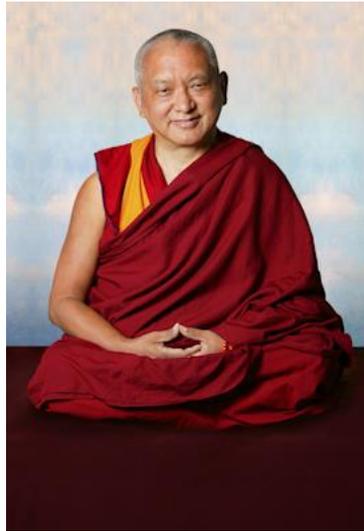


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Lecture One: Refuge and Bodhicitta

7 December 1987

I'm happy to meet all of you and I would like to thank you first for coming here to study the teaching of the Buddha. By opening your mind, by opening your heart to the teachings, by analyzing, practicing, you have a great opportunity to experience and develop not only temporary happiness, but also to achieve ultimate happiness, ultimate peace of mind. So therefore, I have great rejoicefulness and I think all of you are highly fortunate. The more we study the teachings of Buddha, the more and more we realize how we are fortunate. The more you study, the more you understand, the more you practice—the real experience comes from practice, but in order to practice you need to study.

The real study is not just words, not just collecting intellect, like establishing a library in the mind, not just collecting intellect but meditating. We need to put together the listening, reflecting, and meditation practice. This is the only way that we can have the experience and complete the experience of the path to peerless happiness and the fully awakened mind. Before the discourse, in order to pacify the outer obstacles, which arise from the inner obstacles, and the inner obstacles, the disturbing thoughts, and even the subtle obstacles, the mental stains—all the obstacles that interfere with the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment within one's heart—we recite the *Essence of Wisdom*, the essential method, the most powerful purification, the best protection, the inner and outer harm. So, either we can recite it together—the important thing is to meditate on the meaning of the *Essence of Wisdom*, just even the sound, OK?

[Rinpoche recites the *Heart Sutra* in English, and the Lion-face Dakini prayer]

Before the discourse, just a very brief preliminary—refuge, bodhicitta—so do the most simple visualization. One can visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, then offering, accumulating merit, and doing the practice of purification with the seven-limb practice, then the short mandala, then after that the requesting prayer to the lineage lamas, then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's mantra, then the mandala to receive teachings.

[Refuge, seven-limb prayer, short mandala]

For those who are familiar, those who can do it, nectar rays emit from the merit field, seeing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha as the embodiment of all gurus, and the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The nectar beams are emitted, and they purify all the obscurations, particularly the self-cherishing thought and the ignorance grasping at true existence.

So ordinary conception, appearance, and all the obscurations within one's own mind are purified, and all the obscurations in the minds of others are completely purified. Then as a replica absorbs into oneself, you generate the whole path to enlightenment, the method and wisdom from sutra, the method and wisdom from tantra—in your mind and in the minds of all other sentient beings.

[Requesting prayer to lineage lamas]

Now Guru Shakyamuni Buddha descends above one's own crown, and then visualize the mantra at the heart with nectars being emitted, purifying oneself and all other sentient beings.

[*Praise to Shakyamuni Buddha*, then mantra]

Now Guru Shakyamuni Buddha melts into light and absorbs into one's own heart, blessing one's own mind.

[Long mandala offering and *Request to Turn the Dharma Wheel*]

By actualizing the Dharma, the actual refuge, the Dharma that actually frees oneself from all sufferings and the cause of sufferings in order to actualize the actual refuge, Dharma, within one's own mind, and for oneself to become the Sangha, and then to become the Buddha, in order to free all beings from suffering and to lead them to peerless happiness, the fully enlightened state. It is impossible for this to happen without relying upon the cause of refuge, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—that which is possessed by the outer Buddha, the Sangha, and that which is possessed by other's minds, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

Absolute Buddha, the Buddha's omniscient mind, Buddha's holy mind, and also the absolute nature of the omniscient mind—then the relative Buddha or the truth of the all-obscuring mind, the embodiment of the absolute Buddha, that is the relative Buddha, sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya.

Then the true path, the wisdom directly perceiving shunyata and the cessation of suffering that is achieved by developing the true path—this is the absolute Dharma. The relative Dharma, or the Dharma that is the truth of the all-obscuring mind, that is the teachings of the three baskets, the essence of the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment.

