guru, and the shortcomings of not devoting to the guru and making mistakes. After having found the guru then not correctly devoting, and making mistakes—those shortcomings.

And the benefits, the advantage, the skies of advantages of correctly devoting to the virtuous friend, with thought and action, which is the root and that which brings success to all the rest of the path. The beginning of the graduated path of the lower capable being, which starts from realizing how precious this perfect human body is. qualified with eight freedoms and ten richnesses or ten endowments. It's what brings success to from the very beginning of lam-rim, beginning of the path from there up to enlightenment, and then the graduated path of the lower, or middle, higher capability beings, that is mentioned in Sutra, which is foundation, and Tantra the result, the Tantra path.

What makes all that successful up to enlightenment is by the root, by after one has found the virtuous friend, correctly devoting to the virtuous friend. When you ask for blessings, it contains everything from the beginning of the path, guru devotion, up to enlightenment.

In Tibetan the term, if you want to learn Tibetan language, [RL] *chin-lap*; *chin* is 'glorious', 'magnificent', *lap* means 'transformation'. Your mind is transformed into compassion, into loving-kindness, into wisdom, into bodhicitta, into patience, into lam-rim. From guru devotion, your thought toward the guru, which is ordinary, transforms that into pure thought, devotional thought. That is the blessing.

Samsaric happiness is only in the nature of suffering, and is not real happiness, not pure happiness, which is only nature of suffering. By discovering this, that samsara is only nature of suffering, then the mind becomes totally detached to this and develops the total determination to be free from this samsara. So that's the real blessing.

Then, when the mind is transformed to bodhicitta, that's an incredible blessing. When one realizes emptiness, the ultimate nature of the 'I', the aggregates, that's another great blessing. Then the tantra path: the generation and completion path. Then last one is the dharmakaya and rupakaya, it becomes that.

There is a requesting prayer to all the lineage lamas. Maybe I remember or maybe don't remember, not sure, all the prayers. However, we do just the requesting prayer to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. That one aspect is all the Guru, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, all the lineage lamas—direct and indirect—in that one aspect; we make a total one-pointed request. Nectar beams are emitted to purify all these obstacles, all the wrong concepts just mentioned. And then we receive all the realizations, all the blessings from guru devotion, up to enlightenment, the dharmakaya and rupakaya including the path of method and wisdom to be actualized right now with one's mind. So make strong requests. One visualizes nectar beams emitted from Buddha, enter into one's own body, mind, and enter the body, mind of all of us here, all sentient beings.

So now I will lead, recite, the lam-rim meditation prayer that contains essence of the whole path to enlightenment.

*[The Foundation of All Good Qualities]*

[Short mandala offering]

[Refuge and bodhicitta]

[Prayers]

### **Lecture 3**

EMPTINESS: HOW THE MIND LABELS

So what I mentioned last night, did you do some meditation on this?

The sense objects, that which appears to us, every one of them is something that we labeled. Something which appears to us is something which our own mind labeled. Your mind labels it and it appears back to you. For example, you met a person a long time ago, and you have seen that person many times since then but you don't recognize him. Even though you have met before, you knew that person before, but you have forgotten. Then somebody introduces you, and reminds you that this is Robert, and he has such and such a story and you met him in such and such a place and you two did such and such together. You met somewhere, had lunch together, met in party or something like that. Before you didn't recognize him but as soon as somebody tells you, or as soon as you remember—as soon as you put that label “Robert” on him, you see the person that way. You didn't see that person as Robert before but now you see him as Robert. You saw the person's body, you saw that person's aggregates before, but you didn't see that person as Robert. You didn't see that person as Robert.

As soon as somebody reminds you, or as soon as you remember—which means as soon as you label those aggregates “Robert” then that person is Robert. So now this is another example. This example also helps you to realize emptiness by seeing how this inherently-existing Robert that not merely labeled by mind that appears to you is the false view of Robert. The inherently-existing Robert doesn't exist at all ever, but appears to you like that and you believe it. You have that appearance of an inherently-existing Robert and you believe but, in the reality, it doesn't exist. So that helps to recognize this false Robert or this false view of Robert.

First you see the person's association of body and mind. At that time you're seeing the base. You did not recognize that as Robert and therefore you haven't labeled “Robert” and you don't see

the label “Robert.” You only see the base at that time. After you remember Robert, which means you’ve labeled “Robert”—after your mind imputed the label—then you see the label.

So that helps you see how the base to be labeled “Robert” and the label “Robert” are two different phenomena. They’re not one. Normally, according to our wrong view, our view of ignorance, we might think they’re one. But they’re not one. That helps to realize that what you normally believe, what normally appears to you, is wrong. That is false. The aggregates—the association of body and mind, which is the base—seem un-differentiable from Robert. Normally, we have that appearance and we believe in it that way.

So you need to analyze like that, first what you see is the aggregates, which is the base, then next after you remembered Robert and your mind has labeled those aggregates “Robert” then you see Robert. You’re seeing the base. So that is the normal evolution. That is normally how you see things in our daily life. Every single phenomenon—that’s how we see things. First you see the base, then you see the label. That’s the evolution.

So, anyway, what I’m saying, before you don’t see Robert. Why? Because your mind hasn’t labeled “Robert.” You haven’t recognized him. Your mind hasn’t labeled those aggregates. After you remember, your mind labels them, and then you see Robert.

So I’m relating this to last night’s explanation. I gave the example of A, B, C, D, how we see A, B, C, D. How we see the alphabet. Then, I mentioned evolution, so here I’m using Robert as another example of what appears to us as our mind labeled, another example in our life.

When somebody is angry to you, or when somebody dislikes you, when you help that person, you give a cup of tea to that person or whatever and that person doesn’t say ‘thank you’. That person walks in front of you with their “nose up,” [GL] with their nose in the sky [RL]. Anyway, what is it that upsets you? What is it that upsets you? Does it upset you or not?  
[GL] Very much?

[*Student*: inaudible.] [RL, GL]

*Rinpoche*:

What is it that upsets you? Why it makes you upset?

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:

Yeah. So why it should make upset you, even they don’t like you? Why should upset you?

[*Student*: inaudible.] [GL, RL]

*Rinpoche*:

You want to hear?

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:

*A le!* [GL] But why should you be upset? Why should it upset you?

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*  
It offends you. Yeah.

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*  
Mmm. Why? [GL] But why should it upset the ego?

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*  
Price? You put your price on the person? [RL, GL] You mean you bid for the person? How much price? How much does the person cost? [RL, GL] No I'm joking. I just didn't hear properly. I didn't hear properly what you said.

*Student:*  
Pride.

*Rinpoche:*  
Oh, I see, because you have pride. Yeah. Pride. I thought you mentioned something more. I thought you mentioned more than that before—pride and something else?

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*  
Oh, I see. [RL]

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*  
You label pride on that person?

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*  
Oh, you [student] oh, I see, you interpreted that person as doing something wrong. Yeah? Is that what you're saying?

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*  
I think that is there. But why should that upset you? [GL]

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*  
Why should it upset the ego?

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*

That person is telling you that the label is not like that.

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*

Yes. Yes.

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*

Mmm, *a le*. You mean the label that you believe. You mean the reputation that you have or that you believe? The good things what you want to believe, what you believe for yourself?

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*

Because the other person didn't put the label that you want, so then you get upset, yeah? Is that what you're saying? That's what you mean? The other person put a different label than your own label. Mmm, Like what? [GL]

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*

If somebody calls you 'ice cream', do you get upset? [GL]

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*

[RL] You want to be ice cream? [RL GL] Then somebody's going to enjoy you. [GL, RL] I'm joking. Sorry, I didn't let you speak. What did you say? What example you're going to give?

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*

You want a good reputation but the person didn't give you good reputation—that's why? Like that? You want to have a good reputation and person didn't give you a good reputation. Something like that? [RL] So why does it upset the ego? [GL] Why should it upset the ego?

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*

I see. [RL] Oh, it has meaning. Everything you're saying has meaning. All your answers have meaning. You said why the ego get upset is because it is a false image of oneself [*student:* inaudible.] Mmm. [*student:* inaudible.] The other person is attacking to that projection.

[*Student:* inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:*

I see, connect to that. Mmm. That other person is not connecting. Because the ego gets upset that person is only connecting to your false self; your self which is false. The other person is only connecting to that. That person is not connecting to your self which exists. That person is not connecting to that. That person not talking to that—the self which exists, the self which is not false. The other person is not talking to that. The other person is talking to only your self who do not exist, yeah? That's why the ego gets upset. Huh? [RL] You made it much more profound than I expected. [RL GL]

If you get beaten by somebody do you also get upset? [GL] If you get beaten by somebody, do you get also upset? Beaten. Not bitten. [GL, RL] Beaten, with ropes; with leather or ropes, beaten. Do you get upset? Huh? Yeah? And if you ask to be beaten, do you get upset? [GL] It's the same beating; the beating is the same, if you asked for it. [GL] If it is something you asked for then if you get beaten you get pleasure, right? Right? [GL]

But if it's not, but if it's something you haven't asked then you're beaten, you get upset, right? If you asked for it then you don't get upset, you get pleasure, huh? Is it like that?

[RL] So here it becomes very interesting. If you asked for it, even though the beating is the same—if you asked for it you don't get upset, you even get happy!

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:

No, your English is good, yeah.

*Student*:

When things go the way we want. But we just get upset when [they don't.]

[*Student*: inaudible.] [RL GL]

*Rinpoche*:

Thank you very much. [RL GL] You're right. You're right. [GL] Perfectly right. So, being beaten is same but whether you get upset or not depends on the person who beats you, right? If it is a person whom you want to beat you then it's no problem at all But if it's a person [RL] that you don't like to be beaten, if it's a person whom you don't like to beat you, then that become problem. Right?

Huh? If it's a person whom you like to beat you there's no problem. The beating's exactly the same. Maybe the amount of beating, how heavy it is, is same. If person who beats you is somebody whom you like to beat you, whom you wish to beat you [RL] then it's no problem. You enjoy it. But if it's a person that you don't like, then it becomes a problem for you. With the other one it doesn't become a problem for you. Same beating; same amount, just as heavy.

I heard that in the West people pay money to beat you. [RL, GL] You pay money to beat you. I'm talking about that. You pay money to beat you! Business people go there to that place [GL] – pay money to beat you. [RL, GL] I'm talking about that. In that place, they don't get angry. They don't get upset. If you pay money to be beaten, that person labels that beating "good." Here the point is that why he is not upset, the person labeled "good" on the beating done by those particular persons at that place, so that same business person come out of that place where he had to pay money to be beaten. [RL, GL] He comes to the place, then somebody beats him. [GL, RL] But if just as he is getting into his car somebody beats him up, the he gets upset. Then

he will terribly upset and angry. He will sue that person; immediately hand them over to the police. So there's a big difference, you see. When he was in that place, that beating could be even heavier beating, for him is not a problem. It's a pleasure. And then, right after he came out of that place, somebody in the street comes along and beats him. It could be even lighter than how he was beaten inside, in that place where he pays money, but he gets incredibly angry, he sues that person. Or, maybe, he beats that person back, he takes revenge on that person. So, here, this person is labeled "bad," right after he came out of the house. With that one, this person is labeled "bad." At the place being beaten by those girls then this person called it "good," he labels it "good."

#### EMPTINESS: GOOD AND BAD DEPEND ON THE LABEL

So due to different label, due to what label you put to it – other one you put good label, you labeled 'good'. Then, outside, when a stranger come by and beat, put negative label, 'bad'. So, in that particular place where you ask to be beaten by that girl, the person, the business-person, doesn't get upset. He wants to be more beaten. He doesn't get upset because he labeled 'good' so he doesn't get upset. Outside he get upset because he labeled 'bad' even though beating could be much smaller, like that.

Can you see the point? What upsets you, what doesn't upset you, is dependent on what kind of label you put it. One beating could be called "good" and one beating could be called "bad," even if is a much smaller beating and you get hurt much less. But the person's mind labels the other one "bad" and he has a huge problem. When you pay money to be beaten, even though it's much harder, you think it's a pleasure rather than a problem. Even if the beating is the same, it depends what label you put on it whether it become problem or not problem. It is totally dependent on what your mind puts on it—negative or positive, good or bad. Then, depending on what label you put on it, one appears bad to you, one appears good.

In Tibet, a teacher had two disciples. The two disciples went very far to their homes, and when they returned to the monastery, the teacher gave them cold tea. One disciple thought the teacher was so kind, even though they had come so far and were so tired, the teacher still had kept some tea for them, even though he had kept it so long it had gone cold. The other disciple thought how terrible the teacher was because they had come so far and were so tired, and the teacher didn't even bother to give them warm tea. [GL] You understand?

It's the same cold tea, but one disciple is so happy getting it and the other is so upset. This is the same idea. One disciple puts a positive label on the situation, thinking it's good and he's so happy, while because the other disciple thinks he deserves warm tea, he puts and negative label on the situation and thinks it's very bad and he is unhappy and angry.

Now you understand. The point here is, what upsets you, what makes you happy is by your label. What upsets you is all by your own label. And what makes you happy is also by your own label—the label "good" or the label "bad."

The first disciple's happiness at receiving cold tea came from his own mind. The other disciples unhappiness and anger at receiving cold tea came from his own mind. You can see now how the other person's happiness is production of his mind, the mind that looks at the situation as positive, as good. And other person's problem comes from his own mind, the mind that labels the situation as bad.

Both come from the mind. In our daily life, what brings our life down is by our mind putting a negative label on things. What brings us up, is when our mind puts a positive label on things,

thinking things are good. That lifts us up, that makes us happy. The other one, by putting negative label on things, brings us down. It makes us unhappy, depressed.

In our daily life, our life situation, whatever is happening, if it appears good, this comes from our own mind putting positive label, “good,” and it appears bad, if we see problems in our life, that is our own mind putting negative label onto that situation.

Until our mind made up the label, until our mind imputes “bad,” until our mind imputes the problem, we don’t see the problem. Before our mind labels “problem” on the situation in our life, we don’t see the problem. After our mind imputes “problem” on the situation of in our life, then we see problem. Generally, it’s like that in our life. The problem that we see comes from our mind, by putting the label that is a problem. That’s one way.

Your problem is coming from your own mind. That’s one way. The problem is coming from this moment’s mind, your mind of today, of this hour, of this moment’s concept—the kind of concept you have at this moment. This moment’s problem is production of, the creation of this moment’s concept, this moment’s way of thinking. You see problem in the life by thinking in a negative way. By thinking in a positive way you don’t see a problem in your life. Depending on which way you think, like tuning to a different channel. This way is one channel, that way is another channel. Which way you turn—what is this one called?

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:  
Huh?

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:  
Knob, yeah, like a knob. So this way, by turning the knob to another channel. So whether you see a problem in life or not depends on which way you think. It’s totally up to which way you think.

If the label “cancer” is not imputed, cancer doesn’t exist. If the label “AIDS” is not imputed, AIDS doesn’t exist, as well as all of the problems.

#### THE KINDNESS OF THE ENEMY

One time at Dharamsala, the main teacher in the monastery called the Dialectics School walked past me as I was coming down to the palace with “the nose up” as you say, [RL] looking down.

I think I bowed down or something like that and the teacher he did like this. This one. [RL] Because I didn’t apply meditation immediately, didn’t practice mindfulness, so it upset me. So when I went up to Tushita Retreat Center and sat down my room, I thought about that teacher. As I sat down on my bed, the thought came, as soon as I sat down I was thinking very strong of him. The thought came in my mind that I’m only become a friend of my ego, I’m only developing my ego. But this person is helping me to destroy my ego. He’s helping me to destroy my ego. Myself alone, I have always been a friend of my ego. Everything I do has been to develop my ego, to make it bigger. But, here, he’s helping me to destroy my ego. So how kind he is. How kind.

This is so precious because, if you don't have an ego, then you have bodhicitta. If you don't have the self-cherishing thought then you have bodhicitta. And with bodhicitta you can become enlightened. It also makes it possible to collect so much merit that you can realize emptiness and you can cease the gross and subtle defilements and achieve full enlightenment to be able to liberate numberless other sentient beings. Those who are obscured and suffering, you're able to bring to full enlightenment. So this person is making it possible to happen to you.

So this I'm just explaining. What I thought that time is this. I myself am like that, but this person is helping me destroy my ego. My enemy: the ego, my real enemy, *the* enemy, who's abiding in my heart—he's helping me destroy it. So this person is unbelievably precious, so kind. That is not just the kindness of somebody giving you a few hundred dollars or some food, the mother's kindness, the parent's kindness. That kind of kindness is something very deep: somebody who helps you to destroy your ego, the main obstacle to achieve enlightenment. It's an unbelievable kindness; it's so precious. That kindness is something very deep; it's a kindness that you feel from bottom of your heart.

So, here, now you see a person who does that as unbelievably kind, so precious in your life. You see that person as so precious in your life.

Before, when I was in front of him, because I put negative label on the situation, that upset me. After I came to my room and sat down and thought about it, I realized that what he did benefited me and was a great kindness. He did not harm me but benefited me by helping me to destroy my ego, which means, that person helps me to achieve enlightenment. So, here, by putting a positive label on what the person did, it not only you stopped the upsetness, I felt appreciation for the kindness of that person. The thought even came to repay the kindness, to thank him. The thought even came to give him a present to thank him. I thought about a present to thank him but unfortunately the present didn't happen. [RL] Unfortunately, I physically didn't actually manage to offer a present.

#### RINPOCHE'S TWO ALPHABET TEACHERS AND HIS EARLY LIFE

I have about twenty-seven gurus from whom I received different initiations, different teachings since from the childhood time, including my uncles who taught me Tibetan alphabet. When you learn the Tibetan alphabet, the main aim is to practice Dharma, not just for a job or school. I guess, if it's in school maybe there is a different attitude, but the purpose of learning the alphabet in a monastery is to practice Dharma. It's totally different. To live the life in that way and for that purpose to learn the alphabet, normally, the attitude is that. So the person who teaches you the alphabet is regarded as a guru, a spiritual master. I have two uncles who taught me the Tibetan alphabet.

I had two teachers because I was very naughty. [GL] I was very naughty. I was always running away from the monastery to my home, my family place, my mother's house. Maybe it takes, I'm not sure, half an hour or twenty-five minutes from the monastery. It's on the side of the mountain. You go on the hill, then go down in the village. I was very little so when I escaped from the monastery, non-stop I would run down to the village. There are dark caves by the side of the road. You get scared so you just run down non-stop. So, anyway, I did it few times like that. Then my mother or somebody carried me on their shoulders and brought me back to the monastery. I stayed few days and I was taught outside in a courtyard surrounded by piles of firewood. There's a door. When our teacher went inside the room to cook lunch—we have three or four meals, something like that—I just [RL GL] took the opportunity to run down. [RL GL].... [RL]

There is another Solo Khumbu area called Lotsawa Ling, a much more primitive place, much more hidden. But all those areas are regarded as holy places, a place of Padmasambhava, the great yogi who purified the land of Tibet. When they were building the first monastery in Tibet, Samye, spirits came in the night and tore it down. Many problems happened. So the King invited the great yogi Padmasambhava from India, who hooked those spirits by arising in the form of a wrathful deity, a buddha in the form of a wrathful deity. By doing this he was able to hook those spirits and subdue them. He tamed them and ordered them to become protectors rather than harming the monastery, to become Dharma protectors and subdue beings around the Himalayan snow mountains, the border to Tibet.

So these places are regarded as great yogi Padmasambhava's holy places. There are many caves of this great yogi Padmasambhava. Footprints or handprints are left—many things to do with Padmasambhava: holy water, long-life water, long-life nectar water, long-life vases. There are many things to see. There are many, many—so many caves. In the past it happened that many yogis achieved very high realizations there. Now, they are for the yaks to meditate. [RL GL] The yaks go there and they have good time in the caves, they go to sleep. [RL]

So my mother sent me up to that place. By crossing over snow mountains, the slow way, we took three days. It only takes Sherpas, those who go fast, maybe one or two days, something like that. There are some very heavy, very dangerous places. While you are walking over the snow there are cliffs with blue water way below, with the surface covered by snow. So everybody was tied together by ropes so if one person sinks, the others can pull him up. The first person who guides has an axe to unblock the road.

I was carried. I didn't have to walk. I didn't have to walk. The person who carried me, when he falls down then, of course... I was carried on his back. He had his own luggage and then I was put on top of that and carried.

One time I was carried my second alphabet teacher. When I returned from that country to see my mother, my second teacher carried me. He was maybe seventy years old. So I was sitting. He carried blankets to sleep at night, food and grass and all those things and. When you sleep in a cave you put grass down and you put grass inside the shoes. The shoes were of animal skin then woolen things around and when you walk in snow it is very cold so you put grass, dry grass inside the shoes to keep you warm, tight and warm. [RL] This is how the Sherpas who are crossing the snow mountain manage. When the old grass is wet, you take it out and put new grass in. It keeps the feet very warm. [RL]

So, anyway, I was sitting on top of all that. After the food and blanket and many things, I was put on that. I was sitting there, and while my teacher was carrying me with all the luggage, he fed me, passing food up like this while we were walking. There was cooked meat from the house, passed up like this. So I was eating, sitting on the back of my teacher. [RL]

Anyway, the road was very dangerous. There were snow mountains you have to cross and down below a dark blue lake. Avalanches can happen any time. If an avalanche happens then the person totally disappears in snow, in that minute. You don't even know where that person is. All the snow is like that so the person completely disappears.

One time, a small avalanche happened while we were crossing down. The person who was carrying me fell down quite a few steps. I made huge noise, I screamed. Some people, their luggage went all over the snow. If they had fallen down very heavily then would have fallen in the very deep lake, but before the edge there were some rocks. The people's luggage was

scattered all over the snow. But this person stood up and sang! He sang a song then he went to pick up his things after falling down.

At one place there's huge mountain, and the rocks fell down, first small then big. [Rinpoche makes the sound of rocks falling.] Like that. The small ones fell [Rinpoche makes the sound of small rocks] like that. [RL] There's also water. So then you have to cross this mountain, you have to go up and come down and go up. It's not straight like this.

It's very interesting that I only remember going up. Going down I don't remember. Four times I went but all the time I was carried on somebody's back. What the Sherpas do, before you cross a place where there's great danger and you may die, everybody stops and drinks very, very strong alcohol made from small potatoes. It's very, very strong. They drink *chang*, potato alcohol—whatever they have—then they generate heat. They make their hands warm. Then everybody carries their very heavy luggage for trading or to sell things. They carry huge load. Sometimes they pull the yaks on those rocks. It's an unbelievable hard life.

Once they start to walk until they reach the top everybody does their prayers, whatever prayers they know. Mostly they recite the Padmasambhava mantra. Some recite OM MANI PADME HUM. From here to here you hear the sound of the prayer; everybody reciting something, nonstop, because it's very dangerous. So I think at that time people are taking real serious refuge to Buddha and to the deities but as soon as they arrive and the danger is finished, all the prayers stopped. [GL] The refuge is stopped.

The surprising thing is that as soon as the last person got through, the stones came down. As soon as the last person crossed this, then the stones came down. You hear the noise of the stones falling down. [Rinpoche makes the noise of falling stones.] I thought some of them must have been killed but always it only happens after the last person has crossed the mountain.

So very interesting because they all did strong prayers, strong refuge to Padmasambhava and to Compassion Buddha and during that time nothing happened, but as soon as the people arrived at the other side, when they have crossed the danger, then the stones fell down. I find that interesting. That means that somebody is protecting and guiding them.

However, what I'm saying, I forget why I brought this story. Huh? Oh, I see, see. Don't remember why I brought this story, two teachers [GL] Huh? What? [GL]

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:

Oh, label. [RL GL] I think I forgot even the label. [GL]

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:

Huh? What did you say?

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:

Two uncles.

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:

That's right. [RL] That's right. How the two uncles came from before that. [RL] It doesn't matter. [RL GL]

So, that's right. I was talking about giving presents to the person who disrespects you or criticizes you. Even appreciating and give present to that person, talking about that. I thought about that. I really felt to do something like that but it didn't happen that I went down and offered a present to the person. So I remembered one of my teachers. That's how it started.

#### GESHE RABTEN

Geshe Rabten Rinpoche is my first teacher, the first to teach me debating, philosophy, this form of study in India, at Buxor. This is the place where the monks escaped from Lhasa, from great monasteries—Sera, Ganden, Drepung. Actually, they are monks from the four traditions: Sakya, Kagyü, Nyingma and Gelug. Those who wanted to continue their study they were put in this place by the Indian Government. They thought the monks needed a very secluded, very isolated place, some place very far from everything.

After they escaped from Tibet, many monks went to work, building roads in many parts of India where the military made roads. Those who wanted to study were put in this place called Buxor which was a concentration camp when India was under British control. Mahatma Gandhi was imprisoned there. That building became nunnery. The nuns stayed in that building and it became a nunnery. The monks lived there in that prison camp. But, of course, people lived there before in prison. Jawaharlal Nehru was imprisoned there. That became our sort of monastery, prayer hall, monks' room. Sixty or seventy or eighty monks lived in that long house and it became our puja hall and monks room.

My first teacher who began teaching philosophy was Geshe Rabten Rinpoche. When Geshe Rabten Rinpoche was living in Dharamsala, some other geshe criticized to him. It was Geshe Rabten's practice to invite those who criticized him home and make special Tibetan food, *momos*. So if a geshe criticized Geshe Rabten Rinpoche, he would invited that Geshe home and make delicious food and offer it to him. This is in appreciation of his help, to thank the person who criticized him. In other words, Geshe-la used that person who criticized him, for his practice, to develop his mind—to develop his mind in bodhicitta; to develop his mind on the path to enlightenment, to achieve enlightenment to be able to bring sentient beings to enlightenment.

Many real practitioners like Geshe Rabten Rinpoche do like this, practicing thought transformation. You appreciate the enemy who criticizes you, who puts you down. You actually feel this from your heart—it's not politics. [RL] It's not playing politics. From the heart you feel the kindness of that person, then you really want to offer something.

#### GOOD AND BAD ARE LABELED BY THE MIND

So, coming back to what I was saying, whether you see the person as negative or positive is up to your way of thinking, no matter what person does. Whether it's bad or whether it's good, whether it's harmful or beneficial, it's up to what your mind labels. That's what I'm saying.

Naropa, the Indian great yogi Naropa was the guru of the great Tibetan yogi Marpa, who in turn was an enlightened being and the guru of Milarepa, the great Tibetan yogi who became enlightened within a few number of years. There are two books on Milarepa. One is his story

and one is all the hymns that he sings with his realizations, expressing his attainment; his extremely inspiring life story and his teachings.

Milarepa's life story is one text to read. That's one to read, to study, especially for his realization of guru devotion, the root of the path to enlightenment. The root of the path of enlightenment is to have this realization of guru devotion. It is very inspiring, very helpful in developing the realization of guru devotion to read Milarepa's life story. How the great Tibetan yogi Milarepa practiced guru devotion with his guru Marpa is incomparable. It made him achieve enlightenment. It made him achieve enlightenment within a few years.

I think it was, maybe, thirty years ago when LSD was discovered, these things came out. When many young people by taking these things break their fixed idea, fixed concept, solid concept according to Western culture. Somehow due to their karma these things happened. Then by taking these broke the fixed idea or concept according to culture. Then saw Milarepa's life story, which book was available that time, maybe not so long ago. Then after some people took drugs and saw this book, it inspired them. Then they came to Nepal and India, to look for gurus. They wanted to be the same as Milarepa. They were so inspired.

Among the students there are some students who started like that. Then there are others who were inspired by different books at that time like Lama Govinda's book, *The Way of the White Clouds*. Many of them were inspired by that. Those who took drugs talked about tantra, all the visions happening in the mind, traveling without the body and things like that. With the experiences they had, they saw something similar in what they read in the books and they came to look for a spiritual path. They come to the East. According to their karma, they try different Dharma books, such as *Tibetan Book of the Dead* and like that.

The great yogi Naropa said that when one gets sick, the concept is sick. When one is born, the concept is born. When one dies, the concept dies. When one receives harm, the concept is harmed. What Naropa is saying is that actually all these things are all concepts. It's a way of thinking. It's all due to concepts. Where the problem comes from is the concept, so if one is able to cut root of this concept, then there's no obstacle. This is what Naropa is saying. All these things in our life are due to concepts, the way of thinking. Whether there's a problem or not a problem, an obstacle or not an obstacle, is according to the concept.

#### PROBLEMS COME FROM OUR OWN KARMA, NOT OTHER PEOPLE

I met a lady in New Zealand at the Mahamudra retreat center, Coromandel. We have a retreat center there called Mahamudra Center. I met a lady who was doing retreat there. She had so much suffering. She suffered so much for last few years being abused. She was unable to overcome it, unable to deal with it. She suffered so much, being abused. She explained this when we discussed it.

I don't remember, exactly, everything that I mentioned. But I mentioned why this has happened to you is because, in the past, you have treated the other person in that way. You have, in the past, abused the other person in the past lives. So this is the result why you experience abuse, treated like that by the other person. I think that had to do with the family. It was a family problem, the father or something like that. This is the result of your past karma, that you did the same thing to the other person. It's one's own karma. Something you have to accept is your own karma.

I don't remember exactly but I probably mentioned the advice that the great bodhisattva Shantideva explained in *Bodhicaryavatara, A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. This quotation is very effective. It's very powerful. It is very effective to remember advice that talks about karma.

"In the past I gave harm to the person" I don't remember the last verse exactly. It's gone. I don't know how many miles it's gone—it's gone! But, anyway—that's right. Now I remember. Now it came back.

"In the past I gave such harm to sentient beings. Because of that, I receive this harm from the sentient beings. [Tibetan quote.] Therefore, I deserve to receive harm from other sentient beings."

I deserve. What's happening to me—this abuse or whatever—is not something undeserved. It's not something that's happened to me without reason. It's not undeserved. Because in the past I did such harm, so now, by giving harm to other sentient beings, I am receiving harm. I deserve it.

In other words, by thinking of this quotation, by thinking this advice, you're accepting the situation and when you accept it, it doesn't make a problem for you. How the person treated you doesn't become a problem for you when you accept it. I deserve to receive this harm. So when you accept it, the minute when you accept it, it cuts down the problem. You have no problem.

There's a reason why this is happening to you. The reason exists before it happens. That reason is the cause, that's the karma. That reason exists before it happens. That's the cause. That's the karma. Then, also, the other thing is to use this situation to develop compassion. What you labeled as "that person abused me," what you labeled that way, you use to develop compassion for the other person. That is a way of developing compassion, a way of training your mind in compassion towards all sentient beings. So, it's unbelievable. You are using that situation to develop your mind in the path to enlightenment. You are creating unbelievable achievement out of that, skies of benefit out of that.

[Tibetan] "My karma persuaded" [Tibetan] "therefore, I received this harm."  
What he's saying is I did the same to that person in the past so my karma obliges that person to harm back to me. My karma obliges that person to harm back to me.

[Tibetan] "Because of that, didn't I cause that person to be lost in the hole of hell?"

"Therefore, didn't I cause that person to be lost in the hole of hell?" The meaning is that, because I treated the person in that way, harming him like that in the past, so my karma obliged that person to harm me back. And, that action, that person by giving harm to me, caused that person to be born in the hell realm. That's what it means.

To be lost in the hole of the hell, means to lost from where? To lost from the human realm, he's now human being. Because my karma persuaded him, because I harmed that person in the past, my karma persuaded him to harm me back and that caused, that make him who is now in the human realm to be born in the hell realm when he dies. So, actually, I threw him from the human realm into the hell realm. So this is where you generate compassion to that person, the person you think abused you, whose action your mind interpreted as abuse, labeled "abuse."

Here, besides being no way to get angry at that person, no way, that person is purely object for compassion to arise. He's *only* an object of compassion. That person is *only* an object of your compassion.

So then, here there is no angry mind; not sense of upset or anger, no dislike or hatred. Now, there is only compassion and now all you want to do it to help that person. You want to purify that person. You want to save, to protect that person from falling down in the hell realms. You want only help that person.

So, anyway, I mentioned these few techniques, the psychology from Buddha's teachings and she was able to resolve her problem. She felt better, after four or five years, after quite a number of years suffering so much. It had become huge problem to her. After those few techniques mentioned, why this has happened to you, and then to use for compassion so forth, then the problem decreased in her. Then she felt happiness. Here she is thinking in a positive way. Now she puts a positive label on the situation and therefore, now she has happiness. So in essence that is the conclusion.

#### SEEING PROBLEMS AS OPPORTUNITIES

I'll mention one thing then I'll stop there. Just one thing. [RL GL] Just one thing. [RL GL] Not two things, just one thing!

We should remember this in our daily life. I remember saying this before. [RL] We should remember this in our daily life. When things become a problem to you, when you encounter problems, immediately, you should remember "this is because I put the negative label on it. This is because I interpreted it negatively. I put the negative label on it, so that's why I suffer. That's why I see it as a problem." So by recognizing that you change. You then put a positive label on it, saying it is good.

It depends on the situation. You can look at it positively in many different ways. For example, if one has a bad reputation and the whole country, the whole world talks badly about you, for example, on TV or in newspapers, everyone talks bad about you. How fantastic this is! This is so good. I can destroy my ego. I can use this like an atomic bomb to destroy my ego, this thing that has never allowed me to achieve enlightenment from beginningless rebirth up to now. My ego, who never allowed me to achieve liberation from samsara, from the whole entire suffering from beginningless rebirth up to now; who never allowed me to have any realizations. This enemy who made me to suffer up to now in samsara, to die and be reborn, reincarnating all the time, and who is going to harm me continuously without end. It will never allow me to achieve enlightenment, liberation, and any realization in the future, so this bad reputation is so good for my ego. I'm going to give all this bad reputation and what people say is bad to the ego and destroy the ego, the enemy ego, *the* enemy, the demon, the enemy ego and destroy it.

This becomes very effective. Once a bad reputation has already happened, then you use it like this for your practice, you use the bad reputation to destroy the ego and to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, as a weapon to destroy the ego and to achieve enlightenment.

Or you can think that there are numberless other sentient beings who have the karma to receive a bad reputation, who are experiencing a bad reputation, so may I take all those on myself, may I receive all those bad reputations of other sentient beings on myself and I experience them by myself. Let them have all the good reputation. Let them have all the happiness up to enlightenment.

So doing this meditation, thinking this way, each time you experience a bad reputation for the benefit of all the sentient beings, to cause happiness to all sentient beings, for the numberless sentient beings, each time you collect merit, good karma, good luck like limitless skies. Like limitless skies you collect each time you think “I’m experiencing this bad reputation on behalf of all sentient beings.” To benefit all sentient beings. The motivation behind all this is for them to have all happiness up to enlightenment.

You take their sufferings on yourself and you experience, yourself—this one living being, yourself—you experience all like that. You let all the numberless others have all the happiness up to enlightenment. Each time you do this, you collect merit, good luck, and good karma. the cause of happiness like limitless skies. Each time you do this, you become closer to enlightenment. Each time you do this you come closer to enlightenment and it purifies inconceivable negative karma.

Each time you sacrifice your life for other sentient beings by experiencing the suffering for them, it is unbelievable purification; you collect unbelievable skies of merit. And that’s how you become closer to enlightenment each time. The bad reputation has already happened so that’s how you can make the bad reputation worthwhile, meaningful, beneficial for all sentient beings. Not only benefit for you but beneficial for all sentient beings.

In this way, having a bad reputation brings good. With Dharma practice, using it for Dharma practice, using it to practice bodhicitta, the bad reputation become positive. It becomes the path to enlightenment, the path to liberate numberless sentient beings from suffering, to bring them to enlightenment. So, now one point is finished. Maybe, I’ll stop here. I think it’s better to rest here, otherwise, it might get longer and longer. [GL] It might continue up to the dawn time, until tomorrow’s sunrise. So maybe I’ll stop here.

[Prayers: short mandala, dedication, longlife prayer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, further dedications]

Goodnight.

## Lecture 4

COMPASSION IS THE ESSENCE OF RELIGION

[Do not engage in] any unwholesome action, any harmful action, harmful to oneself and towards other sentient beings.

“Engage in the perfect wholesome action, perfect virtue.”

Action which is beneficial to oneself as well as to other living beings. Perfect wholesome action, perfect virtue.

“Subdue one’s own mind. This is the teaching of the Buddha.”

Taming the mind, subduing the mind is not only in Buddhism. It should be the essence of all the religions. If the practice is not there, then chanting prayers or rituals or whatever, no matter how much one does, does not subdue the mind that brings the problems in the life. Subduing the

mind which brings problems, which gives problems to oneself and which gives problems to others, to the world, to other sentient beings.

This should be in any religion. It should be the essence of any religion, otherwise, how it can benefit, how it can bring peace and happiness in life—in the individual person’s life as well as to the world. If the essence of religion is not reducing anger, if it’s not subduing the mind, subduing the anger, the dissatisfied mind, the desire—all these things that make life unhappy—[it cannot work]. The simple way of expressing this is to say it is all these emotional thoughts that make life unhappy, your own life and others’ lives.

By practicing patience, anger is subdued. By practicing compassion, the thought cherishing others, the ego, the self-centered mind is subdued. Only caring for oneself, only cherishing oneself, only working for only oneself, not benefiting others—this is countered by practicing compassion, the good heart, by cherishing others, then subduing the ego, the self-centered mind. Practicing contentment, by renouncing the dissatisfied mind, desire, you achieve contentment. You achieve peace. You achieve inner peace. You give peace to yourself, peace in your heart by practicing renunciation, letting go the desire, the painful mind of grasping. Letting go of this you achieve contentment. You achieve inner peace, satisfaction, in your life, in your heart. The essence of religion should be these things. At least, *at least*, it should be these things—subduing the mind.

The lack of this is why there are a lot of wars between religions. For hundreds and hundreds of years, for an unbelievable length of time, so many people have been killed, and suffered for that.

So, therefore, it is very important to practice the essence of religion, which is compassion. It’s not only Buddhism. Any religion should be like that. You should practice compassion, kindness towards others. Often His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, ‘My religion is kindness towards others.’ That makes sense: my religion is kindness towards others. That has great meaning. If that is practiced then it is impossible to have all these wars between religions for years and years, where so many hundred thousand, millions of people get killed or suffer. I guess, maybe, they missed out what the real meaning of religion is. They missed out or didn’t get to practice the real essence of religion—compassion or kindness towards other living beings.

If the mind is devoid of compassion, if your heart is devoid of compassion, inner peace, contentment, if your heart is devoid of this, then no matter whatever extensive things, what external practices you perform, it is not real religion. It’s not spiritual. Your heart is empty of the spiritual.

Of course, there is no question that what is the teaching of the Buddha mean, what it means to “practicing the Dharma” is to subdue one’s mind, to tame the disturbing, obscuring, emotional thoughts that bring so much suffering to yourself and to others from life to life—that which has been giving suffering to yourself and others from beginningless time, not only from the time of birth in this life but from beginningless rebirth up to now.

If you continue like that, if you don’t change your mind, you will continue giving harm to yourself and others without end, so, therefore, it is very important. Everybody wants peace and happiness. Everybody wants peace. Everybody wants happiness. Numberless other living beings—any insect or human being, deva, or anybody, any other living being—everyone wants happiness just exactly as oneself wants it. Nobody wants suffering and everybody wants peace and happiness. Therefore, it is extremely important that the real essence of any spiritual practice,

any real Dharma, is to tame one's mind. To make the mind soft, not rough, not harmful, not vicious or violent. Not like that. A soft mind, a loving mind, being kind towards others.

#### SUBDUING THE MIND IS RIGHT VIEW

This stanza: "Do not commit any unwholesome action; engage in perfect wholesome action; subdue one's own mind; this is the teaching of the Buddha." This contains four noble truths, the fundamental teaching of the Buddha. This is the basis, the essence, of the Hinayana teachings; this is the foundation of the Mahayana teachings; This is the foundation of Mahayana Sutra and Mahayana Tantra.

"Subdue one's own mind. This is the teaching of the Buddha."

What it contains is subdue, to pacify wrong concepts, from the mistakes towards the guru, from there up to subtle dualistic view, the ordinary impure mind, subtle mind and mind. The dualistic view, up to the very last mind, before you achieve enlightenment, the very last obstacle: the hallucination of inherently-existent appearance. That which is projected, that which is also subtle defilement. That which is projected by the subtle negative imprint left, such as the simultaneously-born wrong concept apprehending that I, while it is non-truly existent, while it doesn't exist from its own side, apprehending, holding on to it as if it truly existent or if it exists from its own side. While it is non-inherently existent, holding on to, apprehending the I as inherently existent. The subtle negative imprint left by that wrong concept, that simultaneously-born concept of inherent existence, the inherently existent appearance, this hallucination that one has up to the time before one become enlightened, this subtle negative imprint which projects that.

So subdue one's mind; this is the teaching of the Buddha. From the very beginning the wrong concept, the thought of mistakes towards the virtuous friend who reveal the path to liberation and enlightenment to you—from there, up to the subtle dual view and the subtle defilement. Subduing all these wrong concepts, all these obstacles, which are obstacles to having realizations of the path to enlightenment. So attaining all these is the teaching of the Buddha.

#### MEDITATION ON EMPTINESS

Next we do just a little meditation. The very meaning of this verse [Tibetan] is Buddha's teaching advice: how to look at the phenomena.

One's own body, possessions, life, surrounding people, family members, friends, enemies, sense objects, all these causative phenomena—not only do they change due to causes and conditions day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, second by second, not only that these things are changing, but they are decaying, they do not last even within every second. Even within second they do not last. They decay. They change. Like when you click the camera, [the film is exposed] for many hundredths of a second, they are changing, decaying. We can use this here, bring this into the meditation. All these conditioned phenomena change, decay, do not last even each second, even within each second.

These are causative phenomena, therefore they are changing, decaying, not only second by second but even within a second, changing, decaying. They do not last. Being under the control of cause and conditions, so because of this, these causative phenomena can be stopped anytime.

Not only these causative phenomena which are in the nature of impermanence, transitory, not only that, this includes causative phenomena and even uncaused phenomena, the permanent

phenomena. All the phenomena—permanent and impermanent—all the phenomena, what they are, is merely labeled by the mind. What they are is what is merely labeled by the mind. No phenomenon has inherent existence. No phenomenon exists from its own side. All phenomena are totally empty of existing from their own side.

In the view of our ignorance, our concept of inherent existence, all these appear as inherently existent, as something real. All these appear as “real,” as something real appearing from there. All these phenomena are real—I, action, object—all these phenomena are real; real in the sense our definition of real for us, especially, if we haven’t realized emptiness. Our definition of real is something appearing from there. That’s real: something appearing from there, something existing from its own side.

All the phenomena appear like this—I, action, object, enlightenment, hell, samsara, nirvana, happiness, unhappiness, suffering, virtue, nonvirtue, everything—all these appear existing from its own side; something real existing from its own side. But, in reality, all that appears to our hallucinated mind, is not in the mind. All these are hallucinations. All these are totally empty. All these phenomena are totally empty of this inherent existence. All these are empty of existing from their own side. So concentrate on this. Concentrate by looking into this emptiness, focusing into this emptiness.

SHAKYAMUNI VISUALIZATION MEDITATION

[Meditation]

[Prayer]

So we visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the one who reveals this unmistakable path to liberation, to full enlightenment; the graduated path to enlightenment that we’re studying, that our mind is going to be transformed in that. That which gives us the possibility to liberate numberless sentient beings from all the sufferings and their causes and bring them to full enlightenment. To be able to do perfect work towards other sentient beings; to be able to purify the mental continuum and receive blessings, all those qualities.

[Prayer]

From the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all the gurus, buddhas and all the lineage lamas, replicas absorb to oneself then one achieves all the qualities, all the realizations from guru devotion up to enlightenment, including the dharmakaya and rupakaya.

So to plant seed for the whole path to enlightenment; to read, by reading English, maybe, get some understanding of the meaning. So everybody read together in English.