The absolute Sangha, who has the absolute Dharma, the actual refuge, the absolute Dharma, the true path, the true cessation of suffering, those who have this absolute Dharma, they are the absolute Sangha—lay or ordained people. The relative Sangha means four ordinary—“ordinary” meaning those who do not have the actual refuge, the Dharma, achieved in their minds, so they are ordinary, they are not arya beings—so, four ordinary members who are living purely in full ordination can do the activities of granting the vows. This is the relative Sangha, from among the two truths, the relative or all-obscuring mind.

However, without having achieved the actual refuge of Dharma in one's mind, without oneself becoming Sangha, without becoming Buddha, without achieving the three resultant refuges, one cannot perfectly lead or guide sentient beings to liberation—which means the state free from the bondage of karma and disturbing thoughts, which binds oneself to samsara. For great liberation, one must achieve the resultant refuge, the actual refuge, the Dharma. For oneself to become Sangha and Buddha, it is only possible by relying upon the cause of refuge, which exists in the mind of others, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

So, “Until I achieve enlightenment, I go for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Due to the merits of my listening to the teachings and the other merits I have accumulated, may I achieve the fully enlightened state in order to benefit migratory beings.”

You should feel strong compassion as much as possible for all sentient beings equaling infinite space. On the basis of this then, as you think of migratory beings—“migratory” which means that the sentient beings are not free but are overwhelmed by karma and disturbing thoughts and continuously experience the three types of suffering of samsara. Even if they do not experience the suffering of suffering or the suffering of change, they experience pervasive

compounding suffering, being under the control of karma and delusions. They are migrating in samsara through the twelve links—*dro wa*, migratory beings, migrating in samsara continuously through the twelve links.

Remembering this meaning, feel great compassion in your heart. If you feel great compassion toward all other sentient beings, then there is a reason—the great compassion is not only wishing other sentient beings to be free from suffering and cause, “I want all the sentient beings to be free from all the sufferings and the cause.” This is great compassion. If you feel the root, great compassion, in your own heart, that gives the reason for bodhicitta, and causes you to generate bodhicitta. If there is compassion then there is a reason to achieve the fully enlightened state, this state that is completely pure, having ceased all the mental stains, all the obscurations, complete in all the realizations. This is called the fully enlightened state.

Having great compassion in the heart gives you the reason to achieve the fully enlightened state for the sake of all the migratory beings who are experiencing suffering.

Like this, you feel great compassion, that, “I want to cause all the sentient beings to be free from all suffering and its cause. At the moment I cannot guide even one sentient being to enlightenment, to liberation, and maybe not even lead them to the happiness of future lives. Correctly guiding even one sentient being to temporal happiness in dependence on oneself is not sure. The one who can perfectly guide sentient beings to temporary happiness, ultimate happiness, liberation, and the fully enlightened state is only the Omniscient One. Therefore, there is no other means at all, except myself achieving the omniscient mind, the fully enlightened state. After achieving the omniscient mind, I will be able to perfectly guide all sentient beings. Therefore, I must achieve the state of omniscient mind.”

This thought naturally arises day and night, without effort. Even if you see an enemy, somebody who is harming you, who is badly treating you, criticizing you, even if you see that person, you feel naturally to achieve enlightenment for that sentient being. Even toward your friend, or the stranger, you naturally feel this thought, which is the altruistic mind to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings, naturally arising day and night. Like the mother who has a beloved daughter or son in prison, who feels day and night, all the time, the thought to liberate her child from prison, to liberate the child from that problem. She feels it is so unbearable that her child is in prison, and because of that, has the thought to help, to liberate that child by herself, to release him or her from prison. So day and night, this is constantly arising, and then she attempts that.

As the mother feels when her most beloved child falls into the fireplace, into the hole where there is a fire—it is so unbearable, day and night, so unbearable, she can't stand it without doing something for her child, to liberate that child, to take that child out of the fire. Whatever activity she does, even if she talks, even if she eats, she constantly has this thought, without effort, spontaneously arising, to take her child out of the fire. So if you feel this, if you have such a thought to achieve enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings, then you have the realization of bodhicitta.

However, at least you should generate creative bodhicitta, the thought to achieve enlightenment in order to benefit all the migratory beings.

“I go for refuge to Buddha, Dharma, the Supreme Assembly, until I achieve enlightenment. Due to the merits of listening to the teachings, from your side, and from the Lama’s side, the merits of explaining, may I achieve enlightenment in order to benefit all migratory beings.”

[Refuge in Tibetan]

Please listen to the teaching, generating at least effortful bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all mother sentient beings who have been kind from beginningless time, those mother sentient beings who equal infinite space. Therefore, I’m going to listen to the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment.” Also by clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teaching according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

Within the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment, the main body is bodhicitta. Then, having bodhicitta, following the bodhisattva’s conduct, the six paramitas, which ripens one’s own mind, and practicing the four factors that ripen the minds of other sentient beings.

So, according to Paramitayana, by proceeding on the five paths, the ten bhumis, one achieves enlightenment. For one who wishes to achieve enlightenment in one lifetime by practicing tantra, Vajrayana, secret mantra—having actualized the common path, completed the preliminaries—the mind renouncing all of samsara, bodhicitta, and the wisdom of shunyata—then if one practices tantra it is possible to achieve enlightenment in one lifetime.

Tantra has four aspects. According to the lower tantras, Kriya and Charya tantra, one seeks to attain a long life of one thousand years and during that time one practices tantra, and becomes enlightened. Taking the great initiation from a qualified vajra master, one trains the mind in the path with signs and the path without signs—creativity or non-creativity.

Then, if one who wishes to achieve enlightenment within a few years, in a short, brief lifetime of this degenerate time, one takes the great Maha-anuttara Yoga Tantra initiation from a qualified vajra master. The four initiations of Maha-anuttara Yoga Tantra definitely plant the seeds of the four kayas in one’s own mental continuum. Receiving these four Maha-anuttara Yoga Tantra initiations from a qualified vajra master, the mind is ripened. It allows one to practice the path, the two stages—the generation stage and the completion stage.

Again, these practices are done with bodhicitta—the common, general path of bodhicitta. One can train the mind in the generation stage and the completion stage, and then one is able to achieve the unification of no-more-learning, the fully enlightened state in a short life of degenerate time.

“I want to make my life meaningful. I want to benefit other sentient beings. How should I benefit other sentient beings?” These questions are common. The happiness that other sentient beings want is only a question of—for those who don’t talk about the state of omniscient mind, the fully enlightened state, having ceased all the stains, all the obscurations, and having all the realizations, peerless happiness, it is only a question that do not know that such things exist. The reason sentient beings don’t talk about the path to achieve the highest benefit, or happiness, is not because it doesn’t exist. The reason they don’t talk about is because they do not know.

For example, when people go shopping, if they know the best quality, they ask for it—even food for one meal, for one hour of pleasure—if they know the place where they sell the best fruit, the best pizza, the best ice cream, that which has most the flavor, the most taste—those who know that such things exist look for that.

Those who do not know don't question it. They don't attempt to look for it. They buy the best quality food or material that they can understand. That which they think is the best quality, they buy. Even though there is better than this, which they don't know about, they don't buy it. So like this, in the same way, the reason the majority of the people don't come to buy the best quality it is not because it doesn't exist in the shop. So it is similar.

If sentient beings know the path, if they know the state of omniscient mind, peerless happiness, if they know, definitely they will seek it. Not seeking that is due to ignorance. So like this, so many of these new subjects—when we hear Dharma, Buddha's teachings, there are many things, so many new phenomena—but it is not so much that it only exists today, as that it is new to our mind. It is there, it exists, but it is new to our mind.

However, in the mind of the sentient beings, they have the wish to be free from sufferings and to achieve the highest, longest happiness. As they have a limited understanding of what suffering means, thinking that suffering means only relationship problems or starving, not having a job, the husband left the wife, the wife left the husband, or having a disease. The understanding of suffering is very limited—they do not have the understanding of the whole entire suffering of samsara, only part of it. Therefore, the liberation that they want is very limited. So the understanding of suffering is very limited, and therefore the cessation of suffering that they seek is very limited. What they are seeking is not real, with limited understanding of true suffering, the true cause of suffering, and the cessation, the liberation that they seek does not become complete, it does not become ultimate liberation. They make the mistake in the goal, liberation, that they are seeking.

It's only that they don't understand, that they don't see it—otherwise the wish is to be free from all the sufferings, and all its cause, and to achieve the highest happiness, that is the fully enlightened state.

Therefore, for oneself to lead sentient beings to the fully enlightened state, this is the greatest benefit. But there is no way for oneself to offer this greatest benefit to all sentient beings if one does not have the realization of bodhicitta, if one does not practice bodhicitta.

Therefore, we need to do listening, reflecting, and meditation practice on the bodhicitta teachings. Without doing listening, reflecting, and meditation, and the preliminary stages, the preliminary path, the foundation for bodhicitta, again, one cannot generate bodhicitta. Bodhicitta does not come by talking, "Bodhicitta, bodhicitta." One has to establish it within one's heart by following step by step.

So I think stop here.

[Dedications in Tibetan]

Maybe I will do the *lung* of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's mantra, OK?

Please think, “I’m going to take the oral transmission of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s mantra, the founder of this present teachings, in order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all mother sentient beings.”