*[Foundation of all Good Qualities]*

Thought transformation: Turning problems into happiness.

[Recitation of *Foundation of all Good Qualities* continued]

[Short mandala offering]

[Refuge and bodhicitta]

[Prayer]

#### BODHICITTA MAKES IT EASY TO REALIZE EMPTINESS

As I mentioned yesterday and the other day, the meditation on what is called ‘thought transformation’, what in Tibetan is *lo-jong* is a very important practice. This is a particular lo-jong, but generally, the whole lam-rim is lo-jong. From guru devotion up to enlightenment is lo-jong, thought transformation. But lam-rim and lo-jong, when you say it like that, the particular one that, even the obstacles you experience when you practice Dharma, when you meditate, you can transform those obstacles if you practice by doing the lo-jong, thought transformation, into the path to enlightenment. Even the problems or unfavorable circumstances or situations that you encounter while you are practicing Dharma, studying, meditating, doing retreat, interfering with your Dharma practice, by doing this special thought transformation, lo-jong, you are able to transform them into the path to enlightenment.

Something that is normally regarded as the opposite to happiness, as a problem, you are able to transform into happiness. When you encounter obstacles when you practice Dharma, even that, with the special practice of thought transformation, even those obstacles you transform. They become the path. They get transformed into the path to enlightenment. With this special practice, thought transformation, you’re using the obstacle as a path, as a means to achieve enlightenment. So it becomes a path to achieve enlightenment.

This way you have no obstacles. And this way you have no problems in life. What is regarded as a problem, with this special practice, thought transformation, with this special psychology taught by Buddha, you transform it. Like happiness, you need happiness—it’s the same. You use the problem to purify your mind, to purify those heavy negative karmas collected over many lifetimes, many thousands, billions how many lifetimes—eons of negative karmas. And you use the problem to collect skies of merit as I mentioned yesterday. One example I used for abuse, what you label abuse. From that one you use to achieve enlightenment. What you think is a problem you use as a path to achieve enlightenment and to liberate numberless sentient beings from all the suffering, causes, and bring them in to full enlightenment by yourself.

It’s the same here: using problems use like that. With this special thought transformation, with the bodhicitta practice, you experience problems for the benefit for sentient beings, on behalf of numberless other sentient beings. Rather than making yourself so sad—“Oh I have this problem. I have this problem. I have this problem,” on and on. You make yourself depressed, mind depressed, discouraged. This way, there is only courage; the problem doesn’t get you down. It lifts you up.

By using this special practice, the bodhicitta practice, giving up yourself for other sentient beings. Letting go of the I and cherishing other sentient beings. In other words, you give yourself up for all sentient beings. You experience suffering on behalf of all the sentient beings with this bodhicitta practice. The problem makes you to achieve enlightenment quicker. Using the

problem in this way, that unfavorable circumstance makes you to achieve enlightenment quicker. It encourages your mind. It makes you strong; it gives you courage.

Because of that, here, it becomes very useful. The problem becomes so useful, so beneficial. So it's something that you need. Here, now, in this way, by using it to develop this special bodhicitta, a problem becomes something needed. The problem becomes something needed rather than not needed. Rather than something you don't want, it becomes wanted. Because it is so beneficial, it brings infinite, unbelievable benefit: it makes you achieve enlightenment quicker. To develop bodhicitta, compassion for other sentient beings, as well, you collect so much merit.

To realize the wisdom realizing emptiness you need so much merit. Like if you want to do big project you need a million dollars, without that you can't accomplish that big project. In business life it is like that, and it is similar here. You need so much merit in order to have the realization of wisdom realizing emptiness, that which cuts the root of all the sufferings, which you have been experiencing time without beginning, from beginning-less past lives. This is something which can cut this, the very root of all this sufferings. To realize that which is incredible benefit like this, to be able to cease not only all the gross defilements, but to be able to cut the cause of suffering, even the subtle defilements. That which makes this mental continuum to be fully awakened, fully enlightened, this wisdom realizing emptiness. Even that can be achieved by developing the good heart. Developing bodhicitta makes it easy to achieve, to realize emptiness. Because having bodhicitta is the most powerful means to collect extensive merit.

#### PRACTICING PATIENCE

For example, if you have an enemy, if you regard a person who has anger towards you or who dislikes or doesn't love you as an enemy, by practicing patience towards that person, your anger, month by month, year by year, becomes less and less. And then, after some time, it is very difficult to get angry, the more the mind is trained in patience. Even if it arises, it arises for a very short time. [Rinpoche snaps his fingers.] It doesn't last long. It just rises for the duration like that. [Rinpoche snaps his fingers.] It stops after having practiced patience for some time, for some months or years. Then, even after that, by developing the mind in patience, no anger arises at all. Whatever happens to you, whatever harm others give you, you never get angry. No anger rises.

Here is the point. Here is the point. By practicing patience, anger does not arise. You're able to control it. So that means you don't give harm with anger. You don't give harm to others. Giving harm to others with anger is stopped. You no longer give harm to numberless other sentient beings, from life to life, and so many people in this life, causing them to get angry and making them create negative karma with body, speech, and mind, which causes them to be reborn in the hell realms, the lower realms. Even if we don't talk about reincarnation, about past and future lives, by making so many people unhappy and angry, you destroy their peace and happiness. You destroy so many people's peace and happiness—even in this one life, in the family, in the office, wherever you are, in the East, in the West, in the countryside, in the city, wherever you live, wherever you are.

Without practicing patience, then from life to life anger harms numberless other sentient beings. When you think from life to life, it harms numberless other sentient beings. Thinking from life to life, if you don't tame the mind, if you don't practice patience by training the mind to make it possible to stop anger, then this is what happens.

However, if by practicing patience from life to life—or even just this life—if you can stop even just this one disturbing emotional thought, anger, so many people, so many animals, don't receive harm from you with that anger. They receive so much peace and happiness from you. If we think from life to life, numberless sentient beings they don't receive harm from you with your anger. All that absence of harm is peace and happiness that other numberless sentient beings are receiving from you.

By your controlling anger, by practicing patience, by making it possible to not let anger arise, you are giving incredible skies of peace and happiness to numberless sentient beings from life to life. And all this peace and happiness you're able to give to numberless other sentient beings is by the kindness of this person who has anger towards you. By practicing patience on that person, you are able to offer all this peace and happiness to numberless other sentient beings. All this happens due to the kindness of the person who has anger towards you.

[GL] [RL GL] I thought the microphone is tired. [GL] Tired and bored. [RL GL] The microphone or the machine, tired and bored, maybe getting upset because of my coughing. [RL GL] Anyway, what I was trying to say before, all this peace and happiness that one is able to give numberless of other sentient beings through the practice of patience making it impossible to rise anger through that training, this is completely due to the kindness of this person. Because of this person, I can benefit numberless other sentient beings so much, I can give them all this peace and happiness.

If this person didn't have anger towards me then I would have no opportunity to practice patience. If this person has no anger towards me I have no opportunity to practice patience then no opportunity to control and to gradually destroy my anger. By developing my mind in patience then [GL] I make it impossible for anger to ever arise. That wouldn't happen if this person didn't have anger towards me. Therefore, developing my mind in patience, making it impossible for anger to arise after some time, being able to give so much peace and happiness to all the sentient beings—which is the absence of harm—all this is completely due to the kindness of this person who has anger towards me.

Other sentient beings not receiving harm from my anger has come from my mind training in the patience. How can I practice patience if no one gets angry at me? If nobody has anger towards me then how I can get the opportunity, how can I develop my mind in patience? There's no opportunity to practice patience, no opportunity to develop patience. In order to achieve enlightenment, I need to develop my mind in patience, this very precious quality of human mind, that which is one the six paramitas on the path to enlightenment: the paramita of charity, the paramita of morality, the paramita of patience, the paramita of joyous perseverance, the paramita of concentration and the paramita of wisdom. You need to complete all these, to cease all the mistakes of the mind and to complete all the qualities of realization which is full enlightenment. Only then you can do perfect work toward all the sentient beings without the slightest mistake.

To achieve enlightenment so that you can enlighten numberless other sentient beings, you need to practice the paramita of patience, which is the path to enlightenment, the bodhisattva's conduct. For that, to train the mind in that, without depending on someone having anger towards you, it is impossible. There is no opportunity to practice this path, to achieve this path. Therefore, you need anger, you need somebody having anger towards you. Maybe it's not good for that person to have anger, but for you there's an incredible need. For you there's an incredible need. There's a great need for development of your mind.

The Buddha give teachings to practice patience, but you have no opportunity to practice patience with Buddha. The Buddha doesn't have anger. Numberless sentient beings can be divided into three: friend, enemy and stranger. Friends, [RL] while they are friends, they don't have anger. While they are your friends, they don't have anger towards you. So with friend, there is no opportunity to practice patience, to develop this special quality of mind—tolerance, patience—this very fundamental quality which is the basis for peace and happiness in the life, yours and others.

Strangers, too, don't have anger towards you, so there is no opportunity to practice patience. The only person among these numberless sentient beings, the only person with whom one can practice patience, who gives you this precious opportunity to practice patience, is the person who has anger towards you. Only this person is left. Only this one's left.

If you don't practice patience with this person, who else gives you the opportunity? Who persuades you to follow the path; to practice patience? Otherwise you have no opportunity to achieve the path, then cannot achieve enlightenment, then cannot do perfect work towards the sentient beings without slightest mistake to bring them in full enlightenment. You cannot. And that is the main goal of your life. That's the main goal of your life: to liberate sentient beings from the suffering, to lead them to enlightenment.

If that's your main goal of the life, why we're surviving day-to-day life, why we survive, why we put so much effort to live, is to develop the mind on the path; to benefit sentient beings. So this one is the main goal of our life to liberate sentient beings from the suffering and bring them in full enlightenment. That's the main goal of life – your ultimate goal: ultimate benefit towards others.

#### THE ENEMY IS THE kinDEST PERSON

Therefore, this person is unbelievable, so unbelievably kind. The kindness is like limitless skies because of the benefit you receive from it. What you achieve from that person is like limitless skies. The kindness of that person having anger towards you, like limitless sky of kindness, is unbelievable. He is the most precious kind one in your life, the most precious kind one in your life.

Each time that person show you the kindness of having anger towards you, it gives you the opportunity to practice patience. You benefit each time, you benefit by practicing patience each time, and that leads to enlightenment, it brings you to enlightenment and then you're able to bring all the numberless sentient beings every happiness, all the temporal happiness and ultimate happiness, liberation and enlightenment.

Even if you were to give that person however many possessions, however much wealth there is on this Earth, it's not enough to repay the kindness. It's nothing. Offering this person all the wealth of this Earth to repay the kindness is not enough. It is nothing to repay the kindness of that person, to repay for all this benefit you have received from that person. Even if you offer billions of dollars, it's nothing. It's nothing. With a billion dollars you don't have that opportunity to practice patience, to develop patience, this precious thing this person has given you. Comparing the billion dollars and the value of this sentient being, the billion dollars is nothing; it is lost when you think of the value of this person, from how much benefit you get from that person giving you opportunity to practice patience by anger. A billion dollars doesn't have anger.

Actually, this person is the most precious, the most kind one, in your life. By making it impossible for anger to arise by developing the mind in patience, then numberless sentient beings don't receive harm from you and therefore they get so much peace and happiness. You're able to offer all this due to kindness of this person, this opportunity given to you by this person.

The other advantage is that by developing mind in patience you are able to achieve enlightenment. Then by developing patience you're able to cause, temporary happiness, ultimate happiness, liberation and enlightenment for all sentient beings. Again, this is completely due to the kindness of this person who had anger towards you. He gave you this opportunity. He gave you the opportunity to develop your mind and therefore you are able to offer all this happiness to others, all the temporal and ultimate happiness.

I'm just trying to conclude this meditation on the kindness to the person who has anger towards you, how to meditate on the kindness of the person extensively, one who has anger towards you, whom you call "enemy," or who doesn't love you.

#### THE BENEFITS OF PRACTICING PATIENCE

And then the other thing is this. Even if you don't believe in reincarnation, in karma, even if you're not seeking enlightenment or liberation from samsara, even if one is not interested in these things, if you don't believe in these things, you still you need to practice patience.

If you don't practice patience, what happens is that the person you want to be your friend, even if that person becomes your friend, you'll turn into your enemy. This is even if we're just talking about one life, this life's happiness. If you don't practice patience then, every time something happens, your mind becomes impatient and anger rises. Then when you get angry with your friend, with your beloved friend, that anger makes you become an enemy to your beloved friend. And your anger makes your beloved friend become your enemy, to change his or her mind towards you, to get angry at you, upset with you. Your anger breaks your relationship. Your anger makes the person separate from you, makes the other person to get tired, bored, to leave you, to drop you.

Even for somebody who only thinks of the happiness of this life, who is concerned only with the happiness of this life, if you need happiness, it becomes so essential, so crucial to practice patience. You want a harmonious relationship but because you don't practice patience, your anger makes disharmony in the relationship. It breaks that relationship. It doesn't last.

To have peace and happiness, harmony, good relationships between employee and employer depends on patience. Between teacher and students, parents and children, to have a good relationship, harmony, the practice of patience is needed everywhere. In every life there's a need.

The person who never thinks of patience, never practices patience, has a very self-centered mind. Whenever even some very small thing goes wrong—something that isn't exactly how that person likes it, that suits that's person's ego—immediately, anger arises. Then that destroys that person's happiness and it makes others angry or unhappy. It transforms the environment negatively. When that person is angry, the environment in the room is very negative, kind of terrifying. When you see that person's body, it is very terrifying that time. Even though it is normally beautiful, when anger manifests even the body becomes very terrifying.

Wherever that person goes, East or West, instead of making friends, everybody becomes their enemy. Behind their back, everybody complains about them, they create a bad reputation explaining to people how that person has a cruel personality in action, in behavior, in attitude,

how they are self-centered, impatient. Then, it is so difficult to have a friend. Even those who are friends at the beginning become enemies later. Maybe they are a friend in the morning, but by the evening time they become an enemy.

In this world, just one person who has much influence and power but who does not practice patience, can cause many millions of people to be killed or tortured. Even one person in this world who has so much influence but does not practice patience, who doesn't have that precious quality of mind, the good heart this can happen. But if that person who has so much influence did practice patience and have a good heart, then the opposite happens. That person could give so much unbelievable peace and happiness to so many millions and millions of people in this world. That covers, also, the animals.

The other way leads to war, where so many millions of people are killed and so many countries are destroyed. And then, by the way, uncountable numbers of animals are killed and suffer due to weapons, to violence, to the atomic bomb. You can see how even one person either practicing patience or not practicing patience can make an incredible difference to the world. Therefore, it becomes so essential in our daily life to practice patience.

Sometimes silence is much more beneficial than talking. Try to communicate without the addition of anger, without the negative emotional mind. Communicate without this extra thing, the unnecessary external thing, the emotional negative thought. That part is unnecessary. It's only harmful. There's no benefit to that extra thing. If, while you're communicating, that negative emotional thought, anger, arises, there's only ever harm; there is never any benefit.

If you don't get to practice patience just once and you get angry, that leaves a negative imprint on the mental continuum. Then that means you are creating more cause to get angry in the future. Already there are a lot of negative imprints left by the past anger. Already there's a lot. So then, again, you're planting another seed on the mental continuum. You're leaving another negative imprint of anger on your mental continuum, which makes it more likely to happen in the future, and you become more impatient in the future.

I'm talking about anger but it the same with all the dissatisfied minds, with desire, attachment, or any other negative emotional thoughts. The more one allows them to arise, the more negative imprints are left on the mental continuum, which makes your future life more difficult. Then you have to experience the hell suffering until the karma finishes. When the karma finishes then the hell suffering stops. There's certain length of time. It's not like Christianity mentions, where once you're born in hell then you are in the hell forever. It's not like that. What causes you to be born in hell is karma. The duration of the experience of the hell suffering depends on the karma and when that karma finishes, the experience of the suffering of hell finishes.

Normally I say that in our daily life leaving negative imprints on the mental continuum each time anger or desire arises is much more terrifying than hell. It is much more terrifying than the suffering of hell because if you don't have any negative imprints there can be no hell. There's no hell. There's no suffering of the lower realms, you can never experience it. It doesn't exist for you. If you don't have negative imprints, if delusion doesn't arise, that means there's nothing there that can cause delusions such as anger and desire to arise. There's nothing there. Nothing there that makes these negative emotional thoughts arise, and these are what make it possible to experience the unbearable suffering of the lower realms, such as hell.

So, normally, I say that by analyzing the negative imprints on our mental continuum, it is much more terrifying, much more fearful, than the suffering of the hell. So, therefore, it is very

important in our daily life, rather every time letting anger arise, every time being controlled by anger, every time giving the victory to anger—instead of that, you yourself take the victory, you take control. Rather than giving the control, the victory to your anger and losing while anger wins, anger controls you, [you control anger and you win].

Just missing the chance to practice patience even not every time, but, at least, one day or one week, even if you miss many times, anger can overpower you, control you, but at least even one time in a day or in a week, trying to practice patience, trying to be able to use meditation techniques is very important. Even being able to control anger by practicing patience one time, for one day or one week, that makes huge differences. That way, there's no opportunity for anger to leave a negative imprint on your mental continuum which gives rise, again, to anger—again and again, so many times in the future.

So, this subject I started was how the other person having anger towards you becomes very positive for you, it becomes a great need in your life. Normally I say it like this: just as you need a friend, you need an enemy. Just as you need a friend in daily life, in exactly the same way, you also need an enemy. In other words, just as you need happiness, in the same way, you need someone having anger towards you. If you don't practice patience right now, right now, while the other person has anger towards you, if you don't take the opportunity right now, the minute the other person's anger is gone then you don't have that precious opportunity. You have lost the opportunity to practice patience. So you must practice patience right now, while the other person has anger towards you.

So, now, going back to the subject, going back. In this case, it is positive. You label it “positive.” With these reasons, you label “positive” and you see it as positive.

#### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION IS THE BEST PSYCHOLOGY

What I was saying before, with this special practice, with thought transformation and the bodhicitta practice, you make the best use of the problems in your life; you make them most meaningful, most beneficial for you and for all sentient beings. You use the problem to cause happiness to all the sentient beings. By using this problem for you to achieve enlightenment.

You have less suffering, less problems—even no problems and only happiness—in your daily life, if you train your mind to always look at life's situations as positive, to always put the positive label “good” on things. I gave quite a number of reasons during these few days. The more your mind is trained in this way the less problem there are in your daily life. The less problems and the fewer negative emotions in your daily life. If you're able to that twenty-four hours a day, then there's no problem at all in that day.

Conversely, the more we are under the control of the ego, the self-centered mind, the more we are trained to look at things negatively, to put a negative label on life's situations. If the mind becomes more trained that way, then more and more problems happen in your daily life. Then, after some time, by the mind becoming habituated to it, getting used to it, there's nothing positive in your life. Everything becomes bad. Whatever you see, whatever happens around, everything is unpleasant, bad. Everybody becomes the enemy—even the dog barking outside, even the bird making noise outside—everything becomes harmful to you. Everything becomes distracting to you, annoying you, because your mind is so habituated by ego, the self-centered mind to put a negative label on everything, “This is bad,” “This is bad,” “This is bad.” Then whatever appears in your life, to you, becomes harmful, becomes a kind of enemy.

So, as such, this thought transformation practice is the *best* psychology. It is the most practical meditation and the best psychology to stop the suffering of life and to achieve happiness from within your mind. The next thing I'll mention and then I'll stop there.

#### THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS: THE ORIGIN OF SUFFERING

What was the purpose of the Buddha descending in this world? To benefit sentient beings, to liberate us sentient beings from the suffering that we have been experiencing from beginningless rebirth. As the Buddha mentioned, the Buddha's way of liberating us sentient beings is not by washing with water, the Buddha's way of liberating us from the suffering, or removing the cause of the suffering, is not by washing with the water. Also, it is not like removing a thorn that went inside the body, with the hand. That is not the way that the Buddha liberates us sentient beings. The way Buddha liberates us sentient beings is not by transplanting his realizations within us, like transplanting a monkey's brain or heart into human beings. Anyway, it is not in that way.

The only way the Buddha liberates us sentient beings is by revealing the truth. That is the reason why. Sorry, it didn't happen last night [RL]. Anyway, that is like these teachings, the teachings of the *Prajnaparamita*. The way they liberate us sentient beings is by revealing the truth, by revealing the teachings, the *Perfection of Wisdom, Prajnaparamita* teachings. Now here the basic teaching is the four noble truths; as I mentioned before, the base, the Mahayana Sutra, the Mahayana Tantra.

The first noble truth the Buddha revealed was the truth of suffering and the second was the truth of the origin of suffering. Nothing occurs without cause and conditions. Nothing has inherent existence. Suffering doesn't have any inherent existence. Suffering exists because there are the causes and conditions, and the Buddha revealed that the origin of suffering is karma and delusions.

Then the Buddha discussed whether karma and delusion can be ceased or not, and showed that they can be ceased, and by doing so you get liberated from suffering. That is the third noble truth, the truth of the cessation of suffering. By revealing the cause of the suffering, delusion and karma, you come to know how to be free from suffering, that you have to be liberated from the delusion and karma, the cause of suffering. You can achieve this cessation of whole entire suffering, the causes, delusions and karma. You can definitely achieve it. To show how you can achieve it, the Buddha revealed the true path, that there is a method to achieve the cessation of the suffering.

As mentioned by Buddha, the truth of suffering is to be *known*, the cause of the suffering is to be *abandoned*, the cessation of the suffering is to be *actualized* and the true path is to be *practiced*. This is like a doctor who explains the sickness and how it happened. Normally he gives some explanation how this happened and then, how it can be cured. The doctor gives you medicine, treatment, whatever, in order to heal the sickness.

All this depends on following a wise doctor. All the success depends on finding and following a wise doctor. So it's the same here. For the success of all this, the cessation of the suffering depends on actualizing true path, and that depends on a qualified spiritual master or virtuous friend revealing the path.

#### THE TWELVE LINKS: KARMA AND CONSCIOUSNESS

The Buddha explained the evolution of the suffering—how we circle in *samsara*—in the *Sutra of Rice Planting*. In Tibetan it is called [Tibetan]. He explained the twelve interdependent links by relating to the external plant. Like a farmer cultivates the field, so ignorance is the very first link

and so forth. There are twelve dependently related limbs which describe the evolution of samsara; how we circle in the *samsara*.

The first link is *ignorance*, not knowing what the I is, ultimate nature of I, the aggregates such as the mind; so that is like the farmer, the cultivator.

The second link is *karmic formation* or compounding action called *du-che keyi-le* in Tibetan. That's like the field from where various crops grow. From the karma, compounded action, the various lives, the various rebirths come, a suffering life or a happy life—all these.

Compounding action is motivated by the ignorance, and the *consciousness* (the third link) on which the compounding action leaves or plants the seed, the imprint—that which produces future *samsara*, the future rebirth—the consciousness is like the seed.

The consciousness carries the imprint, the seed, left by the karma. The various imprints or seeds, which result rebirth in the lower realm, which continue from one life to another life are not the consciousness of eye, ear and so forth—not those five. They are carried on the sixth one, the consciousness of the mind.

Generally speaking, it is considered the sixth consciousness, the consciousness of the mind. But in details there maybe, different schools have different way of explaining, especially *Cittamatra*, the Mind Only School. However, the *Cittamatra* School says there is a seventh consciousness or even an eighth consciousness.

However, so the compounding action leaves imprint or seed on the consciousness of the mind, that which continues from life to life. This consciousness of the mind is like the seed. One small seed like the Bodhi tree seed carries the power, the potential to produce a huge trunk and many thousands of branches and leaves—such a huge tree. That small seed carries all the potential of that huge tree. It carries the potential to grow like that.

#### THE TWELVE LINKS: NAME AND FORM

Then after that, the sprout comes from having planted the seed. The sprout comes. Then there is *name and form*, the fourth link. After consciousness takes place in the fertilized egg in mother's womb, there is name and form.

The name refers to all the body and mind; all the mind part is *name* and the physical part is the *form*. So that's like sprout coming from the seed. Generally, this is name and form.

There are two ways of defining consciousness in the twelve links. One way you count where the compounded action leaves an imprint, and the other you count the consciousness as a result, as that which takes place on the fertilized egg. It depends on which college's text you refer to whether the result consciousness is counted; the previous consciousness on which the past life compounding action left imprint, that's counted. So depending on which college's text, which monastery's text, there are different ways of explaining.

I don't remember but I think at Sera Je we were counting one way and at Drepung Monastery and Loseling, there are different ways. They count the consciousness on which the compounding action leaves the imprint. And Sera Je college's texts count the consciousness which takes place on the fertilized egg, something like that. I have some vague memories regarding that.

After *name and form* there is the *six sense bases*, the six sources or six sense bases and then *contact* and *feeling*.

Then, *birth* happens and—what’s related to us—*old age and death*. So, actually, in reality, getting older starts from the mother’s womb. In reality, getting old, decaying, starts from the mother’s womb; from the time after the consciousness takes place on the fertilized egg. In reality, from there it is getting older. In the ordinary people’s definition of old age, it is when we see wrinkles and all these signs of the physical body’s old age. However, death can happen even before that, so *old age and death* comes together like that. Now what’s left for us to experience is death.

One thing that I didn’t say, I left out. I left out in the cause. Ignorance is like cultivator, then the compounding action, which motivates that, is like the field that you cultivate and grows various crops; then on which the imprint left by the compounding action, the consciousness, this is the seed you sow.

Then, to grow that you need soil and water. That’s like *craving* and *grasping*. Before this life, before we were born, whatever life we had—whether a human life or animal, whatever that previous life was, at the death time, when life is about to end, then craving and grasping arise, like the conditions of soil and water that makes the seed grow and produce a stem. Craving and grasping arise and that makes the imprint seed left by the compounding action ready to produce its future result—*samsara*. Then in this life, there are name and the form, the six sense bases, contact, feeling, aging and death.

#### THE TWELVE LINKS: CONSCIOUSNESS, KARMA AND IGNORANCE

Now, in conclusion, there are two things. When you have a movie, you record many people, countries, mountains, beautiful flowers, you have people fighting, having entertainment, parties, enjoyment—all kinds of things. You make a film and have it printed. Then, you put this into a machine, with electricity and you project it onto a movie screen. Whatever is on the film, then project on the movie screen.

So, this life, including this body, these aggregates, then form, sound, taste, smell, tangible objects—all these appearances, all these sense objects, whatever we experience—all this is a production of karma. All this came from the mind. All this came from the consciousness. How? With the imprints left on that mind, both the negative and positive imprints. It all depends on that, whether the object you see is beautiful or ugly, bad or good, all these things.

It depends on what kind of imprint, positive or negative imprint, is left on the consciousness. That is projected in this life. Whatever we see in this life, include these ideas, all came from what is the imprint the consciousness, the imprints left on that manifest. So it is like the roll of negative film that is process and then projected onto the screen, which comes from that being filmed in that way. How it was filmed, how it was printed, that’s how it is projected. So, this is the same. All these appearances came from one’s own mind, the consciousness, from the imprints left on the mind that manifest. So that’s the first thing about how everything came from the mind.

Now the second thing about how everything came from mind is this. All this, your own aggregates, all the views you have, sense objects, form, sound, smell, taste, everything you see, pleasant sounds, uninteresting sounds, bad sounds, beautiful sounds, bad smells, good smells, good taste, bad taste, whatever—all the sense objects, all this is a projection. The consciousness comes from the imprint. All this comes from the karma, the compounding action.

The second reason that I'm saying that everything comes from the mind is because of karma, the compounding action. All this comes from the mind, from the compounding action of karma.

Now the third reason is that all this comes from ignorance, including this body, this samsaric body we have, which comes from the ignorance. Even this human body comes from ignorance so that's the mind. That's not body, that's the mind.

So I'm introducing that. First came from consciousness; second came from karma; third from ignorance. So using the twelve dependently related limbs, using that, is how everything comes from the mind.

#### EVERYTHING COMES FROM THE MIND

So, now, I usually say that the enemy, the person who is negative towards you, who has anger towards you, who harms you, who abuses you, where does all that come from?

You see somebody abusing you—your mind labels that “abuse” and “bad.” The person who is angry you label “enemy.” All this comes from the consciousness, from karma, from ignorance. Therefore, by discovering this process, where all this came from, by seeing all this is a creation of your own mind, there is nobody out there to blame. There's nobody there to blame. There's nothing external to blame. The creator is your own mind. If somebody abuses you, if somebody harms you or criticizes you, it comes from your mind. The very root is ignorance. So there's nobody there to blame. It is extremely beneficial, useful, to remember this in your daily life when somebody criticizes you, when somebody badly treats you, when something unpleasant happens. It is very useful to remember all the sources that this harm came from.

That's why the basic philosophy of Buddhism is that there's no external creator. There's no outside creator who creates your life. It's your mind. There's no god or something outside that creates your life. Whether there's suffering, whether there's happiness, the creator of your life is your mind, your self. That means that in Buddhism you have incredible freedom because you are—your mind is—the creator of all your happiness and all your suffering. Ultimate happiness, liberation from samsara, enlightenment, everything, all this happiness—the creator is your mind, not somebody outside. Therefore, you have incredible freedom. It's up to you. If you want freedom from suffering, if you want to achieve liberation, it's up to you. It depends on what you do with your mind, how you use your mind. From your mind you can stop the suffering. For example, by realizing emptiness, by developing wisdom, you can stop all suffering.

You can explain the twelve links the other way around. You can cease ignorance. By ceasing ignorance you cease compounded action. Then you cease craving, grasping, all those things. You cease becoming. Then you cease rebirth. You can cease old age, death. You can cease all these links. You can cease all those suffering results by ceasing the cause, as described through the twelve links. By realizing ultimate nature. With this wisdom you can cease ignorance. By ceasing ignorance, then you can cease all the sufferings result in between, including rebirth and death.

So, it's up to you what you do with your mind. In Buddhist philosophy, you are the creator. Your mind is the creator. This gives you incredible freedom.

Many people think everything is up to karma, and you have no choice. There's no free will. There's no free will. Everything is up to karma. You have no freedom (*all in singsong voice*). [RL GL] (*Rinpoche clears throat*) No, the coughing is not answer. [RL]

Anyway, because what I think, because of karma, because everything depends on karma, because of that, same answer. Therefore, you have so much freedom what you can do. Because everything depends on karma, it's up to your mind.

The main thing: your mind has the potential to be completely free from suffering, to cease all the defilements. Your mind has the potential to cease all your defilements, delusion, karma, and to achieve liberation, even to achieve full enlightenment. Your mind has all this potential. Your clear light, the nature of the mind, is the buddha nature. That's buddha nature. Because of that, your mind has all this potential. Because of that, you can remove the cause of all suffering including negative karma, you can practice virtue and achieve liberation and enlightenment.

So, I'll stop here.

## DEDICATIONS

[Prayers]

We have just finished the section on guru devotion, so we'll do the dedication this way. It is a very important dedication if you want to have success in Dharma practice, realizations.

“Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by myself and others, the three times' merits collected by buddhas, bodhisattvas and all the sentient beings, oneself, one's own family members, all the students and benefactors in this organization, and all the rest of the sentient beings, may we always find a perfectly qualified Mahayana virtuous friend guru in all the future lifetimes.

“May oneself and all the sentient beings able to see the virtuous friend as a buddha in all the lifetimes, be able to see only the buddha, and oneself and all sentient beings able to do actions only pleasing the holy mind of the virtuous friend.

“Oneself and all sentient beings able to fulfill the holy wishes of the virtuous friend immediately in all the future lifetimes.”

This dedication is extremely important.

## Lecture 5

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS: THE FOUR ASPECTS OF THE TRUTH OF SUFFERING, IMPERMANENCE

[Prayer]

“To not commit any unwholesome action, engage in perfect wholesome actions, subdue one's mind, this is the teaching of the Buddha.”

[Prayer]

Look at causative phenomena—one's own body, possessions, surrounding people, friend, enemy, sense objects, forms, sounds, smells, taste, tangible objects—these causative phenomena are impermanent in nature.

They are not just changing day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, second by second, they're changing even within every second. They are changing, decaying, they do not last. They do not last even within a second because they are under the control of cause and conditions. Concentrate on the fact that they're decaying, that they're changing, that they do not last even within second. Especially focus on this.

There are three levels of impermanence: extremely subtle, subtle and gross. Because of that extremely subtle change, that extremely subtle impermanence, all causative phenomena are changing, they do not last even within a second. The extremely subtle changes mean they're changing within the second. And then, from those, gross change happens. Because they're changing even within a second, they do not last, they decay. These phenomena can cease, they can be stopped any time. So just meditate on this.

It is so important to meditate on impermanence and death, so important. This is part of the nature of life. When we think of this we see these causative phenomena—your own life, body, possessions, surrounding people—as permanent, that they're not changing day by day, minute by minute, hour by hour, second by second, not changing even within second. They are something permanent and then we try to look at them impermanent; something which are permanent and then we try to look at them impermanent. It's not like that. So, of course, in that case, can be, anyway that's not true. You're meditating on something which is not true.

But this is the nature of life. We're meditating, we're trying to be mindful, trying to realize, discover that these causative phenomena are nature of impermanence. We try to discover that they're impermanent in nature. We try to realize gross impermanence and subtle impermanence.

#### PROBLEMS COME FROM NOT UNDERSTANDING IMPERMANENCE AND SELFLESSNESS

Impermanence is part of the realization of the four noble truths. Each Noble truth has four qualities. What's the difference between attribute and quality? What's the difference between qualities and attributes? [RL] Maybe it's different in Switzerland. [GL, RL] Joking. I'm joking. [Rinpoche discusses with someone (Losang Yeshe?) in Tibetan]

So each noble truth has four attributes or qualities. Impermanence is the first attribute of the truth suffering. Then emptiness, then selflessness.

So we're trying to realize that one's own life, the surrounding people, friend, enemy, family members and so forth are in the nature of impermanence. We're trying to realize that they're the nature of impermanence. In that way we stop the wrong concept of permanence, which is how it is apprehended, how things appear permanent to our hallucinated mind, like how I explained on one of the nights. I explained how, after our mind merely imputes the I, action, object, any phenomenon, then when it appears back, it appears back not merely labeled by mind. It should appear back merely labeled by mind but it doesn't appear back to us in that way. It appears back to us totally wrong, totally false—not merely labeled by mind but existing from its own side. It doesn't appear back according to reality.

So what appears to us, how things appear to us, is opposite – not harmonious with, not according to reality. So that's the definition of false view. Truth and false – the definition of false is that which appears is not harmonious, not according to reality. The way things appear is not according to reality. That's the definition of what is false.

It's the same here. When we look at our body, we don't see its impermanent nature. Even though in reality it's changing day by day, becoming older hour by hour, minute by minute,

second by second, even within second, getting older and changing. It's happening but appears as permanent.

It's the same thing when you think of life, or the I. Although the I is impermanent it appears permanent. When you think of the I it doesn't appear, it doesn't appear to have an impermanent nature, even though it has. It appears as permanent. And it's the same thing when you think of the enemy, or when you think of the friend, it doesn't appear impermanent. Even though they're impermanent, they don't appear to you that way. You hold onto them as permanent. To your hallucinated mind they appear permanent.

Then because we haven't realized emptiness, we not only can't realize that they are in nature of impermanence, but we don't meditate and our mind is not even aware their nature. We totally think the opposite. We totally look at them as the opposite, as something permanent, something long lasting.

So here, again another problem, another suffering that we have in our life, the concept of permanence. Then because of that again builds up attachment, anger, all these things based on that.

When your mind is so dissatisfied—for example, in the case of business—you want more and more and more. After you make \$1000 profit, you want \$100,000 profit. After you make that \$100,000 profit you want a million dollar profit. After you made a million dollar profit you want to make billion dollar profit. After you made a billion dollar profit you want to make a zillion dollar profit. [GL] After a zillion dollar profit, then a trillion dollar profit, then maybe another million dollars. [GL] I'm joking on this one.

By following desire, what you want is always more; always more, more than others. You always want to have more. There's no end to it. As long as you follow desire there's no end to it. There's no limit. Wanting more has no limit. Even while you have enough, enough to live, enough to live for this life, even when you have more than enough, but still you want more, more, more.

#### MEDITATING ON IMPERMANENCE AND DEATH

While there's so much stress, so much worry, fear, all this anxiety about not achieving more, all this worry, fear that what you have might become less, suddenly you think, "Oh I might die." If you think of the nature of your life, suddenly, you bring your mind inside. From being distracted, thinking only of external objects, following desire, busy, busy following desire, you bring your attention back, and think of your life. You think of your inner life and that it is the nature of impermanence that this can be stopped anytime, any day, any hour, any moment, this can be stopped. This breath can be stopped any day, any hour, any moment—it can be stopped. This breath goes out, in; goes out, in. One day it goes out and doesn't go in. It can happen any moment, any day, any hour, any minute.

By reflecting like that, you think of your inner life. You look at your nature of life, which is impermanence. When you think of that, that it can end anytime, then the petty worries make no sense. All the things that you worried about before—wanting more and more and more, better and better, things that had no end, no limit, things that brought all that worry, fear, stress. You made the stress yourself, with all the emotional thought you produced stress. Suddenly, none of this makes any sense, suddenly, none of this has any meaning, when you think that the nature of your life is impermanence, that death can happen anytime. None of this makes any sense. All the

worry, the fear, all the expectations, all the desire, is completely cut, right there. What keeps you so busy day and night is cut by reflecting on the nature of life, impermanence and death.

When you think of death, all this is nothing. It doesn't make any sense. Now you have to think something else totally different. Now you have to think something else. When you think of death, the nature of life, now you have to think of something else, not this one, not what you've been doing so far. You have to think of Dharma. Nothing else, only Dharma, can help at the time of death.

[Part of talk missing] When you don't think carefully about karma, when you don't examine it, then you blindly follow attachment. You think you can do so many things, and you have no rules, you can be easygoing, finding attraction like that. That's because of not thinking about karma. Easygoing yes, you can do so many things, but not thinking about karma, not analyzing karma. But if you think of the karma then that brings you back to the practice, to living in the vows, the precepts. When you don't think karma, when you look at it externally, you can do everything, you have no rules. You create hallucination, you give hallucination to yourself.

Generally speaking, it depends on how the person, the nun or the monk, on how that person lives their life. It depends on how that lay person lives their life. There are many yogis who achieved enlightenment in a lay body. By practicing tantra, by practicing Highest Yoga Tantra, many yogis like Milarepa, Marpa achieved enlightenment by practicing Highest Yoga Tantra. It doesn't matter what sort of person—lay, monk, nun, man, woman—they are able to practice, they are free to practice the Dharma in their life. Of course, that doesn't mean everyone. It depends on how they live their life, even if they have a monk's life. Of course, being a real monk or nun, there is so much freedom to practice the Dharma, generally speaking.

So anyway, I was using that as an example of how that meditator, that monk did not think of death. That's how thoughts that are the opposite of renunciation come. So when I mentioned this, he was crying. As an education, it is very important for the mind to become familiar with this. To train in this meditation everyday life is so important, to remember it every day. When the day begins, you must to remember this.

The Kadampa geshe said that if you don't remember impermanence and death in the morning, then all morning, whatever you do, nothing doesn't become Dharma. That includes reciting mantra, chanting prayers, and so forth, and not just the mundane actions like walking, sitting, sleeping, doing a job. Even reciting prayers, doing meditation and so forth do not become Dharma if you don't remember death in the morning when the day begins.

And then, if you don't remember impermanence and death at noon then, all the afternoon whatever activity you do doesn't become Dharma; they all become worldly dharma, nonvirtue. Then, in the evening time, if you don't remember impermanence and death then, again, all night time the activities do not become Dharma. They all become worldly dharma, nonvirtue.

With desire and problems, for us beginners, there are two things. Without strong meditation on renunciation, impermanence and death, when we are physically separated from something it becomes suffering, it becomes so much pain because of the attachment. So much pain, unbelievable pain and then one commits suicide. All these things happen. Then we get angry. Because of anger, attachment arises. We kill other people. Just in a minute, we kill other people or kill ourselves.

What I'm saying, physically, that alone becomes suffering. Without effectively meditating on impermanence and death and meditating how samsara is in the nature of suffering, which gives inner strength and courage to you, life becomes so painful. Life becomes so painful, when you only physically separate from the objects of your attachment.

Even if you are meditating on these things—on impermanence and death and then how samsara is the nature of suffering—but because your mind is very weak you don't have realizations, because attachment is so strong. When you are physically close to things, then there's great risk.

So, therefore, for us beginners, we need both things: to physically separate ourselves from the objects of our attachment and also to strongly meditate on the renunciation of samsara, as well as on impermanence and death. How samsara is the nature of suffering is effective to meditate as well as impermanence and death. A strong meditation on this gives you inner strength, courage, it makes your mind really brave. With these two things together, life doesn't become painful. Life doesn't become painful and there are no obstacles. If you are living in the precepts, if you are able to continue to live purely, then you're free from obstacles to actualizing realizations. By continuously meditating, you achieve the realization of the path to enlightenment.

Even for a layperson, doing it this way helps to create less negative karma in their life. Not only for the Sangha, not only for the ordained person, but even for the a layperson, by applying this technique to be able to keep, to practice lay vows—the lay five precepts such as abstaining from sexual misconduct which creates a lot of confusion, a lot of relationship problems, so much unhappiness in one's own life and in other people's life—being able to keep the vows helps you have more peace and happiness and have less negative karma. That means it is easier to achieve liberation and easier to achieve realizations of the path to liberation and enlightenment.

#### THE TWELVE LINKS: SEEING HOW PROBLEMS COME FROM OUR OWN KARMA

Yesterday, I went through the twelve links. Then I mentioned how all the appearances we have, the appearance to the five senses, the objects we enjoy, having contact, having pleasant feelings—how all this comes from consciousness. After that, consciousness comes from karma and karma comes from ignorance. I used the twelve links to meditate in that way—how everything came from one's own mind: consciousness, karma, ignorance.

This meditation also becomes another technique to develop patience, by relating it to the enemy, the person who abuse you, the person who treats you badly, or if you hate your parents because they abused you or didn't take care of you when you were young. This is very common. When you go to see psychologist, with the old Western psychology method, that's because you were not taken care of by you mother when you were young, and now you have this problem, that problem, this problem. That is the old method that is taught in the West.

Before the daughter or son had a good relationship with the parents—happy, harmonious, peaceful, happiness, good—then, after going to see psychologist who used all the old Western methods, they begin to totally hate their parents! They don't ever want to see them again. They generate hatred towards the parents who were extremely kind, who gave them this life, all the comfort and pleasure and especially, if they have met Dharma, the opportunity to practice Dharma. This all came from them. They are unbelievably kind. Unbelievably kind. And yet their child looks at them totally as the enemy and generates great hatred towards them, and this continues for years.

This all comes from karma, it all comes from ignorance. There's nobody to blame, even if the parents gave you away for somebody else to take care of, or if they put you in a hospital, even if they did that. Here it is important to meditate like, that even if your parents treated you in that way, it all came from your mind, so there's nobody to blame. There's nobody for you to get angry with. There's no one there for you to get angry with and nothing for you to do *except* to change your mind; except you purify the past negative karma that was already done and to create only good karma, to live in the vows, the precepts—the opposite of negative karma—to change your action, to change your attitude, and to realize emptiness, to eliminate ignorance. This becomes the technique to practice patience. So you should meditate like this.

#### BEING AWARE IN THE BREAK TIME OF HOW WE LABEL EVERYTHING

Before I mentioned the meditation technique of using the alphabet. Whatever appears to you—whatever you see, whatever you hear, whatever you smell, taste, something bad, good, everything—is something that your mind labeled. All these are something that your mind labeled, then it appears “bad.” As soon as your mind labels it, it appears as bad. I mentioned how important it is to meditate on this, especially at break times. To practice mindfulness like this is so unbelievably important. Actually, this is so good to do, even for one week, one month. To practice mindfulness is so good. This is very powerful. It makes the scenery great fun. In this way, the way you look at everything is different.