[Oral transmission of Guru Shakyamuni’s name and mantra]

Reciting *La ma ton pa chom den de*, reciting Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy name once has the power to purify negative karma. It is said in the teachings that 84,000 eons of negative karma that have been accumulated get purified. The mantra contains the whole path, the Lesser Vehicle path of method and wisdom, the Paramitayana path of method and wisdom, and the result of the path, the three kayas—Buddha’s holy body, holy speech, and holy mind, which has immeasurable, infinite qualities to benefit sentient beings.

Each time one recites the mantra, it plants a seed in one’s mind, the imprint of the seed is left on the mental continuum, and then sooner or later one is able to fully understand the teachings of the path that is revealed by mantra. One fully understands the meaning of the mantra, which is the whole teaching of Buddha. Then that way, one is able to sooner or later to have the realizations of the path, and it gradually leads to enlightenment. That’s the very short benefits of the mantra.

SOHA—to take the root, to protect, to establish the root of the path within one’s heart. OM—the infinite qualities of Buddha’s holy body, holy speech, and holy mind, the three kayas, and then by actualizing the path of method and wisdom, relating to the lamrim, the graduated path, the first MUNÉ—the graduated path of the lower capable being; the second MUNÉ—the graduated path of the middle capable being; MAHAMUNA-YÉ—the graduated path of the higher capable being. By actualizing these paths within oneself, within one’s own mind, there is no teaching of Buddha that is not included in these three mantras—MUNÉ, MUNÉ, MAHAMUNA-YÉ.

This completely purifies the ordinary impure body, speech, and mind, and transforms it into the completely pure vajra holy body, holy speech, and holy mind, which is signified by the OM—A, U, MA—the three syllables compound together and become OM.

So, thank you very much.

[End of discourse]

Lecture Two: Cherishing Others

8 December 1987

[Preliminary prayers in Tibetan]

Please listen to the teaching by generating at least the creative, purest attitude, bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate, I must achieve omniscient mind for the sake of all mother sentient beings, who have been kind from beginningless time. Therefore, I’m going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment.” And also clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teachings according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

So, in regards mind training in the bodhicitta, which is the root of the Mahayana path to achieve enlightenment, there are two techniques, two advices about the mind training in bodhicitta.

There is mind training in bodhicitta through the seven techniques, the Mahayana cause and effect, that has been passed from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha through Maitreya Buddha, to Asanga, and then through the pandits. Then, there is the mind training equalizing oneself and others, exchanging oneself for others.

In the first one, by meditating, by realizing how every sentient being has been one's own mother and has been kind to oneself from beginningless time, generate the thought of loving kindness toward the mother sentient beings, thinking how they are devoid of happiness. Then generate great loving kindness, not only wishing that all sentient beings have happiness, but for oneself to cause this happiness toward all sentient beings, generating the realization of great loving kindness, OK?

Thinking how the kind mother sentient beings are suffering, we should not only wish them to be free from suffering, not wishing that somebody else, such as the buddhas, bodhisattvas, or some other holy beings will help sentient beings be free from suffering—great compassion, loving kindness, is not that way. You sit comfortably, enjoying, completely relaxed, and then you wish that they are free from suffering. The mind just wishes them to be free from suffering. “How wonderful if they had happiness,” then you are completely relaxed, laying down, sleeping. Not in this way!

In everyday life, the responsibility that one takes through action, in the actual work, is nothing else than to obtain happiness for self, nothing else than sacrificing the life for and serving to the selfish mind—nothing else besides that. Day and night, serving oneself, one's body, speech, and mind serving oneself, the selfish mind. Nothing else. “If I'm happy, then it's OK, it doesn't matter about others. If I'm suffering, that is very bad. If I have problems, that is terrible, that's very bad. If I can be happy, then that's very good, that is the best thing.”

So instead of thinking that, think that if others have success then this is the best, if others are happy then this is the best. Instead of thinking that way and working for that, serving that, then think if I'm happy that's the best, I will succeed in my wish. If I do not have the happiness that I am looking for, if it didn't happen, if I failed, if I'm miserable, that's the worst thing.

As long as we have this attitude, if we do not change, as long as we lead life with this attitude, concerned only with oneself, then there is no happiness, there is no peace of mind, there is no happiness in our life. If that is the attitude, day and night, if this is the main aim, others don't matter—however much they have problems, unsuccess, whether they are happy or unhappy.

It is said in the teaching, the *Guru Puja*, the teaching on the guru yoga practice, the guru offering, “Please grant me blessings to feel happiness when others are happy. By understanding that there is no difference between myself and others, not desiring even the slightest discomfort, suffering, and having no satisfaction in happiness, having no satisfaction at all in happiness.”

So, what it is saying is that, from beginningless rebirths we have followed the selfish attitude, “It’s better if I’m happy, rather than others being happy.” So we are constantly only thinking, only concerned with our own problems, with eliminating our own suffering and obtaining happiness only for oneself. Therefore, from beginningless rebirths until now, we are still not free from the problems we have been experiencing over and over, all the samsaric problems, all the sufferings, over and over, again and again, still they didn’t end, still we didn’t reach the end, still we did not finish experiencing the problems.

Therefore, now, the main mistake we have been making, the root mistake, is following the self-cherishing thought, renouncing others and cherishing oneself.

So now we see why we have constant problems in my life, life to life, day to day, month to month, year to year, life to life. Why? Now we see all this failure, unsuccess, undesirable things, came from our wrong attitude, from the mistaken thoughts. So therefore, from now on, if we change our attitude from this minute, if we change our attitude from the self-cherishing thought that is the root of all unsuccess, failure, undesirable things, depression—all the bad things—from there to bodhicitta, the thought of cherishing others, which is the root of all the happiness, all the success, the root from which we receive all benefits. The other one is the root from which we receive all harms.

So in this way, by changing this attitude, right this minute, we can obtain all the happiness for every sentient being, fulfilling the wishes of all sentient beings, and lead everyone to the peerless happiness of enlightenment.

Therefore, from now on we should rejoice if others are successful. Between oneself and others, if others are successful, we prefer that one. Between oneself and others, others should be happy, so happy. If others get the profit, we are happier.

Instead of others experiencing the problem, the loss, the undesirable thing—you experience it, instead of others, you experience it on behalf of them. Between you and others, if there’s a choice—you experience the problems, the suffering, and dedicate, give the happiness to others, instead of taking the happiness for oneself and giving the loss, the problems, to others.

So then, request the merit field to bless the mind to be able to do this, to be able to change the attitude in this way, to be able to act, to be able to live life in this way.

My thoughts are getting a little bit mixed with the other bodhicitta training. But the main point that I was trying to tell you is not this way. Changing the mind—our stomach fills up with delicious food and then we lie down on a soft comfortable bed, relaxing, and the mind wishes for others to be free from suffering, for others to have happiness. This is not what is called Mahayana great loving kindness, or great compassion. Great compassion is when oneself is the cause for all the sentient beings to be free from all the sufferings.

Then after that, generate the realization, the special brave attitude—to do the work to free all sentient beings from all suffering, the whole cause, the obscurations, and to cause all the happiness, which includes peerless happiness, enlightenment, by oneself alone. Taking the whole responsibility of the work for other sentient beings, upon oneself alone.

This is what is called the thought seeking the works for other sentient beings. After having generated this, then comes bodhicitta, the thought seeking enlightenment for sentient beings.

Then the second mind training in bodhicitta advice—equalizing and exchanging oneself for others. Here one meditates on the extensive kindness of other sentient beings. By exchanging oneself, by realizing the shortcomings of self-cherishing thought and the benefits of cherishing others, this contains the meditation on the extensive kindness of mother sentient beings. In the other bodhicitta meditation, there is only one part about kindness—sentient beings are the mother and kind, but here we think about their extensive kindness in this life and other lives, when sentient beings are not our mothers in that particular life. This includes generating the realization of loving kindness and great compassion—all are included in this. This includes repaying the kindness, the realization of great loving kindness, great compassion, the special brave attitude—all these are contained in the second bodhicitta technique, exchanging oneself for others by realizing the shortcomings of self-cherishing thought and the benefits of cherishing others.

Now, before doing the mind training in bodhicitta, exchanging oneself for others, we need to equalize oneself for others, to lay the foundation. So, now here, the equilibrium meditation coming before exchanging oneself for others—that is the great equanimity. There is also an equilibrium meditation before mind training, realizing that sentient beings are our mothers and kind. So there are differences like this. We wish sentient beings to be free from anger, attachment, and from discriminating sentient beings far and closer through anger and attachment.

So, wishing the sentient beings free from anger and attachment, and free from discriminating far and closer, realize the mistake, how the problem comes to other sentient beings. The mistake is having anger and attachment, discriminating sentient beings—some sentient beings as far, some sentient beings closer. The mistake is this—this is why they have problems in life. The mistake is this. The problems are not only day-to-day life problems, but life to life—the mistake is this. In other words, they made a mistake in the way of thinking in everyday life.