You see something and recognize that that one comes by labeling. In that minute, by your mind labeling something, then you see it that way. How everything comes from mind. I'm talking about meditating on how everything comes from mind in a long process.

Look at how you see temple, the people here, how we see each person, the effect you get by seeing each person. Then, when you go out, these trees, road, sky, clouds. When you're going by car, when you're travelling, you see many mountains. You see different towns, cities. So you have many different visions, many different appearances, passing through while you're going by car. You have all these views. All these views, each time one comes, see that it is coming from your mind. It looks like it comes from “there” but, actually, it's from here.

As I mentioned, the negative roll for a movie camera. Many things are printed on the negative roll, but then when they are put in the machine and projected onto the movie screen, then it appears. Or on a TV screen. So it is like that here. For example, when you're going by car you have many views—mountains, different cities, towns, whatever—some are beautiful, some are rocky, some are very nice green, some snowy, some ugly, some are beautiful. You see many things. All these views passing through come from you own karma, from the imprint left on the consciousness, being experienced. That's what you're seeing. That's what you're seeing. Your consciousness comes from your karma, which comes from ignorance. This is the process, the long-term process, how things come from the mind. It's a deeper way to meditate on how things come from the mind.

So it's a very important meditation. It's fundamental Buddhist philosophy and reality. Not only Buddhist philosophy - but is reality. It's universal. It's reality.

It's very good to meditate on this when you go to the shop, when you go sightseeing. Meditate on the lam-rim when you go sightseeing, when you go city, whatever you see, even if it is garbage. [RL] Whatever you see. When you go sightseeing, when you're trekking, meditate on the lam-rim. Practice awareness on how all these things come from the mind. This way it's very good. This way it's very interesting. This way it becomes a very interesting tour; it becomes very

interesting scenery—the scenery of your mind. In other words, you are watching your karma. The movie of your karma, movie of your mind.

#### A PURE MIND SEES THINGS PURELY (THE PRETA, THE DEVA AND THE HUMAN)

That's what's happening. Maybe you don't recognize it but you're looking at, you're watching the movie of your karma. If your mind is pure, you see everything as pure. What appears to you is pure. If your mind is impure, what appears to you is impure. That's another logic. That's another logic showing how everything comes from mind.

With the devotional mind, the pure mind, you see the guru as a buddha. Even if from the guru's side, he is not a buddha, but when your mind is pure you see the guru as a buddha from his side. This is like the great yogis, even the practitioners of the generation stage of the Highest Yoga Tantra, who trained the mind to look at everything as pure: the body is the deity, the place is the mandala. Somebody who has trained the mind in that way, whenever that person wants to see it that way, it happens. Then, of course, by completing the path, by ceasing all defilements, the dualistic mind, when you achieve enlightenment, for your senses, everything appears pure.

Any enjoyment depends on the mind. A bowl filled with liquid for human beings is water, it appears as water. The same bowl, the same liquid appears as pus and blood to hungry ghosts, for *pretas*, who don't have the merit to see water, to see something nice and clean. If somebody doesn't have the merit then that liquid in the bowl appear as pus and blood. For human beings, it appears as water. For *devas* it appears as nectar. Then, especially, for buddhas it appears as the most pure, the best quality nectar.

This is another line of reasoning to show how things come from the mind. Those who have higher merit see nectar; those have merit only to see water but no merit to see nectar, see only water. Those who don't have all that merit just see pus and blood.

#### MEDITATING ON HOW EVERYTHING COMES FROM THE MIND

Another example is when different people look at that one person. Somebody sees that person as nice; somebody sees that person as ugly, even though it's the same person. That same person appears as somebody nice, very beautiful, extremely beautiful to one person but very ugly, and for somebody else. [RL] Maybe not so beautiful, not so ugly. Anyway. [RL] So, how this one person appears depends on the karma of the people who look at her. This is another example how things come from the mind due to different karma. Life's full of examples like that, which proves that everything comes from the mind.

If something exists from its own side without depending on mind, only from object's side, then it should be same for everybody. It should appear the same. The water should appear water to everybody, to a buddha, to a hungry ghost, to anybody; it should appear as water but is not like that. This is just one example; one example like that.

This is a very essential philosophy of Buddhism. This is very important understanding, extremely important education of the mind and is extremely important technique to control the mind, to overcome delusions. You can't see anybody to blame. So there's no point for anger to arise. So this stops anger. When you think of this, anger stops. Anger doesn't arise.

It is very good to practice these two things when you go trekking or sightseeing, or when you walk around: that whatever you see, whatever object the sense contacts, it comes from the mind by being merely labeled by the mind. The other one is what I explained the twelve dependent

related limbs, how it comes from the imprint left on the consciousness due to karma, which is created by ignorance. It is very good to meditate on this when you're walking around every day. In your daily life when you go for walk, this is a very good meditation. You can practice the awareness of this—whatever is happening to you, the views you have, the view of your senses. So, this is very good.

If you only put a positive label in the daily life, then that makes your life happy all the time. It keeps you happy all the time. But what makes your mind to make up, to impute a negative label “bad,” what makes it? What causes that? That's one thing. What causes the mind to put negative label “bad?” When our mind makes the negative label instead of putting positive label: “this is bad,” “this is bad,” what causes that?

[*Student*: inaudible.]

Huh?

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:  
Everybody's karma.

[*Student*: inaudible.]

*Rinpoche*:  
Yes, that's right. So your past negative karma which leaves an imprint on your mental continuum, that makes you put negative label. And your past good karma makes your mind put a positive label. Then you're happy. Your past negative karma makes your mind to put negative label, and that's what makes you unhappy, that's what gives you an unpleasant feeling.

So now, there are more reasons. Now, there are other reasons why everything comes from your mind, besides mind labeling. Karma. There's karma there you see. Everything comes from karma, which means from the mind.

Meditate on the twelve links, how appearances come from karma which comes from ignorance. While you are walking, all that you see comes from the mind. It comes from karma. And karma is motivated by ignorance.

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: KILLING

From the completed negative karma of killing what kind of appearance do you get? What kind of appearance, what kind of life experience do you get from that?

So now more details, more specific details on that. The completed karma of killing is this. There's a base, a living being, a sentient being having a mind—not necessarily a human mind, but having mind. The mind doesn't have to be only a human mind. So the base is a sentient being. Then there is the action and the thought. There is the base, the thought, the action and the goal. In this case, the goal is, you did action of killing, but, if you died before the other living being, then it's not completed.

These are the four things that make it a complete action of killing. If the killing is done out of ego, self-cherishing thought, attachment or anger or whatever, that's what makes the killing a nonvirtue. That makes action of killing come from nonvirtue. By having these four things

gathered, action of killing is completed. This negative karma is a completed negative karma, and then it has the four suffering results. The ripened result is rebirth in the lower realm: hell, hungry ghost or animal and you have to experience those very heavy sufferings until the negative karma finishes. If the karma is to be experienced for eons, for many billions of years, one has to experience that. If the karma is heavy like that, you must experience for that length of time. The ripening result is rebirth in the lower realm.

Then, a lesser suffering, when you are born in the human world you experience the three other sufferings. The place where you live, or where you get born—the food, drink, medicines, crops, fruit, all these things have very little protein. Due to you karma they don't have much power, very little protein, very difficult to digest. Even if you eat these things, you are unable to digest it. So you have digestion problems, according to the sutra explained by Buddha, *The Sutra of the Ten Bhūmis*. I think this explanation comes from there. It is explained in lam-rim by Lama Tsongkhapa. Here, it talks about digestion problem. Even when you eat something, you are unable to digest it. These things are the result of the past negative karma of killing. Even you eat these things, you get disease. It causes bad health.

Even if there's nothing wrong with the food itself, but for some people it becomes a problem. I think like this. I have diabetes so I cannot eat sweet things. It increases diabetes. People like me with diabetes cannot eat food that contains sugar. So this is the same. The food itself is okay and it doesn't harm most people, but some people can't eat it. It harms them.

A person might have karma to live longer but an untimely death happened. These things are the result of past negative karma of killing. Death can happen in the mother's womb, before even coming out, and so forth; a shortness of life, like that, is from the past negative karma of killing.

Then, there are two other types of sufferings. This one is to do with the place. In Tibetan it's called *de-wo*, the possessed result. Two other problems result of the negative karma, comes from the negative karma of killing. The other one is *experiencing the result similar to the cause* you've done in the past, giving harm to others. Even if you're born as a human being, you experience a shortness of life and you experience many sicknesses. You experience a shortness of life and many sicknesses one after another, or many sicknesses at the same time. This is experiencing the result similar to the cause.

Then the other one: [Tibetan] is *creating the result similar to the cause*. [Tibetan] Creating the result similar to the cause. When you're born human being you engage in killing again because of the previous habit, or imprint, the negative imprint left on the mind by the negative karma of killing. Then, in next life, after some time when you're born human being, then again you do killing. That is creating the result similar to the cause.

With creating the result similar the cause, by killing again, you again produce the four suffering results. When you're born human being the next time, you then do the action of killing again.

So it goes on and on like that. It goes on and on like that and there is no end to the negative karma and suffering, unless you purify the negative karma.

The result goes on unless you purify the past negative karma of killing, but the solution is not only to purify. Purifying is one thing, so that you don't experience the result again, but purifying is not the only solution. The very important solution is to live in the vows, the precepts, to abstain from killing. To abstain from killing, that's very important. Changing of your actions is so important.

These two things are vital: purifying past negative karma that we've done, and then not killing again. To do that, the best thing is to live in the vow, to live in the vow abstaining from killing. These two, purifying and living in the vow to not kill, are the solution to not experiencing ongoing, unending suffering. Being killed and killing again and again and experience the suffering result again and again.

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

I'll do the next one and then I'll stop.

I'm going to mention completed negative karma of sexual misconduct. I'll leave that second one [stealing]. With the completed negative karma of sexual misconduct, the ripened result is birth in the lower realm. And then for the three other suffering results one experiences in the human realm, the possessed result is to do with the place where you're born, or the city where you live. It is a very filthy, dirty place; filled with excrement or a lot of dirt, a very muddy place. There is a lot of garbage; it is unhygienic, with so many bad smells. It's a very sad, very unhappy place, a very unpleasant place. Even if normally we don't live in such a place, but sometimes we have to pass through, even *that*, even that short time of passing through such a smelly, dirty place, even that is the possessed result of the past negative karma of sexual misconduct.

Then, experiencing the result similar to the cause. That one is, when you're born as a human being, the people around you disturb you. They're not harmonious with you. Your family or companion, the other people that you live with and the neighbors and surrounding people are not harmonious. They create a lot of disturbance and they are always bothering you. And you can't trust them.

The wife or husband, other companion, the other person, the mind is comparative, against to your wishes. What the husband or wife or other person, the way he or she thinks, the other person's way of thinking is against your wishes. So that brings problem like disharmony, bad relationship.

These things are not harmonious to your mind. The way of thinking of the person you live with is against your wishes and that brings disharmony and so much unhappiness and problems, so much quarreling and fighting. This is experiencing the result similar to the cause of the sexual misconduct done in the past.

In other words, everybody—even the family members—become your enemy. Your husband or wife becomes your enemy; the other family members become your enemies. The people around you become your enemy. They never listen to you; they disobey you. This is the result of the past negative karma of sexual misconduct.

Then creating the result similar to the cause is doing the action again. When you are born as a human being in another lifetime, then you do the action again, you commit that action of sexual misconduct again. Then, again, that produces the four suffering results. You engage in sexual misconduct again and that produces another four suffering results. So it goes on. If you just leave it, if you don't do anything, if you don't practice purification, if you don't live in the vow abstaining from that, then one negative karma of killing or sexual misconduct today goes on and on. It affects in all future lives, numberless lifetimes; it becomes unending suffering. So this one karma today, this one negative karma today, if you don't purify it, if you don't live in the vow, if you don't change your actions, abstaining from negative karma, then these sufferings become unending, leading to more and more suffering through numberless future lives.

#### THE KARMIC RESULTS OF KEEPING VOWS

Even if I just explain one or two of these, you can see how it the same thing for the others. If you're live in the vow, the precepts, this virtue, morality, then also it should be same. There are four happy results of: good rebirth as a deva or a human rebirth. Then, in the future lives you are also able to live in the vow, the precepts.

In the case abstaining from killing, living this morality, the place where you live, where you get born, everything is so good, the food, the crops and so forth. It is completely the opposite to the four sufferings of the negative karma of killing; you receive four happy results by living in the vow abstaining from killing,

You will have a long life in the future lives, with no disease, no sicknesses; much of the life is healthy. Maybe there's some sickness but much of the life is healthy, or no sickness. It's not just one lifetime, the effect goes on life to life. By living in the morality abstaining from killing, the four happy results go from life to life. You enjoy the result from life to life.

Then, it is the same thing with practicing the morality of abstaining from sexual misconduct. There is not only peace and happiness this life, but harmonious relationships, and not only in this life but in future lives. Everybody listens to you. Everybody's mind is harmonious with you, in the family, in the office, wherever. Your companion's wishes always accord with yours, you obey each other there's much peace and happiness in the life.

The place is so beautiful, so clean. There is no dirty smell, no filth; it's not like that. It's the opposite result of committing sexual misconduct. In this life, when we enjoy those kind of places, very clean places with beautiful gardens, that's the result of past good karma of living in the morality abstaining from sexual misconduct.

We should recognize like this in our daily life: these enjoyments came from such and such a good karma, and these unpleasant things came such and such a negative karma. And by understanding lam-rim, about karma, in our daily life we should recognize *this* is the result of negative karma, *this* is the result of positive karma. That is very good. It inspires you to abandon negative karma and practice virtue.

The conclusion is that you never improve if you allow yourself to live without morality. Some people say, "I want to be myself. I don't want to be something else. I want to be myself." If you continue to become "yourself" which is all self, there is no change. Then, what happens is you do nothing. You don't purify negative karma. You don't practice morality. You don't change your mind and action, so then there is no change. So, being yourself: the old one, the old self—"I want to be myself"—it's that same old self and then the suffering is endless. There is no end, even from one negative karma.

But by living in morality, the happiness goes on and on in all the numberless lives. Therefore, the four happy results come from complete good karma. Now you can understand the importance of morality. Even for lay people there are lay vows; it doesn't mean everybody becomes a monk or nun. For the lay people there are lay vows.

Even if you cannot practice all the five lay vows: abstaining from killing, sexual misconduct, telling lies, stealing, and alcohol, which makes the mind unconscious or uncontrolled and then engage in much negative karma—even if you cannot take and keep all the five lay vows, you

should try to take at least one. At least one. It becomes so important, so essential. If you want happiness, this is living in the morality, and so try to take at least one.

You can understand from this explanation that it's so essential. It's the basis of your happiness from now on. It's so important. It is what makes life meaningful, from now up to death, for how many years, how many months, days, weeks, hours, minutes, seconds you have from this second until death. If you want to make meaningful, one of the most important practices is this. One of the most important practices to make life meaningful is this one: morality. So today there are many subjects on that.

#### INTRODUCING GESHE SOPA

Geshe Sopa Rinpoche was Lama Yeshe's teacher from Tibet. Now in Sera Je College, the present abbot, the ex-abbot before, many of the great teachers there who have been educating the young monks, educating many hundreds, thousands of young monks to become a geshe, receiving an excellent education as you saw with Geshe Tashi. There are many young geshe like that down there receiving excellent education. These monasteries, Sera, Ganden and Drepung, are the main places to learn the most extensive Buddhist education in the world. These are the only places to learn that extensively through the form of debate—not *Tibet*, debate! [RL]—in the world. Many of those great teachers have been educating those young monks, like Geshe Tashi, like Lama Lhundrup and so forth. Their teacher is those great learned ones down there. Their teacher is Geshe Sopa Rinpoche, He is Lama's teacher and my teacher.

Geshe la will be here few days, so I will request Dharma teaching according to the present development of our mind, [GL, RL] something that is really needed, that fits so that later it is easy to develop bodhicitta and so forth. Then we have basis to practice tantra. Geshe Sopa Rinpoche will be teaching. This time we are very fortunate that Geshe-la happens to be here on his way to India for a pilgrimage and Dharamsala to attend religious meetings.

#### ORAL TRANSMISSION OF THE THIRTY-FIVE BUDDHAS, INTRODUCTION

I thought maybe tomorrow to give the oral transmission of the Thirty-Five Buddha practice, the compassion purification, the oral transmission of the prayer, the Thirty-Five Buddha. The name of the prayer is *The Confession of Downfalls*. It is extremely powerful. So I'll give the oral transmission of that and then you can recite wherever you are, in a car, an airplane, wherever, just by putting your palms together like this. It's unbelievably powerful.

Even reciting the first name of the [Thirty-five Buddhas], Shakyamuni Buddha's name, even reciting that first name, just one time, it has the power to purify 80,000 eons of negative karma—not just years or months or days but *eons* of negative karma it has the power to purify. So these Buddha's names are like an atomic bomb to purify negative karma, [GL] to destroy negative karma. Each Buddha's name can purify so many eons of different negative karma. Even without the prostrations, just reciting the names is unbelievably powerful. This is a very essential practice in the daily life; it is very, very important. Then when there is a place to do prostrations, or an opportunity to do prostrations, then you can do it with prostration. Prostrations are extremely important to collect extensive merit. So, maybe, I'll do some elaboration on that, on the prayer, as a solution to purify all these negative karmas. So I'll stop here, I'll *really* stop! (GL, RL)

[Mandala offering]

[Dedication prayers]

Goodnight.

## Lecture 6

EMPTINESS: HOW THINGS APPEAR TO EXIST FROM THEIR OWN SIDE

[Although all causative phenomena] are in the reality transitory, by not seeing them as having that nature, by seeing them as permanent, as lasting a long time, by apprehending them in that way, the result is only suffering. The concept of permanence becomes basis for the arising of the discriminating mind: attachment, anger, all these disturbing negative emotional thoughts. That immediately disturbs your own mental continuum. Instead of giving peace to your own mental continuum, it only causes disturbance to your own mental continuum. And, also, it makes you to engage in negative karma and leave negative imprints on the mental continuum and that creates samsara. These, attachment, anger, ignorance, and then motivating karma, creates, produces samsara. Like this, the result is only suffering.

Without meditating on impermanence and death, without looking at the impermanent nature of phenomena, the result of this wrong concept leads only to suffering, to the endless suffering of samsara. You die and are reborn, die and are reborn, continuously, and experience the suffering of samsara. All phenomena, all existence, is divided into two types of phenomena: impermanent and permanent phenomena. Now think: it is not only these causative phenomena, even the uncaused phenomena, the unproduced permanent phenomena—all phenomena, including ‘I’, action, object, are merely labeled by the mind.

Meditate in this way. This is a good example, to meditate on emptiness. There’s a year. When we think of year in our mind, it appears as a real year. Not this ear. Not this one. ‘Y-e-a-r’. not ‘e-a-r’. Year. [RL] Later you can meditate also on the ear.

Anyway, by the way, as we meditate on impermanence, then meditate on emptiness. This is very powerful to cut delusions, the cause of the suffering. By ceasing the true cause of the suffering, by ceasing that, true suffering ceases.

So when we think of ‘year’, how does it appear? The year is an inherently existent year, a real year. In other words, it seems a real year appearing from there. A real year. If you put it in the simple explanation, according to how it appears to our mind and the way we apprehend ‘year’, the way we think of ‘year’ is as a real year, not merely labeled by the mind.

When you use the word “real” in your daily life, you should actually know what people are talking about, what you yourself are talking about. You are talking about the false, the real “I.” When you say “me,” “I’m really there” or “I’m really here” or “I really did it” or something like that—whenever we use those words, actually, if you can understand, if you can relate to teachings on emptiness, you’ll see that at that time you are talking about false “I.” Whatever object you think is real, you’re not talking about what exists; you’re talking about what doesn’t exist. You believe what doesn’t exist exists. What appears doesn’t exist. The way things appear to us, the way the I, phenomena appear to us, to our hallucinated mind, is not merely labeled by the mind. As long as it appears to you that way—not merely labeled by mind—they don’t exist. They’re totally empty there. They’re totally empty right there. From where it is appearing, it is totally empty there.

This is what I usually say. I am introducing this as my *mudra*, to express the object to be refuted, the false object. That which appears from its own side, which doesn't exist from its own side.

So like this mandala here, it appears as something real, really real—that gold and those stones, whatever, this bright blue, bright red—this blue is blue from its own side, everything exists from its own side. This clock appears as existing from its own side. These flowers, all this yellow, all these appear as existing from their side. All these: all appear as existing from its side.

And this one exists from its side. [Rinpoche rings his bell] When you hear the sound, you don't hear the sound. You don't hear the merely labeled sound; you hear the sound *not* merely labeled by mind. When you hear the sound, you perceive it as not merely labeled by mind, so that's false. It's a false sound. That sound is totally empty there. Even though it is a merely-labeled sound you don't hear it that way. Because the definition of sound is an object that is apprehended by the ear sense. It is whatever the ear sense apprehends, what it hears. This is the definition of sound. That is how it is explained in the very first debating subject, *dura*, at the very beginning of the path. So, that's the definition, the object that your ear sense hears or listens to. That is the base. That's the base.

#### EMPTINESS: THE "A" SEEMS TO APPEAR FROM ITS OWN SIDE

I mentioned the other day, probably the clearest example is the one that I gave one day, the letter "A." Do you remember? First, you see the design. You see the design like this and then, afterwards, when you're introduced that is "A." and after that you believe and follow that person's explanation. You believe and then your mind labels "A" and believe in that. Then there's appearance that this is A. Only then, do you see this is A. You don't see A as A at the very beginning. At the very beginning you don't see this as A. When you see this design you don't see this A at the same time. You don't see A before the design. You don't see A together at the same time as you see the design.

I think I might have mentioned this before. But, anyway, it's useful to bring it up again. It's very important logic; it's a very important analysis to help us realize emptiness.

You think you're seeing this design at the same time you're seeing the A. First you know that from the process that I explained. You don't see the A, that this is A, at the same time you see the design. It doesn't happen together.

You can understand this from the experience when you were in kindergarten before you were taught that this is an A. At that time, you only see this design but you don't have this appearance. You don't have the appearance that this is an A and you don't see that this is an A. Having the appearance that this is an A only comes after somebody introduces to you to it, after somebody teaches you, and then you believe in that and your own mind also labeled it as "A" and you believe in that. Only after that then it appears as A.

From the experience when you learnt the alphabet, you can see very clearly. You have to see the base first, and then *that* makes your mind label "A" and then it appears as an A, then you see it as an A. You can see from your own experience, it's like that. And that is how we see everything in daily life. Not only just this A, not just the alphabet, but this is how we see everything. This is the process. This is the process of how we see anything.

So, all these phenomena that we see here—the statues and pillars, lights, everything—all these phenomena, everything that we see here, the procedure is like that. Everything is like that.

The light, for example, the phenomenon that functions to dispel darkness. You see that first. That's the base. You see that first then, by seeing that, that thing which dispels darkness, then that causes your mind to make up the particular label "light." By seeing that particular phenomenon, which has the function of dispelling darkness, causes your mind to make up the label "light." What is "light" is only all—merely imputed because the base does function of dispelling darkness, so that is "light." You relate to that, then due to the existence of that base, you made up label "light." And then it is the same with other phenomena that function as the base to dispel darkness. You label them all "light."

Whatever the mind does, whatever the conscious mind does, our mind makes up the label "I"—"I am thinking." Or when the mind is unhappy, even though mind is not I, but when the mind is unhappy, our mind makes up the label "I am unhappy." When the mind is happy our mind makes up the label "I am happy." So like that.

It's the same thing with the body. Even though the body is not I, depending on what function the body does, what activity what the body does, continuously, our mind make up the label "I am doing this and that." So it's like that. Geshe-la also mentioned this yesterday, so it's the same thing. Even though the collection of those two, even though that's not the I, but because that's the base which can receive the label "I," the valid base, because the base is there mind makes up the label "I." Then, whatever activity the aggregates does, the base does, then we make up the label "I am doing this and that."

So you can see here, very clearly, how it is merely imputed by the mind. It is not non-existent. It exists. But it exists in mere name; merely imputed by the mind. It is the same thing with this light.

Maybe I'd better go back. I want to clarify once more why you don't see it together. When you see the base, this design, this "A", why you don't see the A at the same time. I mentioned about experience, how you gradually come to see the A. The other thing that, when you see this base, this design, if you're seeing the A at the same time, you can understand from the process that I explained before. To be able to see that this is "A" there has to be appearance that it is A. In order to have the appearance that this is A your mind also has to label A first.

Now here is the question. Seeing the base of A seeing this base, this design, and the A at the same time, then the question comes: when does appearance of "A" happen? If you think the appearance of the base and the labeling all happens at the same time, the big question is here. That would mean that by seeing this design like this you don't label "A." It doesn't cause you to label "A."

For your mind to be able to choose this particular label "A," you have to see something first. You have to see something first, the design, which causes your mind to choose the particular label "A." There must be a preliminary; you have to see something before.

Without any of those designs which can receive the label "A," upon which can be imputed the label of "A," without seeing these designs, these particular designs, either this way or this way, [you can't have the label.] No other design causes your mind to choose the particular label "A." You have to see either this one or this one. It is this particular design that which causes the mind to choose the particular label "A." You have to see something, a particular design, that causes the mind to give this particular label "A."

So, therefore, this is the process. Before you put the label, before you see the label, you have to see the base first. That's the preliminary. First the base comes into existence and then the label comes into existence by imputing.

Seeing the A comes after seeing the base. You can meditate on emptiness like this. After your mind imputed the "A," the reality is by seeing that your mind merely imputed "A." That's it. So now, here, after the imputation, after your mind imputed "A," when the A appears back to you it doesn't appear back to you as merely imputed by mind.

It appears to you the A is there. The A is there on this design. You see the A on that design. You don't see the A as being merely imputed by your mind when it appears back to you. You see the A as being there. I'm not talking about the blackboard or the paper. You see the A on that design, on that drawing or the design, like that. You see the A on that design. You see A *there*. 'There', in the sense, on that design, on the base. That's what's wrong. That's false view. That's the object to be refuted. That's example of object of refutation. That's what you have to realize is empty. It is the absence of that; it is the emptiness of "A."

You see the real A on that design, but when you analyze it, where is it? You visualize the other one. I tried to make an "A" here [GL] or here [RL] or here [GL, RL] anyway, this little bit longer maybe. [RL] Anyway, I'm joking!

The analysis is the same. This line is not A. This line [RL] this is not A. This line is not A. You understand? This piece is not A. This piece is not A. [RL] All together it is not A. All together, the design, is not A. That is the base. That's not A because that's the base to be labeled "A." As I mentioned before, you see the base first, you see the A later. You see the A afterwards. They're two different things; they're not one. They're two different phenomena. They exist differently. As I mentioned the other day, P and aggregates don't exist separately but they exist differently. So, therefore, this design is the base to be labeled "A" not A itself.

So, where is the A? Where is the A? There's no A there. There's no A here. There's no A there on this piece. There's no A on this. Where this is drawn on a blackboard or paper there's an A. But on this design there's no A. On the base there's no A but on the paper, on the blackboard, there's an A. What is that A? It's nothing but what is merely imputed by the mind. That exists. What is the A? What is the A is what is merely labeled by the mind, what is merely imputed by the mind. Why the A exists, why it exists is because there's the base, the design is there. It's better to think this way: why it exists in the first place is because the base exists. Then after that is the question, what it is? Nothing. The A is nothing except what is merely labeled by mind. And then third question is where is it? Wherever there's a base. Not on the base but wherever there's a base, there's an A.

So like that, the answer comes. Three important questions that help, three important questions that makes clear how the phenomenon A is never the A we believe in; it is never the way it appears to us. It is never that one; is not that one *at all*. That's totally false. If you look for it, you cannot find it there. It looks like it's there. It looks like you can find the A. It looks like you can find 'A' there on the design but, if you look for it, you cannot find it. If you analyze it you cannot find it.

As we haven't realized the emptiness of the A, the ultimate nature of the A, when we do not analyze it, that's one thing. And as we do not practice mindfulness and recognize the appearance of A, it appears that there's a real A un-differentiable from the design, with the base. The A appears from its own side above this design. On this design there's an A appearing from there.

First of all, not having realized the ultimate nature of the A, that this is empty there, that this real A appearing from there is empty. It's totally empty there. It's non-existent there. Not having realized that the A is empty of existing from its own side, not realizing this and not practicing mindfulness, that this is a hallucination, that the A appears from there, un-differentiable from the base or from above the base, that particular design.

This is only the point of view of the hallucinated mind. This appearance is only from the view, from the perception, of the hallucinated mind. It is according to the view of a hallucinated mind, not according to your wisdom. Not according to your wisdom realizing the emptiness. The other mind is wisdom. According to that, this is totally non-existent. This A is totally non-existent, totally empty there. It appears like this, as if it is findable on that base, on that design, when we do not analyze it

Now you can get some idea when we say “alphabet,” when we see the A, in our view there is a real A there on that design. There's a real A appearing from there. What I was trying to say before, as an example, as I introduced those analyzes, when you look for that real A, which means appearing from there, existing from its own side. When you analyze you don't find it there.

Neither the merely imputed “I” nor the real I; neither the merely imputed “A” nor the real A, or the A appearing from its own side, it doesn't exist there when you look for it. When you analyze, it's not there. When we do not analyze it appears as if it is there on that base.

EMPTINESS: THE I IS NEITHER ONE WITH NOR SEPARATE FROM THE AGGREGATES

Anyway, that real A appearing to us, that is another example of the object to be refuted, what is called in Tibetan *gag-cha*. For example, to be able to realize the emptiness of the I through this analysis, we use the reasoning called “one or many.” Put it this way, by reasoning, by using the logical reason, we analyze whether it exists either as one or it exists separately. By logical reasoning we prove that it is neither oneness with the base nor does it exist separately. I think, maybe. [GL, RL] At this point of reasoning—neither is it one nor does it exist separately—we'll have some rest. [RL] We'll have some rest in emptiness. [RL]

[Rinpoche holds a discussion in Tibetan]

What I was saying before, among the many lines of reasoning, there are different logical arguments used to meditate on emptiness. The one basic common one is meditating on emptiness by reasoning that nothing exists either as oneness with the base or separately from the base, in the Tibetan, *chik du dor-je ten-tsik*. It sounds like many but is not. If you just think of only the word of translating then it looks like many, then it will create confusion. That's not how you start first; whether the object is “one or many” comes later. That analysis comes later. [Tibetan] Whether it exists, the reasoning that it doesn't exist either oneness or separately [Tibetan] it sounds many but is not. There's a reasoning called “one or many” but actually that is the second part. Sometimes if you only think of the Tibetan word [Tibetan] it usually means “many.” But if you translate just without thinking of the meaning, without thinking of the way of reasoning, without knowing that, it will be wrong translation. But the second part is correct.

Anything which exists has to be either oneness [with the base] or exist separately [from it]. For example, this mug cannot exist in oneness with the aggregates with my body, with aggregates of body, speech and mind. The mug has to exist either in oneness with the aggregates or separately. Of course the mug doesn't exist in oneness with the aggregates of my body, but it exists separately. So it is like that.

What this line of reasoning is saying is this. If the I is inherently existent, if the way the I appears to you is something real, in a sense appearing from its own side, of existing from its own side, of not merely labeled by mind—if this is true, then it should be, it should exist either [in oneness with the aggregates or separately from them.]

Maybe I should mention the outline, the analysis of the four vital or important points.

The analysis of the four very important points is this. The first one is the important point of recognizing the object to be refuted. This is a vital point, recognizing the object of refutation, the object which is to be refuted. “Object of refutation” and “Object to be refuted”—is it the same meaning? In Tibetan, it is *gag-cha*, the object which is to be refuted. So, “object of refutation” is the same.

The first point means recognizing the object of ignorance, the object that the mind grasps or apprehends as inherently existent. The important point is to recognize that this object of ignorance, that which is hallucination, doesn’t exist.

Then second important point is *kyappa* (?) definite pervasion. The important point, the understanding is that it’s not oneness with base. Anyway, we’ll just go through the outline.

Then the next important point is the understanding that it doesn’t exist separately from that.

What we call the real I seems to appear from there, existing from its own side, not merely labeled by mind. You recognize that, which is the object of ignorance. Just as you recognize the enemy who always harms you, or thief who always steals your things, you recognize that. Then after you recognize that, whether you throw bombs at it that, or hit it with big hammer on the head, you use whatever way is the most to destroy the enemy.

You try to eradicate ignorance by realizing object of ignorance, object that your ignorance apprehends, which is the inherently existent I, to realize that it is empty. After you recognize that then, like weapon as I mentioned before, then the important point the definite pervasion. If this real I exists, then it has to be oneness with the aggregates or it has to exist separately.

If it exists, if there is a real I, and analyzing if it is oneness with the aggregates, comes here, whether it is one or many. It only here comes, not with the first one, but with the second important point of definite pervasion. What is definite pervasion? It is either that this inherently existent ‘I’, if this exists, must be either one with the aggregates or it must exist separately from them. What is definite, the important point of definite pervasion is this. It has to be either, if this real I that appears to really exist then it must be either one with the aggregates or it must exist separately from them.

#### EMPTINESS: THE I IS NOT ONE WITH THE AGGREGATES

If you think that it is oneness with the aggregates, then you can analyze that it is not oneness with aggregates. If you think the I is oneness with the aggregates then this analysis comes. In that way, in that case, because the I is one with the aggregates, there are five aggregates: the aggregates of form, feeling, cognition, compounding aggregates and the mind of cognition. There is the principal consciousness. Generally, we’re talking about six consciousnesses. And then there are fifty-one mental factors. Feelings and cognitions are from the fifty-one factors. So the feeling and cognition they are counted there. Their name is precisely mentioned.

So the rest, from the fifty-one mental factors, all of the rest without counting feeling and cognition, all the rest are labeled [Tibetan], feeling, cognition or the discriminating thoughts, discriminating the objects: this is table, this is mug, this is mandala, this is pot.

From fifty-one mental factors you take out the feeling and cognition. All the rest are labeled 'compounding aggregates', *du-je kyi pung-po*, compounding aggregates. Then the last one, fifth one, is consciousness. So there are five aggregates like this.

If this real I appearing from there, if it is oneness with the aggregates then the mistake that can rise is this? Because the I is one, therefore all the aggregates must become one. Either that, or because there are five aggregates so there would be many Is, many selves. There would be five selves. The body has many parts. The body has many parts: the limbs, head, the trunk. Even in the arms there are all these pieces.

There are many atoms, so the I would be so many. The same logic follows. If the real I appears not merely labeled by mind, if it's oneness with the aggregates, then all these aggregates become one because the I is one. That's not true. There are five aggregates. Or there would be many Is, five Is as there are five aggregates. There would be many of those Is.

Taking the four aggregates of form, you can use the same reasoning. Eliminating the different parts of the body, you go down to the atoms. There are so many atoms. There would be that if this I is oneness with the aggregates, with that number of atoms, there would be that many Is or selves.

The feeling aggregate can be divided into the three types of different feelings, so there will be three different Is. And because there forty-nine different types of compounded aggregates, there would be forty-nine Is. From fifty-one mental factors, we take out two. The rest is forty-nine. So there'll be forty-nine Is. So there are all these mistakes. There are six consciousnesses. If this I is oneness with the aggregates of consciousness then there are six Is, so that is a mistake. All these mistakes will rise like that.

This is not according with your experience. It would mean that there are so many beings, so many selves. The sense consciousnesses and then the sixth one, mental consciousness, all those Is. There are so many selves there and then all these atoms of the selves.

Then when you buy an air ticket, how many Is do you need to buy tickets for? You have to buy an air ticket for each I. [RL] So many Is!

Even starting with the five aggregates, there are five Is so you would have to buy five air tickets. There are five people, five Is. If you can think all the atoms are I, it becomes so many. In the plane the numbers would be incorrect, the number of passengers would not be correct [GL] There would be many billions of billions of passengers travelling. [RL GL]

So, anyway, many mistakes could arise. Then many problems can happen, if you buy an air ticket for only one person. [RL]

Then, how many hairs you have, then all these are I. If the I is one with the aggregates, then however many hairs you have, there must be at least that many Is. Then, when you shed the hair, if you burn the hair, what happens with the I? What happens to all those Is? All those hairs are people. All those hairs are oneness with the I so all those hairs are people, sentient beings. So you're killing all these sentient beings. [GL] You're burning all these sentient beings. So then the

problem is, when the body ceases, because the body is one with the I, the I would cease, the self would cease.

Do all these Is experience the results of karma? Do they experience happiness and suffering? Do all those hairs, all those aggregates of form, all those atoms experience karma, experience happiness and suffering? That means this I is experiencing karma. All these Is are experiencing karma, the karma when conception takes place, when the consciousness joins with the fertilized egg, that is the result of karma. That is a good result and the cause of that is virtue. So consciousness took place on the fertilized egg, that's the result, and that good rebirth was the result. The cause was created before, which was the reason why the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg.

The reason exists before the birth. That's why it's happening. That's why the consciousness is taking place on the fertilized egg, taking human body. So karma exists before the birth. The cause of the birth, the karma, existed before the birth. That means there's a continuation of the mind. There must have been a previous moment of the mind, which just took place on the fertilized egg. So that previous moment of mind was the one that was created the karma, the cause to receive human body. It is the continuation of the same consciousness, but which is the future, which takes place, to take place on the fertilized egg.

The cause of much of the experience of this life was created in the past. If all these Is which are oneness with all the atoms in the body, oneness with every single hair, then whenever they experience happiness or suffering, the cause has been created before. It has to have been created before that. So that means every I would have past lives. So these mistakes would arise.

None of the physical body came from past life. It does not continue to the next life. The physical body did not come from past life and does not go to the next life. In that case, mistakes arise on the basis of all these Is. Mistakes arise because this invalidates karma. If there's no past and no future lives, then there's no karma. These mistakes will arise. However, there are many analyzes; it goes on and on.

Seeing the real I existing from its own side, as oneness with the aggregates, all these mistakes arise, so it's not oneness with aggregates.

EMPTINESS: NOR IS THE I SEPARATE FROM THE AGGREGATES

Now, the next one is whether the I exists separately from these aggregates.

If the I exists separately from the aggregates then many mistakes arise. Then you don't need a job. Why would you need a job? If I existed separately from aggregates why would you need a job because you don't have body. Why would you need to go to school? Why you need to go to university? All those many years of study, what was it for? Normally it is to get a job and earn more money. Because you have a body you have to earn living, you have to earn money. You need money to take care of this body, for food, clothing and shelter for this body. You have to give food to this body, and shelter and clothing, hundreds of pairs shoes, [GL] hundreds of hats, hundreds of jackets, hundreds of pairs of trousers, undershirts, whatever. Many hundreds each year, many hundreds of pairs of shoes: winter shoes, summer shoes, outside shoes, inside shoes [GL] mountain shoes, so many. That's because you have the body.

That shows that the I doesn't exist separately from the body. If the I existed separately from the body you don't need to go to school. You don't need to go to college, university. You don't need a degree. What for? You don't need all these things if the I were separate from the aggregates.

You don't need shelter. You don't need food. You don't need dresses. You don't need motorcycles [GL] which make a huge noise. You don't need a passport. You don't need to go through immigration. You don't need to pay money. You don't need anything. If the I existed separately from the aggregates you don't need all these things. You don't need an airplane. The I doesn't need to go by plane. Why it needs all these things is because the I doesn't exist separately from the aggregates.

In our daily life, the experience is that. In twenty-four hours, depending on the aggregates, whether it is the door of the body, the mind or the speech, you always impute the I. In the morning when you wake up, then you label, "I'm waking up." When the aggregates of the body are getting dressed then your mind makes up the label, "I am getting dressed." When you wash the body, then you think, "I am washing." Your mind imputes "I'm washing." When you have breakfast, when the body's aggregates are doing the action of eating, then your mind labels, "I am eating." When your body is going for meditation session in the morning, maybe, with a sleepy mind, when the body is going for a meditation session then your mind merely imputes, "I'm going for a meditation session." Then when the body is doing the action of sitting then mind merely makes up the label "I am sitting." When the mind is transforming into the path, into lam-rim, meditating on lam-rim, then one's own mind merely imputes, "I am meditating."

So it's the same. When the body is hungry, when the stomach is hungry, when the food has gone out and then the stomach is hungry, the mind merely imputes, "I am hungry." After sitting for a *long* time in my talk, [GL] when the body aches, when the knees are complaining, then the mind merely imputes, "I am tired," "I am having pain." All these are merely imputed one after another, continuously for twenty-four hours. "I am this," "I am this," the mind is merely imputing. So like that. Twenty-four hours a day it is like that.

The I doesn't exist separately from the aggregates. The I exists in relation to, in connection with, the aggregates. The I exists in connection with the aggregates. It doesn't exist separately from the aggregates. Therefore, this I that appears to you, and that you believe in, as a real one in the sense of existing from its own side, doesn't exist. The one you believe in, which you have been believing in from beginningless rebirths up to now, that it is true, that is totally non-existent.

So, this I is neither oneness with the aggregates, nor does it exist separately from this body, so that means that this I is totally non-existent there. This I that you've been grasping onto, that you've been believing in, that you've been holding onto from beginningless rebirths up to now, is totally non-existent. You can see this after all this analysis.

Seeing the totally non-existent I, the totally non-existent, totally empty I, that, right there, is entering the middle way. That time you are seeing the middle way, devoid of the two extremes, nihilism and eternalism.

#### EMPTINESS: YEAR IS MERELY IMPUTED

Since I brought this topic I want to mention these two things and then I'll stop. This is another good meditation, this way of meditating. There's gross dependent arising and there's subtle dependent arising and this is a meditation on subtle dependent arising.

It's like this. A year is twelve months. First, you think of a year. [RL] First you think of a year, that is normally how you think of a year. You think this year I came to Kopan and you think like that. You think this year I'm going to become enlightened. [GL, RL]

The main thing to focus is year. While you're thinking this you analyze how the year appears to you, how you see the year. Year not ear! [GL, RL] Year. How the year appears to you. How you see the year. [RL] While you're thinking I'm going to be enlightened this year, okay. Think about how the year appears to you.

Okay, so now there's twelve months. Now we analyze what is year? We question what is the year. It's nothing other except what is merely imputed by the mind, by one's own mind, okay. Nothing except what is merely imputed by the mind. Why the year exists is the next question. Why does it exist? That is because there are twelve months.

What is called a year—those twelve months—is the base to be labeled “year.” It is the same as I mentioned before. That's not a year. Those twelve months are the base to be labeled “year.” The base, the twelve months, and the label, the year, are two different phenomena. They're two different phenomena. And that year, the year that exists, is what is merely labeled by mind because there are twelve months. So what the year is, is an extremely subtle phenomenon. It is totally empty, that which is totally empty from its own side.

It exists, but it is totally empty from its own side. It is merely imputed by mind, totally empty from its own side. The year is totally empty of existing from its own side; it is empty of inherently existing. So, it is unbelievably subtle how it exists, that phenomenon which exists in mere name, merely labeled by mind.

It's so fine, so subtle. You cannot say that it's totally non-existent. It is not non-existent but is like it is non-existent. It's so subtle. That phenomenon is so subtle that it's not totally non-existent, but it's like it's non-existent; so fine, so subtle. It's on the borderline between existing and not existing. The mode of its existence is so subtle.

It is so unbelievably subtle that it is very easy to fall into nihilism, thinking that it is totally non-existent. This phenomena “year” is totally non-existent. It's so easy. It is so subtle that it's easy to slip into the nihilism, believing that it doesn't exist. It's unbelievably fine, the way year exists.