This wish is immeasurable equanimity. The equanimity that is the foundation of the seven techniques of the Mahayana cause and effect, that equanimity is cutting off your own attachment and anger—your own attachment discriminates some sentient beings as being close to you, and anger discriminates some sentient beings as being far. So cut off this discriminating thought of anger and attachment. This equanimity of the advice of mind training in bodhicitta, the seven techniques of Mahayana cause and effect, is just this. This equanimity is general equanimity, common equanimity. This is nothing special, this is not a special particular Mahayana thought transformation, not a special Mahayana practice. This is practiced also in Theravada—the training in this equanimity is also revealed in the teaching of the Lesser Vehicle path.

What is the way this equanimity is practiced, the way one cuts off the anger that arises by reasoning, “This person gives me harm,” and the attachment that arises thinking, “This person benefits me.”

Now I have one question—the person gives you a present of \$1,000 this morning, and this afternoon he kicks you—he comes along and beats you. How do you regard the person? Do you regard that person as an enemy or do you regard that person as a friend? What do you call him?

[Student's answer inaudible]

Why?

[Answer inaudible]

Enemy. But why do you care more about what is recent, why do you count as important the nearest action that he has done to you? Why do you count that as important? Why do you think in the mind that the nearest thing that he did is important?

[Answer inaudible]

Yes, why?

[Answer inaudible]

What happens if you make what he did in the morning to benefit you stronger? What happens if, instead of making the present stronger, what he or she did in the present, you make what he or she did in the morning, the benefit, stronger?

[Answer inaudible]

But why do general people care more about the nearest action, what people do? If the nearest action is the benefit, he is the friend. If the nearest action is harm, then he is the enemy. Why? Why don't we refer back to the past?

[Answer inaudible]

But he might do the same thing again.

Some people might think that way, but it doesn't mean that person will harm again.

Is that thought beneficial or not? That you only care about the nearest action that the person does for you, whether that is benefit or harm. You don't care about what the person did in the past. Is that a useful thought or not?

[Student's answer inaudible]

What? Is that thought something we need or don't need? Is that thought beneficial for the person's life?

[Answer inaudible]

Did somebody see it as beneficial? You see? Huh?

[Answer inaudible]

Then do you remember somebody's faults, or do you receive the fault of attachment?

[Answer inaudible]

Yes, yes, you're talking about the technique. Not relying on my question. I think it's very useful to analyze like this, just to check. Then you see that this thought is completely useless, only problem.

[Student's comment inaudible]

I think it is not so much labeling, I think it is more to do with attachment, anger.

[Comment inaudible]

You can realize all sentient beings are your friend, your own mother, but without clinging, without grasping mind. That only helps you to have loving kindness, without the grasping mind. So you mean there is something wrong in thinking that this person is kind?

[Answer inaudible]

So I think the last one.

[Comment inaudible]

Yes, to care about the nearest action, to count that as the most important, rather than remembering the past ones, rather than thinking the past is most important. Why do the people in the world care about the nearest action? Is that a useful thought or not? Useful for himself, for herself, for others' happiness?

[Answer inaudible]

I think the other one has also the help that was given this morning.

[Answer inaudible]

I think that generally among sentient beings, most cannot remember their past lives and cannot remember the relationships that have caused harm or benefit in the past. Therefore, if this present life's birth is the only life, they consider harm and benefit from those sentient beings only in terms of this life, because this is only what they can remember. And then mainly I think, referring to how much they can remember, even in this life, the ones that they have forgotten, they think about that. So this year, this month, how much they can remember, they refer to that—the friend, enemy, benefit, harm.

Then, I think one thing, the basic thing, why do we have the discriminating toward friend, enemy, why? Why do we have basic discrimination in relation to the nearest action? Why? One thing might be because in general, for ordinary sentient beings, there is much grasping and care in relation to their happiness—the present happiness, this minute's happiness, today—that is so important, the mind grasps on that.

Since this is the attitude and general mistake, if one is able to change, able to establish the happy life—the general mistake we have now is thinking that if there's harm, it's bad—that is the attitude. If somebody criticizes you, it's bad. If somebody disturbs you, it's bad. If there are miserable conditions, if there are difficulties in life, if there is a miserable situation, it is

bad. You establish the mind to dislike that. But if we establish the mind that likes the difficulties, if we establish the mind that likes miserable conditions, if we change the attitude, then the whole problem is stopped.

[Tape ends]

[Recording very soft and difficult to hear]

...actually doesn't need so much change outside. Now, how much we need to change outside depends on how much—there is a simple example—somebody who is so selfish, unbelievably selfish, with nothing else to think about day and night except, “How can I be perfect?” Thinking of happiness, every comfort, concerned with every comfort—when you eat, when you sleep, everything comfort, so much comfort.

Now, for that person with a very selfish mind, no matter how much change is done outside, it is very difficult to satisfy. No matter how many friends the person has, no matter how many possessions the person has, no matter how much they try to fix the place, they are very difficult to satisfy. It is very difficult for things to be perfect for that person. Therefore you can see it came from the mind.

So, the person thinks, “Still it's not right, still this is missing, it should be this way and that way.” There is so much, he is concerned about every tiny bit so much. Therefore, for the life of that person ever to be perfect is very difficult. That person's mind is so difficult or so strongly selfish, such a difficult mind, so life becomes very difficult to satisfy, and it is very rare for that person to be happy.

So the basic psychological method, the one thing, the one change that makes every outside thing change without worry or fear—we are unable to do it, unable to get it, so many things in the life.

So, the one answer to solve all the thousands, the billions of problems in that city, so many people depressed, the whole day and night there are problems with telephones, the people going through change, people in nighttime, daytime, talking to people to explain the problems, what's that called?

[Answer inaudible]

And there is the person that you can call? One person?

[Answer inaudible]

They sit in the corner of the room, beside the telephone, day and night, one person...

[Answer inaudible]

Isn't that called psychiatrist?

[Answer inaudible]

You hear their problems in the small radio, the people talking to each other, you hear this from the small radio, the talkback radio.

[Comment inaudible]

Talk show, like that.

So basically, not only these people, but if you want the one change that covers all the problems, stop establishing the mind that dislikes problems, and instead of that establish the mind that likes problems, that likes difficulties in life. If one is able to do that, by meditating, by thinking of the everyday life benefits of the problems, how the problems are useful to develop your mind, to pacify all the disturbing thoughts, the cause of sufferings, the shortcomings of the luxury life—when there are difficulties, make it worthwhile. When there are problems, misery in life, make it beneficial. When there is happiness, make it beneficial for oneself and other sentient beings. So, I am just giving the summary.

This is for the non-religious person—but there is the utmost need, especially for the Dharma practitioner, because when there is happiness, the mind is excited and cannot do practice. The mind is in the lifted-up aspect and again cannot do practice. And when the life is in misery, with difficulties, again one is unable to do practice. It is very difficult to continue the practice.

Therefore, with this psychological method, the one most important thing is to change all the undesirable things. Having this one change, establish liking problems, instead of disliking problems by meditating on, understanding, and always being aware of the benefits of the problems, thinking it is good. So, this way, instead of not wanting all the problems in life, all the difficulties, instead we want them. Instead of undesirable, the difficulties in life become desirable. This is for everything.

Now, the other thing is, if the person thinks more of.... Let's put it this way—the person may have stolen one million dollars or one thousand dollars last year. But today you're starving, and that person gives you food. Or you are so exhausted, so thirsty, and you are traveling, you are looking so much for a cup of tea, so the person gives you a cup of tea, and that brings incredible joyfulness in the mind. So then you see that person as a friend.

The other thing is that because the general basic idea, the concern, is moment-to-moment happiness, what the person does to you in the present, moment-to-moment, becomes very important. So that becomes discrimination.

Is that right or not?

[Answer inaudible]

So now you can see that it completely came from your own mind—how you think of that person. That person could be your friend if you think about this morning's help, if you concentrate more on that, if you think how he was very kind this morning, what he did for you. For example, that person doesn't think so much of his giving a cup of tea and how this is joyful, how he gave relief from your exhaustion. But if the person thinks more of the past, the stolen one thousand dollars, if he concentrates completely on that, then I think it is very difficult.

So I think stop here.

[Quality of recording improves]

Even though their natures are completely impermanent, they appear as permanent, and completely cling to this as true, however, believing that they were permanent.

So, if we don't get to practice Dharma, to achieve ultimate happiness, the fully enlightened state for the sake of other sentient beings, with this body, if we don't get this done, then having taken birth, having taken this body, looks simply like suffering longer. The purpose of taking birth is continuously to suffer, nothing more than that. We have taken this birth, this body, just to continuously suffer longer—as I just described the suffering of changes, and those other sufferings, other problems, and simply to make the place dirty.

Until we get liberated from samsara we have to continuously experience suffering. So therefore, due to this, being under control of these wrong conceptions, if you think of yourself and other sentient beings, we have been suffering in samsara without beginning. If you think of beginningless suffering, it is something that cracks the heart—if you look back, the beginningless suffering of samsara. If you think it is endless, the continual suffering of samsara, if we do not abandon these four wrong conceptions, then it is all heavy, unbearable and endless, such a long time that one has to experience all this suffering of samsara again. If we think of the future, even if one eats food, it makes us vomit, unable to sleep. It is like this.