#### EMPTINESS: SEEING LIFE AS LIKE AN ILLUSION

All phenomena are like that, not just the year. Some may think I'm only talking about a year but it's not only to the year. The I exists in the same way. And the body and mind, all the phenomena including hell, enlightenment, everything—the way phenomena exist is like that, like this example here. It is extremely fine, so subtle—so subtle that it is so easy to slip into nihilism. Many famous meditators in Tibet made that mistake. They thought they had realized emptiness but actually they got it totally wrong. By meditating on emptiness they fell into nihilism. They were unable to see the middle way and fell into nihilism. It is so difficult. To see the middle way is so difficult. It's so subtle how things exist, extremely subtle.

This is how we should see all phenomena. This is how we should see the I, everything, all phenomena like that.

By seeing the year is empty of existing from its own side, then you realize the ultimate truth of year, then you realize conventional truth of the year, how the year is existing and in mere name, being merely imputed by the mind. When you realize how everything, including the I, the aggregates, the sense objects, how you see them is like an illusion, like a dream, then there's nothing to cling to. There's no base to cling to. You don't find any reason to get angry. You don't find any reason to grasp, to cling. This is what you realize.

Even though the year or whatever phenomenon you are looking at still appears to exist from its own side, it still has that appearance, what your mind realizes is that this appearance is a total hallucination, that the year is totally empty of inherent existence. You realize that the year is merely imputed by mind but when it appears to you it still seems inherently existent.

Until you become enlightened you have this hallucination projected by the negative imprint left on the mental continuum by the concept of inherent existence, ignorance. Except, when you become arya being, at that time, when your mind is doing meditation of the equipoise concentration on emptiness, only during that meditation state you don't have that hallucination.

That hallucination is not cut, but it is absorbed for the time being. Meditating on wisdom like that you don't have that hallucination. Seeing emptiness in equipoise meditation is like "putting water into water." During the time of the meditation you have absorbed the dual view. So through that wisdom there is not that hallucination during that time, when you have wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, when you achieve the aryan path. Otherwise when you are not in equipoise meditation then you have this hallucination.

While you have the subtle negative imprints left by the concept of inherent existence, these objects, *she-dip*, the obscuration to directly see all phenomena, while one has that then there's hallucination except when you become an arya being and when you are in equipoise meditation on emptiness. You still have that hallucination but since you have the understanding that it is empty, that it is not true, there is no grasping, clinging to that.

It is like you see a mirage as water but you know that there can't be any water in the desert. You came through that, or you are told by other people, and you know that there is no water but still you have the mirage, as if there's water. So it's like that. There's the appearance but there's no conception that there's water, no belief that there's real water, that it's water. It appears inherently existent but you realize that it's not true. So, therefore, you don't see any point in anger or attachment to it. There is no base for it.

If you see a beautiful man or woman, but you recognize that this is a dream. You know this is not true. You recognize this dream as a dream. Even though you have the appearance, there's no belief that this is real so there is no discriminating thought, no anger and attachment. There's no point because it's not true.

#### EMPTINESS: A YEAR IS MERELY IMPUTED

After this analysis, you see that a year is something totally different than the year you've always believed in. What has been appearing to you and what you have been believing in as a year is totally the opposite. That real year that appears from there, from its own side, is totally false. There is no such thing. Before, when you thought of "year," it always appeared as something real from out there, and you apprehended that as true. That is the object to be refuted. That's the *gag-cha*, the object to be refuted.

However, the year that *does* exist is this one—the one I've just explained—that which is merely imputed by mind.

So now, it's the same with each of the twelve months. Months are exactly the same. A month is made up of four weeks, right? Four weeks? Three weeks or four weeks? Huh?

Okay, four weeks. So now, when we analyze a month, when we meditate on a month, it's exactly the same. Four weeks is the base to be labeled "month." So, there is the base and "month" is the label. There's no other month except what is merely imputed by the mind.

Because there's four weeks, because there's that base, so the month is merely imputed by the mind. Because there's four weeks. Again, the month is totally empty of the real month existing from its own side. It is totally empty. It exists, but it's totally empty. It exists but it's totally empty. It exists merely imputed by the mind. Again, that is so subtle when you analyze what a month is.

Now, a week is seven days. Because there is seven days. What that "week" is nothing else, nothing other, except what is merely imputed by the mind. Is nothing other what is merely imputed by mind. So, again, it exists in mere name and is empty from its side, so the way it exists becomes an extremely subtle phenomenon.

And now a day. A week is like that, so now a day. When we think of a day, how day appears to us, it appears as a real day, something existing from its own side. "Day" doesn't appear to us as merely labeled by mind. It doesn't appear to us like that, even though the way the day exists is merely imputed by mind.

So, now, again, twenty-four hours. Because there's twenty-four hours, a day exists. What it is, is what is merely imputed by the mind. So again "day" is the unification of emptiness and dependent arising. It exists in mere name, merely imputed by mind. Therefore, it is empty of existing from its own side.

Now the hour. Again, when we think of "hour" we think of a real hour. How many hours is this talk? [GL] [RL] I think five hundred hours! Anyway, especially when you realize I'm going to teach one more hour, how will that hour appear to you? [GL] [RL] It would appear an even *more* inherently existent hour! [GL RL] A very painful hour! [GL] [RL] But it could be helpful to realize emptiness. [RL] It could make it easier to recognize the object to be refuted, the hour.

Anyway, how many minutes are there? Sixty minutes. How does the hour exist? It is because there is sixty minutes. Those sixty minutes are the base, and "hour" is the label. They are two different phenomena. What is "hour" is what is merely imputed by the mind. Again, it is totally empty of the real hour existing from its own side. That is what "hour" is in the reality, how the hour exists. It exists in mere name, while it is totally empty from its own side.

So now, how many seconds in one minute? Sixty seconds. [RL] Again, why there's a minute is because there's sixty seconds. That's the base, and "minute" is the label; they are two different phenomena. And "minute" is what is merely imputed by the mind, therefore, it is totally empty from its own side. It becomes extremely subtle phenomena. Not that it "becomes" to our mind, you see. This is how the minute *is* but we don't see it that way. Now, this is how we see something which is an extremely subtle phenomena.

So now, is this a second or not? [Rinpoche snaps his fingers] Huh? What? Less. This is less than a second? [GL] A second is longer than this? [Rinpoche snaps fingers] The clock, tac, tac, tac, [GL] each one second. So this is same. [Rinpoche snaps fingers] What? This is less than second? A second is longer? You think like that? Huh?

[Student: inaudible]

Rinpoche:

One one-thousandth of a second? So you mean you split that second in thousandths? [GL]

[*Student*: inaudible]

*Rinpoche*:

*A-le*, one-thousandth. What is the meaning? [*Student*: inaudible] [GL] But there's no meaning of the thousand? [*Student*: inaudible] Just to create some base? [RL GL] Just to say that it has a base. The second has a base: one one-thousandth. [RL]

So, anyway, it's the same. Why "second" exists is because there are so many split seconds. There are many split seconds. So that is the base, and "second" is the label. They are two different phenomena. What is "second" is merely imputed by the mind. It is imputed in connection to all those split seconds. I don't know how many split seconds.

The four different schools of Buddhist philosophy have different ideas about [the smallest things. The lower schools claim] that there are atoms that don't have particles, and it's the same with time. There are different views on that. I think the Prasangika school says that even particular atoms depend on another particular atom. And similarly, different schools have different way of explaining time.

So, anyway, all those split seconds are the base and "second" is the label. And that is merely imputed by the mind so, therefore "second" does not exist from its own side; it is totally empty.

This is to get an idea, starting from the year, down to the seconds, then including split seconds, all that they are is nothing except by what is merely imputed by mind. They are totally empty from their own side. This is true of all phenomena. It is exactly like that, all the phenomena are the same. We have to understand that all phenomena are the same in that way. That's the real nature of how phenomena exist.

#### EMPTINESS: THE AGGREGATES ARE MERELY IMPUTED

This is the same way that the I exists. The I exists because there are aggregates. The base is the aggregates and the base has a label. What the I is, is what is merely imputed by mind so, therefore, that's totally non-existent, it's totally empty from its own side. So, again, it's an extremely subtle phenomenon. It exists but it's extremely subtle. The way of existing is unbelievably subtle.

It's the same with the aggregates. Again, the aggregates in general are merely imputed. How they exist is merely imputed by the mind because there is the collection of the five aggregates. How the aggregate of form exists is because there is the collection of all these parts of the body. So aggregate of form is an extremely subtle phenomenon; it is what is merely imputed by the mind; it is nothing more than a collection of all these parts of the body.

All those what you call head, legs, hands, all these are nothing except what is merely imputed on collections of those parts, and what even those parts are, is what is merely imputed by mind depending on another base. So it goes, down to atoms. What is an atom? An atom is also merely imputed by mind because there are particular atoms. So the particular atoms are merely imputed by mind because there are other particles.

## EVERYTHING IS MERELY LABELED

So starting from the I, go through everything down to the particular atoms—the whole thing. Nothing exists from its own side. Nothing has any inherent existence. Everything is totally empty right there. But that doesn't mean they don't exist. They exist in mere name. Starting from the I down to the particular atoms, everything exists in mere name.

Starting from the 'I' down to each mental factor and consciousness, all those are also merely imputed by mind, depending on another base. Those different thoughts that have different functions, those minds are merely imputed different labels, "this" and "that." They are different thoughts which do different functions, perceiving different objects. Go down to the seconds of consciousness and the split seconds of consciousness. Starting from the I, everything what they are, is what is merely imputed by mind. All these are totally empty. Starting from the 'I', down to the split second of consciousness, everything is totally empty. That's why the Buddha said in the teachings, [Tibetan] "Everything exists in mere name, by being merely imputed by the mind."

*Tak-yer*, means "exists in mere name," existing merely imputed by the mind. *Yer* is "exist" and *tak* is "labeled." Everything exists being merely imputed by the mind. I made it a little longer in English.

So the conclusion is that everything is empty. [GL] The meditation is from the year down to the split second, then 'I' down to the atoms. Meditate on how everything is a label placed on a base and how even the base is labeled on another base, like that. The aggregates are the base to label I, but even the general aggregates are a label is imputed on the collection of five aggregates. They become a label and then it exists on base.

So like that, everything, from the I down, exists in mere name, merely imputed by mind. This meditation is very important for not thinking that the I is the aggregates. It's very important to think that there are the aggregates and the I is merely imputed because there is that base, the aggregates. When you think this way it differentiates the aggregates and label "I" then you don't think the I is there. At that time, you don't think the I is on the aggregates. That is a very important point. That's a very important point to get to appear to your mind. To get the idea that there's no I on the aggregates. When you get that feeling, then it's easy to see that the I isn't here. It exists in mere name, merely imputed by the mind. It's empty. That's the idea you should get.

Then like this, it's similar with all the rest of phenomena. This is very effective. What you discover is how these phenomena exist, what the reality is, which is something *totally* different to what you have been believing, to what has been appearing, up until now.

If you can see the differences, then you're able to distinguish between what is the false and what is the truth. You're able to see what is false in your life and what is the truth. With this realization or recognition you don't cheat yourself. Then you don't get deceived by these hallucinations. You don't get deceived. Otherwise, what you falsely believe is true is like a bad friend. It is like a bad friend. You believe him to be good and you trust him and then he cheats you.

You believe that all these appearances really exist, and then, by clinging to them that, that makes delusions to continually arise and you create karma, die and are reborn in samsara without end, suffering in samsara without end.

This meditation on emptiness is the path, it is the only way, to directly cut the delusions, cause of samsara. Only by this way will we get liberated from the sufferings of samsara.

I'll stop here.

[Mandala offering]

[Dedication]

So, goodnight—in emptiness. [RL, GL] Thank you.

## Lecture 7

EMPTINESS: THE ROPE AND THE SNAKE ARE MERELY LABELED BY THE MIND

First I'll finish what I started. There was a commercial break. [GL] There was commercial break advertising coca cola, advertising tea. [RL] As I was saying before, with the torch you see it's not a snake. It's a rope, but a real rope. Before it was a real snake, but now that's gone. Now you discovered, now that you cannot find it. It doesn't exist. Now you see the real rope. Before there was a real snake; now with the torch there is a real rope.

This real rope has nothing to do with your mind. It never came from your mind; it has nothing to do with your mind. The rope completely exists from its own side. The rope, the real rope, exists, having inherent existence, existing from its own side, not merely labeled by mind. It appears like that: a real rope in the sense of appearing not merely labeled by mind. So that is the subtlest, extremely subtle hallucination of the object to be refuted.

Of the four schools of Buddhist philosophy, the fourth one, the Madhyamaka school, the second subschool, Prasangika—that school's object to be refuted is this extremely subtle one. You see the rope. The rope appears to you and you see the rope in that way, as a real rope, not merely labeled by mind. There's the object to be refuted, the false object, according to each school of Buddhist philosophy, the Mind Only School, the Madhyamaka Svatantrika, then the Prasangika School. By believing in the hallucination, which the wrong view, the ignorance according to each of the points of view of these schools, everything is there in your view. While you're looking at the rope all those hallucinations that are explained by each school are there in your view.

However, the extremely subtle one is the rope appearing to you not merely labeled by mind. For the Prasangika school's view, that is the object to be refuted. This very subtle one is also there in your view. All these hallucinations piled up, the way the rope is appearing to you and how you believe what the rope is.

So with the torch, what you thought was the snake is revealed as a rope, but you see it as a real rope, not merely labeled by mind. It is a rope that is existing not merely labeled by mind. It is slightly more than what is merely imputed by mind. This appearance is not there, which is true; it is not there. You don't see it. Even though that's the way it exists, we don't see it that way.

So, now, this real rope appearing not merely labeled by mind, even slightly more than what is merely labeled by mind, now we look for it. Where is it? Now you look where, you analyze whether it exists there or not. So where is it?

Let me put it this way. Every a single strand of the rope is not even the mere labeled rope, then whole bunch of rope strands together, even that whole bunch woven together, even that is not

the merely labeled “rope.” What exists, the rope that exists, is the merely labeled “rope.” But every single strand is not the rope, the merely labeled “rope.” And altogether, even that is not the merely labeled rope.

You cannot even find the merely labeled rope, there is no way it exists on this. Wherever you point, you cannot find it. The merely labeled rope does exist but we cannot find it on that. You cannot find from top most tip down to the lowest most tip. You cannot find it. The merely labeled rope you cannot be found anywhere. Even that which exists you cannot find there. You not only cannot find it on every single hair but even on the whole together, you cannot find the merely labeled rope. Nowhere. If you look for it, where is it?

All that is just the base. All that is just the base, which can receive the label “rope.” It is the base, which can receive the label “rope” and your mind, which sees the base, the collection of strands put together which has the function to tie things, and it makes up the label “rope,” merely imputing the label “rope” and believing in that.

So that’s the label. What you see first is the base. Second, the mind sees that base, then merely imputes “rope,” which is the label but is not there. The label is not on that base, it exists nowhere on that base.

When you analyze this, that real rope is gone—the real rope, the one not merely labeled by mind. When you shine a torch after the real snake is gone, you see it’s empty, it’s non-existent. Now this real rope, not merely labeled by mind, existing from its own side, is gone. That which you believed in so strongly at the beginning is totally non-existent. When you shine torch, after you realize it, this is not a snake. The real rope, not merely labeled by mind, which appeared so strongly, which you believed in 100 per cent without doubt, is now totally non-existent.

How are you going to find this on this base? How are you going to find this collection of hairs put together? You cannot even find what exists, the merely labeled rope, there. How can you find the rope that is not merely labeled by mind? How can you find this? This doesn’t exist anyway—neither on the base nor anywhere it exists; it is totally non-existent, a total hallucination.

So, you realize its absence, you realize that it is totally non-existent right there, that that which appears from its own side is totally empty. It appears to exist from its own side but it’s totally empty from its own side; it’s totally empty there, it’s completely non-existent there. This is seeing, realizing the emptiness of the rope.

When you shine the torch on the real rope—the one not merely labeled by mind—this is what appears and this is what you then believe in. It is exactly like this. Now you can get some idea of this hallucination. The second phenomena, the second object you have seen with the torch, is also revealed. By shining the torch, you discovered that it wasn’t a real snake but a rope, but you believed it was a real rope, “real” in the sense of not merely labeled by mind. You believed that this is what exists. The previous snake, that you really believed in and appeared as a real snake there, that’s totally non-existent, but this one exists. The mind thinks like that at the beginning. Later, after analysis, it’s totally non-existent. It exists nowhere, neither on the base nor anywhere.

In everyday life, I, action, object, enlightenment, hell, samsara, nirvana, happiness, problems, virtue, nonvirtue, friend, enemy, bad and good—we should recognize all the rest of the hallucinations that we have from this idea of the real rope. Just as there is no real snake, there is

also not the second one, a real rope. By recognizing this as a hallucination, we should recognize all the rest of the hallucinations that we have on all the merely labeled phenomena.

Whatever exists there, the hallucinations cover everything. All these are empty: I, action, object, everything—all the phenomena. They all are totally empty of that which appears real from there. This rope is empty of that real rope appearing from its side. Just as this rope, which is merely imputed one, which doesn't have inherent existence, existing from its own nature, so it is the same with the rest of phenomena, including the I. Noting has inherent existence; nothing exists from its own side by nature.

This is an extremely important meditation to practice mindfulness in daily life, the mindfulness looking at the hallucination. Practicing the mindfulness of looking at all these objects as hallucinations, that one is extremely essential.

#### BODHICITTA: THE SEVEN POINTS CAUSE AND EFFECT

I'll mention it here, although it may not happen at another time, I'm not sure. To integrate meditation into your daily life, there are two very important lam-rim meditations: bodhicitta and emptiness. These two very essential practices, bodhicitta and emptiness, are like two legs that take you to enlightenment, that make your daily life most meaningful. This is not just sitting meditation, but here I'm talking about during your busy life or at break-time. The term "break" doesn't mean a break from Dharma. That's wrong. A break from Dharma practice means your actions will be nonvirtuous. If you allow yourself a break from Dharma practice then you will be engaging in nonvirtue. That is the break from Dharma practice. Here I'm talking about a break from sitting meditation, not a break from Dharma, and especially at busy times or when you are working, whenever you're not doing sitting meditation. This is how to make life, how to make your daily life most meaningful. By meditating on emptiness you are liberating yourself from samsara. All day long, whatever you do, you're liberating yourself. With mindfulness of emptiness, all day long you're liberating yourself from samsara. You're liberating yourself from the prison of samsara that ignorance has put you in. Your ignorance put you in the prison of samsara. Now, by allowing yourself to generate wisdom within yourself, you liberate yourself from your prison of samsara.

I'm not sure whether you have heard these lam-rim teachings before, but there are two meditation techniques to develop bodhicitta. One is developing altruism to achieve enlightenment through what in Tibetan is called [Tibetan], the seven-point technique of Mahayana cause and effect. Based on the realization of equanimity, how all sentient beings are equal to you, on that basis, you reflect on how all sentient beings have been one's mother, and then how kind they all have been. And then you determine to repay the kindness; and then you develop loving-kindness, affectionate loving kindness, the love that a mother feels for her beloved child. Like the love a mother feels for the beloved child that she's cherished so much in her heart; you generate that kind of love towards every single sentient being without discrimination, exactly like that. That's what affectionate loving-kindness means. The Tibetan term is *yi-ong jam-pa*—the feeling in your heart. It's similar to saying "most dear." You generate love exactly like that towards every single sentient being, even the person who abuses you, even those call enemy, it's the same. You have to generate that even to that person, without discrimination, to everyone, top every six realms' sentient being, not only human beings. This is affectionate loving-kindness, feeling every being is most dear.

#### BODHICITTA: THE KINDNESS OF THE MOTHER

You see the object of your meditation, that sentient being, as a beautiful one, you see that being's beauty. This beauty is not physical beauty. Physically they can be totally ugly, most horrible, but you see that person as beautiful because you have meditated on kindness of that person before. That person has shown kindness to you from beginningless rebirths, of being your mother and kind. Or if in this life the person who has been most kind to you is the father, then you can use the father. If that's easier for you to meditate on kindness of the father then you can think that all sentient beings have been your father. You see that every sentient being person has been kind like this, exactly like this, numberless times from beginningless rebirths.

If your father is the one who has been most kind to you then you can try to get the same feeling towards all sentient beings. And then that helps you to repay kindness and to generate this. How you see your father's beauty, you see all sentient beings. Or if you use the mother, or somebody else that you feel so kind, most kind, somebody who is the most kind. Then everybody did the same, everybody has shown you that kindness.

It's not that you're making it up. This is according to reality. It has been like that from countless rebirths for every sentient being. So then, you see the beauty in every sentient being. As I mentioned, even a person who is physically ugly, terrible ugly, when you think of the kindness of the person then you feel affectionate love and in view of that affection you see that person's beauty. It's nothing to do with the physical beauty.

So this is why the mother is used in the texts. It is because the mother gives you life, when your consciousness took place on the fertilized egg, taking care for nine months in the womb. It's where your consciousness took place. And you were born from your mother, you came out from your mother's body. That in itself is an unbelievable kindness. Just that in itself, even if that was the only thing she did, even if she did nothing after that but just that—that in itself is an unbelievable kindness. If she had had an abortion or something, if she'd thought more of her own comfort, to make her own life easier, but she didn't, she chose to take care of me, even though it made her life uncomfortable or uneasy. She gave up her freedom.

If she hadn't taken care of me then, I wouldn't have this precious human body. Not only that, I wouldn't have these pleasures, these human being's pleasures. Not only that, but the most precious thing is to meet Dharma and practice and learn Dharma, so I can be free from samsara. The Dharma, which is only the Buddha's teaching, is the only thing that has the means, that has the complete path to liberate me from samsara and, not only that, to achieve enlightenment so I can liberate numberless sentient beings from all the sufferings and causes, and bring them to enlightenment. It allows me to bring infinite benefit to sentient beings.

You can think that all this came from the mother's kindness. This came from the mother. This is the mother's kindness where you have all these opportunities.

Even if all the mother ever did for you was to give birth to you and then gave you to somebody else to take care of you, even if somebody else raised you, and you think, "Oh, my mother's abandoned me. My mother is terrible. Somebody else took care of me and that's totally bad. Mother is totally bad." You see the kindness of the person who's raised you but you don't see the kindness of mother. You don't see that all these opportunities that you have now—not only temporal pleasure, human pleasure, comforts, but all these unbelievable chances to practice Dharma as I mentioned before—come from the mother. This would all be impossible if she hadn't taken care of me in the womb.

By now, you could be in the hell realm. You could be fish in the water, caught in the fisherman's net, or whatever. By now you could be a worm eaten by bird, cut in pieces. You could be in the mouth, in the beak of the birds, those big birds on the beach, in the ocean. They have these huge beaks.

[*Students*: inaudible]

*Rinpoche*: What?

[*Students*: inaudible]

*Rinpoche*:

Pelican. This huge beak! [RL] This long beak and kind of like that, very terrifying. [GL] It somehow swallows the fish whole and keep it down. Somebody goes down. So, anyway, you could be there by now, you could be in that mouth.

Anyway, you never know. You could be a mosquito, [Rinpoche makes mosquito sound] disturbing people. [GL] You could be annoying people [RL] so you never know. You could be a crocodile, with this long mouth, like this, this very long mouth. [GL] With teeth hanging here, such an unbelievable body. So could be like that in the mud. Or you could be this big animal that lives in the mud, a rhinoceros. Huh?

[*Students*: inaudible]

Rhinoceros, Hippopotamus. [GL RL] Or hiponomas [RL GL] or happyinomas. So you could be anything. You wouldn't have this chance.

When you think like that, even if all she did was just keep you for nine months in the womb, taking care and giving birth, that is unbelievable. Just that is unbelievable. Due to that, all these things happen. It's the cause of all this unbelievable, incredible opportunity we have now. It's all came from her unbelievable kindness, especially to practice Dharma, to have the opportunity to practice Dharma, because she took care of you in the womb and gave birth to you. Now having opportunity to practice Dharma came from her, from her kindness. It's dependent on her. Like the fruit that you enjoy depends on the seed that was planted, this is the same. All these incredible comforts, pleasures, that we have and the most fascinating thing that is a miracle: having opportunity to practice Dharma to achieve all the happiness of future life and liberation from samsara and enlightenment—it all depends on her taking care and giving birth to you, giving you a human body.

Just to repay this life's kindness, without questioning, without thinking about all the past lives that she has been your mother, giving you not only temporary happiness but the opportunity to practice Dharma—not just in this life but also in numberless past lives. Without thinking that, just her kindness in this life, even if you sacrifice your all your lives to her, you give up your lives to her, equaling the number of atoms on this earth, that many lives you sacrifice for her, still is nothing. It's nothing. You cannot repay her kindness, who gave you this incredible opportunity. That much you sacrifice your own life to her is nothing, you cannot repay the kindness.

So, then, there is no question of other things. There's four ways of meditating on kindness. First is the numberless kindnesses that gave you this body and, especially, this human body, and *especially* which gave you the opportunity to practice Dharma. That cat is saying yes, yes. [GL]

The first way the mother has been kind is that she gave you this body. Then, she has given her life throughout countless lives and in this life she has protected you numberless times. The mother has protected your life from hundreds of dangers each day from the time you are born. There is that kindness. You cannot count from the time of the birth, from the time of conception, for that many years, how many times she has protected you. She has done this numberless times.

She has given her body numberless times from beginningless past lives. That is a main kindness. As well as that, when you were born to her, she protected your own life from hundreds of dangers each day. Like that, she did this numberless times from beginningless rebirth up to now.

Then she led you on the “path to the world” which means she gave you education, either she taught you within the household or she helped you to get an education, and especially a Dharma education. She has done that numberless times from beginningless rebirths.

Then the fourth kindness is that she has born great hardships for me, and not only this life. At that time when you meditate on this it’s good to remember whenever you yourself have had experience of taking care of children. Especially, if you have found it difficult to take care of children, if it has caused you hardships, then this is a very useful experience for you because then you can use that as an example how your parents suffered so much for yourself for so many years. If you have your own experiences of having a hard and difficult life, day and night, then that is very good for realization of bodhicitta, to realize the kindness of your parents—how they suffered so much, how they sacrificed their lives so much while you were in the womb and after your birth. That’s very effective because it’s something that you have seen, you have experienced.

Even if you don’t have experience, you should look at the other people who have children, who have many children, how the parents have so many difficulties, how they have to bear so many hardships, how much life they have to sacrifice, day and night, to give everything to the child. Even the simple example of the hard work the parents in the West have to do to pay for their child’s university education.

What I see among the students, what I hear, is that they’re waiting until the children get their degree or finish university or college. They really work so hard; there is no time for retreat. They want to do many things. They want to do retreat; their own wish is to retreat. They know how the Dharma is so precious and how life is so short. They’re aware that this is the most precious life and very short—that all the opportunities they now have can soon be lost—but they have no choice because they are taking care of their children. They try to find many jobs to earn a living, not only for themselves but for the children, and there are all the expenses, for living and for the education. They work so hard and when they come home they are so tired, from working so many hours. Even though they are so exhausted, they still have to work at home to look after the children.

Watch other parents if you yourself don’t have yourself any experience. If a mother did not watch her children even for five minutes, there are so many things that can harm the child. If she can’t watch them she has to pay somebody else to watch them. If the child is not watched even for five minutes the child is in risk to fall down from the steps or some cliffs or to put sharp things—things that harm life—into the mouth. The baby has no knowledge what is harmful and what is beneficial, no idea. Even if it is not watched for one minute, the baby’s life is in danger. You have been in a similar situation like this when you were a baby, where all that time you were looked after by your parents or by somebody hired to take care of you while the parents were working. And you repaid them by never giving them a minute’s peace to have a good sleep, by

crying all the time, day and night, crying right through the night, endlessly making *pipi* and *kaka*, always making things dirty that they would have to clean up.

In Solu Khumbu, in the Himalayas, the place where I was born, a mother would even clean the child's nose by mouth, by sucking the snot out with the mouth. And especially she would feed by giving the food mouth to mouth. I don't remember, particularly, myself being fed by my mother mouth to mouth but I enjoyed baby food very much. [GL] I don't remember being fed by mouth but I know the food they give to babies is so delicious. I think it's mainly because of the butter. I think the milk they put in *tsampa* had lots of butter so it's so delicious, maybe a little salt probably. It may not have been my own food but maybe another child's, maybe my brother's food, one of my brothers when he was baby or something. Maybe I ate his food. Anyway, the mother takes the food in her own mouth and then feeds it to the baby from her own mouth, in exactly the same way that a mother bird feeds her young. Maybe the same method is used in Tibet. And of course she feeds the child with her own breast milk. That's very common.

So, you should remember all the hardships. If you yourself didn't have that experience then look at others and use that for the meditation. Look at how your parents suffered in this life. They suffered so much, they exhausted themselves so much, they bore so many hardships, they had so much worry, so much fear, and all of that; trying to earn a living for the shelter, food and clothing, all these things. They protected your life from hundreds of dangers every day. That includes giving medicines when you were sick, giving food when you were hungry, giving you drinks when you were thirsty, giving you clothing and shelter—that includes all those things, protecting your life from hundreds of dangers each day.

Then think this is not the only life. They have done so much for you in this life but this is not the first time. They have done this numberless times, from beginningless rebirths. Then, try to see how their kindness is deathless, beginningless; each kindness is beginningless. They have exhausted themselves life after life to provide you with shelter, comfort, food, they have created so much negative karma for you, by cheating others, telling lies to others, harming others, killing others—they have collected so much negative karma—all for your wellbeing. Who will have to experience the suffering result of all that negative karma done for your wellbeing, for your happiness? Only themselves. They have done things like that numberless times. It's not the first time they have done this. And as a result, they have suffered so much, from time without beginning, for me. Because of the negative karma created for me, for my wellbeing, they have had to suffer all the results, from beginningless rebirths. This is not the first time. And they will have to experience the suffering results of all the negative karma they are collecting in this life for my wellbeing in their future lives. They have to experience all that. So remember all those things.

On top of that, from your own side, you cause them to get angry, and cause them to create negative karma because of that. Then, again, they have to experience all the suffering results. Besides the kindness of bearing such hardships for you, on top of this, you cause them to create more negative karma and they have to experience all the suffering results. From beginningless rebirths this has happened. They have shown great kindness by bearing hardship for you.

To think this way is also very good. Even the buddhas are unable to see the beginning of the kindness of this life's mother, even just the kindness of giving her body. Even the buddhas cannot see the beginning. She did like this numberless times, from beginningless rebirths and the buddhas cannot see the beginning of the kindness of her giving her body.

BODHICITTA: REPAYING THE KINDNESS

Think, “To repay this kindness, even I sacrifice my life for her, even if I sacrificed countless lives, equal to the number of the atoms of this earth, it’s still nothing.” I mentioned before that even for just this life, because she gave birth and therefore you have all these opportunities now, especially to practice Dharma, so sacrificing your lives equaling the number of atoms of earth to her is nothing.

The second kindness, protecting you from hundreds of life dangers each day—this is not first time she has done this. There have been numberless times, from beginningless rebirths. The buddhas’ omniscient minds cannot see the beginning of this kindness.

So think, “Even if I sacrifice my life equaling the number of atoms of all this earth to repay that kindness, I cannot. I cannot finish repaying her kindness. Her kindness gave me an education, it led me in the path of the world. She has done this numberless times; this is not the first time. She has done this numberless times from beginningless rebirths. Even the buddhas’ omniscient minds cannot see beginning of this kindness. Even if I sacrifice my life equaling the number of atoms of this earth to her, I cannot finish repaying her kindness.”

Then the fourth kindness is that she has suffered so many hardships for you. Think, “This is not the first time she has suffered great hardships for me, she has done this numberless times from beginningless rebirths. Even the buddha’s omniscient minds cannot see the beginning of this kindness of bearing hardships for me. So even if I sacrifice my life number of atoms of this earth to repay the kindness, it’s nothing. I cannot repay this kindness. At this time, I must repay her kindness. Especially, as now I have this opportunity to do it. This time is my turn to help.”

In regards to how to repay kindness to your parents, giving food and shelter and so forth, giving external means are good, but they do not solve their problems. That alone doesn’t solve their problems.

In their past lives, they themselves have been wheel turning kings, or kings in deva realm, kings in human realm. They have had all the power and wealth numberless times. They have been born a king numberless times and had all this wealth and power numberless times but that didn’t help them. That didn’t help them to be free from samsara, free from delusion and karma. So that’s why they’re still suffering.

Therefore, the best way to repay kindness is by giving them the Dharma. To reveal Dharma to them, first you yourself should practice Dharma. The only means to liberate sentient beings from samsara, from delusion and karma, is only by Dharma. And to that, first you yourself should practice in order to realize the path to liberation and enlightenment, the lam-rim, by listening, reflecting, meditating and practicing the lam-rim. The source of all the happiness is trying to achieve lam-rim realizations based on living in ordination or living in lay vows, which is protecting karma, which is the fundamental practice of Dharma. This is the best way to repay the kindness.

In Hong Kong, a famous producer of CDs, a Chinese person, told me he didn’t have child yet and asked me whether he should have a child. His mother died, I think, this year. Is that right? He loved her so much and he did his best to help her rebirth. So he asked me whether to have a child.

Some students suggested that I make a CD of prayers and various prayer practices, so I did that. And a famous Chinese singer there made a CD of some short prayers and mantras to help Maitreya Project, the 500-foot Maitreya statue.

However, this person asked me that question that time. So I said you must have a very clear goal before you have a child. You must have clear direction with the child's life. You must aim for the child to be source of happiness, peace, for all, for the whole world. If you're going to have a child, you should have that aim—to bring the child up with a good heart, with loving kindness, compassion, with universal responsibility, feeling responsible for all sentient beings happiness. You should try to help the child grow up that way. That should be your main aim, for your child to become a source of peace and happiness, so he or she can give so much peace and happiness to the world. You should be like that, with a clear direction for the life of your child.

If you attempt it that way, then it's worthwhile. I don't remember the other part I mentioned. Otherwise you sacrifice so much, you suffer so much, you put so much effort and you work so hard for the child then child, but with all that sacrifice and dedication, the child is not beneficial for the world. I don't remember exactly what I mentioned but, anyway, it means he or she means doesn't even bring peace and happiness in the family. All he or she brings is harm, harm to others. There is no education of the good heart, then, of course, the family suffers, the children suffer, life ends in suffering. Life becomes continuous suffering and ends with suffering. But this is only accounting for this life.

#### BODHICITTA: GENERATING LOVING KINDNESS

In our daily life when somebody gets angry at you or mistreats you, when they harm you, even for a whole month or a year, the aim is to practice patience, to not get angry and practice patience. That's what gives meaning to life.

Even practicing patience just once makes your life worthwhile. That makes your parent's life worthwhile, who sacrificed their life for so many years, from the time you were in your mother's womb until now, for so many years. It gives meaning to their life. All the suffering they have gone through, the worry and fears, all the exhaustion, all the troubles they have taken, it gives meaning to their effort, to their life. It gives meaning to everything they did for you. Whenever you practice not harming others, it gives meaning to your parents, to all the sacrifices in their life, as well as the material considerations. All the worry and fears, how many they suffered—it gives meaning to their life.

Whenever you help others, whenever you benefit others with a sincere heart, with compassion, with loving-kindness, it makes your life meaningful and gives meaning to your parents, for all the suffering they experienced for you.

Therefore, there is no question that meditating on the lam-rim—meditating on renunciation, bodhicitta, emptiness—is the best thing in the life; meditating. There's no question. In the daily life, trying to live life as much as possible in the lam-rim, in bodhicitta, emptiness and renunciation, and especially the best one, guru devotion, this makes every twenty-four hours of your life most practical and meaningful, not no harming others but only benefiting them.

So, every minute, every second you are coming closer to liberation, to enlightenment. By living your life with mindfulness in these things, even if you don't have actual realizations, at least with this attitude, with the lam-rim, every day, every hour, every second, you're coming closer and closer to liberation and enlightenment. That means every day, hour, minute, second, you are coming closer to bringing numberless sentient beings, including your parents, to enlightenment. You are coming closer to that aim, the main goal of the life.

Otherwise, you are just born to cause suffering to others. You are just born to cause problems to your parents, to torture your parents and harm other sentient beings with anger, with the self-cherishing thought, the dissatisfied mind, with desire and the jealous mind, with all these negative emotional thoughts.

Every day, whenever you practice virtue, whenever you're able to practice one virtue, the unmistakable cause of happiness, whenever you're able to practice that virtue, that gives meaning to your parent's life. All the sufferings they experienced, all the difficulties they experienced for you, are made worthwhile.

Therefore, with your body, speech and mind, every day, every hour, every minute, every second, you should to practice virtue as much as possible. For example, even when you do prayers, when you recite mantras, when there's a mental recitation. [Break in taping]

Your mind is completely in virtue but if you verbally, if you recite OM MANI PADME HUM, OM VAJRASATTVA SAMAYA... the Vajrasattva mantra, your speech is also collecting merit, double merit, so that makes your life more worthwhile and gives more meaning and makes your parents' life more worthwhile because they are connected to you. That is an example.

Being kind to others in your daily life, being kind to everybody is very basic. Not only to friends, not only to the person who likes you or helps you, even to the person who criticizes you, who mistreats you, as well as strangers who do neither, you should be kind to everyone. Even to animals. Like that, I think that is really the most wonderful life. To practice that, including the animals, insects, to all the living beings to treat everyone well, that is the most wonderful life. You should use that way as the foundation for your lam-rim practice. It is the foundation for a lam-rim meditator, for a practitioner of the Mahayana teaching. That is what should be done to repay kindness of your parents. Being kind and respecting everyone should be the fundamental practice, that should be the fundamental practice.

I think I also told that man, that producer, about all the problems in Columbia. There has been so much violence for so many years, with so many people getting killed every week, every day in Columbia. I've been there once. The students told me that family members can be killed anytime. They said there is so much violence and so much stealing or confiscating their property. So much violence has happened. I mentioned that there is a need for a special education in the schools, for a good heart, especially an education to develop the good heart, loving kindness compassion and universal responsibility. The children in school need this special education, not only this education on school, but it should be the education they receive at home by the parents. They should get this education at both places. At home they should be educated by the parents, which means they themselves have to become examples, not just saying words. They themselves have to be inspiring examples to the children and that is how, by giving them special education, special training, the children can transform their minds. Maybe not all children will be able to practice this but from a hundred, maybe fifty or a quarter can do it.

The problems of the country may not be solved right away, but gradually through this education of a good heart at school and at home, by the parents, gradually this will bring the country peace, with less violence. Having peace and happiness depends on the present children. The more children being trained in a good heart, the less violence there will be in the country.

So, I thought to mention that. This is true for the United States as well, with very young boys shooting and killing many people in schools and other places. The Government is puzzled because it doesn't know whether to allow people to have guns. They talked for months and

months. I watched TV one night, and a Senator and very important people talked about these matters about guns. I don't remember but I think that in all the hours of talk, nobody at all mentioned the need to have a good heart, how everything depends on the mind, how we need to control the mind with a good heart. In those hours nobody mentioned that at all in all the talk about whether to allow people to have guns or not.

When Geshe-la gave teachings he quoted the great bodhisattva Shantideva on the many benefits of bodhicitta. I don't remember word for word but Shantideva says:

Once your inner enemy, delusion, is subdued, is tamed,  
Once it is destroyed, it's like you have destroyed all your external enemies.

Once your inner enemy, delusion, is destroyed, it's the same as destroying all the external enemies. Once you have destroyed your inner enemy, anger, you have no enemies outside. Once you don't have anger you have no enemy outside, you cannot find any enemy outside. The minute anger comes, you see the enemy outside, you find the enemy. Once you allow anger arise, then you are creating, you are making the enemy. Then you see enemy outside, because you allow anger to arise. Then you anger projects "enemy" onto that person and that's how you see them.

Shantideva gave this example. If you are wearing shoes made of leather on your feet, it's like covering the whole ground, the whole earth with leather. Wherever you walk, wherever you go, on the ground, in the mountains, no thorns can get into your feet. Your feet are very small compared to the Earth. [RL] Your feet are very small but, if you have leather, wherever you go no thorns can get into your feet. It's the same as covering the entire earth with leather. Shantideva gives this example. So like that no matter how many weapons you have, even atomic bombs, they cannot harm others, once you no longer have anger. However many weapons you have don't become dangerous to others.

#### ADDING DHARMA TO ROGER'S CAR

When I started living in United States needed a car to travel, so Roger very excitedly bought one. What was the name of the car? A Dodge. I think a student whose parent was in the business, his friend helped with the price or something.

I was staying at a student's house near Vajrapani in California, not in the center itself, but in Santa Cruz, in the bush. [GL] I was staying there because is easier to travel with an American passport than a Nepalese passport. Roger was so excited when he bought the car. He wanted to show it to me but I didn't go down to look until late the next morning. I went out and saw the car.

Anyway, I tried to think this car belongs to all sentient beings but of course did not continue, it didn't last. It is very helpful to try to think this belongs to them, this is their car, at time when you think something like that. But it didn't last. So, I have advertisements on the car. Just as people have advertisement cars and buses, so I advertised on this car: "No Anger No Enemy." That is the best sign on the side of a car "No Anger No Enemy."

There is a big spare wheel on the side of car, so I wrote OM MANI PADME HUM in Tibetan. Also in English? Just Tibetan. It should have been in English also, but maybe that next time. Anyway, I wrote OM MANI PADME HUM in Tibetan with prayer: "Anyone who see this car, who touches it or remember it, who think about or talk about this car, may everyone be free from all the problems and develop compassion and achieve enlightenment." Then on one side there is

message [RL] that His Holiness usually says: “My Religion Is Kindness.” Then I added the word “others.” Then on the other side the message says: “Cherishing Others Is the Source of All Happiness.” So that car is an advertisement for bodhicitta.

Because we drove from Vajrapani to Geshe Sopa’s place, where there were farms or certain areas, so many insects banged into the car and died. So we stopped and I did a lot of light offerings for them and made prayers for all those insects and flies.

So, anyway, I was wondering how to stop this from happening and I thought it might help to put something around on the front of the car, like a plastic shield that pushes the air up so the insects won’t bang onto the windshield. So anyway in front there is a Medicine Buddha mantra as well as being full of very powerful mantras, such the Medicine Buddha mantra and OM MANI PADME HUM. By seeing that, it purifies one hundred thousand eons of negative karma. There are many other powerful mantras. The benefits are that any wind that touches those mantras, when insects land on it and touch the mantras, or if they are touched by any wind or dust or rain, that has touched the mantras, their negative karma is purified and they receive a higher rebirth. So these mantra have power; they have so many benefits. They should be written on the glass where the insects bang into it, where they crash, but of course that can be difficult.

So, anyway, the main point of the car is advertising, with Chenrezig in the center and on the other side “No Anger No Enemy” so that people not only get the message in their mind, but it also leaves a positive imprint by seeing the Compassion Buddha.

Many people driving behind who see the messages on the back of the car try to overtake so that they can see who is driving the car. I think one or two person might have been upset. I think there might have been a problem with a more extremist person thinking. I suppose they know it’s a Buddhist car, [RL GL] not only because of the messages but also because there are many buddhas around the car. [RL GL] There are the Thirty-five Buddhas for prostrations. [GL RL] Then there is White Tara, Shakyamuni Buddha, a big one, and I think maybe Lama Tsongkhapa. I’m not sure. Anyway, there are *many* buddhas around. So, I am sure there are some people who know that this is a Buddhist car. [RL GL]

#### BODHICITTA: GENERATING LOVING KINDNESS

Anyway, now going back to the subject. The next point is generate loving kindness (*yi-wong kyi jam-pa*). Affectionate loving kindness is, feeling other sentient beings are most dear, by that definition. All our own most kind mother sentient beings, what they want is happiness but they don’t know what is the cause of happiness. They mistake the cause of happiness as the actions done for this life, this life’s works, the actions done with anger, attachment, and particularly clinging to this life—all the actions done with the three poisonous minds. They think these actions are the real cause of happiness, but this is totally wrong. Actions done with anger, actions done with attachment clinging to this life, ignorance, are only the cause of suffering.

As Nagarjuna says: [Tibetan]

Actions born from anger, ignorance or attachment are nonvirtue;  
From them all the suffering transmigratory beings arise.

That means that actions done with such an attitude are nonvirtue. People believe these are the cause of happiness whereas they are actually the cause of all suffering, therefore the result can never be happiness in these situations. They are suffering due to not understanding karma, due to ignorant in understanding karma, reincarnation and these things.

Being totally ignorant of the unmistakable cause of happiness the unmistakable cause of happiness, virtue, they run away from it. They run away from the actual cause of happiness, and even if they manage to create some virtue, they destroy the merit with anger or heresy. They destroy virtue like that.

Lower realm beings especially, hell beings, hungry ghosts and animals are devoid of even temporary happiness, and even those who have temporary happiness, the upper realm beings, humans and devas, are devoid of the ultimate happiness liberation from samsara. So there is no question that all the sentient beings, including the arhats who are free from samsara, are devoid of the peerless happiness, full enlightenment.

So think, “How wonderful it would be if all my kind mothers sentient beings could have happiness and cause of happiness. How wonderful it would be.” So, you see, already by meditating on kindness you have the realization that all the sentient beings are your mother, kind since beginningless rebirths. This realization that every sentient being, all these numberless sentient beings are so precious for you in your life is built on this base.

In the same way that a mother wants her only child to be happy, you can understand this and have the strong, intense wish for all these numberless sentient beings to be happy. You feel how wonderful it would be if they had all this happiness, including the most important peerless happiness of full enlightenment. Then think, “I will cause this to happen.” When you take the responsibility on yourself to cause that, then that becomes great loving kindness.

You want them to have all this happiness, in the same way that a mother wishes her child not just happiness, but the highest happiness. Whatever knowledge or education she has, whatever she sees as the highest happiness, she wishes that child to have right now, so strongly. In the same way, you wish all sentient being to have all happiness, right up to enlightenment. Then, you yourself want to make that happen.

Just as all sentient beings want happiness but are incapable of getting it, so they do not want any suffering at all but, as I mentioned before, they are constantly creating the cause of suffering. They are ignorant of the cause of suffering and constantly create the cause of suffering. They keep busy running towards suffering, creating the cause of suffering in everyday life. That is what they do all the time.

This is how a mother feels when her child is sick. She can think of nothing else except how to free her child from that sickness. Or if the child had fallen into a fire, there would be nothing else in her heart but saving the child from being burned in the fire. This is the same as the compassion you feel towards all the numberless sentient beings, feeling so unbearable that they are suffering. Then think, “How wonderful it would be if all the sentient beings, all my kind mothers, are free from all suffering and its causes. How wonderful it would be.” Then, “I will cause this to happen by myself.” You take responsibility on yourself. “I will do it. I will cause them to be free from the suffering.” Whenever you take responsibility on yourself, then that compassion becomes great compassion.

#### BODHICITTA: SPECIAL ATTITUDE

After those realizations, you develop the special attitude, which is called in Tibetan *lhag-sam*. It is the attitude of taking the responsibility for all sentient beings completely on yourself.

In daily life, if there is hard work to do, then you tell the other person that you yourself will do it, you take on the responsibility yourself to do the hard work, rather than them doing it, that attitude is *lhag-sam*. Rather than letting the other person suffer with such a hardship, you take it on yourself and you let the other person have happiness. So, here it is the same.

The converse of this is for you, the son or daughter, to stand by a tree or on roof and sing a song idly while your mother is being attacked by a tiger. She is in mortal danger and you climb a tree and sing a song. Maybe not to dance! How selfish and cruel that is! Your mother, who did everything for you now desperately needs help, her life is in danger by being attacked by the tiger. She needs help, but because you yourself are not in danger you carelessly sing a song. You are happy because you yourself are not in danger, you don't help your mother, you don't try to save your mother from danger. How cruel that is, how selfish that is.

Just as the blind need somebody to guide them so they don't fall over a cliff when they are walking, your mother is blind with ignorance, and needs a virtuous friend who possesses the wisdom eye knowing the Dharma, karma, the lam-rim and who can lead all mother sentient beings to safety, showing them the path to liberation.

Think, "They are inflicted with the three types of suffering: the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change and pervasive compounded suffering. They are constantly attacked by three types of sickness. They do not have opportunity to help themselves, while I myself, because I have received the perfect human rebirth and have met the leader of the blind, the virtuous friend who has the wisdom eye, the Dharma eye, therefore I have all the opportunities to develop my mind in on the path to enlightenment and to help all sentient beings, to help all my mother sentient beings to free them from all the suffering causes and bring them to enlightenment. I have this opportunity to help them, so if I don't do this, while my kind mother sentient beings are suffering so much and while I have the opportunity to do so, there is nothing more selfish and cruel, nothing more ungenerous and shameless. So, now it is my turn to help. I have all the opportunities *and* I am responsible because I have all the opportunities to do it. Therefore I must free them from all the suffering and causes and bring them to enlightenment by myself alone."

Before, with great compassion and loving kindness the thought was, "I will do it." Now, with the special intention, the thought is: "*Alone*. I will do it by myself *alone*." The extra word—"alone"—remember that.

#### ONLY ENLIGHTENED BEINGS CAN HELP ALL SENTIENT BEINGS

Geshe Sopa Rinpoche also mentioned that, at the moment you cannot guide even one sentient being to enlightenment. Even arhats, who are free from samsara, cannot do perfect work towards sentient beings as they do not have omniscient mind. They still have the four unknowing things: they cannot see the secret actions of a buddha and they cannot see subtle karma. I think there are two others, which I think are they cannot see places at an unbelievable distance or unbelievable lengths of time. I hope it's those last two. It should be checked whether these four unknowing things the arhats have is correct.

Even though they are totally free from samsara, from all the suffering and its causes—delusions and karma—arhats cannot see the subtle karma of the sentient beings. Therefore, it is still possibility for them to make mistakes, which means they cannot do perfect work towards sentient beings. The tenth bhumi bodhisattvas who are close to enlightenment still do not have an omniscient mind, so for them it is the same, they cannot do perfect work towards sentient beings. The only one who can do perfect work towards sentient beings is a buddha, an omniscient mind, who knows every single being's mind, every level of mind, every intelligence,

the karma and characteristics and every single method to bring them from happiness to happiness to enlightenment.

Think, “Therefore, I must achieve buddhahood.” This special mind, which is really bodhicitta, is a principal consciousness. It is not a mental factor, but a principal consciousness which is harmonious with the mental wish to achieve enlightenment. First, you determine to only work for others, when you generate the special attitude, then you determine to achieve enlightenment yourself.

When you have actualized this bodhicitta then your mind will be like Lama Atisha’s. When Lama Atisha saw a cow tied to a stake, he felt so uncomfortable. He called out “mother,” Lama Yeshe used to call all beings “mother.” “My mother is suffering,” when he saw an animal tied to a stake Lama Yeshe used to call animals mother, realizing all sentient beings are our mother.

When you reach the stage of the special intention, you already have this attitude already. With every sentient being that you see, you have this spontaneously-arising thought, that yourself will achieve enlightenment, in order to bring that sentient being to enlightenment. You naturally, spontaneously feel that with any sentient being that you see in daily life. Very intensely, from bottom of your heart, you feel that, just as a prisoner living in prison every day has aversion to prison twenty-four hours a day, always spontaneously wishing to be free from the prison intensely, day and night, like that, you feel this strong desire to liberate every single sentient being you see from samsara and bring them to enlightenment, to free them from the prison of samsara and bring them to enlightenment. You feel that every day spontaneously and then, to do that, you feel the great wish to achieve enlightenment.

If that wish happens effortlessly from the heart, not only intensely but also with great stability, lasting not just for a few days but stable for a very long time, that is a realization of bodhicitta. When you have that, you have entered the door of the Mahayana path to enlightenment, then you are a bodhisattva, the heart son of all the buddhas. This son is nothing to do with the physical body, the shape of the physical body, this extra thing hanging down, it has nothing to do with that. This is the spiritual son, the son of all the buddhas. Geshe-la mentioned many quotations from *A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life* showing the benefits of bodhicitta. When you have this realization, all those benefits happen.

I think, maybe I read just two pages. [GL] [RL] And only two pages. [R reads in Tibetan] Maybe just half a page, or two pages. [RL] [*Rinpoche reads in Tibetan*] [RL] I think I’ll just finish this one [RL]. I’ve almost finished this part, so I’ll stop here. [*Rinpoche reads in Tibetan*]

[Chanting]

#### DEDICATIONS

Even the past and future merits collected by oneself, the three times’ merits collected by others, all the merits collected today, all the particular merits collected today, the unconceivable merits, by taking precepts and so forth, by listening to the teachings, by meditating and explaining, by listening to the Dharma, may the bodhicitta, which is source of all the happiness and success in the world for me and for all sentient being, may it be achieved without delay for a second in one’s own mind as well as all the family members and in the mind of all those sentient beings and then which may it be increased.

[Tibetan chanting]

Dedicate to wisdom in same way. Due to all the three times' merits collected by myself and others, may all the father and mother sentient beings have happiness and may the three lower realms be empty forever. May all the bodhisattvas' prayers succeed immediately. May I cause all this to happen by myself alone.

[Tibetan chanting]

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me in the three times, collected by the buddhas, bodhisattvas and sentient beings, from now on whatever action I do in life, whatever I experience—eating, working, sleeping, doing jobs—whatever in life I experience, the ups and downs, being healthy or unhealthy, happy or unhappy, whether I have sicknesses or whether I don't have sicknesses—whatever happens, even including cancer or anything, whether one has or doesn't have so any sicknesses, happy or unhappy, rich or poor, gain or loss, living or dying, whether I am receiving praise or receiving criticism from other people, even if I am born in the hell realm—whatever happens to me in my life experience, from now on the most important thing is to become beneficial, to become useful for other sentient beings in my life.

To be useful for others, that is the most important thing, that is the meaning of my life, the purpose of my life. Having long life alone is not the meaning of my life, being healthy, without one single sickness, even for thousand years or eons, that alone is not the purpose of my life. Being wealthy alone is not the purpose of my life. Being famous is not the purpose of my life. Having power in this world alone is not the purpose of my life. The purpose of my life is to become useful for others. At that time I am fulfilling my life.

Therefore, whatever action I do, whatever I experience in life, even to be reborn in the hell realm, may all my experiences from now be most useful for all sentient beings and the cause of all sentient being achieving enlightenment as quickly as possible.

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me and others, that which is like a dream, like a mirage, like an illusion, may I—who am like a dream, like an illusion, like a mirage—achieve Buddha Shakyamuni's enlightenment, which is also like a dream, like an illusion, like a mirage. By using the example try to get idea that it doesn't exist from its own side, that it is empty of what is appearing real from its own side. The example is to break, to see as empty, to feel the false or empty object of ignorance and lead sentient beings who are like a dream, like an illusion, like a mirage and so forth to that enlightenment which is like a dream, like an illusion and like a mirage by myself alone who is like a dream, like an illusion, like a mirage, and so forth.

I dedicate all the merits in the way that three times' buddhas and bodhisattvas dedicated, the way they dedicate I will dedicate my merits in the same way.

Due to all the three times' merits collected by others may the purest teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa unified Sutra and Tantra be actualized completely in my mental continuum as well as in the mind of all my family members and in the minds of all the students in this organization, as well as all the benefactors in this organization, especially those who sacrifice their lives doing service for others through this organization.

May those whom I promised to pray for, whose names I have and those doing service for me actualize all this in this way in their lifetime without delaying even a second.

May all the virtuous friends, including the great compassionate one, His Holiness the Dalai

Lama, have stable lives and all their holy wishes succeed immediately.

Due to all the three times' merits collected by me and others may all the Sangha in this organization complete their scriptural understandings and realizations of the path to enlightenment in this very lifetime by receiving all the needs and all protection.

May all the meditation centers and social service centers pacify immediately the suffering of the bodies and the minds of all sentient beings, and actualize the teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa in the minds of all those sentient beings by suitable needs. May all the projects and all the organizations succeed immediately for His Holiness, as well as all the projects, building temples, statues and stupas and scriptures including the five hundred-foot Maitreya project, may they succeed immediately by receiving the necessary needs. May all these projects and centers cause bodhicitta to arise in the minds of all sentient beings. Due to that may everybody have perfect peace and happiness. May nobody experience war, pain, diseases, torture, poverty, sicknesses, dangers from fire, water or, air, from people dying by planes, cars and so forth. May they never experience all those undesirable problems and may all these centers' statues and all the projects cause all sentient beings to achieve enlightenment as quickly as possible, and may Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings spread all over the world and be glorious forever. May I be able to cause all these things by myself *alone*.

[Tibetan chanting]

So, thank you very much. I'll complete it maybe tomorrow.

[Chanting]

## Lecture 8

### A MAHAYANA MOTIVATION

At this time, one has received a perfect human body which is extremely rare to find. Generally even getting any human rebirth is extremely rare and only happens from having practiced pure morality. Therefore, we know how that is not easy to practice, how usually there is a fear and a lack of interest to do it. Even when try to practice, we are unable to do it purely because there are so many obstacles and all the delusions from inside the mind, and so many obstacles from outside, from the environment, to practice pure morality.

Therefore, the perfect human body which is qualified with the eight riches and ten endowments is extremely difficult to find. But at this time we have found it. We have met the Buddhadharma even the Mahayana teachings that makes it possible to achieve full enlightenment by ceasing all the gross and subtle defilements and to be able to liberate numberless sentient beings from all the suffering and causes and bring them to full enlightenment. And we have met a virtuous friend, not just a virtuous friend who can show us the path to liberation but Mahayana virtuous friend who can reveal the path to enlightenment, the complete path to enlightenment without missing a single thing.

At this time, having all the opportunities to practice Dharma is not enough. It is not sufficient. We don't have this opportunity forever. It is for a very short time and this opportunity can be stopped at any time because not only is death definite, but the actual time of death can occur any time. As is mentioned in the lam-rim outline in the meditation on impermanence, in this world system, the southern continent, the sentient beings have no fixed lifespan. Now, in this period of

degenerate times particularly, there is even more uncertainty about when we will die. It can happen any day, even today; it can happen at any moment.

So, before that, we need to be able to make preparations not to be reborn in the lower realms, but to receive another human body. Even if we are able to achieve liberation from samsara that is not sufficient. Even if we are able to do that, to achieve this goal and be totally free from the whole of samsara and all suffering, that is still not sufficient. That is not the ultimate goal of our own life, that is still not the purpose of our own life, just to achieve happiness for ourselves. That doesn't fulfill the purpose of our life. We must achieve full enlightenment to liberate numberless sentient beings from their suffering and bring them to full enlightenment.

To make that happen, we have to change our own attitude, by letting go of the I, by cherishing others. Without that, it is not possible, we cannot achieve full enlightenment, we cannot complete the Mahayana path, we cannot liberate all the numberless beings from suffering and bring them to full enlightenment.

#### THE SHORTCOMINGS OF SELF-CHERISHING

By cherishing the I, you experience all the shortcomings. It not only interferes with but actually harms any attempt to achieve ultimate happiness, liberation and enlightenment, especially enlightenment. Not only that, it even interferes with having the success of this life; it even creates obstacles to temporary happiness. As the great bodhisattva Shantideva mentions in *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*,

What is the need is there to mention? The childish work only for their own end  
while the buddhas work solely for the benefit of other. Just look at the difference  
between the two.

The first two verses talk about the shortcomings of what happens if you cherish the I. The results are only suffering, only problems, opening the door for all the problems if your attitude is only seeking happiness for yourself. If, on the other hand, you seek the happiness of others, if your attitude is wishing happiness for others, cherishing others, then you achieve all the happiness up to enlightenment, including the day to day life's peace and happiness.

In the previous one, your attitude is only seeking the happiness for oneself, by cherishing the I, and from there you open the door to all suffering. We can prove this by seeing that what has happened until now has only ever been through the self-cherishing thought and because of that has never been true happiness. From beginningless rebirths, we have only sought happiness for ourselves, cherishing the I, living that kind of life. This is why Shantideva calls such a person "childish." That means the ordinary being who lives his life with an attitude seeking happiness only for himself, working only for himself. Such a person is called childish.

We have been doing just that, living our life with that attitude, from beginningless rebirths up to now, therefore we are still a child, still childish. We have so far done nothing at all to become enlightened.

Before I mention that the Buddha himself changed his attitude from self-cherishing to cherishing others. From seeking happiness only for himself, he changes his attitude to one of seeking happiness only for others, and as he changed his attitude, he changed his actions.

Therefore, because of this in Tibetan the Buddha is called the "Mighty One" (Tib: *Thun-pa*). This name denotes he was able to change his attitude from the self-cherishing thought to cherishing

others, as well as the actions. Even at this very beginning of the Mahayana path, the Buddha was called *Thu-pa*—the Mighty One—because even though Shakyamuni Buddha had been the same as us, with all the delusions, sicknesses, problems, obstacles and so forth, he was able to change his attitude. He didn't stay like that forever. By realizing the extensive shortcomings of self-cherishing and the extensive benefit of cherishing others, he changed his attitude and developed bodhicitta. Having generated bodhicitta, he was able to enter the Mahayana path and complete the two types of merits, the merit of wisdom and the merit of virtue, the merit of wisdom is the cause of the dharmakaya, the holy mind of a buddha, and merit of virtue is cause of the rupakaya, the holy body of buddha.

He achieved full enlightenment and he has liberated numberless sentient beings already and is still enlightening them. In each minute, in each second, he liberates numberless living beings. This is what Buddha is doing, liberating unimaginable sentient beings, even with each beam that emits from Buddha's holy body within each second. This is what is happening. This is why Buddha is called the Mighty One. Buddha has infinite qualities of holy body, speech and mind. He has inconceivable qualities. It is beyond our concept to know Buddha's holy actions' extensive benefit to other sentient beings, how Buddha is able to benefit sentient beings. It comes from cherishing others, from changing the attitude; it started from there.

If we haven't changed up to now, if we haven't achieve full enlightenment up to now, if we haven't even achieved liberation from samsara, it's because of following the ego, the self-cherishing thought. It hasn't allowed us to have any realizations up to now. From beginningless rebirths up to now, our mind has been empty of realizations, we haven't had any attainments up to now. This is due to the self-cherishing, which has caused all the other negative emotional thoughts to arise, such as anger and, attachment and all those things. And because of that, we have had to experience all the sufferings of samsara up to now again and again, without beginning.

If we never changes our attitude and continue to be the same person, continuously following the ego, the self-cherishing thought, keeping the demon self-cherishing thought in our heart, then there won't be any realizations—neither enlightenment or liberation, not any realization. We will endlessly experience the sufferings of samsara without end. That is how it has been in the past and it will be continue to be like this in the future. We will have to experience the sufferings of samsara endlessly.

Therefore, the ego, this self-cherishing thought, is much more harmful than all the atomic bombs there are in the world, because even if all the atomic bombs explode, if we have bodhicitta, they can't cause us to be reborn in the hell realm, the lower realms. Even if the actual atomic bomb exploded, even though it caused the mind to split from the body, if we have bodhicitta, it doesn't cause us to be born in the lower realms, but if we have the self-cherishing thought, if we die with the self-cherishing thought, then due to that negative emotional thought arising, that causes us to be reborn in the lower realms. So with ego, with the self-cherishing thought we are thrown into lower realms.

No matter how many atom bombs there are, they are nothing compared to the harm our own self-cherishing thought can do, how much it has done since beginningless rebirth up to now and it will continue to do. As long as we don't change it, as long as we don't eliminate it, it will torture us, it will make us suffer without end. And then we will give problems to other sentient beings, giving them so much suffering and harm, cause them to create negative karma from life to life—all due to this ego, this demon the self-cherishing. When we say "life to life harm to all the sentient beings" it is like that. The atomic bombs can't do that, all this harm to all the

sentient beings. This ego, this self-cherishing thought abiding in our heart is much more harmful than the atomic bomb. An atomic bomb is nothing compared to this.

Normally, people are terrified when their doctor tells them they have cancer. Their mind gets so terrified. But, for example, many of my gurus have had cancer but they passed away in a state of meditation, and have reincarnated again in a monastery in order to benefit sentient beings. They have taken that aspect again to benefit other sentient beings, by showing this aspect of ordinary being, then they go to a monastery in their childhood to inspire others, in order to go through what ordinary people go through.

Buddha also did same thing. He was born a prince, then as a child, he played and took part in competitions. Then he got married. Even though Buddha became enlightened inconceivable eons ago but he showed the aspect of only in that life discovering suffering, old age, sickness and death, and then rebirth. Looking for a spiritual guru, he led an ascetic life for six years, then he showed the aspect of becoming enlightened and revealing the Dharma. At dawn time, just before become he became enlightened he was attacked by millions of maras, not wanting the Buddha to be enlightened at all but Buddha, without the slightest movement, in meditation state on loving kindness, subdued all those many millions of maras.

For example, many of my gurus took cancer, but just changed the body, just took another young, fresh, healthy body to benefit sentient beings. So, experiencing having cancer, the sickness alone doesn't make you be born in the lower realms. Only if you have the self-cherishing thought, if you die with the self-cherishing thought will you be born in the lower realms. Even if you experience a sickness such as cancer, you can also go pure land of the buddhas, such as the Kalachakra pure land, Shambhala, the Amitabha pure land, the Vajrayogini pure land or the Heruka pure land—those pure lands where there are tantric teachings and you can become enlightened in that next life.

Therefore, what is *really* frightening is the ego, not the sicknesses, not the cancer. Of all the four hundred and twenty-four sicknesses, all of the harm they can do is nothing compared with your own ego, your self-cherishing thought. All those sicknesses are nothing; they do not even compare with the harm the ego does.

How many weapons there are in the world is nothing, their harm is nothing compared to your own self-cherishing thought, how it is harmful to yourself and all other sentient beings.

If there is a good heart, bodhicitta, no matter how many weapons you own, they are harmless. But even if you don't have any weapons, but your attitude is the self-cherishing thought then there is danger to harm others with the body with the speech with the mind. There is great danger to harm others with the body, with the speech and with the mind.

How much pollution there is in the world, how much poison there is in the world, all those external harms are nothing compared to how much harm the ego, the self-cherishing thought does to you and other sentient beings from life to life. This self-cherishing thought is something that you must get rid of without delaying for even a second. Without delay of even a second you need to get rid of it, it needs to be abandoned.

This self-cherishing thought always interrupts with your ability to practice Dharma and even to meet the Dharma. Even when you finally, *finally*, met Buddhadharma, or when you finally try to meditate, to open the mind to meditate, to help yourself to have realizations—something that has never happened before from beginningless rebirths, this chance to have real change—when

you finally do this, again this self-cherishing thought comes and doesn't allow even for one minute to concentrate one pointedly. It causes attachment to arise which distracts the mind, moving it to other objects. Not only does it block perfect meditation even for one minute, it doesn't even allow a full mala of reciting OM MANI PADME HUM to happen.

Even if you have a wish to practice Dharma, the self-cherishing thought not only interferes with that wish, it actually causes a fear of practicing Dharma, because it causes a fear of letting go of the I and of cherishing others, of offering the victory to others. It doesn't allow this. Because of self-cherishing thought, desire arises which doesn't allow you to practice the renunciation of samsara, the renunciation of this life. It doesn't allow you to be able to practice pure Dharma. Even if you wish to practice, even if you know that to practice Dharma is a good thing for yourself and for others, still the ego doesn't let you practice Dharma. It always finds excuses for you to do something else. There is always something else to do and the Dharma practice gets delayed.

Similarly, the self-cherishing thought doesn't let you take vows, take precepts, not just the higher ordination of a monk or nun, but even the lay vows. The self-cherishing thought gives you a fear of taking precepts. Even if you have the opportunity to do so because you are in the right environment, the ego doesn't allow that to happen, causing inferences, making attachment arise.

And even if you have taken vows, the lay or higher ordinations of a monk or nun, the self-cherishing thought again harms you by not allowing you to practice purely. Due to it, many other emotions and attachments arise which cause you to break the vows. The ego harms you even if you are trying to have a pure life. It ego doesn't allow it. The ego doesn't allow it, even if there is opportunity to collect merit, to create good karma, by practicing charity by making charity.

#### SELF-CHERISHING STOPS YOU FOLLOWING THE GURU

Having met your guru, even if you were to meet Shakyamuni Buddha himself, or Maitreya Buddha or Manjushri, there is nothing more you can learn from these buddhas, nothing more you can achieve from them than you can learn from your guru. I am not saying that I am one of them. I am not saying that, you shouldn't think that way. But, for example to receive teachings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama or Geshe Sopa Rinpoche and then meet Manjushri, there is nothing else he could teach you.

However, due to the self-cherishing thought, having met a virtuous friend like that, you are still unable to follow his or her advice, you are unable to surrender to the guru who reveals the path to enlightenment. Again, this is all caused by the bad ego, the self-cherishing thought. This why, even though you have met a virtuous friend, the most qualified you can find in the world, still nothing happens in your mind. Even if you have received all the most profound and most secret sutra and tantra teachings, containing the whole path to enlightenment, even if you have heard it many times, still nothing happens, there is no change in your mind. That is completely, totally because you follow the ego, the self-cherishing thought instead of following the guru. Instead of surrendering to the guru, you surrender to the ego, you follow the ego, you become a disciple of the ego, follow it day and night, listening to what it says all the time. This is why there is no change, no realization, even after having met the Dharma and hearing so many teachings, for years and years. That is completely the shortcoming of following the ego, of surrendering to the ego. Even if all the buddhas come in front of you and give you teachings, as long as you don't give up this ego, this self-cherishing thought, you won't be able to achieve realizations because as long as you don't change the mind, as long as you follows the ego, there is no way to achieve enlightenment.

## SELF-CHERISHING BRINGS ALL UNHAPPINESS

Whenever you experience unhappiness or depression in daily life, this is caused by the ego, the self-cherishing thought. Any obstacle you experience, to practicing Dharma or even to achieving the happiness and success of this life, this is caused by the ego. How many times you have suffered due to relationship problems, one after another, on and on, all this totally is due to the ego. Because of the self-cherishing thought, attachment, desire arises and this creates all this suffering and confusion and all these relationship problems. Others' unhappiness, anger, jealousy and so forth, all these problems are also caused by the ego.

So many times the thought comes that life is totally overwhelmed by suffering, you are totally suffocating. Because there are so many problems such as relationship problems, you experience life as suffocating. Then when there is no other solution the thought arises to commit suicide. You can't think of anything else so the thought arises to kill yourself by jumping from a roof or from a bridge like the famous Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco or like the Sydney Harbour Bridge. There are many bridges like that for people, when life becomes suffocating like that. They can jump from the roof or sometimes sit in a bathtub with some electricity or something. I'm not sure. Anyway, the thought comes many times to commit suicide. All this is definitely related to the self-cherishing thought. You can definitely see the connection to it.

When a businessperson fails in business, losing, say, thousands of millions of dollars, then has a nervous breakdown and commits suicide, all these unhappy life's problems are definitely related to the ego, because in the past, out of ego, he did actions of stealing, covetousness and such things, and created negative karma which resulted in all these things, such as lack of success. Because he wishes are not fulfilled he takes his life. From success, suddenly one day he is plunged into loss and his business fails and there is so much difficulty in his life.

Why we have been so unhappy in the past can all be related to the self-cherishing thought, but also they come from negative karma. As I have mentioned, how that negative karma happened, first there is the self-cherishing thought then due to those actions that's how they become negative karma, stealing and telling lies, covetousness and so forth. First there is the thought, but the resulting actions of speech and body become negative karma because the motivation behind them is the self-cherishing thought. That is how they are transformed into negative karma. Then, because of this, these problems arise and you are unable to succeed in business. When you have problems in your job—other people are jealous and they try to kick you out, to sack you—all these things are shortcomings of self-cherishing. They are caused by the self-cherishing thought. This is basically the same explanation as I explained before.

So many relationship problems come not only because you are unable to control desire, unable to control the self-cherishing thought, but also your companion or friend you rely on, who you trust, lets you down. You want to live with them, you want to live together harmoniously, but they change their mind and leave you, they abandon you. As I mentioned already the other day, these are the results of slandering, the past negative karma done out of self-cherishing. The other person leaving you, giving you up, splitting from you, is due to your own negative karma of slandering in the past out of self-cherishing. As well as sexual misconduct in past lives, done out of self-cherishing, became negative karma, all this unhappiness is related to the present self-cherishing thought and related to past lives' self-cherishing who committed that negative karma. Therefore all those problems you normally experience came from the self-cherishing thought. Those normal problems you always see on TV, that you always hear and you yourself have also experienced are shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought, caused by the self-cherishing thought.

Even in one day, what makes life empty is the self-cherishing thought. Why every action you do in each twenty-four hours doesn't become cause to achieve enlightenment is because of the ego. Because ego is abiding there, there is no place for bodhicitta, no place for the altruistic mind to achieve enlightenment, no thought of cherishing others. So in that twenty-four hours your activity did not become the cause to achieve enlightenment and your life is wasted; it did not become meaningful, because it did not become the cause to achieve enlightenment.

Then not only did that twenty-four hours of your activity not become the cause to achieve even liberation from samsara, but because of the self-cherishing thought—the attachment to samsaric perfection, to samsaric pleasure—with those activities during the twenty-four hours there is no attitude of renunciation of samsara. Your attitude is only the desire clinging to samsaric happiness.

Due to the self-cherishing thought, desire arises, attachment, clinging to this life, seeking the happiness of this life and so due to that, in the twenty-four hours activities, even if you try to meditate, or even if you manage to meditate or chant mantras, those things do not become Dharma. What appear to be Dharma such as making charity, giving things to others, since the attitude comes from attachment, clinging to this life, it does not even become the cause to achieve the happiness of future lives because it does not become Dharma. Each activity of the twenty-four hours is the worldly dharma, it is nonvirtuous due to the attachment clinging to this life. Therefore, the twenty-four hours' life becomes totally empty, totally meaningless—not only not Dharma but nonvirtue. Everything becomes nonvirtue. Therefore the ego makes your life during each twenty-four hours totally meaningless, empty, and not only that but every action is nonvirtue, the cause of suffering, the cause of the lower realms.

Therefore, this self-cherishing thought is to be abandoned, to be renounced without delay for even a second. What is called the I, this is to be let go of forever because cherishing this is opening the door for all problems, all obstacles.

#### BODHICITTA IS THE SOURCE OF ALL HAPPINESS

Bodhicitta is the source of all the success, of all happiness, yours and all other sentient beings. Your bodhicitta brings all the happiness up to enlightenment to you, it completes all your work, ceases all the gross, subtle defilements such as anger, and completes the works for others, completes all the realizations up to enlightenment. Your bodhicitta, one person's bodhicitta—if you have it—gives happiness to all sentient beings, causing them happiness in all future lives, causing them ultimate happiness, liberation from samsara, and full enlightenment. One person's bodhicitta causes all this happiness to numberless other sentient beings. The numberless hell beings are liberated from all their oceans of samsaric suffering and are brought to enlightenment. Your bodhicitta causes all the numberless hungry ghosts to be free from the oceans of samsaric suffering and brings them to enlightenment, besides all the other happiness. Your bodhicitta liberates numberless animals from the oceans of samsaric suffering and brings them to enlightenment, and causes all the other happiness. Your bodhicitta causes numberless human beings to be free from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment and all other happiness. Your bodhicitta causes all the numberless suras and asuras to be free from all the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment. Your bodhicitta causes the numberless intermediate state beings to be free from all the suffering and its causes and bring them to enlightenment.

Normally I recommend to even just think about the animals, the number of fish in the ocean or even in just one lake. Just thinking of one spot where there is a lake or river, without talking about the ocean, how many fish are there? Without talking about other animals, just the fish

there is an uncountable number. If we think just one place, if you have bodhicitta then you liberate those numberless beings from that one lake— you liberate so many fish from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment. That is fantastic; it is unbelievable! Then think of all the fish in the ocean, all the fish in any universe, you liberate them from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment. Even without thinking of any other sentient beings, without thinking of any other animals, just looking at the fish you liberate, how fantastic it is! If you think of just the ants you liberate, there are numberless ants, even in just those living one mountain or one field. It is unbelievable how many ants there in one field, even under a rock there can be a whole nest with thousands and thousands and thousands of workers that your bodhicitta is liberating from those oceans of samsaric suffering and bringing them to enlightenment. How wonderful is that! How incredible is that! This is what you do with your bodhicitta if you have bodhicitta.

Now think of all the ants living in all the universes—not only on this continent but in all the universes. You are able to liberate them all from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment. How wonderful is that! How incredible is that! Similarly, we can talk about the numberless hell beings, the numberless hungry ghosts, the numberless animals, the numberless suras, the numberless asuras, the numberless human beings, all the numberless sentient beings are liberated from the oceans of suffering and brought to enlightenment. When we think about one type of worm, there is an unaccountable number, and to be able to liberate them and bring them to enlightenment is incredible. Therefore, they get all the happiness up to enlightenment from you, from your bodhicitta. It is up to you. It is your responsibility. All their happiness up to enlightenment comes from your bodhicitta, so you are responsible.

How crucial, how urgent it is to generate bodhicitta, the good heart. This is an emergency. You can't wait, you can't delay for even one second to have this bodhicitta realization. All the numberless sentient beings, their happiness up to enlightenment comes from your bodhicitta. They all depend on you, so you can't wait. Your bodhicitta is crucial. It is so unbearable that sentient beings are suffering, that they *are suffering* is unbearable so you can't delay for even a second.

All happiness comes from bodhicitta. All your happiness, all other sentient beings' happiness comes from bodhicitta. All your past, present and future happiness comes from your good karma. Your good karma is the action of a buddha working within a sentient beings' mind, within your mind. There are two types of action of a buddha: there is one where a buddha possesses his own mind, a buddha's mind, and there is one within us sentient beings' mental continuum. So this is the action of a buddha, our own good karma is the action of a buddha. And a buddha came from a bodhisattva, a bodhisattva came from bodhicitta and bodhicitta came from the root, great compassion.

From this you can understand. You can see that a bodhisattva came from bodhicitta. From this explanation, you can understand how all your happiness and all sentient beings' happiness came from bodhicitta. Now it's clear, it came from bodhicitta. All the happiness every single comfort that you experience, past, present and future, all happiness came from bodhicitta.

#### ALL HAPPINESS COMES FROM OTHERS

Bodhicitta came from great compassion and great compassion is generated by depending on the existence of suffering of sentient beings. Great compassion is generated dependent on the existence of suffering of sentient beings. It happens by the kindness of the suffering obscurations of sentient beings.

This is where all your past, present and future happiness came from, from other sentient beings. That means every sentient being. You can't only include the friend and leave out the enemy; it is not like that. All your past, present and future happiness—including enlightenment and all realizations—everything you have received by the kindness of every single obscured suffering sentient being. So that also includes the enemy, the person who abused you, the person who criticized you, the person who doesn't love you. All the past, present and future happiness you have received is also from this person that you call enemy, because compassion, from where bodhicitta arises, is generated by depending on the existence of that suffering sentient being. Great compassion has to cover all sentient beings. The compassion that feels how unbearable is the suffering of all sentient beings who are obscured by suffering, that compassion covers *all* sentient beings, and wants to free them all from suffering and its causes by oneself. That is great compassion—without leaving out any sentient beings, without exception, without leaving out any sentient being.

All your three times' happiness came from this person who also abused you, who got angry at you, therefore this person is the kindest, most precious person in your life. It is like that with all other sentient beings. Every human being, every animal, every hell being, every sentient being is the kindest, the most precious one in your own life. Everybody, including the person next to you. Look around here, starting from here, there is the kindest, most precious one in your life.

Therefore think, "In my life, there is nobody for me to cherish except only the other sentient beings, there is nobody to work for except only the other sentient beings. I have no purpose to work except only for others. Any work other than this is meaningless, senseless. What sentient beings want is happiness, what they do not want is suffering. Therefore, I must free them from all suffering and its causes and bring them to enlightenment by myself alone—*alone*. There is no other means to do that except first myself achieving enlightenment."

Dinner time. It looks like beyond dinner time. [RL] I think the motivation is for dinner. [Rinpoche confers] Oh, okay, I think not only for dinner, I thought motivation was only for dinner, but maybe not quite.

"For that reason then I am going to listen to the teaching on the lam-rim and the oral transmission of the *Diamond Cutter Sutra* for the benefit of all my kind mother sentient beings."

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: STEALING

The negative karma of stealing is a completed one when there is the base, thought, action and goal, when there is all four aspects. As I mentioned before, at the present whenever you think that something you have taken from somebody without their permission is actually yours, then that is the goal. The action of stealing is complete. For example, if you borrowed a book from somebody a long time ago, and the other person hasn't given it up—they still think of it as their book—but because you've had it so long you consider it yours. You think, "Now this is mine, I've got it." At that time it becomes stealing, even though before it was borrowed.

With the completed negative karma of stealing, of the four suffering results you have to experience, the *ripening aspect result* is rebirth in the lower realms, as a hell being, a hungry ghost or an animal, one of those.

Then of three suffering results you have to experience later, sometime, when you get reborn in the human realm, the *possessed result* is the place where you are born. Where you live, the crops, the fruit, your enjoyments are all very little, very scarce. Crops or food, enjoyments are very scarce, very few. Even if before they were plentiful, now they have changed and they are very

scarce. That is the possessed result of the negative karma of stealing. Or you plant something it won't grow, and even if it grows, like a fruit tree bearing fruit, the fruit rots and becomes inedible. Then there are lots of obstacles experienced, like in those countries such as Africa, where there are weather problems, heat or cold, or violent storms where crops are destroyed. This happens in Solu Khumbu, the place where I was born, where the main crop is potatoes. When it is too cold it destroys the crop, when it is too wet it destroys the crop. Or the crop becomes dry. The fruit becomes dry, or eaten by insects or animals. It becomes nonexistent and can't be enjoyed by humans.

One time when I was in New Zealand, there were so many rabbits, an unbelievable number of rabbits, covering whole mountains. This is due to the karma of the people. The government's idea was to kill all these rabbits, but it didn't do anything to change their past negative karma. Their karma was for their crops to be eaten by the rabbits and because they didn't purify it, killing the rabbits didn't eliminate the problem. All it did was create the karma of killing, the extra negative karma, which suffering result they will have to experience later, either in this life or in future lives. If they don't want rabbits to eat the crops they have to deal with the past karma, they have to purify that. That is the solution. To not experience problems they have to purify the karma, but instead of purifying the karma they create extra negative karma to experience different, other sufferings, later.

This is due to a lack of understanding, a lack of education of karma, a lack of the correct understanding of the cause of happiness and the cause of suffering, how all these problems come from the mind. Therefore, their solution only created another problem. The karma was not purified and so more rabbits came continuously to eat the crops and they kept on killing them, thinking that will solve the problem. But as long as karma is not purified, there will continue to be rabbits, no matter how many they kill.

Then you may think of this question: when did the rabbits start in this world? Rabbits coming to eat crops, that kind of connection to the people, so when did the rabbits start? You see, they had the karma for that to happen, there is the karma to have the rabbits. The people who want to kill the rabbits think this is a solution to protect the crops, to have their enjoyment—they need to ask how the rabbit happened in the first place. What makes the rabbit happen? That could be interesting question to the people who think killing the rabbits is the solution.

If there is the karma for a rabbit to happen, it will happen. Because there was karma for such animals, with such-and-such a body shape, to be born, because that karma was created so therefore that rabbit was born. Therefore killing is not the solution.

So with the possessed result, the seeds you plant get eaten by worms or are burned by fire; they cannot grow and things like that.

Then with *experiencing the result similar to the cause* of stealing, you experience poverty when you are born as a human being. You have no means of living or very little; it is very difficult to earn a living. Even if you can, you have to share it with other people. You don't have complete freedom like that.

Also, you lose your things all the time or your things get stolen by other people. When your things get stolen by others, you have to remember immediately at that time that what you are experiencing is the result similar to the cause, it is an experience which is similar to a cause you have created in past times. It doesn't have to only be a past life; it can also be caused by something you have done in this life, in your childhood time or even the last year or even the last

few days. Sometimes it can even be the same day.

So when your things get stolen by others remember this is one of the results of the karma of stealing, the experience which is similar to the previous cause, which is called *nor-wa* in Tibetan. Anyway, this is my own translation.

Then *creating the result similar to the cause* is after some time, even when you born as a human being, you do the same thing again, stealing. Even after some people are punished—even if they are put in prison—they still steal. Even if that person has suffered so much in prison, having been severely punished, the person does it again and again, because of such heavy karma from past lives, creating the habituation, creating the result similar to the cause.

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: LYING

The *ripening aspect result* means you will be reborn in the lower realms. The *possessed result* means that, if you are a farmer, you can't develop your work, can't improve the work. Or if you are doing business, such as sailing ships, transportation, carrying things or people, you are unable to have success, you unable to develop. It might be same thing, you open a shop but you don't receive any buyers, clients or customers. If you open a hospital there are not any patients, even though there are many at other hospitals. Or if you open a restaurant, you don't receive any diners, all the chairs are empty. So anyway, you are unable to progress.

Nothing happens according to your wishes, nothing is according to how you want. People cheat you, so many people cheat you. Whichever country you go, so many people cheat you and there are so many causes of fear. The places where you live are filled with so many dangers, so many fears. Life is dangerous. This is possessed result of negative karma of telling lies.

The three other suffering results you experience in human realm later, for some time, when you get born as a human being. *Experiencing the result similar to the cause*, you have so many people who criticize you, who put down you, who cheat you, who deceive you. *Then creating the result similar to the cause*, you do it again—cheating others, telling others lies.

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: SLANDER

Then for the negative karma of slandering, the *possessed result* that is when you are born as a human being after some time, the place where you live has so many hills or mountains, which makes life very difficult because you have to go up and down, up and down. It is not planned, not beautiful, traveling is very difficult, which makes life very difficult. The place where you live also has so many external dangers; there are so many fears and so many causes of fear.

Then for *experiencing the result similar to the cause*, there is no unity in the family, other people are not harmonious with you. There is disharmony; there is no unity and so the surrounding people don't really like you. They have bad thoughts towards you; they are mean to you. This is because in the past you slandered others, you expressed uninteresting words to others, therefore in this life you hear this from others—words that disturb your mind, other people talking badly about you, or badly about another person, your companion or friend, which creates disunity with that person. Even the words your speech becomes the cause of fighting. You try to talk but your words become the cause of quarrels with other people and they get angry. So this is experiencing the result similar to the cause.

The next one, *creating the result similar to the cause*, means that again you commit the negative karma

of slandering. As I mentioned before that completed negative karma has four suffering results. The negative karma of slandering produces four suffering results, so one of them is to again slander, and this goes on as long as you don't change your mind and actions, as long as you don't abstain from that negative karma, don't purify the past negative karma, then the suffering result goes on and on, without end. It is the same with stealing and telling lies.

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: GOSSIPING

The next one is the completed negative karma of gossiping. The *ripened aspect result* is rebirth in one of the lower realms. Then the *possessed result* to do with the place where you live. The trees don't bear fruit, or it doesn't happen at the right time, when you need it. Then although the fruit appears ripe, it isn't. And not having stable roots, the trees don't last long time. The place where you live is very ugly and unpleasant. If there is a forest or a pond it is a very unpleasant pond. The place is filled with so many causes of fear for your life.

Then *experiencing the result similar to the cause* is that, after some time when you are born as human being, your speech doesn't have power. Therefore, when you give a talk or when you request somebody to do something important, your words doesn't have power so other person doesn't aspire to help you. Others do not pay attention to your words. Then, *creating the result similar to the cause* is doing the action again, creating the negative karma of gossiping—having conversations or talking without meaning, without purpose, to develop delusions.

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: HARSH SPEECH

Then, harsh speech. However nice your words might sound, their purpose is to hurt another person or people's mind. Sometimes the way the person says it, it kind of sounds nice, but it hurts the other person. The completed negative karma has four suffering results. The *ripened aspect result* is birth in the lower realms. The *possessed result*, is where you are born or where you live there are lots of thorn bushes, lot of thorns that are very unpleasant. And it is a very rocky place, kind of rough. I don't know how to say it, there are many details. I don't know the name in English, but it is very rough like a thorn, a very rough bush that grows on logs, like that kind of bush. However, the main thing is it is a very rough place, it is not very pleasant and it doesn't have many glorious, magnificent, green places. In fact it is the very opposite. It's a very unpleasant, unhappy place. The sutra texts go into quite a number of details; there are many things mentioned, many unpleasant things. The place holds many fears for your life; there are many cause of fear. There are places where there is a lot of negative karma of killing, where lots of negative actions are done.

Experiencing the result similar to the cause of harsh speech is that your words hurting other people's mind. Sorry, I've got mixed up. Some part that I mentioned was the slandering so that is the result of this one. So, experiencing the result similar to the cause of *slandering*, is being surrounded by people who are not harmonious with you, they don't unite to you and they are bad to you, mean to you. There is also separation, where your friend or companion or husband or wife separates from you, leaves you, because, by slandering, you caused disunity with them in the past, causing people who were harmonious to split. So, the same thing happens to you.

So for harsh speech, with *experiencing the result similar to the cause*, you hear unpleasant words from other people, in exactly the same way that you said unpleasant words to other people in the past. Even your own talk becomes the cause of quarrels. You try to speak truthfully but it still becomes the cause of quarrelling. *Creating the result similar to the cause* of harsh speech is that you do it again, so then that action itself has the four suffering results. So it goes on and on like that,

until you purify the past negative karma and change your attitude and action.

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: COVETOUSNESS

Then, covetousness. The three negativities of the mind are covetousness, ill will and heresy. Doing this negative karma will have ripening aspect of birth in lower realms. Then *possessed result* is things decrease, such as the crops or any worldly perfection. For example, where there was once a lot of oil production or gold—any perfection like that including crops—now year by year it decreases, year by year, month by month, day by day it becomes scarcer and scarcer. *Experiencing the result similar to the cause* of covetousness is that your wishes don't succeed. What you hope for doesn't succeed. You always have a dissatisfied mind with so much desire, and so you are unable to satisfy yourself. Your desire is so strong you are unable to be satisfied, unable to be content. This is experiencing the result similar to the cause.

Then, *creating result similar to the cause* means you do the same thing again. Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo mentioned in *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand* that when you go to the market shopping, you come back with so much negative karma of covetousness. You come back with your shopping bags full of the negative karma of covetousness. First, there is the attachment wanting to have those objects, then there is the action where you decide to get them, then the action is completed. So, first there is attachment wanting to have them. Therefore, I often say you need lam-rim in daily life. There is no choice; your mind *has* to abide in lam-rim. When you go shopping if you do the shopping with the renunciation of samsara, the renunciation of this life, with detachment to this life and detachment to samsara, then you don't any create negative karma of covetousness. If you go shopping with a bodhicitta motivation to benefit other sentient beings, when you buy things to benefit other sentient beings, whether it is food or clothing or whatever, the aim is to benefit the sentient beings, not for your happiness—in that way it does not become covetousness, a negative karma of mind.

The same is also true of right view. When you go shopping with right view, with a meditation on emptiness... I was going to mention today how to meditate on emptiness in the busy life, but I did not get to finish. Anyway, while you are busy, if you do the shopping with right view, with a meditation on emptiness, then you don't create the negative karma of covetousness, in Tibetan, *nak-sem*.

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: ILL WILL

The next one is the negative karma of ill will. With the completed negative karma, the *ripened aspect result* is rebirth in one of the lower realms. Then later, when you get born as a human being in human realm, you experience the *possessed result* to do with the place. There is a lot of disease. There are many, contagious diseases that do great harm to life. You get so many contagious diseases from other people. I think there are many wars, fighting, attacks by others. And you are bitten by poisonous snakes or mosquitoes, or scorpions. [RL] Anyway, and all those insects harm you. Some people get bitten a lot by ants.

His Holiness Song Rinpoche, one of the gurus from whom I have received many initiations and teachings, the great pandit, the great scholar and highly attained being, the deity Heruka in reality, His Holiness Song Rinpoche—wherever he is in hot countries such as India where there are a lot of mosquitoes, they never bite him because his karma to be bitten was gone.

Anytime ants bite you, or all those biting insects like fleas—whenever that happens, you should remember at that time that you are experiencing the possessed result of the past negative karma, your past evil. When you remember this, you won't get angry. There is nothing to blame to those

animals, insects for because it's your karma that caused them to bite you. Also the place where there is a lot of robbery, a lot of thieves, the place where there is a lot of fear—that is the possessed result. *Experiencing the result similar to the cause* means that you receive harm from other people. Even though all you wish for is whatever is beneficial, all you seem to receive is harm.

Then *creating the result similar to the cause*, you commit that negative karma, ill will, again in the next life where you are born as a human being. Then again, if you don't change your mind by purifying it, that negative karma goes on and on, like that.

#### THE TEN NONVIRTUES: HERESY

Then next, the last one—miraculously we've got to the last one. [GL] It's a miracle. Anyway, so it doesn't matter. The last one, the last of the last, is heresy, the negative karma of heresy.

Just before that, I forgot something about ill will. In recent years there have been many new diseases happening, in Japan and places like that, including AIDS and not quite recently many other disease that started that have started to spread that are very harmful. In India it happened and people dies so fast, just with one disease. Also, there was one place in Mongolia where this disease happened but it was already gone. There was one place where there were many, many stupas. It's quite far, you spend a day getting there, stay one night there, then come back the next day. That's a good way to do it. I was going to visit that place, but there was news that it was blocked because there is still doubt about this disease that was in the area. I think after some days the road was reopened. Anyway, I don't know name of the disease but people were dying much faster than AIDS.

One time in Dharamsala there was a new, very life threatening disease coming and there was a lot of danger to spread, so His Holiness advised everyone in Dharamsala that after they finished work, after four o'clock the lay people go to McLeod Ganj Stupa and the prayer wheels and chant the Lochama mantra. There is a healing deity, Lochama, with a few different aspects. So this is a healing deity and His Holiness advised the people to chant this mantra. Everybody went there after they had finished work in the carpet factory, or wherever they worked and they chanted this mantra for some time. That way they didn't get that new life threatening disease. So anyway, the place where you have these diseases is the result of the past negative karma of ill will.

So now, heresy. The *ripened aspect result* of the completed negative karma is rebirth in the lower realms. The *possessed result*, where you are born and where you live is also at a place that was rich is now poor. Where before it might have been a main production area for gold or oil, now it is all dried up and nothing happens there anymore. The place has become very dirty and unhygienic. It can be that it appears clean to you, but in fact it is very dirty, and in the same way it can seem like a pleasurable place to you but it is really great suffering. You live in a place where you have no guide, you have no refuge, you cannot find a guide, a person to help you.

Then, with *experiencing the result similar to the cause*, after some time when you are born as a human being, you have wrong views and you associate with evil friends, friends who give you wrong conceptions or who engage you in evil deeds. You don't like spiritual friends, you like evil friends' minds, and you start to become like them. Conversely, you hate friends who give you good advice, Dharma friends who give you Dharma advice, who guide you. You only like the opposite—evil friends who give you wrong advice and oblige you to engage in evil deeds. Instead of liking virtue, you like nonvirtuous activities. You take an interest in wrong philosophies. You lose your wisdom, you degenerate your wisdom, and your mind becomes unclear, imprecise. I'm not sure of the translation; it might be like that; in Tibetan it's *she-rab chowa*.

*Creating the result similar to the cause* means that again you engage in heresy when you are born a human being. You do it again and again, and so on, like that.

#### KARMA: THE FOUR OUTLINES

There are four outlines of karma. I am going to use it like that, after going through these examples. *Karma is definite*. Once the karma has been created, as long as you don't purify, no matter how many eons it takes, it doesn't get lost, you definitely experience the result. If you have created nonvirtuous actions then you definitely experience suffering results, so karma is definite. You *must* experience the result of that karma, no matter how many eons it takes, once that negative karma has been created. It never gets lost and you definitely experience its result when the causes and conditions come together. Therefore, because karma is definite, you must, you *must* abandon negative karma. And similarly, if you have created good karma, you will definitely experience the positive result so therefore you *must* only create good karma.

[Then, *karma is expandable*.] From one negative karma you experience the suffering result for many life times, for so many times, for many years again and again in one lifetime, and you experience it for many lifetimes, for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes.

For example, it is said in the *Shi-gya-pa*, the *Four Hundred Verses* by Aryadeva, if you cheat one sentient being then you will be cheated by other sentient beings for one thousand lifetimes. If you cheat one sentient being you will be cheated by other sentient beings in future lives for one thousand lifetimes.

Like that, karma is expandable. You must experience the result for many lifetimes. This is so much more than natural cause and effect in the external world. When you plant a grain of rice then many grains of rice come; you plant a tiny sapling of a bodhi tree in the ground then a big tree comes with many thousands of branches and many seeds come. A huge tree grows from a small seed. In India there are many trees that are so big that horse carriages are kept under their shade. But in the case of karma it is much, much more expandable than those outside phenomena.

So therefore, if one good karmic action is done, you experience many lifetimes, you will enjoy the happiness for so many lifetimes, for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes. If one negative karmic action is done, you experience the suffering result for many lifetimes, either so many times in one life, or over many hundreds of thousands of lifetimes.

Therefore, you must abandon even a very small negative karma, and you must nurture even a very small virtue. Even if you see an insect in the water having difficulty, if you take it out of the water, or if you do a person the smallest service. Even a small virtue, even a tiny offering of one stick of incense, one grain of rice or one tiny flower offered to the Buddha. Whatever you have, you should first offer to the Buddha. Even if you have a little candy or you see a glass of water, first offer it to Buddha. Anyway, the conclusion is that even if it's just a small virtue you must do it because karma is expandable and even the smallest nonvirtue you must abandon.

Then, *without having created the cause you don't experience the result*. In Tibetan this is *lai-ma che-pa(?)* Without having created the karma you don't meet the result.

Then, *that which is done never gets lost*. This is the same. Because of these things you must abandon nonvirtue, whether big or small, and you must practice virtue. It is mentioned in the Vinaya,

Don't think that a nonvirtue is so small that it won't harm me. Never underestimate the harm negative karma can bring.

For example, even if small fire spark can burn huge pile of hay—not hashish! [RL GL] Dry grass, husks. [RL GL] It is not hashish, it is hay. One tiny fire spark can burn a whole big pile of hay and one small candle flame can burn a whole mountain, a whole forest. Similarly, you can see how harmful one small nonvirtuous action can be. It is like that example.

Also never underestimate even a small virtue. Don't not do it because it is so small. You *must* practice it, because it is like dripping water can fill a huge container one drop at a time. Like that, the whole pot can be filled. So, the Buddha advises us that we must practice even small virtues.

#### SIX WAYS OF PURIFYING

As explained in the lam-rim, there are six ways of purifying negative karma, such as reciting the names of the Thirty-five Confession Buddhas. By depending on and reciting the Buddha's holy name, you purify negative karma in the same way as the Thirty-five Buddhas practice. Then by reciting mantras you purify negative karma. By making statues or tsa-tsas of the Buddha you purify negative karma. By making thangkas or holy objects is another method of purification, of purifying negative karma. Then reciting a *Prajnaparamita* text, such as the *Heart Sutra* or the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*. There are other sutras like the *Sutra of Liberation* that are *very* powerful. There are texts that are very powerful for purification, for purifying the negative karma to be born in the lower realms. You can also meditate on emptiness as well as bodhicitta, and things like that, and you can make offering to the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. Those are also counted as a means of purification.

#### HOW TO LIVE WITH BODHICITTA

Generating strong compassion for other sentient beings with a sincere heart, and working hard for others, is a very powerful purification. That is something to be kept in mind. No matter how hard it is when you benefit others, when you generate strong compassion for others, you purify many eons of negative karma. Combining this with guru devotion, obtaining advice, doing service, this is the most powerful purification.

I just mentioned some example of negative karma and the unbelievably heavy suffering results, therefore you can now see how it is so essential it is in your own daily life to live morally. Even for a lay person to live in the lay precepts, this is so important. As I mentioned the other day, this is one of the crucial means to make your daily life extremely meaningful. It is the basis for realizations, for protecting you from negative karma, from obstacles to realization, as well as stopping giving you harm and harming others, so it involves many things.

From this you can understand that everything is to do with the attitude. It is all to do with your mind. Therefore, it becomes so essential to keep your daily life attitude in the lam-rim. When we talk about karma, here comes the practice of lam-rim in daily life, not only lam-rim when you do sitting meditation in the morning but the whole twenty-four hours. While you are doing your job, you are mindful of living in the lam-rim, to practice lam-rim all the time, to protect yourself from the negative karma immediately. Then eventually to achieve enlightenment and to be able to liberate sentient beings from all suffering and bring them to enlightenment.

If you really want to practice, you begin the day with bodhicitta. The very first thing when you

wake up, you begin by generating the bodhicitta attitude in your life. You can do this meditation while you chant OM MANI PADME HUM, creating merit with the good karma, purifying the speech by reciting the mantra, you purify so much negative karma and collect so much merit and the mind meditates on bodhicitta. In one day, you can do the seven techniques cause and effect, as I explained, as I gave some idea last night.

So, in the morning you begin the day when you wake up with the bodhicitta attitude of this life, how you are going to spend your life from now on until death, especially this year, especially today. Never allow yourself to be under the control of the self-cherishing thought, but always practice and never be separate from bodhicitta.

In other words, you determine to separate from the ego but never be separate from bodhicitta. Anyway what it means, what it contains is “I am going to live my life for others,” that’s all it contains, “From now on, I am going to live my life for others.”

You begin the day with that bodhicitta motivation, then the rest of the day while you are working, whatever you do, you continue with that thought. When you meet people, you think, “This is my most precious kind mother sentient being who has been kind from beginningless rebirths.” You continue your bodhicitta motivation that you generated in the morning for the rest of the day like that. When you meet people, you think of their kindness that is so precious, then respect comes naturally, the wish not to harm all those comes, to help, to offer service, the practice of loving kindness, of compassion all comes. By keeping the mind in that continuously you take the opportunity, you create merit with every sentient being, with every person you meet, you generate loving kindness and compassion for others, and you offer service. You create the cause of enlightenment with every sentient being for the rest of the day with this attitude.

Then the next day, you can begin that day with the other technique of bodhicitta, exchanging oneself with others. I think today I explained that way, I just gave you some idea of the very powerful bodhicitta practice, exchanging oneself with others. Actually in the lam-rim outline there is equalizing, then meditating on shortcomings of self-cherishing, benefit of cherishing others, then training in the attitude, then actual exchange. They are outlines.

So, on the second day you begin with a meditation on bodhicitta. You begin the day with a meditation on bodhicitta, exchanging oneself for others, and chanting the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM at the same time. Then you get done your practice of also chanting OM MANI PADME HUM. If you have a commitment, you do your commitment like that. Then, for the rest of the day you try to continue to hold your mind in that bodhicitta, that “every sentient being is source of all my peace and happiness.” Anybody you meet—animals, insects, your enemy or your friend—each one is the source of all you past and future happiness, and is most kind and most precious. Try to feel that with all people. And again here you respect them and offer service to them and everything comes naturally. You collect so much merit for the rest of the day with the other sentient beings, the cause of enlightenment.

[Rinpoche confers] Already? Okay. So I think anyway maybe I’ll finish the oral transmission in a dream. So, that is the bodhicitta, in the morning meditate, and then for the rest of the day that is how you live your life with that. Then, of course there is emptiness which I started but it didn’t happen.

The mandala offering.

[Chanting]

I do the same every day, but I change the subject division just to give you an idea how to dedicate the merits in the most productive way, the *most productive way* to make your life most beneficial to other sentient beings. Now in the future so you know how to dedicate the merits, that is the purpose.

#### DEDICATIONS

Due to the past, present, future merits collected by all the buddhas and sentient beings, that which appears something real from its own side but which is totally hallucination, empty, nonexistent, not there. May the I, who appears something real from there, which is a total hallucination, nonexistent right there, achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which again appears something real from there, which is a hallucination, nonexistent. And lead all the sentient beings, who appear real from there which is total hallucination, nonexistent right there, to that enlightenment, which appears a real one but which is total nonexistent, a hallucination there. By myself alone, who also appears a real one from there but which is a total hallucination and nonexistent there.

I dedicate all the merits in the same way as the three times bodhisattvas dedicate their merits and admire the most. May the teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa which is unified sutra and tantra, may it be completely actualized with one's own mind without delay for a second, as well as may it be completely actualized in the minds of all of us here and all the rest of the students and benefactors of this organization, those who sacrifice their life to the service of others through this organization. May it be actualized, both sutra and tantra completely without delay for even a second. May the teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa flourish forever and spread in all the directions.

[Chanting in Tibetan]

## Lecture 9

WHEN IS A PERSON DEAD?

Anybody questions that there is no reincarnation? That it doesn't exist, or maybe you believe that you don't exist. [GL] Anyway is there anybody? Yes go on, only one? Two, two handed people, I'm joking, go.

*Student:*

I don't believe in rebirth, I believe in reincarnation.

*Rinpoche:*

You don't believe in rebirth but you believe in reincarnation? What?

*Student:* Yes.

*Rinpoche:*

Oh, I see.

*Student:* I believe in the law of karma, but I don't believe in rebirth. [GL]

*Rinpoche:*

That sounds very sweet (RL, GL) very cute. But anyway most congratulations that you believe in law of karma, most congratulation, that is most important. So you differentiate rebirth and reincarnation. Reincarnation you believe right?

*Student:*

I differentiate between rebirth and karma. Rebirth in conventional sense, dying, being buried and being reborn.

*Rinpoche:*

Dying and reborn [noise on tape]. [RL] Rebirth means dying and being reborn? Is that right? I didn't hear with the extra noise.

*Student:*

He doesn't believe you die, you are buried and can be reborn again.

*Rinpoche:*

Oh I see, yes, I agree with you. Yes, that is true. You die, you're buried in the ground and again reincarnated. That is correct, yes, that is right. I think a lot of people, I don't have question with that. Anybody have question with that?

*Student:*

So what is reincarnated?

*Rinpoche:*

Your nose. (RL, GL) The rest stays in the ground (RL, GL) in the coffin, just nose. I'm joking.

*Rinpoche:*

What is the definition of death? That is the point.

*Student:*

There is no such thing.

*Rinpoche:*

There is no death? There is no definition of death? Because?

*Student:*

What is life?

*Rinpoche:*

Death has no definition, oh I see.

*Student:*

You had better carry on because you know exactly what I am going to say.

*Rinpoche:*

Oh no. [RL, GL] Okay. [GL] Doesn't mean exactly I know what you think but I will try.

To discuss the definition of death is very important. When that is not clear then there will be unclear information about rebirth. If the death is clear then birth will be clear, and the same—if birth clear, then death is clear; if birth is not clear, then death is not clear. I think that is a very important question. The definition of death in the West, not in the East, but in the West that is a

very big question. I've heard that it has happened many times the people were put in a coffin, believed to be dead but it's happened so many times that when they were taken to the graveyard, they made a noise, the person was trying to get out. That happened many times because the doctors were unable to see clearly, unable to judge whether the person was dead or not. Many times they make mistakes like this.

I think also I have heard in Calcutta, West Bengal when a coffin was taken to a cemetery, where many people were gathered at the funeral—it was not burned but was in a coffin—the person was not dead, and recovered from whatever sicknesses or harm he had. I guess probably the heart was not functioning; it stopped for some time.

The heart stopping functioning doesn't mean the person is dead. One of our students is Doctor Adrian Feldman from Australia. Nowadays, he is one of the elder monks teaching in Mongolia working for the Mongolia Center that was established last year. He is teaching there now in Mongolia in a monastery, young Mongolians. Normally, it is believed when the heart stops functioning, I guess, maybe, I am sure there must be certain amount of time, maybe not immediately, there is heart attack and then gets treatment so there might be certain amount of time—he said that death is usually defined by that. But then he saw a person whose heart was not functioning, but then later, I don't know after how many hours, after some time, the person again woke up. So he used that reason. Normally it was definition but that reason didn't cover because he saw, actually saw that person. Must have been quite some time, quite long time ago, he said he actually saw.

I am not sure about a coma, person in a coma whether the heart is functioning or not, huh? Is functioning?

#### SEEING THE SUFFERING NATURE OF SAMBARA BRINGS REALIZATIONS

Lama Yeshe achieved a very high level of realization within Highest Yoga Tantra, based on the graduate completion stages, both gross and subtle, the isolation of body, isolation of speech and mind, clear light, illusory body, those two. Who has achieved the isolation of the mind, the clear light as well as the illusory body, these very high levels of tantra, who actually received, by having this realization, actually received the label “yogi,” the real meaning of the label yogi, by having this realization.

Of course there is the realization of the three principal paths before that; it is not just tantra. On the basis of the realization of guru devotion, there is a total renunciation, detachment from samsara, by seeing this entire samsara as only in the nature of suffering—like being in the center of the fire. It is not finding the slightest attraction for even one second, for any samsaric enjoyment of human beings or devas—those worldly gods whose wealth is a billion times more than the most developed human country, than the wealthiest people in the world. Many billions of dollars cannot compare to even just the one ornament of a deva. It is much more valuable than a billion dollars. True renunciation is not finding attraction for even one second in any of this, seeing it all in the total nature of suffering. This is besides the lower realm.

In the formless realm there is no suffering of pain or suffering of changes, only pervasive compounded suffering. But if you see even the form or formless realms as totally like being in the center of a fire, only in the nature of suffering, you have total renounced detachment. So then on the basis of that you have unbelievable, unbearable great compassion towards other sentient beings. Because now, here you have discovered your samsara, so much in total nature of suffering, so unbearable, then when you look at others, numberless other sentient beings, they are the same, in samsara, you feel so unbearable, like for example, particularly like the people

who have AIDS.

I didn't see this much among people who have cancer, but somehow a person who has AIDS has a lot of concern to other people who have AIDS. I don't know why, but it seems more among people who have AIDS; they have a lot of concern to others who have AIDS, I have met so many people, because the person he or she has AIDS, then there is a lot of attention, compassion for other people who have AIDS and want to help, want to go into that society, want to offer service. There is a lot of concern to other people who have AIDS. I didn't see that much among people who have cancer—they may have but I didn't see that much, so that I am not sure. Whether it's because the group who have AIDS feel they are abandoned by society, — which is what some people say— I am not sure. Because you know how you feel when you have AIDS, it is so clear, therefore it is easy to feel how others they feel, so easy to know that, so then you get much compassion to other people who have AIDS.

Anyway, just like that here, you feel incredible compassion, unbearable compassion, when you look at others and see how they are also in samsara. You can't stand it and so on that basis you achieve the realization of bodhicitta, to free them from all the sufferings and bring them to enlightenment and therefore yourself to achieve enlightenment.

So guru devotion, three principals of the path, the realization of right view, of emptiness, then the realization of the Highest Yoga Tantra stages, the gross and subtle generation stage and the various stages of the completion stage: the isolation of body, the isolation of speech, the isolation of mind and the illusory body.

Lama took the aspect [of illness.] Generally, what appeared externally was developing a very weak heart. It was found out in the hospital in Nepal. The doctors checked about five years before, or quite a number of years ago. Then during that time, we came from Dharamsala. I think from Lama's side, he didn't want to come but I kind of requested, so he came to give teaching during the course.

#### THE EARLY DAYS AT KOPAN

Normally I talked so much on suffering. This time I didn't get to talk that much. I talked on it, but not in the way I did in early courses [where I went over] all these sufferings. I didn't talk that way this time, although maybe a bit previously, but not so much as in early times.

During the early days of Kopan Monastery, it was very primitive. When you got to this place, there was an old house, a very nice, very old house built in the British style by a British architect. It was the Nepalese king—not this present one but a previous one—who had built this house for his guru astrologer. Also at the top of the hill there was supposed to be a house, where I think maybe the king came for enjoyment—sort of like a tea house—but a big earthquake happened and the house collapsed. That is why you find many bricks on that ground up on the hill. Some karma happened and a huge earthquake shook Nepal. It might have been at that time that Tengboche Monastery in Solu Kumbu, near Mount Everest, completely collapsed,

The first and second Kopan courses were done in this old house, but by the third and fourth courses the monastery had already been started. It was still a very small monastery. Then the fifth, sixth and I think the seventh courses were done behind the monastery. Between the hill and the monastery there is some flat ground, so a tent was put there, a tent of iron sheeting, maybe the walls were bamboo or grass. There was a lot of hay and grass around people, and at night time people slept on that. You put down grass as a base, and people slept on that. I think Roger, my attendant, slept on grass at those times. The place where we did meditation, people

used grass, and put sleeping bags on that grass. Then, there are many fleas—not lice—but many fleas came. [RL]

So, even when we did the fifth, sixth and seventh courses, the conditions were very primitive. People who did the course went under the big tree to eat food, and at the same time the smell of kaka came from down below. It was very primitive, you see. In the teachings about detachment, [I often use the example] of the people sitting under the tree eating their food with all the smells from toilet coming up. It was not like this for just one year, but for quite some time, I don't know. [Rinpoche confer with Ven. Karin] When did you start to come to Nepal? Was the course held behind the monastery? Already here? Oh, I see, behind the monastery at that time. At that time was the smell of the toilets bad when people were eating and drinking? Lots of smell from down there! So, it was like that. Even some of the guest rooms didn't have proper doors. Anyway, I don't know why I am talking about this. I lost the evolution of my talk.

After that, we moved here and put the sheet here. This side of the hill was covered with this sheet, which was very cheap cloth all round on the hill, and then the bamboo was planted all around.

*Student:*

We were talking about Lama Yeshe.

*Rinpoche:*

Oh, ah yes that is right. [RL, GL] Thank you very much, I owe you a lot. So, yeah, that's right. But why I am explaining about Kopan?

*Student:*

Because you used to teach a lot more about suffering. [RL, GL]

*Rinpoche:*

Thank you, that's right. You're right. Thank you very much again. I think for many years we taught the courses this way, where there were no rooms—right up to the eighth course—behind the temple. We did quite a number. What? [Rinpoche confers] Yes, that's right. course seven, up to course seven was done behind the temple.

I think, until this was built, until this was actualized, we did the course there for so many years. Now it has become ten star. [RL, GL] Like the hotels are five star, this is now ten star. Compared to how it was for those many years, it has now become a ten star, maybe even a fifteen star course. The whole condition has become unimaginable at the moment compared to all those past courses, with many hardships. People had to do courses with many hardships, but now there is unbelievable luxury and it is so clean. There is a huge difference. Now Kopan has become unrecognizable.

The reason I talked so much about the suffering is that if the people don't realize suffering they won't know how important it is to practice Dharma, to meditate. People won't take it seriously; it would just be a kind of hobby or some trip or something but not a serious thing, not a serious practice. They wouldn't be seriously looking for liberation. That was my interest in suffering; it was not that I want to suffer. When people's minds went down, like at sunset when it became dark—each time people's minds became dark, Lama came and lifted them back up, he made sunshine in their minds. [RL] And then I would talk about suffering again, and their mind would go back down. Then, Lama came again with the sunshine. This is how we did the course in the past. I talk only about the bad parts. [RL]

When the course was done behind the temple in those times, I gave the talk and guided the meditation for the whole day, guiding the meditation, doing the discourse. I did that on many of those previous courses, but then I think I became very lazy. After that I became very lazy. [RL] There were a lot of hardships; it was very primitive, but I think it was very a fortunate time. Because people had to bear a lot of hardships, of course it had a deep effect and was very meaningful.

#### LAMA YESHE GETS SICK

So, anyway coming back to Lama. I don't know which meditation course it was that Lama gave Bodhisattva vows. His last teaching was the Bodhisattva vows and I was there at that time. That night, Lama took the aspect of vomiting. I was eating some canned food, some cherries from an Indian can. I had some and I think I may have advertised them to Lama. Like on TV, people eat and show how much they enjoy it. So I may have advertised the cherries, and Lama ate. Anyway that evening, he started to vomit, he took the aspect of vomiting. The next day he went to Delhi, where he stayed in hospital for about a week and then a farm house was found for him near Delhi. He stayed there. Every evening I did puja. There is a very powerful puja for a Dharma protector called Kalarupa, who is the protector to realize impermanence and death and maybe also emptiness. There are four actions: pacifying, increasing, controlling and wrathful. In the tantric meditations, there are different activities you can do that, depending what is needed for success. So this puja is wrathful; it involves hooking the evil beings who have harmed the sentient beings and who have harmed the holy beings.

//break in taping//

...because that involves concentration, then Lama said he didn't want to do it, because every time you concentrate the heart stops. His concentration was very intensive, not like our concentration. It was something very deep, very stable—a very deep concentration, and it seemed that during that time the heart doesn't function. This maybe, when a person does a very deep meditation, such as on the clear light when the extremely subtle gross mind is absorbed

#### MEDITATION ON DEATH

[Rinpoche confers] Was the death process meditation done? That meditation is very good. Normally that kind of meditation is not done in lam-rim. That subject doesn't come in a lam-rim course. It is part of tantra; it comes in tantra. Normally, it doesn't come in lam-rim teachings but I thought that it is very important to know how a person dies, what is happening within the person. In the West a person usually goes through the process and then he dies, and nobody knows—there is nobody who can explain about it. Anyway in the West there are many people, young and old, who remember past and future lives but because society doesn't believe in this, even though it is your real experience, even though that is your real insight, even though it comes from the quality, the power of your mind. You have that power and clarity of mind to be able to be clear from pollution, from defilements, to have less pollution.

When the mind is much cleared and with more insight, you are able to remember not only coming from your mother's womb, but also you can remember being in the womb and even before entering the womb. You are able to see past and future—both yours and others—but because society doesn't have that education, because in general people don't have that education, that kind of deeper knowledge, they don't accept there can be such a thing. Ordinary people only accept what they understand, that there is this one life because this is all you see. Therefore, even

those who have those experiences are afraid to tell them in society, to the public, because other people will think they are strange, even though that is their actual realization, their actual experience.

But, of course nowadays, in the last thirty years reincarnation and karma have become very common subjects; they are discussed more and more and people talk about them and want to learn about them. Interest is growing, and more people are becoming familiar with reincarnation than not. Every year more people are becoming familiar with this, there is more education on this, so it becomes more and more familiar, and gradually society will start to accept it. If you compare with the people who don't have this education, or who do but whose education is still very small, it is always increasing. So it's getting better, a deeper knowledge of mind is happening.

It's like in a country in which everybody has a goiter, and then if somebody doesn't have a goiter, everybody thinks it is very strange. What the culture of a particular society is, the people of that society believe; what isn't part of that society, the people don't believe. They regard it as very strange, even though it might be the real experience of that person, the real discovery of that person through the power of mind, the clarity of mind.

Generally speaking, your belief depends on when you are born into your new life what comes first, what culture is introduced first. What belief is introduced to you first, your belief follows that. Normally speaking, not everybody. So, you are born in a new life, fresh, then you believe what kind of culture you encounter, what kind of belief you are given by the society, by other people. That doesn't necessarily mean it's correct. What you have believed so far from birth is not necessarily correct. You have to analyze, whatever you believe is what you have been taught by society; it has been influenced by society, but that doesn't mean that it is correct, not necessarily. It depends on what it is. It depends on whether it accords with reality or not. You are reborn, you have new life, a fresh start, and so you believe what you are given by others. Therefore, you have to analyze, to check.

#### DEATH MEDITATION: THE CLEAR LIGHT

I'm not sure but it seems that when the meditator meditates on clear light, there are twenty-four absorptions happening at the time of death. This happens when a person is dying, and even the animals, so through the Highest Yoga Tantra meditation it can happen that the meditator experiences those twenty-four absorptions, those visions or appearances, the same as happen at the time of death when the gross mind absorbs, and becomes more and more subtle, then extremely subtle mind, the clear light, is all that is left.

At that time everything stops. While you are meditating, everything stops including the breathing—there is no movement, or barely any. The similar experience to what happens at the death time, the absorptions, happens in meditation with the practitioners, the yogis, who have realization of the gradual completion stage, the second stage, who have experience of the clear light, the illusory body, and the unification [of these two]. They not only have the experience of the absorptions at death but they can use the Highest Yoga Tantra methods to purify ordinary death, to purify the ordinary intermediate state, to purify ordinary rebirth. With the second stage of completion stage of Highest Yoga Tantra they actually purify ordinary death, ordinary intermediate state and so on, then they actualize the path-time dharmakaya, the path-time sambhogakaya and the path-time nirmanakaya. Those meditators' wind is able to manifest into deity's holy body, and can travel. It manifests into the deity's holy body and does practice with subtle bodies, then the meditator can travel, like Lama Yeshe did.

In Dharamsala, there is a monk called Lama Gyupa who does the altars and water bowls in the different rooms. He is the caretaker of the different shrine rooms at Tushita Retreat Center. Lama doesn't tell of his experiences in public, he only tells them if he meets very close friend meditators, then he mentions those experiences, those very Highest Yoga Tantra realizations. He shares the experience, any only by this kind of conversation can you see what kind of highest tantra realizations Lama had. He never showed the aspect in public. Lama practically never showed he was a meditator. He may have manifested as a business person, he may have manifested in many different ways, but he never showed that he was a meditator, that he was a yogi. Common people, even Tibetan people, had no idea that inside was a great yogi; they only believe what appeared on the outside.

Anyway, Lama mentioned to Lama Gyupa—the monk who took care of the shrine rooms, — that without the gross body he could come with his subtle body into his room. This is what yogis who have achieved clear light and the illusory body can do with the subtle body, in the holy body of the deity in which they practice. They can also go to a pure land of a buddha and do practice and make offering. They do practices, then enter back into the old body to do the common things such as eating, giving teachings, giving advice and so forth.

So, there are the base time three kayas, which means death, intermediate stage and rebirth; the path time three kayas, and then the result time three kayas, the dharmakaya, sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya. Yogis, who achieve this clear light and illusory body, can actually use these realizations as the actual weapon to purify ordinary death, intermediate stage and rebirth, and achieve enlightenment, achieve the result-time three kayas.

#### THE DEATH PROCESS

I am going to mention the very last extremely subtle mind that is there when you die. There is a central channel at the heart—the heart is not this pumping one but the point half way between the two breasts—and all the gross and subtle minds are absorbed into the extremely subtle consciousness, the extremely subtle mind of death. Externally, it looks completely like there is no sensation there at all, nothing, but the mind is still there. Externally there is no sensation, everything is absorbed; all the heat is absorbed so there is nothing. The body looks completely dead.

Even at that time the consciousness is still there. So, the very last mind is this extremely subtle mind. As from a seed, a sprout comes, like that, from the extremely subtle wind and mind, the gross wind and mind come out. The extremely subtle mind leaves from the indestructible seat and then gross wind and mind after it has left from there. When it manifests into the gross wind and mind, that is the intermediate state being's body. If you are going to be reborn in the desire realm or form realm (the formless realm doesn't have an intermediate state) there is intermediate state, generally speaking.

So the extremely subtle mind and wind leaves from the indestructible subtle seed, then the gross wind and mind develop, which is the intermediate state being's body.

The “door” that the consciousness exits the body from depends on which realm you are destined to reincarnate in. If it comes from the crown then either you go to the formless realm or the pure land of a buddha. The best one is Kalachakra's pure land, Shambhala, where you can practice tantra and achieve enlightenment there. And especially Vajrayogini's pure land or Heruka's pure land, where you will definitely become enlightened. Then Amitabha's pure land, where you will never get reborn in lower realms from that time. Some lamas, such as my root

Guru Trijang Rinpoche, say you can practice tantra and become enlightened in Amitabha's pure land. In some of the pure land of the deities you can practice tantra and become enlightened.

So, if the consciousness leaves from the crown, either you get reborn in pure land or formless realm. I think, if it leaves from the mouth you are reborn as a preta, if it leaves from the anus then your destination is hell, that person is going to reincarnate in hell. If the consciousness leaves from the urinary passage, through the sex organ, then the rebirth is as an animal. So, depending from where the consciousness exist, the ears, nose, navel and so forth, that indicates the different rebirths.

In the teaching of the Buddha, it is said that the main location of the mind, where the extremely subtle mind abides is at the heart. Because of that, when we get angry the anger doesn't come from the brain, it arises from here. Similarly, when you get attachment, when you get desire, it doesn't come down from the brain, it comes from here. When you feel pride, pride comes from here; when you feel jealous of somebody, it comes from here. So your ordinary daily life experiences are harmonious with the text, harmonious with what the Buddha explained. The ordinary real experience of life is harmonious with the text, with what the Buddha says.

I am not sure what I am going to do now, there are also many obstacles tonight, so I am just going to finish the *lung*, the oral transmission. There is not much left.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING REINCARNATION AND DEATH

It is very important have a lot of discussion on reincarnation and karma, on rebirth and death. I think it is very, very important. If you think that there is no reincarnation then you should check. In the past in meditation courses I remember giving this technique, during the discussion about reincarnation, about the mind, I guided this meditation where you take the mind back. You go back to last year and the year before that, you go back more and more and more. You go back to childhood and then you go back mother's womb and to the time of conception time, checking all the time on the continuity of the mind.

Many people have had experiences with this meditation. I remember one person, who had very stable concentration and are able to concentrate, who was very stable and very precise, this person was able to go back to conception time in his mother's womb and then he tried to go beyond that. He had a very strong vision, a very strong feeling of being in Tibet. He was in Tibet, he saw the room and the Tibetan tea and the wooden container you use to churn the butter. He could remember the room and the butter, the container to churn the buttered tea—he could see it all so clearly.

For many people who have a clear mind and whose concentration is very stable, just by doing this simple meditation, going back to conception time and then beyond, they get an experience, even during our past courses. Maybe some of you may have had such an experience even this time or something similar. It is possible for some but not everybody. It doesn't happen for everybody.

#### THE DALAI LAMA CAN REMEMBER PAST LIVES

If you think there is no reincarnation or if you find it very difficult to understand reincarnation, you should analyze, you should put a lot of questions to yourself. I mean there are many logical reasonings in the philosophical texts, but a very simple question is, what about so many young and old who are able to remember? This is besides the incarnate lamas like His Holiness the Dalai Lama who are able to remember, to recognize past lives' attendants and belongings. He

even mentioned the name of the lama as soon as the lama came to the house to examine the incarnation. It had already been proved by the deity, by the protector, when the lama spent seven days at the special lake in Tibet, the lake of the protector Palden Lhamo. He put up a tent there and looked into the lake. Whatever question you have, it answers. It is exactly like TV, like a Tibetan TV! From the lake, whatever question you have it shows.

I have also been there. I've been to Tibet twice. The first time I went, I only spent five days in Lhasa and came back, but the second time I was supposed to be there only one month but took a lot of time. I was looking for some commentary of the secret Compassion Buddha, Gyalwa Gyatso. I had to go to Amdo, a place in lower Tibet, the specific monastery that Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche explained. Trying to get this text took a lot of time, so I spent two months in Tibet.

There is one very special place, you have to go from Lhasa, where there is this lake where many people go to look for their guru's incarnation. The protector shows where the guru, the lama, has reincarnated—the house, the parents, the child playing. Sometimes the child is protected by a protector, that lama's previous life Dharma protector. So they see child playing and the protector is also running after that child, [RL] because the protector has commitment from past times to protect this lama.

The people who have come to examine this lake, the Tibetan Government and this Lama Ketsang Rinpoche, not this present incarnation but a previous life of Ketsang Rinpoche, spent seven days every day searching for His Holiness Dali Lama's reincarnation in the lake, asking questions. Then he saw a house with blue tiles, maybe like Chinese tiles, and the mother and father—everything was shown. So like that, it was already proved, but then they went to family disguised, wearing the mala and carrying a stick from the Dalai Lama's past life, and the child, the incarnation, came over to the stick, took the mala, and called the lama's name. He was able to recognize the Lama.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama was in Wisconsin one or two years ago at Geshe Sopa's Center to give Chenrezig initiation. When he talks about bodhicitta, His Holiness often says, "There is no way I have any realization of bodhicitta but I have so much devotion to bodhicitta. There is no way I have any realization of emptiness but I have such strong faith in the emptiness." That is normal expression that His Holiness says.

One day when the organizers of Geshe-la's center had a private interview with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, one of the guys asked him, "You said you don't have any realization, then for us it's hopeless. If you say you have no realization, then for us it's completely hopeless."

This guy has made such big point so His Holiness had to say something, he had to express something, he couldn't bear this person thinking it's all hopeless. It's a kind of private talk but His Holiness actually said he remembered when the Buddha was in India. His Holiness was around the Buddha, His Holiness was with Buddha. Historically, at the time of the Buddha, there was a bodhisattva, whose name I don't remember, who the Buddha predicted that in the future in snowland of Tibet, he would become Chenrezig, the Compassion Buddha and guide sentient beings of snowland of Tibet and you would spread the Buddhadharma. I don't remember exactly, but it was something like, "You will do the four prayers and you will spread Dharma like sun rising in snow land of Tibet." This was one of the bodhisattvas who was an attendant of the Buddha, surrounding him. So the Buddha had already predicted this. All the Dharma Kings are manifestations of this Bodhisattva, the compassion Buddha. Historically it is like this. Each one preserved the Dharma, spread the Dharma and benefited Tibet much. That is why there is such a

special connection with the Compassion Buddha among the Tibetan people.

The Chinese also practiced Compassion Buddha but there is more connection with Amitabha Buddha who is the Guru of Compassion Buddha, Amitabha Buddha, on the crown of the Compassion Buddha. Tibetans also have connection with Amitabha Buddha but mainly Compassion Buddha.

Now of course, His Holiness has been coming so many times all over the West, to many Western countries, giving initiations, teaching, benefiting so many millions and millions of people, guiding the people in the West. The Compassion Buddha is guiding, benefiting so much. That shows us that Western people also have a connection with the Compassion Buddha.

So, historically, it is like this. His Holiness says that he remembers that he was with the Buddha when the Buddha was in India nearly 3,000 years ago. There is no question about high reincarnate lamas who remember, but even common people in the West, many countries in the East and West, young and old, there are so many who can remember past and future lives and can see other people's past and future lives.

#### ORDINARY PEOPLE CAN REMEMBER PAST LIVES

There is a book in the library that somebody received, an American, who researched many, many people who can remember their past and future lives. He collected all the stories in one book and did research like that.

Quite a number of years ago in the Punjab there was a girl who could very clearly remember the town and the parents of her previous life. She explained it very clearly to her present life parents. Then one day she took them, she guided them along the road to the village—I don't know how far it is from her village—to the house of her past life's parents. They had a picture taken together, the present life and past life parents. Of course, the past life parents were older with more wrinkles, and fatter. In the photo, the girl is standing in the front with a toy or something in her hand. I don't know how it happened but I had the photo—quite a large photo—for quite a number of years, but then I lost it. I don't know what happened to it; it was a very precious photo. It was unbelievable what this girl could remember. His Holiness heard this and sent a person to her house.

In the East, in Tibet and Nepal, wherever Buddhism has spread, you see the education about reincarnation. It is a very common understanding. But in the West, in the past, this education has not been in the culture, there is only just one life. I think, however, that many people, even though they may follow the philosophy, the culture of the society that says there is only one life, but in reality if they really question in their heart, I think deep down they are not sure.

#### FEAR AT THE TIME OF DEATH

Also, another thing that is very interesting to consider is this. If there is no future life, if there is no continuation of life after death, why people who did a lot of negativities, a lot of evil deeds, people who are alcoholics, why do they have so much fear at the time of death? Why is it? I asked some students in the Vajrapani, California who are working in the hospital where people were dying, what kind of people have more fear at the time of death. They replied alcoholics have much more fear when they are dying. So we have to question about that, we have to learn about that, why alcoholics have more fear at the time of death. That is a very interesting point to study.

If there is no reincarnation, if there is no past life, no future life why should they be frightened, why should fear arise? No matter whether you are an alcoholic or not, why should fear arise? there must be some reason why fear arises. In the texts of the Buddha's teaching, it says that this is a sign of imminent reincarnation in the lower realm. Before you get reborn in the lower realm there is a sign, there is a karmic torture at the time of death before you are reincarnated, your own karma tortures you and you have all kinds of terrifying visions happen. If you have killed many animals or gone fishing and killed many fish, for example, if you did a lot of killing in the life then at the time of death you have very terrifying karmic appearance, your past life karma, where those animals you killed manifest, the crazy visions, the terrifying visions attack them. All around you are the animal that killed this life, eating you, attacking you, all over the body, and you die with so much fear.

This is very important, it is very good when people are dying, to be near them and to learn what kind of fear, what kind of vision that person has. That is very important research. Then you can see what kind of people have more fear when they die and then you can judge, you go back to what kind of life they led. When there is a lot of fear when they are dying, and you research how that person lived during their life, then the next question is that. Then you find out why they have so much fear. This is the way to make research on how to learn about life.

A lay Tibetan person in Dharamsala, when he was dying he screamed so much, and the people around couldn't do anything, they couldn't help. They didn't see any animals attacking him but he saw them, so many goats and sheep attacking him. He screamed so much. The other people around they couldn't see anything, they couldn't do anything.

#### GESHE JAMPA WANGDU

Gen Jampa Wangdu was an old and very successful meditator, who before he escaped from Tibet was meditator for a few years, and then meditated in Dalhousie then came to Dharamsala. He was Geshe Rabten Rinpoche's disciple. Even before I took teachings from this meditator, he was the best friend of Lama Yeshe and myself. Every time we met at Dharamsala it was the best time, because he always told his life stories, about his practice, and who had achieved realizations among the Tibetan lamas, the monks. You could find out who amongst those meditators living in the mountains had achieved what realization. He brought information to us about other places, about such and such a lama, such and such a Geshe, what realization they had achieved, because when they achieve a realization, either lam-rim or tantric then they report it and many report to His Holiness Dalai Lama, to make an offering of their realization. There are some whose root guru is His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, so they send a report of what kind of realization they have achieved.

This meditator Gen Jampa Wangdu can go to see His Holiness Dalai Lama whenever he wanted. He might also know by his clairvoyance the right time to leave from his cave to visit. It might also be like that, because I remember in Tushita, when I needed him he appeared. He generally stays down below. There are few different places, such as a cave and a big rock, which he lived under for seven years, meditating. One time, there was so much rain the whole place filled with water, but he still kept meditating. There was a small box like that, and all the rest was filled with water, so much rain came. Geshe Rabten Rinpoche heard about this—he and his cook attendant, also a geshe, who was an incredible meditator. You never saw him angry in this life, no matter what bad things you might say to him, he never, *never* said anything harsh in this life, he was always the same person.

He has many lice, he keep many lice on his body, We talk about tong-len, the special bodhicitta practice for quick enlightenment by taking other sentient beings' suffering on yourself, and

giving one's own body, happiness and merit to others. He actually *does* this, not just in meditation, he actually does it. He has so many lice, but if he sees a louse falling out, he picks it up and puts it back, inside. [GL] Like that, he is actually doing tong-len, taking and giving practice, actually giving himself. Like the Buddha, making charity by giving his body completely to the five tigers who were dying of starvation at Namu Buddha, up there in the mountains, one of the holy place where you people go to see. Here, he is giving his body as everyday charity to all the lice. Like that, no matter how much people say bad things, teasing, whatever situation happens, you never see him unhappy or angry. He was famous for that, so very inspiring example of patience.

Anyway, Geshe Rabten Rinpoche, who is my teacher, who began teaching me philosophy first time, when he heard about the situation with Gen Jampa Wangdu, this meditator, Gen Rinpoche carried tools to dig, and he and his assistant went down to drain the water out. Anyway, I think there, in that cave Geshe Jampa Wangdu realized emptiness. It seems so, according to what Geshe Rabten Rinpoche said. One time, when I was taking Mahamudra teachings from Geshe Rabten Rinpoche, Geshe-la told me if you want to ask questions on emptiness ask Gen Jampa Wangdu, he has a very fresh realization of emptiness. Often Geshe Rabten Rinpoche used to praise Gen Jampa Wangdu, saying "He is such a lucky person."

There are other places where Geshe Gen Jampa Wangdu lived to do meditation. He was one of the most successful meditators in Dharamsala, who achieved very high realizations, even external looking. Before he passed away I took a teaching, the Pill Retreat, where if you are living in the high mountains or very isolated place and it is difficult to find food, it takes so much time if you go to look for food because it is very far away and you waste a lot of time, then you don't get to meditate, so you live on pills. I think the retreat was twenty-one days. You cut down food every day, you bless the pill and you take the pill, and that helps to get very clear mind and very healthy body; it purifies all the bad things, and very clear mind, it helps particularly with *shamatha*, calm abiding meditation, perfect concentration. So anyway I have forgotten what I am talking about. [Rinpoche confers with the audience.] Oh yes, good, thank you very much.

So this person, this Tibetan man in Tushita, when you come down the road from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's old place, at McLeod Ganj where there is the bus station, there is houses down below the road, so this dying person was there, screaming so much. , I think Geshe-la must have known from the cave. When a certain person was suffering so much and needed help, he just appeared, without even being asked. He must see, with clairvoyance. Before coming to Dharamsala, he had achieved calm abiding, *shamatha*, which has nine levels, the perfect concentration free from attachment, scattering thought (*go-pa*) and sinking thought (*ching-wa*), the two obstacles that block perfect concentration. He achieved all that, he totally succeeded. So of course he would have reliable clairvoyance. There are other techniques to achieve clairvoyance but they are unreliable, but this way you have reliable clairvoyance.

Why clairvoyance? So that you can help, you can benefit other people. So, Gen Jampa Wangdu came to give advice to the people and when he checked he saw that many goats and sheep were attacking this man, completely all over him. Gen Jampa Wangdu checked what kind of life he had led. He asked a friend and found out he had been a butcher and had killed many sheep in this life, so that is why he is dying with unbelievable fear like this. If you kill fish, such as if you did a lot of fishing in the life, the same thing happens at the time of death. But that is just preliminary, before you die, this is just preliminary. The actual one is the next life; when you actually get reborn in the lower realm it's a billion times heavier. Anything, killing flies, mosquitoes, whatever—it is same, so depending what kind of negative karma we have like that.

Nobody else tortures you, your karma tortures you; it gives you all these terrifying projections.

I can't remember many years ago but there was a very rich Tibetan business person, very, very rich. He was from lower part Tibet, from Amdo, and he was a very big benefactor of monasteries. He became rich by selling statues, by selling holy objects. When he was dying, for months he has so many unbelievable difficulties, his stomach was swollen, and the hospital couldn't do anything. He couldn't eat, couldn't drink—just a tiny drop water—but despite terrible thirst he couldn't drink. Doctors could not do anything so he was taken home by his wife. Each step upstairs took a long time, one step there like that, then upstairs. Then he saw ants coming from the windows and there were covering his bed completely. Ants came all over. He screamed so much, "Please chase away the ants!" but other people around couldn't see one single ant on his bed, but he actually saw them, saw those ants all over. So he had a very hard time before he died. This is a sign of imminent rebirth in the lower realm; this shows what his future life will be.

Even if intellectually you do not believe there is more than one life, why do you have fear at the time of death? That is some guilt, you feel guilty, a feeling of "I wasted my life. I didn't do anything worthwhile with my life." No one is telling you but you feel like that. You fear some very heavy thing is going to happen to you. That shows there is some intuitive feeling for a next life, even if it is not an intellectual belief.

If you really check your heart, down there, the sincere answer is "not sure." That is the very sincere answer. When I spent two months studying English in England some years ago, my teacher was Irish. She brought many articles about the scientist who invented the concept of the atomic bomb, Einstein. She told me the scientist never told lies, and I am very happy of that. She says whatever they discovered they always say "maybe it is like this." They never say before they have fully discovered something that it is so. They will never tell a lie, or over exaggerate. Anyway when she brought me that, it make me very happy to know they just said what they knew and didn't tell lies.

However, so I think maybe I'll stop here. Okay, maybe have a tea and then go to bed. [GL, RL]

This question is very important. What about those who are able to remember, to see past and future lives? Do you ignore them because it's not your experience? Do you refuse to accept things because it's not your experience, because you don't have the capacity? That is totally fooling yourself, so that is a big question. What about many things you don't remember you did in this life? Do you say you didn't do them? There are many things you did in childhood you don't remember now. Other people said you did this and this, but [using this criterion] you shouldn't accept that because you don't remember them. Also, you don't remember coming from the womb, this is just something you believe. Most of us believe "I was born from this mother." Because you are told you were born from this mother you just believe it, but you don't *remember* coming from your mother's womb. [RL, GL] You don't coming from your mother's womb, with a bluish body, with so much pain. [RL] And you don't remember being in the womb. You just believe what they said, that you are born from her. [If you only accept things that are your experience, then you shouldn't accept being born either, because you don't remember. Anyway, there are numberless things.

The conclusion is that there is nobody who has realized that there is no reincarnation, there is nobody. There are those who as part of some major philosophy have assumed there is none, but nobody has actually realized there is no reincarnation. However, there are many people who have realized that there *is* reincarnation and karma—they are *numberless*. This is without counting

buddhas, those high beings, without counting them, just ordinary beings, they are numberless.

Okay, so maybe have tea.

#### THE UNCERTAINTY OF WHEN A PERSON IS DEAD

I just want to make sure in case some people still have some questions. In case you still find it difficult, I am saying how to analyze, the way of analyzing. If you don't know how, to analyze then you think there is no proof.

Before you mentioned "body buried." Now I understand what you are saying, what you meant, body buried, then reincarnating, you can't see how that is possible. That is because we don't differentiate the mind from the body. We don't see, because body has color, form and shape, like that; it is substantial. The mind is colorless, shapeless and formless; it's a phenomenon that doesn't have form, whose nature is clear and knowing. The two are completely different, one is form, substantial, and the other is without form, not substantial.

The definition of mind is clear and knowing, *sem-chen rig-pa*. That is definition of the mind—that which is formless, clear and can know an object. The body is not in that nature, so therefore what goes to the next life is not the body. The body does not reincarnate, the mind reincarnates. That is how we should think, the body does not reincarnate.

Sorry what is your name? Concentration! [RL, GL] I thought your name was meditation [Student: Constantine.] What you said is true, that the body is buried. Then, how is it possible to reincarnate. It's true, that is why I said I completely agree with you, that body does not reincarnate. It's the mind that goes to the next life. These are two completely different phenomena, separate, different phenomena.

I want to tell you this. Not having a head doesn't mean there is no mind. [GL] There are two people that experienced this in Tibet. My Guru His Holiness Song Rinpoche, once visited Pagri, where I lived for three years in Tibet and did pujas. Almost every day I went from family to family to do puja, at eight o'clock I went puja, then at four or five o'clock, my stomach filled with delicious food, I went back to the temple, packed up the texts, *damaru* and bells. Anyway, I did this for three years.

Anyway, when His Holiness Song Rinpoche was there he saw a person without a head. Rinpoche himself told me. There was no head. There was a hole for food, and when he got hungry he rubbed his stomach like this. So, you see [GL] the family put some tea in the hole. When he felt cold, he made some gesture and they took the body into the sun, then took it into the shade like that. That is what I heard.

Then, I saw in the texts another very high Amdo Lama, Kundak Konchog Tenpa Donme, in Amdo he saw the same thing, a person without a head. If he had no head that means he didn't have a brain. I saw these two bits of information. This Amdo Lama explained this in a text. So therefore, it disproves that if you don't have brain you don't have mind. These people have karma to live even without a head; they have karma to suffer in that way. If you have karma to die, even if you cut your finger you may die. Sometimes, you can die from even some small thing, but if it is your karma to suffer, even though your body is cut in half still you can stay alive for many days and suffer.

For example, there is a Sherpa porter that I know who went as a servant for a Sherpa businessman from Tibet. He carried the things being imported while the businessman went

ahead. So much snow fell that he could not go any further, so this Sherpa laid down in the snow for seven days, with no food, with nothing. Then, his feet were all, what do you call it? [*Student: frostbite.*] Yes, they became like that. I asked what happened and he told me the whole story. The Sherpa businessman didn't look after him and he was left there for seven days and covered in snow, with no food or drink but he didn't die. You see, if the karma is heavy to suffer, he has the karma to suffer; but his life lasted and he didn't die. Anyway, I hope this information is enough.

[Tibetan chanting]

#### REFUGE IN THE TRIPLE GEM

Even though the subject of the qualities of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha has been mentioned, maybe the details haven't been reached yet, to do with the purpose of taking refuge. Actually, it's gone on so much. Geshe Sopa Rinpoche explained it, he described the whole Wheel of Life, samsara, the suffering of samsara and how we circle in samsara due to the twelve dependently related links. Geshe-la also mentioned the four noble truths.

Why we rely on the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is because of suffering, because of true suffering and true cause of suffering. We want to be free from that. No external medicine can stop the true suffering, no external medicine can stop the true cause of suffering. No operation by the doctors can stop true suffering and true cause of suffering. Only by Dharma, only by Dharma, so we rely upon the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Taking refuge means relying on the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha; that is the foundation. Relying upon the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, which is the taking refuge. Then practicing what the Buddha advised, that which are the teachings, and essence of the teachings is protecting karma, to not harm others. On the basis of not harming others, to benefit others as much as possible, and protect karma.

#### REMEMBERING THE TRIPLE GEM HELPS AT DEATH

Normally I introduce it like this. When you die, at that time, if you remember a Sangha, an ordained person in whom you have faith and devotion, if you die with that thought of devotion you can never get reborn in the lower realms; you can never get reborn in hell, as a hungry ghost or an animal. This is how the object Sangha is so powerful.

Then, when you are dying, if you remember just the *Heart Sutra* or a Dharma text, if you die with this thought you never get reborn in hell, the hungry ghost or animal realms. You are saved; it protects you. If you remember a mantra, a Dharma text, that saves you, protects you from getting reborn in the lower realms.

Then, if you remember the Buddha, the name of the Buddha, if you hear the name of the Buddha, if you remember the name of the Buddha when you are dying, you never get reborn in the hell, hungry ghost or animal realms.

Without taking refuge to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, without relying on all three, just by remembering one mantra you don't get reborn in the hell, hungry ghost or animal realms.

Normally, I make a comparison, like a competition, between this and all the knowledge of science. For example, say you have an incredible knowledge of science, an unbelievable knowledge of science. Now, the day when you are dying, with all that knowledge at your death, what can you do with that? Nothing. There is nothing you can do, but if you remember just one member of the Sangha to whom you have devotion, you don't get reborn in the lower realms.

## REFUGE IN THE TRIPLE GEM FREES FROM SAMBARA

The purpose of taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is not only to not to be reborn as a hell being, a hungry ghost or an animal, the purpose of taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, of relying upon the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is to be free from the whole entire prison of samsara, bound by karma and delusion, as Geshe-la explained in the three principals of the paths. To be free from the whole entire samsara, in other words, the whole entire suffering, and to be totally free from delusion and karma, the causes of suffering, we need to rely on all three. the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. This is like a very sick patient has to depend on the doctor, the medicine and the nurse. One is not enough; all three are needed. That is the fundamental reason why we need to rely on all three refuges, the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

Now, on top of that, to liberate numberless sentient beings from the suffering and its causes and bring them to enlightenment, for that you need to achieve enlightenment. Now there is more reason to rely on the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha for the success of this, so that is the whole thing. That is the purpose of taking refuge.

Refuge is the door for entering the Buddhadharma and it is also foundation for the pratimoksha, bodhisattva and tantric vows; this is the foundation. Without the all three refuges, taking vows and precepts cannot happen.

You may already have refuge in the Dharma. As I mentioned the other day, when you took an interest in meditation, to meditate on the path to enlightenment, when you took an interest to learn the Dharma, to meditate on the path to liberation and enlightenment, at that time you have already taken refuge. Having taken an interest in meditation, in meditating on the lam-rim, the path to liberation and enlightenment, you have taken refuge in the Dharma at that time.

It is the Buddha who reveals the Dharma so naturally you depend on the Buddha, you rely on the Buddha. Then, of course, to learn all these things and to practice you need the support of the Sangha, for example and inspiration, you need support of the Sangha, so refuge is taken there from that time.

The ceremony of taking refuge makes the practice certain. By taking the refuge vow, there are refuge precepts that you practice in daily life. Because the Buddha is so kind, so compassionate, even if you don't want to take all five lay vows, still the Buddha is so kind by making it possible to take the refuge vows, even if you don't want to take those five lay vows, abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, telling lies and alcohol.

There are refuge precepts to do in everyday life so you collect so much merit. For example, in the morning when you get up, you do three prostrations to the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, and before you go to bed, you do three prostrations to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.. Before you eat, first you offer to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, lay people do, then you take as blessing to serve others. These are things do you in daily life anyway. You are anyway eating, drinking so many times a day, sleeping, so just by the way you collect so much merit and make your life meaningful. Even though they are small practices they make life so meaningful, they create so much happiness, and the cause of happiness up to enlightenment, including a good rebirth in next life. So the Buddha is so kind to us sentient beings, by still allowing us to take refuge vows, even we cannot take, or don't want to take those lay vows.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING VOWS

The other thing is what I want to say is this. Now the one thing to understand is that if you make the vow to be butcher, wine seller, prostitute or something, if you make the vow to be like that then you collect negative karma continuously in whole life. If you make the vow for your whole life “until death this is what I am going to do,” if you make that vow you create negative karma your whole life. But if you make vow to abstain from killing, abstain from stealing and so forth, if you make vow in this way, then you collect merit, you collect merit in whole life until you die because you make the vow until you die you are going to do this, to abstain from that negative karma and live in morality.

Therefore taking vow, even refuge vow, makes a huge difference to your life. By taking the vow you collect merit day and night, all the time. In the same way, by taking the vow, abstaining from killing or stealing—all the five vows or any number of them—you are collecting merit, you made the vow up to death so therefore while you are eating, you collect merit all the time by living in that vow. While you are sleeping, how many hours you are sleeping, even if you are sleeping for twenty-four hours you continuously collect merit because you are living in the vow, one vow or five vows, you are collecting merit all the time. For every twenty-four hours you are collecting merit, you are making your life meaningful, the cause of happiness, the cause to achieve liberation from samsara.

Then with bodhicitta motivation, the cause of enlightenment, you are creating cause for enlightenment all the time by living in these vows. So like that even while working, walking on the beach or whatever, you are collecting merit all the time, your life is never empty, never meaningless. Even whether you took one vow or five vows until death time, so like that, all this life is meaningful.

Say a person has taken the vow, the precepts and all he ever does is eat, sleep, make *kaka* and *pipi*, eat, sleep, make *kaka*, *pipi*—only ever these things—he never does any practice, prostrations or reading Dharma texts, studying or chanting mantras, but his only practice is living in the vows, just the refuge vow, or the five lay vows, and so no question the vows of an ordained monk or nun, the 253 vows of a fully ordained monk or the 360 or something vows of a fully ordained nun. (Of course there is more merit the more vows he can take and keep purely.) But even if all he ever does is those three things, eating, sleeping and making *kaka* and *pipi*, if he lives in the vows then he is making merit continuously. Even if he is in a coma for many years he is collecting merit all the time. With the five lay vows, the merit is fivefold, so therefore he is making his life so meaningful all the time.

The merit of keeping the 253 merits of a fully ordained monk all the time is unbelievable. This is an incredible advantage. Then, especially, as mentioned by the bodhisattva Shantideva, in *Bodhisattvacaryavatara*, if you have taken the bodhisattva vows you continuously collect merit whether you are asleep or whether you even become unconscious. You continuously receive skies of merit, limitless skies of merit all the time, causing happiness, becoming the cause of enlightenment. Even while you are sleeping, even when you are unconsciousness, you are collecting continuously even those times, limitless skies of merit. That makes life unbelievably beneficial and most productive.

If you take the higher tantra vows then there is even much more merit, as explained by Pabongka Rinpoche in *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, by the great enlightened being. So now that is one thing to understand, that is one advantage what makes life so meaningful.

The second what that living in the vows makes life so meaningful is this. As mentioned in the sutra texts, if as many sentient beings as there are in the three galaxies, in that many worlds,

becomes a Wheel turning king, everyone become the most powerful incomparable king in the world, then offers oceans of butter and Mount Merus of wax to make light offering to all the buddhas, and compare that with a person living in the ordination vows make an offering to the Buddha with butter as small as a mustard seed, and wax the size of a hair, this offering done by the person living in the ordination, creates far more merit, it is far greater, than the three galaxies of worlds filled with sentient beings, each a wheel turning king, each making light offerings of oceans of butter and Mount Merus of wax to all the buddhas. Even those that merit is unbelievable, it is so small when you compare it to one person living in the vows makes a light offering of butter like a tiny mustard seed and wax the size of a hair to the Buddha. Even though the offering is so tiny the merit is unbelievable. This is explained by the Buddha in a sutra text.

In your daily life, by living in the vows, whenever you collect merit by making charity to other people or animals or by making offering to the Triple Gem or making prostrations—whatever virtue you do, it increases so much. The more vow you take, the greater the increase. Whenever you collect merit it increases depending on the number of pratimoksha vows, the number of bodhisattva vows and the tantra vows you have taken. By taking bodhisattva vows, any virtue you do in daily life increases millions of times, and by taking tantra vows it increases much more.

This is the second advantage how it affects your daily life, making it so most productive. More merit means then you are able to overcome all the problems, all the obstacles, and create even more merit and avoid more negative karma. The merit becomes more powerful and the negative karma becomes weaker, and this makes your life very smooth. Whatever you think, all your wishes get fulfilled, now and in future lives. Like that you are able to achieve enlightenment without taking much time, without many difficulties.

#### THE REFUGE CEREMONY

Those who are taking refuge, please make three prostrations to the Buddha, by thinking this is the actual living Buddha. Make three prostrations, and then again make three prostrations to the Lama who gives refuge. Then, if you can kneel down like when taking the eight Mahayana precepts in the morning. If you can't kneel down, then you can sit, relax. Put your palms like this in the mudra of prostration.

Then think this motivation. “This time I have received the perfect human body which is extremely rare to find, I have met the Buddhadharma which is extremely rare to meet and I have met a virtuous friend who will reveal the path to enlightenment liberation and enlightenment, who is extremely rare to meet. At this time, while I have all the opportunity to practice Dharma, I must achieve liberation from samsara, I must achieve the great liberation, the non-abiding sorrowless state, the full enlightenment, that which is free forever from suffering. I must achieve this. I must achieve full enlightenment for the benefit of all my kind mother sentient beings. If I don't do that, I will have to experience the suffering of samsara, the suffering of pain, the suffering of change and pervasive compounding suffering, without end.

“Therefore, for this purpose, I am going to take refuge, by relying upon the Buddha, the founder of the actual refuge; then the Dharma, the actual refuge; and the Sangha, the one who helps actualize refuge within my mind.”

If you are only taking refuge think I am only taking the refuge vow, but if you are taking any of the precepts of the five lay vows—one, two, three, four or five, either all five or any number—then think, “I am going to take upasika one vow, two vows,” whatever number you take think like that.

One reason why it is important to take any number of those lay vows is because by taking refuge to the Dharma, there are two things, two precepts, one thing is to be abandoned and one thing is to be practiced. The thing to be abandoned by taking refuge in the Dharma is harming other sentient beings. It involves giving up harming other sentient beings, so therefore in that case it helps if you take from the five lay vows, or if not all the five then any number of that—it helps to do refuge practice, refuge vows, not harming others, so you get done that practice.

Normally, I emphasize at least abstaining from killing, by taking that vow it helps to not harm others, but of course if one can take more than that, then of course, more than that then, it is very exciting. If you are taking any lay vows, any number, think, “I am going to take Upasika vow one, two, three, four or five (whatever number you take) on the basis of taking refuge.”

Then please repeat the precept prayer, the seven-limb prayer.

[Tibetan refuge prayer]

Please mention your name, as in the Mahayana ordination ceremony, before taking refuge. Until I achieve enlightenment [Tibetan giving vows, audience repeats] from now on until I achieve enlightenment I go for refuge in the Buddha.

Now remember meaning of the Buddha, whose holy mind is totally free from all the gross and subtle mistakes of mind and complete in all the qualities of the realizations. So that is Buddha. Remembering the meaning of the Buddha, then rely on the Buddha, billions of times much more than an ordinary doctor, who if even though he can cure but it is only temporarily.

Now taking refuge in the Dharma, relying upon the Dharma, that which is the true path and the true cessation of suffering. That is absolute Dharma. The conventional Dharma is the Tripitaka, the scriptures, which reveals the path. So, like that, take refuge in both.

[Tibetan, giving vows, the audience repeats]

Relying on the Dharma is billions of times more effective than medicine, which even though it can cure, it is only temporarily.

Now, the next one is taking refuge in the Sangha, those who support us. There is absolute Sangha and conventional Sangha. The absolute Sangha—whether a lay person or an ordained person, it doesn't matter—is somebody who has the realization of the cessation of suffering and the true path. The conventional Sangha is somebody who doesn't have those realizations, who is ordinary, but who is living in the full ordination purely. Relying upon them both, take refuge.

[Tibetan, giving vows, the audience repeats]

Rely on them a billion times more than a nurse.

[Tibetan, giving vows, the audience repeats]

Now please repeat a second time.

[Tibetan, giving vows, the audience repeats]

Please repeat your name.

[Tibetan, the audience repeats]

Remember the meaning of the Buddha, then with the whole heart reply upon the Buddha.

[Tibetan, audience repeats]

The next one is taking refuge in the Dharma.

[Tibetan, the audience repeats]

The next one is taking refuge in the Sangha.

[Tibetan, the audience repeats]

So, at the end of the third repetition [Tibetan]) when I say loudly then you have received the vows and you must develop the thought that you have received the vows, even if you are not taking any of the lay vows, only the refuge vow. Then, from that time on I have become the *Lopen*. Your *Lopen* is the master, the teacher who leads the disciple on the path to liberation. How? By revealing the vow, by causing the disciple to practice, that brings the disciple to liberation like that.

[Tibetan, giving vows, the audience repeats]

Please repeat a third time.

[Tibetan, giving vows, the audience repeats]

Say your name.

[Tibetan, giving vows, the audience repeat]

Now think you have received the upasika vows, whatever number of vows you have taken, or if you have taken only refuge vows okay.

[Tibetan, giving vows, the audience repeats]

So now repeat the prayer. Those taking the lay vows please repeat.

As I mentioned the other day, this is a most practical contribution to the world peace. Your living in the vows, precepts, this is your most practical contribution to the world peace, for the happiness, the peace of all the sentient beings, not just in this world. This is what you are offering, this is what you can offer, this is what you are offering towards the sentient beings, so it becomes extremely essential, it becomes most enjoyable way to live the life.

[Tibetan, giving vows, the audience repeats]

If you are kneeling, you can sit down.

#### HOW TO PRACTICE REFUGE IN THE BUDDHA

Actually, all the instructions are here. By taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha there are three things to be abandoned and three things to be practiced. Then, there are general

instructions by the Buddha in our daily life, like those things that I mentioned before.

So, the three things. By taking refuge in the Buddha what you should practice is respect to the Buddha's statues and the paintings of the Buddha, even if it is a broken statue or even if it is a small piece of a drawing of the Buddha or statue. If you see it on the road or on the floor you touch it on your crown and then put up in a high, clean place, by thinking it is the actual living Buddha you are putting in a high place. Even if you see a small, broken piece from a drawing of the Buddha or a statue—something like that—it doesn't matter if it's made of mud, gold, diamonds, whatever, you should show them all equally respect. If there is something that you don't like, something of bad quality or of poor material such as mud, and if you throw it away, or throw away any broken ones in the garbage, it obscures your mind. It blocks you from developing compassion. It pollutes the mind, it obscures the mind, and it makes it difficult to have realizations on the path to enlightenment. Then, it is very difficult for you to be free from samsara, this is besides achieving enlightenment. So, one must respect holy objects, even if they are broken; you should put them in a high clean place, or fix them.

Then what you should abandon by taking refuge in the Buddha is following the wrong founder. For example, if you meet a wise doctor but while you are taking treatment from the wise doctor, you take treatment from a bad doctor and you get wrong advice and then you see that the wise doctor cannot help you. Like that, it becomes obstacle for the wise doctor to guide you, to heal your sickness. So in the same way, if a wrong founder reveals the wrong path to you, the wrong concept, then it follows that the Buddha cannot guide you. Therefore, you must abandon following the wrong founder.

#### HOW TO PRACTICE REFUGE IN THE DHARMA

By practicing Dharma, what you should practice is that you must respect Dharma texts, even a torn page from Dharma text, even a few lines you see in the garbage or on the road. You should pick it up and put in the car thinking that this reveals the path, which liberates me from the whole entire oceans of samsaric suffering, brings me to liberation and enlightenment. Then put it in high, clean place—even for a torn page you see in the garbage, it is like that. If there is so much you don't have place to keep all those torn pages etc. In Tibet and in Solu Khumbu where I was born, they build a square stupa which is under a rock so it was protected from the rain, then they put all the missing pages in this stupa so nothing goes in the garbage. If other people stepped over them they would create so much negative karma and you would create so much negative karma, so these things don't happen. It protects you from heavy negative karma like that.

You should respect even a torn page torn from a Dharma text like this, so there is no question about a complete Dharma text. You shouldn't put on the bare ground without any cover, without a cloth cover, without a tablecloth. You can't just put Dharma texts on the bare ground or on the bed or cushion, without any cloth, without tablecloth or something clean to put on top, to show respect. You cannot put Dharma texts or prayer books page which is Dharma on a meditation cushion or seat without something to support it, to respect it. This is important and I want to emphasize it. You cannot put a mala, even a mala, on a Dharma text.

I mentioned the other day, I saw a mala was put on top of the text during Geshe Sopa's teaching and I said like this, but didn't get the idea. [RL] What I am saying it is disrespectful so don't put the mala on Dharma texts. You can't even put a statue on Dharma text. You can put a Dharma text on a statue but not a statue on a Dharma text. Sometimes you have statues on the top shelf where you have put Dharma texts. This is the correct way to do it or the other way it to put it at

the side.

One time when we visited His Holiness the Dalai Lama there was an Italian student, a very old student with us. He was one of two or three Italian students who were the source for Lama and myself to spread so much Dharma in Italy. These are two or three Italian students became the source for Lama Tsongkhapa Institute, the largest center in Italy, which has now been there so many years. His Holiness the Dalai Lama came a few times to give teachings and initiations and many thousands of people gathered, as well as many other high lamas. His Holiness Ling Rinpoche came I think. I don't remember but many high lamas came. Song Rinpoche gave teachings and initiations.

Nowadays, there is a seven year program, studying extensive Buddhist philosophical sutras, and after that tantra, after which they get a degree and become qualified teachers to teach in the organization or the centers, to educate other people also teach outside the organization. The degree is given on the basis of not only intellectual understanding but also meditation experience. They have to meditate on the lam-rim, given the basis is not only intellectual but having one year's meditation on the lam-rim. The degree is also given on the basis of their behavior during that time, how they have lived their life, because we don't want any problems in the centers, with behavior, with teachers having problem with behavior. In the past there have been stories, so we don't want that to happen. Therefore, the teacher degree is given not just on an intellectual understanding but also meditation experience and behavior. So, you see it is very special; there is no others like that, it's very special degree. Now many centers, many branches happen from this.

Anyway, this student's name is Pierro. He offered a stupa to His Holiness or he asked him to bless it—I'm not sure—and he put the stupa on top of a Dharma text on His Holiness' table. His Holiness took the stupa off the text and I think he might have mentioned something about how you cannot put stupas onto Dharma texts. Anyway, he purposely took the stupa from the text.

You can't put things like malas or glasses on Dharma texts. That is wrong, that is disrespectful. Even if you put a statue, a mala and or some glasses it is disrespectful. But if there is a wind problem, if the wind is blowing and there is danger of the text blowing away, that is a special case. Then, you can put things on it because the Tibetans say that "necessity is more important than the negation." If there is the danger of the wind blowing the text, you can put things on it, such as a mala or whatever, otherwise you can't put anything on it. I want to emphasis this at this time in public.

You can't use a Dharma text as a cushion to sit on, and you certainly can't put shoes and Dharma text like this. [RL] You can't put spit on it. I don't think Western people do that, but it is a custom with Tibetan people, when they turn a page to lick their fingers and turn the page. I didn't see Western people doing that. There are many Tibetan people who have the habit of doing this, but it is also disrespectful. One time in Darjeeling at Tomo Geshe Rinpoche's monastery, where I lived nine months when I had TB, His Holiness Ling Rinpoche, His Holiness Dalai Lama's elder guru, mentioned that when you turn the pages you should not put your spit on the pages, otherwise you will be reborn in the vajra hell. His Holiness Ling Rinpoche said that.

What Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche does is this. Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche is such a great scholar and great yogi, whose qualities are like the limitless sky but yet he is extremely humble, respectful to anybody—wealthy, poor, educated, uneducated. Like His Holiness the Dalai Lama he respects everybody. What he does is he keeps water next to him so when he turn the pages many, many

times and the pages stick, he dips his finger in the water to help separate them. That way it is so respectful, it doesn't create any heavy karma, it doesn't obscure the mind.

Even if you are marking Dharma texts with orange color highlighter or something, which many people do but not all the time, you should think that you are offering color, like you offer color on the body of a statue. If you think that you are making offering of the color then this isn't disrespectful.

One time, Jeffrey Hopkins, the well-known American professor, who studied the Buddha's philosophy extensively and is a very respected teacher, came to Australia to Chenrezig Institute. We now have maybe about fifteen nuns and a very good program happening there, with an excellent geshe, teacher, who is very compassionate and very learned, very kind-hearted, who has been teaching there now many years. So, one time Jeffrey Hopkins came there to give a talk. I wasn't there at the talk but he gave teaching on hell.

He explained that he has to mark the dissertations of the students he teaches. When the students do a thesis or a translation or whatever, he has to correct anything that is wrong, which means he puts black lines through words. He said he does this many times, putting lines through what are Dharma texts. So, he told the Chenrezig students that he had created so much negative karma to be reborn in the hot hells, not the first one, being alive again and again, but the second one, the black line hell where karmic guardians draw black lines on your body laid out on the red hot burning iron ground, like a carpenter does on wood, then they cut it exactly like they do with wood. Jeffrey Hopkins said many times he put black lines through the students' mistakes, and in doing so he created so much negative karma to be born in second hot hell, the black line hell.

Anyway, even when you make a mark on a Dharma text, mark it nicely and think you are offering color, orange, usually. Like His Holiness Ling Rinpoche who puts it separately, you put it at the bottom of the page, you separately mark it like that. However, when you put those colors from the pen, you can think that you are offering color like that and you collect merit. It does not become disrespectful.

If there are many missing pages, then you can put them some respectful place, such as in cave or whatever, in trees or something. You can do it like that. Otherwise, here we have this stupa outside. When we make tsa-tsas, we put them there, also Dharma texts, missing pages and whatever. Instead of throwing them in garbage, we put them in the stupa like that. This way you don't create negative karma and other people don't create negative karma. The minimum thing is on the roof or some clean place, then you visualize all those letters as empty or absorbed in syllable AH, absorbed into your heart, then there is just empty paper, and then you offer fire, like that. That is the very least thing that can be done.

#### HOW TO PRACTICE REFUGE IN THE SANGHA

Now, the Sangha. By taking refuge in the Dharma, what you should abandon is giving harm to others. By taking refuge in the Sangha, what you should practice is that whenever you see Sangha, wearing red or yellow dress, wearing Buddhist robes, you should think, "This is my guide who liberates me from samsara. This is my guide who liberates me from oceans of samsaric suffering." You should respect them in this way. By thinking of the qualities you can respect them, it doesn't matter which Buddhist tradition, Hinayana or Mahayana, you just respect them like that. What you should abandon by taking refuge in the Sangha, is following the wrong kind of guide, who leads you on the wrong path, who gives you the wrong practice, the wrong view. If you follow that then the Sangha cannot help you.

## HOW TO PRACTICE REFUGE IN GENERAL

Then, the general advice on refuge. In the morning, when you get up, do three prostrations, as I mentioned before, by thinking of the Buddha, or think of the Triple Gem. Then, before you go to bed, do three prostrations to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. If you have a statue of the Buddha or if not you visualize the Buddha, you can think that is all the Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, all the ten directions' statues, stupas and scriptures, that it is everything. Then you do the prostrations. By doing that, you have done prostration to every single holy object that exists in any universe, in Tibet, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, anywhere, you have prostrated from here, and to all the Buddha Dharma and Sangha. So with this meditation, you prostrate, you collect unbelievable skies of merit.

Before you eat and drink, first make offering to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, then take it as a blessing. Even you don't know prayer from your heart, you offer and recite OM AH HUM, you bless and offer, then you take it as a blessing. So, these are general refuge precepts, the general advice on refuge.

Then, you should practice compassion towards other sentient beings. Then, you should live your life by relying on holy beings. By relying on the Buddha then you become a buddha; like relying on His Holiness Dalai Lama eventually leads you to have the same quality as His Holiness Dalai Lama. So, relying on holy beings.

Then, you should listen to teachings. This means the when gurus give teachings, whenever you can, you should take the opportunity to listen to the teachings, whether from a teacher you have already made a connection with, a Dharma connection, a Dharma relationship, a Guru-disciple relationship, or from somebody you make a new connection with, making a new Dharma connection. So, one thing is listening to the Dharma.

Then other thing is when you are in danger to create negative karma, such as when anger arises with other sentient beings, then try to control the mind by applying lam-rim meditation, practicing patience and applying the antidotes such as Guru devotion, renunciation, bodhicitta, those techniques. Then there is also tantra to try to control the mind. I don't remember whether I have remembered everything or not, but that is the general advice. It is written here, so you can study it here. There are also benefits I explained.

On the back here, there is St Francis, a great holy being from Italy, even though he chants Jesus' name, actually his mind is so pure; he has no attachment clinging to this life, no eight worldly dharma, no self-cherishing thought. He is an actual bodhisattva. Even though externally he used Christian terms and prayer like, but in reality his mind is in realization. Anyway he has those realizations so he is an actual bodhisattva, the same as those Tibetan great meditators such as the Kadampa Geshes, Lama Atisha's disciples and so forth.

I thought it would be very interesting to put this. I like how he advised here so I put it here. Normally lamas won't put this, wouldn't mix things like this, but I like this. I don't think in this advice there is contradiction with Buddhism. I only made one or two little changes, the rest is as it is. So, I think that's all.

So, feel great happiness because of all those benefits, as I mentioned before, how much merit you collect from now on until you die, continuously, then, every day whenever you collect merit it increases unbelievable number, unbelievable. As I gave the example before, three thousand galaxies of sentient beings and each one becomes a wheel turning king and makes light offering of oceans of butter and oceans of wax top countless buddhas—that much merit is so small when

compared to one person living in ordination with vows making a light offering to Buddha with butter the size of one mustard seed and wax the size of one strand of hair. This one is far, far greater. Every day, when you collect merit, whether you make charity to other sentient beings or whatever you do, the virtue you collect is increased unbelievably. Therefore, rejoice, thinking, “From now on my life becomes most productive; it becomes really meaningful towards all sentient beings. This is the most practical contribution for the peace and happiness of all sentient beings I am giving.” So that is it.

[Tibetan chanting]

[Rinpoche confers with somebody, unclear]

#### THE ORAL TRANSMISSION OF THE MEDICINE BUDDHA MANTRA

I did the lung the other day but I think, the monks and nuns were there but I think many of us went out.

[Tibetan chanting]

This is one of the most powerful practices of purification, reciting the names of the Thirty-Five Buddhas, the confession of downfalls.

[Tibetan chanting]

It is very good to recite the seven Medicine Buddhas after the Thirty-five Buddhas. When they were bodhisattvas, before they become buddhas, the seven Medicine Buddhas made so many prayers for us sentient beings to have happen that anybody who recites their name mantra, may they have this happiness, that happiness, all this, success. So, when they became buddhas and achieved infinite qualities, one of the qualities is the ten powers. One of the powers is power of prayer, so because of that, because they achieved this, as they made prayer before for all the success for sentient beings who recited the name mantra, therefore the names mantra of the Medicine Buddhas has so much power. By reciting Medicine Buddhas’ name mantra we receive all the Medicine Buddhas’ prayers and whatever we pray for in daily life will succeed. Therefore, the Medicine Buddhas are regarded as so blessed, so precious, especially as the time is becoming more and more degenerated, and everything is becoming more difficult as the time gets more and more degenerated.

No matter how degenerated the time gets, any one of the Medicine Buddhas is very powerful for success and also very powerful for purification, for purifying negativity, broken vows, degenerated vows and precepts. The Medicine Buddhas are very powerful for purification, not only for healing.

Even when animals hear the Medicine Buddhas’ name mantra they never get reborn lower realms, so there is no question for human beings, this is guaranteed. If you recite the Medicine Buddhas’ name mantra you never get reborn in the lower realms. This is a guarantee, so this is *very* important.

You spend so many thousands of dollars to learn so many exercises, many hundreds of exercises to make the body healthy, you spend so much money for the body to be healthy. You put so much effort. In that case, reciting the Medicine Buddhas’ name mantra, which protects you from reincarnating in the hell, hungry ghost or animal realm, which means you will never be reborn in the lower realms, you have to put all the effort to practice this like that. If you are putting so

much effort those other things to be healthy, if you spend so much money to be healthy, to have long life, there is no question this practice of Medicine Buddha is most crucial to practice.

[Tibetan chanting]

#### THE VAJRASATTVA MANTRA

Vajrasattva mantra, [Rinpoche recites] and the short one. [Rinpoche recites]

To purify today's negative karma, to not multiple today's negative karma, for it not to become double tomorrow, if you going to recite the long one you need to recite it twenty-one times, if you are going to recite the short one—OM VAJRASATTVA HUM—then you have to recite it twenty-eight times to stop any negative karma becoming double the next day. This shows how extremely important it is to practice Vajrasattva, meditation recitation is like this.

It is said by Pabongka Nyingpo if you killed one tiny insect today or committed one small nonvirtue today, then without confessing it at the end of the day, such as within a Vajrasattva practice and so forth, then it increases every day, and after fifteen days then you created same heavy karma as having killed a human being. Even though you haven't actually killed a human being, the amount of negative karma is same as having killed a human being. Then, one small negative karma done today, after eighteen days by increasing how much it is said to become 131,072 greater. The negative karma get multiplied after eighteen days by that amount. Then it increases, as the months go by, the years go by, it increases and becomes like a mountain, like the size of this Earth as year goes—like multiplying one atom until it become like this Earth, like a mountain. If you don't confess even one small negative karma, it multiplies every day then become so heavy, such as like this Earth materialized.

Therefore, by doing Vajrasattva at the end of the day before going to bed, even just twenty-one times or the shorter one, twenty-eight times, that not only stops the karma multiplying, becoming double by tomorrow, it purifies this negative karma, it purifies this year's negative karma, this life's negative karma, it purifies past lives' negative karmas, so it is unbelievably powerful. This is how important it is to practice like that; it is so important to practice Vajrasattva.

If you recite one hundred thousand mantras of Vajrasattva then even the very heavy negative karma you have committed gets purified. If you took vows and then broke a root vow, such as killing a human being or telling the big lie of having realization while you don't, the big lie, or stealing, sexual misconduct or sexual intercourse [if you've vowed to celibacy as in monastic ordination]—if you broke those root vows, it has the power to completely purify them. Those heavy negative karma get completely purified by reciting Vajrasattva one hundred thousand times.

That is why so many years ago, maybe before we start these courses, I am not quite sure, Lama started this Vajrasattva retreat for student to do a Vajrasattva retreat. Lama gave the initiation to the very first student—she is now a Doctor, I think PhD—Jan Willis. Lama gave it to her and friend. They were the first students Lama gave Vajrasattva initiation to, and they did the retreat in one of the nearby Nepalese houses. They did it upstairs and the Nepalese lived downstairs. They made fire downstairs and all the smoke went upstairs, filling the room with smoke while they were doing retreat.

That is how the Vajrasattva retreat tradition started in the FPMT, and since then there have been lots of Vajrasattva retreats, which are extremely important and beneficial. So much negative

karma—which causes us to be reborn in the lower realms and then to be there for many eons, suffering terribly—gets purified, so it makes it so easy to achieve enlightenment. This is Lama’s kindness. It is Lama Yeshe’s kindness that it is very common in the FPMT to do Vajrasattva retreat practice.

[Tibetan chanting]

#### DEDICATIONS

Due to all the three times merit collected by me by others may myself, all the three time merits collected by me, the buddhas and bodhisattvas and all the sentient beings, all the three time merits collected by me, the three time merits collected by the buddhas, the bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, may myself, also my family members and all the rest of all of us here, all the rest of the sentient beings, may we be able to complete pure morality by keeping it pure without mistake and without pride. [Tibetan chanting] May I and all sentient beings, all of us here effortlessly keep pure morality in all the future life times and completely be able to complete the path of morality.

May I achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s enlightenment which is empty from its own side and lead all the sentient beings who are empty from their own side to that enlightenment which is empty from its own side by myself alone who is also empty from my own side. I dedicate all my merits in the way the three times buddhas and bodhisattvas admire the most, in the same way I dedicate. May Lama Tsongkhapa’s teachings, the stainless teaching of unified sutra and tantra, be completely actualized in one’s own mind, in one’s own family members, all the students, benefactors of this organization and especially those who sacrifice their life to this organization. May it be actualized completely in all of our minds within this very lifetime without delay for even a second and may Lama Tsongkhapa’s teachings spread in all directions. May they flourish forever. May I be able to cause this by myself. [Tibetan] Then, those who have taken refuge, there is more information here. There is a Mickey Mouse photo. [GL, RL] So anybody who has taken refuge can come up.

[Rinpoche confers, tape unclear—Rinpoche receiving thanks from students]

## Lecture 10

### THE BENEFITS OF WRITING AND LISTENING TO DHARMA

[beginning of teaching unrecorded] ...the *Prajnaparamita* teachings on the *Perfection of Wisdom*, “Gone Beyond Wisdom,” is the Buddha’s actual means to liberate us numberless sentient beings from the whole entire, unbearable oceans of samsaric suffering, and karma and delusion, which is the continuation of suffering and its cause, the continuation which has no beginning. The Buddha’s actual method, the way of liberating us sentient beings is this teaching *Prajnaparamita*.

The Buddha told his attendant Kungawo, Ananda, that it doesn’t even matter if all the rest of the other teachings of the Buddha are completely destroyed, it doesn’t matter; even if one little bit of these teachings of the *Perfection of Wisdom* is degenerated or destroyed, it is much more harmful; it is a much greater loss.

Buddha said, “Wherever this teaching of *Prajnaparamita* is, I am.” There is *Bum* or *Yum* there is about twelve volumes, then there is *nyi-che* three volumes, then there is *Ge-tong-ba* 8,000 stanzas, 20,000 stanzas then 100,000 stanzas.

I am now writing the 100,000 stanzas in gold, mainly Nepalese gold. I did use some New York gold which is much brighter, the Nepalese one is like the ones painted on the Buddha statues here; it’s calmer, less bright, anyway of a different nature. So, I am writing now with gold and writing also with silver. I am not doing the actual writing but a nun [Tsen-la] is, whom I asked to build a nunnery down there, who has also been a translator of many, many years for the organization.

She is the sister of Geshe Sopa Rinpoche’s attendant, [Yangsi Rinpoche] who was here when he was young. He studied here at Kopan for three years then went to Sera to study, completing his geshe degree to become Lharampa Geshe, which means a good quality of understanding the Dharma, so he studied extremely well. Last year, I asked him to lead the two month lam-rim course at Dharamsala. That was his first teaching after he finished studying. Actually besides the talks here and there that were the actual teachings, he gave a two-month *lung* of a text that gave teaching based on a Kopan-style course in Dharamsala. It is doing very well. I have been receiving letters from students that say how they want to continue again with courses from Rinpoche.

However, this nun is his sister. She is actually doing the writing, almost finished *Diamond Cutter Sutra* in silver on black paper, then she is going to start the 8,000 stanza version. I want to have one whole set of *Prajnaparamita* in silver and gold. My one contribution is when I have time, when I am traveling, so I think it would take a long, long, time. My idea is maybe to hire somebody here, some of the monks here and from Sera monastery, to write the gold version or maybe the silver. They can get some offerings for their work. This way, I think we will finish quicker and then when the Maitreya Buddha statue is erected, it will be ready to offer, to put inside the statue at the heart, this, the Buddha’s most precious teaching.

### THE PRAJNAPARAMITA TEACHINGS ARE THE HEART OF THE DHARMA

So the Buddha said to Ananda, Kungawo, that even if the rest other teachings were completely destroyed, it doesn’t matter, whereas if a little bit of this teaching were destroyed, it would be a much greater loss. So, he gave the responsibility to Ananda, and said, “Wherever the teaching of the *Prajnaparamita* is, I am there.”

All the numberless past buddhas were born from this teaching, the *Perfection of Wisdom*, the teachings on emptiness, as were all the present buddhas born and all the future buddhas will be born from this, as well as all the numberless bodhisattvas, the numberless arhats who are liberated from samsara—there were all are born from this. This *Perfection of Wisdom* “*Gone Beyond Wisdom*” is the one that liberates numberless sentient beings, including us, from the oceans of samsaric suffering and the cause of the delusion and karma, this teaching, so this teaching, the teaching of *Perfection of Wisdom*, is most precious.

I am not only talking about the *Diamond Cutter Sutra* but also the *Heart Sutra*, the essence. The *Prajnaparamita* teaching, which I mentioned, is the heart of all the 84,000 teachings of the Buddha. And the very heart of all these teachings of *Perfection of Wisdom* is the *Heart Sutra*, Essence of Wisdom *Heart Sutra*, which is one or two pages.

Geshe Sopa Rinpoche said about these teachings, in the *Heart Sutra* there is *Chom den den ma / sherab keyi parchin nyingbo*(?) Mother, Bhagawan, *chom* Destroyer, qualified, gone beyond, mother. Then *sherab keyi nyingbo* at the heart of *Perfection of Wisdom* is the mother. Why is it called the mother? What I explained just before gives you an idea of the mother, in that it gives birth to all the three times buddhas, bodhisattvas and arhats. As I said, these teachings directly contain the wisdom, but indirectly contain the method, the path, so these are called the mother. I will go into a specific explanation.

There are other teachings on emptiness besides *Perfection of Wisdom*, but they do not contain method. But these ones that I have gone through, the names that I mentioned, they are the teachings which contain method. The teachings within the *Abhisamayakarika* are directly method teachings but indirectly wisdom, there is also *Prajnaparamita*, like that.

Before what is called death, that happens in this life, while there are all the opportunities to practice Dharma, everything we have gathered miraculously, *miraculously*—it is kind of an impossible thing but it has happened this time—so, before death happens, it is not enough just to be free from lower realms or to just receive a human body. Even to be free from samsara is not sufficient. We must achieve enlightenment to liberate numberless sentient beings from all their sufferings and bring them to enlightenment. Think therefore, “I am going to listen to oral transmission of the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*.”

Listening to this definitely leaves a positive imprint on the mental continuum and that definitely means in the near future—in this life or future lives—you will be to be able to understand the teachings on emptiness, the *Perfection of Wisdom*, to understand the meaning and to be able to actualize the path that they reveal and then that directly ceases all defilements. And also, with the method bodhicitta, the method path, to be able to cease even the subtle defilements, and so be able to achieve enlightenment. So, this definitely leads to enlightenment. Even listening the teaching, even just listening to the words, definitely leads oneself to achieve enlightenment.

The reason I am writing in gold is when I was receiving teachings from Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche in Dharamsala some years ago, when I was living there for a long time, after Lama passed away, I read a text by the bodhisattva, Tibetan lama bodhisattava Thogme Zangpo, who composed the *Thirty-seven Practices of the Bodhisattva*. There are two collections of his teachings. I received the oral transmission of one volume from Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche but I haven't received the other one yet. The Tibetan Library has the text.

During that time, I saw there are references, there is a quotation from the *Prajnaparamita* where it says that the benefits of writing the sutra is that it creates far greater merit than worlds equaling

the number of sand grains of the river Ganga—the huge, long river in India, very long, so you can understand how many sand grains there are—that many worlds, if all the sentient beings living in that many worlds build stupas—I’m not sure if it is Mount Meru or stupas—anyway built them not with bricks but with jewels, with seven different types of jewel—diamonds, gold and so on—like that all those sentient beings build stupas with seven types of jewel and covered all those world. How many worlds? Equaling the number of the sand grains of the river Ganga, all these worlds are entirely covered with stupas. You build one stupa, it is direct, unbelievable purification, just building one stupa. The merits you collect in this life are like the sky; it directs your life toward enlightenment if you build a stupa. So therefore, now, here, that many worlds covered with stupas with seven types of jewel create so much merit, and also making offerings every day to stupa the stupas make so much merit. But, writing the *Prajnaparamita*, not with the gold, but just with black ink, even just ordinary ink, this collects far greater merit than building that many stupas and making offering to them.

When I saw this benefit said by Buddha, that was the main inspiration to build this statue of the Buddha of Loving Kindness, to generate to cause for loving kindness in the world. It needs a lot of merit for that big project, so hopefully by doing these things now that might help the success of this project. The idea is it is possible to do it with different jewels. In Mongolia and Tibet, that has happened. One text, for each line you write with different precious jewels—pearls, silver, and I think different stones crushed and then used as ink to write each line to collect a lot of merit and for purification.

[Tibetan, oral transmission]

Pay attention to every single word without the mind being distracted. Then, think, “With each word that I listen to, may I able to actualize the meaning of that immediately in my mind. With each word that I listen to, may I be able to benefit all the sentient beings. When I explain, they immediately are able to actualize emptiness in their mind and then liberate from all sufferings and bring them to enlightenment.” So dedicate each word and then listen to the effect that way.

If you generate a strong wish like that, it will happen because everything is by the power of the mind. Hell is by the power of the negative mind; enlightenment is by the power of wisdom, by the power of the positive mind. Even having this human body is by the power of the virtuous thought, the positive mind. It’s the same with all enjoyment, such as being able to see the appearance of this temple, being able to see the statues, the holy objects—this is also from the power of the virtuous thought.

[Tibetan, oral transmission]

It says here that the Buddha told the disciple Rabjur (Subudi), if a man or woman who in the morning sacrifices their life, makes charity of their life, how many times in the morning you sacrifice your body, you give your body to other sentient beings equaling the number of the sand grains of the River Ganga. Then at noon, twelve o’clock, you sacrifice, you make charity of your body that many number, equaling the number of sand grains of the River Ganga. In the afternoon you make charity of your body to others equaling the number of the sand grains of the River Ganga. You do that for so many eons like that—not just for one day, but for so many eons, ten million eons, how many times, maybe one hundred billion. I have forgotten the English name. Quite a few times I counted, but I have forgotten. So ten hundred million is one *terbum* then ten *terbum* is *terbum chenpo* a “great *terbum*” which means ten great *terbum* is a hundred billion. So a hundred billion. I must remember that. One hundred billion, ten million how many times *chewa* one hundred billion, but that doesn’t stop there: a hundred, hundred billion, how

many times a hundred thousand, a hundred billion like that—a hundred thousand times that many eons, you make your charity of your body to others, then the merit is so much less than somebody who hears the Diamond Cutter Sutra teachings and after hearing doesn't give them up. Just mentally not giving up these teachings, having faith in this teaching, the merit after hearing and not giving up this teaching is an inconceivably numberless times greater than that many eons of every day making charity of your body in the morning, and again in the afternoon equaling the number of grains of the sands of the River Ganga.

So, you see externally it's unbelievable. If you do that even for one day, how much merit you can collect is unbelievable. Even if you make charity of even one body in the morning and one body in the afternoon, it's unbelievable. To even sacrifice one body, as charity to sentient beings, even one is unbelievable. But then if you compare the merit to this, just having heard the teachings of Diamond Cutter Sutra and then having faith in that, not giving up this merit numberless times far greater.

[Tibetan]

Then, it says there is no question if somebody writes it. You can write this, but also you can print it. [Rinpoche confers, unclear] You can print it. One thing is, you can write it but you also can print it, and if you print it you finish it very fast! [GL] When you can write it by hand, of course, you have to bear more hardships so there is more purification, but I think also you can print it and printing creates unbelievable merit. Here, it says there is no question if somebody writes it.

And it says there is no question even keeping the text, if you keep this text at home with yourself and you read it and try to understand meaning and reveal to others. So, you can do this when you want to create a lot of merit, when it is most important for realization, for the success of a retreat or even business. If you have business difficulties, if it is not working, if you are unable to find a job, if things are not working out, not progressing well, you need a lot of merit. This shows you don't have enough merit to be successful. Even for this life's happiness, or for this life's work, because of a shortage of merit, you are unable to success even for the work of this life. My advice is of course to read this text. It is unbelievable purification and, as I just mentioned now, it creates unbelievable merit; it is such an easy way to collect extensive merit. This is the atomic bomb to destroy the root of samsara, ignorance—when you read these teachings, when you listen to them, when you meditate on them.

You can even print making many, many copies of this and give them to other people or you can keep them at home at all time. You can give them to other people; you can put them in statues. If you make the text very small, but readable, you can put them in small statutes. There are many ways you can use them. You can carry them as a protection in the car or in an airplane, so they can help stop accidents. It becomes such powerful protection that even planes can't crash. Many Chinese carry the Heart Sutra, printed very small, in the car or even carry it on their body because of the very high printing techniques developed. You can make it very small to put in statues. Normally we fill up statues with mantras so there are many ways you can use it. So, to print a lot collects unbelievable merit and more merit means your life become easier; more merit means your wishes are met. Whatever you wish comes easily. There are no hardships. You think of something and it happens effortlessly, it comes.

#### THE PURPOSE OF FILLING STATUES

The purpose of filling statues. Chinese Mahayana and Theravadin Buddhists don't have a tradition of filling statues with all those precious, precious mantras but it is there in the Mahayana, the Secret Mantra, the Vajrayana which came from India—from the Buddha—and

went to Tibet. It was preserved in Tibetan Buddhism, which was also practiced in Nepal. Even now it is very common for Nepalese to do practices like Vajrayogini. This whole valley is an incredible holy place. In the view of the Western tourist, it may seem dirty and dusty, but in reality it is an unbelievable holy place. Everywhere there are holy places; everywhere there are different yogis' or deities' holy places. The Buddha came. There is one high mountain where Buddha gave [inaudible] and then Buddha Kashyapa, the past Buddha came. Anyway, there are many, many holy places, so it is an extremely blessed place, especially in Kathmandu and also many parts of Nepal.

I'm lost! My talk went on and on and I'm lost again. [RL] So, anyway, it doesn't matter. That's right.

In the Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism, the Vajrayana, secret Mantrayana or secret mantra vehicle, is not something made up by Tibetan lamas. People who haven't done really good research, who didn't really study well or maybe only learned some meditation or some rituals or something, they think this is something made by Tibetan lamas and they call it Lamaism. Lamaism is wrong. That's wrong. That gives it a negative interpretation; it suggests that Tibetan Buddhism is just made up by lamas, that it didn't come from the Buddha. It implies that it didn't come from the Buddha. This is according to what I have heard. Recently a Nepalese man who is the head of a Theravadin organization came and I told him how some very early tourist books used the "Lamaism."

The sutra and tantra practiced by the Tibetans—and with which they achieved realizations on the path and achieved enlightenment—came from the Buddha, from India, and the great pandit yogis who wrote commentaries on the basis of the Buddha's teaching. Everything refers back to the Buddha's teaching, the root, and the pandits and yogis who achieved realizations, who experimented. Everything refers back to them. We don't practice anything contradictory to these teachings, anything that doesn't lead to liberation and enlightenment. We only practice whatever is harmonious with the Buddha's teachings, the root and commentaries by pandit yogis. Then after on the basis of that, the Tibetan lamas wrote commentaries.

In the East it is very important before a meditation practice that you show references, you quote the Buddha to show whether this is something taught by Buddha or not and whether the quotation refer to the quotations in the Indian pandit yogis' commentaries. Then the lama explains the meditation, on the basis of that. That is how relying on source, that is how you can trust, that is how it is valid, otherwise you never know where it will lead to, instead of leading to liberation or enlightenment it will lead somewhere else.

But in the West it is totally different. For people's minds in the West pure references are not important. In the West, immediately if you hear something that suits your mind, that makes you immediately happy, like music, then you stay. If it doesn't make you happy, then immediately you leave. In the West it is like that. There is no checking whether it is pure or not, whether you can trust it or not, whether it is a valid teaching or not. People don't see that as important. The main thing is *right now*, immediately, if it suits your mind or not, whether it makes you happy or not. It is like, when you first taste some food, then if it tastes good then you have it. [RL] But if the very first taste isn't good, you reject it. It's like that with teaching. You don't analyze, you don't check the teaching, and because of that there is danger, great risk, your whole life can be easily misled. There is great danger because there is no checking involved. It is only what makes you happy or not. As well as quality of teacher, all those things.

Then what I am saying? The Vajrayana within Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism came from India,

from the buddhas, so there is a tradition that you not supposed to leave the statue empty. You should fill it with mantras and should fill the throne with precious things, as you would with a wealth vase. That's the same as making a wealth vase for success and harmony. Then, from the top of the throne up to the head different mantra goes. The throne is mainly for wealth, to increase wealth so that you can practice Dharma by receiving all the needs for your practice as well as to benefit others.

There are different mantras. Why you make a lot of expense printing the mantras and those different teachings and filling the statue, is because, for example, if you print the long life Buddha Amitayus text, which has mantras repeated again and again and followed by the benefits of the mantra, this text is unbelievable merit. You collect incredible merit by just printing or writing this text. Like that, there are many other mantras that you collect unbelievable merits if you print them. So, this is another *easy* way to purify the negative karma and collect extensive merit.

It did mention in the text that if you leave the statue empty then the obstacles arise due to that, not because the Buddha has made those obstacles, but dependently arising obstacles can happen. The main reason why we fill statues with different mantras, however, is to collect merit. Then, when you do prostrations to the statue there are all these holy objects inside, so you collect unbelievable merit. When you make offerings, when you circumambulate it, it's not just the statue, there are so many holy objects inside, so when you circumambulate you circumambulate all these. The sentient beings collect so much more merit; it becomes unbelievable powerful purification when they circumambulate it.

For example, there is one mantra that you write on the life-tree that goes inside the statues and stupas called the "Secret Dharmakaya Relic." If you have that mantra inside the statue or stupa then anybody who circumambulates it just once, purifies the karma that causes you to reincarnate in all the eight hot hells. There are eight major hot hells, so your negative karma which causes you to reincarnate and experience all the eight hot hells get completely purified by going just around it one time. This is due to the power of that mantra.

There is another mantra, the Stainless Beam Deity's mantra. If you have that mantra inside, then when you offer a bell to the stupa, then any birds or dogs, or any people in that area who hear the sound of the bell that is offered to the stupa, all their negative karma is completely purified. Even the five uninterrupted negativities—killing your father or mother or an arhat, causing blood to flow from a buddha and causing disunity among the Sangha— get completely purified. This is true of even the birds and animals in the area, whoever hears the sound of the bell offered to a stupa which contains this mantra.

There are many powerful mantras that are of such unbelievable benefit for sentient beings who see, who circumambulate, who touch, make offering to the holy objects they are in. They are incredible benefit to sentient beings, to their minds, bringing them to enlightenment. The holy objects, the stupas and statues, these things have the power to liberate sentient beings, without words, without the need to talk, to explain the Dharma, in silence. By actualizing these holy objects in silence, without any talk, you liberate so many sentient beings by purifying their negative karma, saving so many sentient beings from the lower realms every day. Then you liberate them from samsara by actualizing the path, and you bring them to enlightenment. So, every day you are able to benefit so many sentient beings through these holy objects, without words. Even if they come as a tourist, as an animal, and they touch stupa or go around it, whoever receives the shadow of the stupa on their body gets purified.

#### THE BENEFITS OF PRINTING THE *DIAMOND CUTTER SUTRA*

So, I was talking about even printing this. If, because of a shortage of merit you have a lot of difficulties in your life, even printing this text helps make your life easier by collecting a lot of merit. So, this is an essential method.

[Tibetan chanting]

Wherever this *Diamond Cutter Sutra* text is in your house, all the devas, the suras, come to worship. Your place, your house becomes a holy place for those beings to worship; it becomes a holy place where those other beings come to prostrate, to circumambulate, it becomes like a stupa, due to the power the blessing of this text.

[Tibetan chanting]

It says that son or daughter, anybody, who reads even one verse collects a hundred times more merit than how many Mount Meru—the largest mountain—there is in the three great, thousand great universes. This universe, this one thousand universes you count as one, then you make another thousand of those thousand universes. Then the second thousand, with that you make one thousand, so then three lots of thousands.<sup>1</sup> So, how many Mount Meru there are in a three great thousand great universes, that many piles of seven types of jewels—gold, silver and so forth—then you make offerings to the buddhas—that amount of merit; if you memorize just one verse, which is four lines, from this *Prajnaparamita* text and then reveal it to others, the merit is a hundred times more than you collect from the previous one, making that many offerings.

[Tibetan chanting]

#### THE ORAL TRANSMISSION OF THE *DIAMOND CUTTER SUTRA*

This is the mantra of the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*.

I don't remember a hundred percent, but I have received the oral transmission of the *Diamond Cutter Sutra* from Geshe Sengye Rinpoche, a Mongolian Lama Lharampa Geshe from Tibet. He was the abbot of the Sera Monastery in Tibet, Sera Me and Je. Usually, they are separate but after Mao Zedong died there was some freedom given to have a monastery, to have some monks, not like the total freedom of before, but still to have some monks and to do some activity. At that time, because there were so many monks, under threat of danger to their life, they were forced to kill animals, goats. They were forced to do many things to do. So all the monks have great respect for the Mongolian Geshe Sengye. He became the abbot for a number of years in Tibet. He came twice to Dharamsala and here. I took teachings for about two months at Sera Je College on the deity the Most Secret Hayagriva, all the different practice of teachings, and took three volumes by Khalka. Khalka is one lama of Mongolia who is like the Dalai Lama for them. There were three volumes, then two volumes by Fifth Dalai Lama. I received the initiation here a few times and in Dharamsala, so at Tushita I received the oral transmission of this from Geshe Sengye Rinpoche.

I am not a hundred percent sure whether I have lineage for the mantra or not, but anyway I'll just read for positive imprints. By reciting this mantra, it is the same as if you have recited the mantra 90,000 times.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a "trichilicosm" or "three great, thousand great world systems," so called because a thousand world systems makes a great world system and an thousand of those makes a second-order thousand-fold world system, and a thousand of those makes a third-order thousand-fold world system or three great thousand great universes.

[Rinpoche chants the mantra]

There was a businessman from Indonesia who totally lost his business; he was in a very heavy state. I met him at the airport when I was going to Singapore the previous time. So, I checked and it came out very good to recite this to pick up his business, to develop it. One way is you read the whole Prajnaparamita text but another way you can recite the mantra of those texts. Like here, there is mantra of *Diamond Cutter Sutra*. You can recite it and it is unbelievable merit, unbelievable purification. You need to purify your negative karma even for success in business, even for the success of this life. Whatever, whenever you have difficulties—even for that you need to purify negative karma. That is the best solution—the only way you can have success—is to collect merit like that.

If you don't have merit, then no matter how smart you are, no matter how much you have studied economics, it doesn't work. No matter how much you try, it doesn't work. Nothing will happen, no matter how high the degree you have from university, it doesn't work. You have to have merit. So, therefore you need this for the success of any project.

So, I gave him the mantra. There is mantra of all the Prajnaparamita teachings. There is quite a good mantra to recite, so I gave it to him to recite, and it was up to him whether he accepted it or not. I just gave it to him. I think he actually did it, he actually recited the mantra and his business picked up. I heard his business improved. You need purification and you need quite a lot of merit, and reciting this text, this mantra does that.

[Tibetan transmission]

So, this oral transmission of the mantra of the dependent arising.

I did the oral transmission of the Vajrasattva mantra also last night. I was supposed to give the initiation last night. I think I was supposed to do many things last night [GL, RL] including enlightenment. [GL, RL] Billions of things, anyway. Even though it didn't happen, I'm still quite happy. I was able to give refuge precepts and also talk on the very important subject for the foundation, otherwise it is not stable.

Those who intend to take Vajrasattva initiation and want to do the retreat can still do it, even though I didn't give the initiation. I did the *lung* which you need, so those who intend to retreat are most welcome, extremely, most welcome, those who plan to retreat.

Purification is one thing we should do immediately. The most important thing is purification. If you die today you need to purify negative karma. That is the immediate solution, a Vajrasattva retreat. At one time, you do a big number of mantras and purify so much—all the past negative karma. That's very important, then you can continue every day with some practice.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF PUTTING EFFORT INTO DHARMA PRACTICE

Coming here for this one-month meditation course is good. I am not sure whether you will get another chance like this. You can't say in your life, in our life, whether there will be another chance like this. You can't really say, so definitely this one now is so good, and therefore it is good to follow all the programs; it is good to follow the schedule, to do everything, try to be here for all the program, the meditation and talks.

People put a lot of effort into climbing Mount Everest, which is nothing. They spend millions of

dollars to climb Mount Everest just to get a reputation, just to get some dry name. They put so many millions of dollars into the project, many hundreds of thousands of dollars, which is totally meaningless. People spend so much money and effort and so many years, their whole life they put effort into things which are totally meaningless, things which only create negative karma because the motivation is just attachment. It is nothing; they totally waste all their money, they totally waste all their life. They put so much effort for so many years into nothing.

There are so many people in the world like that, human beings who have received a precious human body but are totally wasting it by doing meaningless actions. So, it is very important here, following the path to enlightenment. Even if you die for it, even if you die doing prostrations to the Buddha, you are still practicing Dharma, so if you die it is worthwhile. So far, we have died countless times, died by creating negative karma for meaningless work. We died for meaningless work so many times. If we die by practicing Dharma, by doing things like nyung-nās, the two-day intensive retreat of the Compassion Buddhas' retreat, it is worthwhile. The retreat is very powerful purification; we collect unbelievable merit. Until we reach the level of path where we overcome death, where we never experience death again, until then we have to die anyway, so even if we die by doing that practice, we die by practicing Dharma, we die for sentient beings rather dying for ourselves. We die to spread Dharma, to liberate sentient beings, to bring them to enlightenment. If through practicing Dharma we die, that is extremely worthwhile, because anyway we have to die. If we die bearing hardships to meditate on lam-rim, that is an extremely worthwhile way to die. Even if it causes danger to our life it is very worthwhile.

Therefore, it is very important to try hard for this one month. It doesn't matter whether you believe it or not, just learn it. You have to learn it. If you learn, if you have the understanding, then you can analyze. That's my point. Therefore you should listen to teachings. Last night, night before I was talking about karma, I think there are more men, less women in the dining room, there are more men there, talking. When I went there after teaching I saw more men, I didn't see many women there. I think the teaching on karma is very important, it changes the mind, it changes the action.

Even with this one chance you have here, if you waste your life hanging around outside, instead of attending the teachings, if you do that then when are you going to change your life? When are you going to change your mind, when are you going to have real spiritual progress, when are you going to develop your mind on the path to enlightenment?

At the moment we don't know how precious it is. We don't know it takes time to realize, to discover. It needs a lot of merit, so much merit. Here there is a lot of logic. Somebody who knows about reincarnation, there is so much logical proof, but for some people still that alone is not enough. From that person's side, they need to purify the mind, until you don't purify the mind it's like a mirror covered by dust, like dirt on the cloth, like a beautiful painting on the wall covered by so much dust that you can't see it. You need clean it. No matter how sharp the logic is to prove things, for some people that is not enough. From that person's side, they need to purify the defilements. If there is no purification, no matter how sharp the logic is, it won't affect that person's mind. So, you need to practice purification. *Then* you can get inside things to make the real discoveries, then things can happen. You can see beyond, otherwise you will be blocked, like wearing dark glasses that you can't see out of. [RL] So, anyway, it's like this.

Here is some general advice for life. After doing the course, those of you who want to continue meditation in everyday life, usually the question is what to do, now you are going back to the West. My advice is that it is extremely important to continue. The main practice is to study and meditate on the lam-rim—that is the main goal of the life. Generally, in the text, after you have

found a spiritual master, a guru, the first step is to correctly devote yourself to the virtuous friend with thought and actions. On the basis of that, then you study and meditate on the lam-rim, you practice the lam-rim until you have realizations of the lam-rim, the three principal aspects of the path, and then after that, the two stages [of Vajrayana]. That is the main goal of the life. It is the best way, the deepest, most profound way to serve other sentient beings.

Even though there are many other ways to do social service, giving food and clothing so forth, this and that, but the deepest one is to train yourself in the path, so that you can liberate others from the suffering of samsara and bring them to enlightenment. Based on the practice of the good heart, you determine not to harm other sentient beings, and on top of that to benefit them. On the basis of that, then you study and meditate, especially the lam-rim. To make your realization successful—the listening, reflecting, and meditating—to have a realization of the lam-rim, to be able to complete that depends on collecting much merit and purifying the obstacles and receiving blessings of the Guru in your own heart. That depends on the practice of guru devotion, guru yoga. So, therefore you need these other practices.

This is not possible by just reading texts and just meditating on what you can do all those others, because for the seed to grow and produce a plant and food, you need water, soil—you need many things. This is exactly the same. To develop the realization in the mind up to enlightenment you need all these conditions, to receive blessings, like water, the blessing of the Guru in heart by doing guru yoga, guru devotion practices, then those practices of purification and practices of collecting merit. You need those things. From refuge, bodhicitta, the six preparatory practices, including the seven-limb prayer, also mandala offerings, requesting, all those things.

#### ADVICE FOR DAILY PRACTICE

I have written a book for daily meditation, using Guru Shakyamuni Buddha practice. It is simple, but it explains the meaning of each practice, why we do it, so it doesn't appear as ritual. What people think of rituals, without knowing what it is for and without knowing how to practice and without knowing why, so this is some explanation for somebody who wants to do meditation every day, a beginner, and also having done a course, such as a weekend course.

Karen has also made a book. Karen, has led the meditation courses here for so many years; she hasn't traveled much outside to give teachings like some other nuns but she has stayed here for so many years. She has collected many, many experiences and she herself has done the practice. So she made a book. I think everybody probably knows it. It is extremely good on actually how to meditate on the lam-rim. It is quite short but yet very effective. It is very good for both beginners and also those who have heard the lam-rim teachings before and are doing everyday meditation. So, that's very good. This book has daily meditations and the preliminary practices that you need.

If possible, the first thing in the morning you should do when you wake up is think of emptiness. There are different verses, different quotations like that. Usually in the tantra practice, you go to bed by meditating on emptiness, and if possible with a clear light meditation, but also when you wake up, you arise up out of emptiness. This is generally same for all tantra practice, whether you practice lower tantra or higher tantra same. So, the first thing you think of is emptiness. There are verses recited by dakinis to you that persuades you to wake up. They are persuading you to practice lam-rim, free from samsara, to achieve enlightenment, then by practicing Vajrayana to achieve full enlightenment. Practitioners of tantra, those of you who practice Vajrayana, what you are supposed to do in daily life is according to the commentary.

The first thing, you can use the different quotations, different verses—there are very effective quotations from different teachings. One day you can do the meditation on dependent arising, meditating on emptiness by using the logic how everything is dependent arising. Because there are aggregates therefore the I exists, merely imputed by the mind. When you think of that then you know that there is no I on the aggregates, that the aggregates are not I, it is clear. Then like that, starting from the aggregates, as I mentioned, down to the particles, as well as the split seconds of consciousness, everything like that is mere name. Nothing has the slightest inherent existence from its own side. Everything is totally empty. Starting with the I, then the aggregates, each of the aggregates, and so meditate in dependent arising in that way. You can do that, depending on your time.

Then think, “For the rest of day, I am going to practice mindfulness in that way, on form, sound, smell, taste, and so forth.” When you think of dependent arising, everything you see, hear, smell and so forth is merely labeled by the mind because of the base, so, it is not there. That is not the label and it is not there. In the same way, all the rest of the phenomena—whatever you see, hear, everything—is just like that. So everything is merely labeled by mind. In that way, practice mindfulness. When you think of that, in your heart you get the idea that things are empty, not like this, not something solid appearing from there, everything is empty. Try to get the idea in your heart that everything is empty. Then, think it is merely labeled by mind, it is not like this—how it appears and how it is empty is totally the opposite. So, mountains, things—everything—when you look outside, everything is empty.

Then, the next day you can do similar to that, but more meditating on the form, sound, smell—how they are subtle dependent arising, merely labeled by mind. Then for the rest of the day you also be mindfulness, as much as you can.

Then, the next day, in the morning you can begin a mindfulness practice on hallucination, looking at that which is a hallucination. When you think of the I, the I appears as a real one from there. This is up to your mind, this merely imputed I, then when it appears back, it appears back as not merely labeled by mind, so this is a projection from the negative imprint from ignorance. It is a total hallucination.

So, on the third day, your practice of mindfulness is how all this is a hallucination. When you think of all this as a hallucination, with this mindfulness, keep the mind on this a little while, as much as you can, looking at that which is a hallucination. When you think of that, the understanding that comes into the mind is “empty,” the mind is empty, the I is empty, the aggregates are empty, the body is empty, everything is empty. That feeling, that understanding should come—you know they are hallucinations.

Then, the next day you do more on the external form, sound, smell, looking at them, then meditate a little bit on that, as hallucinations, appearing that way, after your mind has merely imputed. Stay for the rest of the day on that as much as you can, practicing like that. In the morning you begin and continue like that for the rest of the day. When you meet a friend, while you are talking to her, you meditate like that; when you are talking to an enemy, when you meet an enemy, you practice mindfulness like this. When you go shopping, when you go to market you meditate like that. When you go shopping in a department store, in a supermarket, you meditate like that. When you leave your house, when you go in your car, you meditate like that. When you enter a shop, when you are going up the escalator, you think like that. When you see so many bright objects in the shop—billions of things, make-up things, cosmetics—meditate on this. Walk around meditating this, looking at your false view of hallucination, by meditating, practicing mindfulness, looking at the hallucinations of yourself, of people, of the shop and all

these things, like that. This is a really fantastic meditation. It doesn't have to be only sitting on a cushion, sitting like this, you can do a very effective meditation in the market or when you go sightseeing.

For example, since you are in Nepal, when you go to India, in the train stations, there are people fighting, quarrelling, all things happening on the train. All this is like a dream. Meditate on mindfulness, looking at the hallucination as a hallucination, projected from your imprint on the merely labeled phenomenon.

It is good, while you are eating food, to practice mindfulness on all this as a hallucination of the real I, the real action, the real eating real food—real in the sense of appearing from its own side. By analyzing, you see it's not there, it exists nowhere. The eater, the action of eating and the food exist, but what appears as something real from its own side you cannot find anywhere. This other one can be found, not on the base, but it exists, it can be found—but this *real* eater, this *real* I, this *real* action of eating, this *real* food that appears to exist from there, this *real* TV appearing from there—if you analyze, in reality it cannot be found anywhere, so it is empty, it doesn't exist. This is how to practice mindfulness while eating.

It is the same while you are doing a job, you can also practice mindfulness on this like that, that everything is a hallucination. While you are talking to people, clients, all this that appears real, from its own side, is totally nonexistent from its own side. Practice the mindfulness that they are all hallucinations. Whether you are in hospital, whether you are in school, in a factory, do this as much as possible.

When you do this it helps so much to stop ignorant thoughts arising. When you think like this, it slowly cuts down and makes your life more stable, more peaceful, happier, more contented. It brings so much benefit, *so much benefit*. It doesn't also allow strong ego to arise because everything you look at is empty, so the strong selfish mind, full of pride or these things, doesn't happen.

You can even practice mindfulness like this with your family. That you have a family is the same as a dream—you are seeing the whole family in a dream. Like that, it's exactly the same. You are not sleeping but these things are appearing to you as inherently existent, like in a dream [whereas they are]not there. In a dream, everything appears real—friends, having babies, having cars, having all this is something real—but in fact it is not there, it is not true. Seeing this is very good; it helps you very much in your life to deal with painful minds like attachment and anger. It helps everything. So, you see, this is a very good, a fantastic, a really powerful meditation.

If you can do that, it is so enjoyable. Constantly, you are watching your own TV, the TV of your mind, watching your own hallucination. It's very, very interesting and even if other people criticize you, if you are meditating, in state of meditation, if there is anger it doesn't affect you. If people criticize you, if they say bad things about you, of even if somebody praises you so much, your mind has stability. There are no not ups and down, getting so excited and then getting so depressed. Your mind remains so peaceful, whether somebody criticizes you or praises you. In this way, this is how to integrate the lam-rim meditations with life, especially emptiness, how to integrate with your working life is like that.

Then, the next one. Now, I'll make it short. [GL] The third one, what the numberless buddhas see is this real I that appears from there is totally nonexistence. The numberless buddhas, the higher bodhisattvas see it is totally nonexistent. *I* believe it is there, but the numberless buddhas, the omniscient ones, the numberless bodhisattvas see this is totally nonexistent. *I* believe these aggregates, in my view, are real, appearing from there, but all the numberless buddhas and

bodhisattvas see they are totally nonexistent. This is what you can meditate on. Then, the next day you can do the same with external phenomena.

Whatever problem happens to you—having cancer, any disaster that happens to you—you can think this way. It is like a dream. When you encounter some problems, it becomes like a dream, you encounter the problems in the dream. When you do this constantly in everyday life, what is happening is that you are destroying the root of samsara, your enemy, the root of samsara. That is the main purpose, to cut the root of your suffering, liberating yourself from samsara. When you do this mindfulness meditation, continuously, in everyday life, you are making preparations for yourself to liberate other sentient beings. That is the purpose.

Then, how to live daily life, how to integrate daily life with bodhicitta. I have explained this already before. One day, you can do exchanging oneself for others, one day you can do the sevenfold technique of Mahayana cause and effect. After a short meditation on emptiness, depending on your time, you can meditate on bodhicitta like that. You meditate on emptiness, then you plan how you are going to practice today, then some bodhicitta, and you chant, OM MANI PADME HUM and then you plan this how you are going to live your life from now on. Practicing like that you are using the two legs to go to enlightenment.

Then, you must study *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*. That is most elaborate one now. You do the short meditation like Guru Yoga, like the Buddha Shakyamuni Buddha or you do Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga, one of the guru yogas that has preliminary practices. Then, if you are not familiar with the lam-rim teachings, with something like *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand* read a little bit today relating to your life and that becomes a meditation. Anytime you relate it to yourself it becomes a meditation. Then, whatever is not finished, you can do tomorrow, whatever is not finished then day after tomorrow. Generally it is like that—after you have finished the direct meditation, you do the lam-rim prayer.

Between the bodhicitta attitude to life and before you begin the actual practice, it is very good to do prostrations by reciting the names of the Thirty-five Buddhas. If you haven't memorized them, you can make a tape and as you play it, you stand, meditating at the same time, and do the prostration, because reciting and prostrating collects unbelievable skies of merits. Reciting each Buddha's name purifies many, many eons of different types of negative karma. Therefore, if you don't recite, you lose an unbelievable opportunity to purify. It's very important you yourself recite; it is not enough to have somebody else recite, you should recite verbally.

If possible, keep on reciting, "I go for refuge to Guru" until you put your head on the ground then you change to the next, "I go for refuge to Dharma," and like that. Do the prostrations like that until you finish the last name of the Buddha, then you come back again and do another round, and when you have finished, you come back again and do another one, so you end up doing about a hundred and fifteen prostrations. You don't need to count the prostrations themselves. Combined, the total comes to hundred and fifteen prostrations.

If can do that sort of daily practice each day it is unbelievable, it is excellent. I am not saying everybody should do this, but if you can, if you able to do it at least sometimes, it is extremely good for realizations. That's the main thing. Then, by the way, it takes care of a good rebirth and whatever success is needed in this life.

If possible, read a lam-rim text like this two or three times. It makes everything very clear, it brings your feeling of the lam-rim very close, and that is very good. Along with that you can do a daily practice of guru devotion for fifteen minutes or twenty minutes or half an hour or

whatever. You can do something on guru devotion every day until you have realizations, until you see all the buddhas are guru, and every guru is all the buddhas, until you have a very stable realization that lasts long time, not just few days or a few hours, but lasts a long time and is very stable.

No matter how many years it takes, you should continue on the basis of that the first part of the lam-rim, the gradual path of the lower capable being, from perfect human rebirth up to karma, but mostly on impermanence and death because when you have that realization it helps to have good realization of all others. That is the key, that is the most important among those. That is quick way to have realizations of first lam-rim path. Here, you have to go step by step.

Then, if you can on, you can also meditate on emptiness. Then, on top of that, it is good to do some meditation on *shamatha*, calm abiding. If you able to make time for it, try to do it for six months or one year. Rene meditated in this way, so he can discuss this with you, he can share his experiences. He tried for some time, and so has the experience how to do it.

On top of that, there is tantra, the generation stage. If you are practicing tantra, then put your main effort in the lam-rim, because you have to have realizations of the three principal aspects of the paths and guru devotion as a base. You first put your main effort into the lam-rim then as a second effort, tantra. Otherwise, if you make your main effort tantra and no lam-rim, then you cannot achieve complete tantra realizations. This is what makes tantra very tasty, very rich. The lam-rim is like the cream in the ice cream. Anyway, that's the tantra path to achieve enlightenment quickly so you can liberate bring sentient beings quickly.

Then, another very important thing to make your life so meaningful is the eight Mahayana precepts. You can take these on the special days in each month—the fifteen and eighth and thirtieth of the Tibetan calendar. There are many calendars you can use, but you collect more merit on those days, especially the day of the Buddha, or when there is a sun or moon eclipse. Then also, at any other times, whenever you think you can do it , good to take the eight Mahayana precepts at your own house, in front of the altar, or even if you don't have an altar, by visualizing you can take them. This is for one day, so it makes it very easy. Of course, if you have lay vows for life, that is good. Here I am talking about how to practice in order to make life most beneficial.

The very basic thing is a kind heart. The most important, very basic thing, is to live your life with a kind heart. Whether you are able to do all those practices or not, whether you are able to meditate on the lam-rim every day or not, even though you can't do that, to live your life with a kind heart, and as much as possible to stop giving harm to others and to benefit others as much as possible—that is the very basic practice of Dharma. I think that is it.

Then, each year, try to do some retreat, either preliminary with the lam-rim or a deity retreat with the lam-rim. Do some retreat each year.

[Tibetan chanting]

So, thank you very much. [RL, GL] So, anyway, that is the advice, even if I don't see you.