So it is not sufficient for oneself alone to achieve liberation from samsara. This attitude, seeking liberation for oneself, is no different from that of a dumb, mute animal. Tiny creatures—ants, worms—whatever they eat or drink, whatever they do in their life, they have this attitude to use all this for themselves alone, for their own happiness.

Mother sentient beings are the originators of all my past, present, and future happiness. Even day-to-day life, our enjoyments, this happiness, is completely dependent on, completely came from, and completely given by sentient beings. Even without the long run, just checking the day-to-day enjoyments and happiness, one can see that it very clearly and completely came from sentient beings, from their kindness.

The comfort of the place, having protection in life, not having harm to the body, having this enjoyment, comfort, by living in the house—this is received from so many sentient beings being killed. They had to die, had to suffer, when the house was built. So many other sentient beings created negative karma killing these other sentient beings. Without all these sentient beings creating negative karma, without others suffering, there is no way that we can receive these enjoyments and comforts in day-to-day life—the protection of life—there is no way to receive these enjoyments at all. This enjoyment, this comfort is completely received by the kindness of sentient beings.

Same thing—the clothes that we wear to protect us—wearing them, we have enjoyment, comfort. Again same thing—we received these by so many sentient beings creating negative karma, harming others—human beings, creatures—and then so many others get killed, had to suffer. These enjoyments completely came from the kindness of mother sentient beings. Now, the comfort and enjoyment that arises from drinking one cup of tea—again the same thing. Without so many of these creatures, so many of the tiny creatures living in the water, suffering, dying—also when we put medicine we kill many creatures in the water, for people's health. This is all received from so many sentient beings' suffering, from harming other sentient beings. All this comfort and enjoyment of drinking is given by them.

It is the same thing with eating one tiny, single grain of rice. In order to plant this, to grow this, the field is made, the land is fertilized. However, uncountable numbers of creatures were killed, sentient beings were killed, and many other sentient beings created negative karma harming others, and so many others suffered. So this single grain of rice came from other rice. Again, so many sentient beings suffered for that. So like this, it is inconceivable—we can't believe, it is unbearable, if we look the whole way through. For this one single grain, how uncountable numbers of sentient beings suffered. Therefore, all this comfort and enjoyment is completely given to oneself—the enjoyment of eating food given by the sentient beings. So like this, day-to-day life's enjoyment and happiness is completely received from sentient beings.

Therefore, it is impossible to live life with the selfish attitude. To use all the sentient beings' enjoyments, to take all the sentient beings' enjoyments, so many sentient beings suffer and we use all the enjoyments received from them only for our own happiness. So it is unbearable to live the life for self even for one minute, to live the life for one's own happiness. It is impossible—it is so unbearable to not live life for others, without having the thought to eliminate suffering, to obtain happiness for other sentient beings. To live life with the selfish attitude even for one minute is impossible, it is so unbearable!

Mother sentient beings have the utmost need, and beginning Dharma practice is dependent on them and continuing Dharma practice is dependent on their kindness. Even achieving enlightenment depends on the kindness of mother sentient beings. Therefore, mother sentient beings are extremely kind, unbelievably kind. What they want is happiness, what they do not want is suffering. Therefore, to eliminate all suffering, which they do not want, and to obtain all the happiness that they want, the highest enlightenment, is my responsibility. This is completely my responsibility. I need to accomplish this work for all sentient beings, so I must achieve enlightenment.

If one does not subdue one's own mind, speech, and body, one cannot achieve the realization of the path to enlightenment. Only by subduing this, by living in virtue, can one achieve realizations, the path to enlightenment. So therefore this is the foundation.

Therefore, I'm going to take the eight Mahayana precepts.

Now, please make three prostrations. Think of the lama who grants the ordination as the essence and aspect of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, OK? Then make three prostrations.

Now, please kneel down, those who can, if you don't have a disease or something. Put your palms together like this in the mudra of prostration, holding your palms...

Lecture Three: The Good Heart **9 December 1987**

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the creative bodhicitta, thinking, "At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all the sentient beings who equal infinite space and who have been my mothers and kind. Therefore, I'm going to listen to the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment." Also clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teaching according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

As I mentioned yesterday, how much happiness and peace and how many difficulties and problems one has in life is completely dependent on the doer, the one who experiences, one's own mind.

Generally speaking, a person whose mind is less selfish has more thoughts cherishing others, more concern for others. Naturally by that attitude there are so many less problems, especially with other sentient beings in day-to-day life. That person has less bother, that person takes it easy because of the good heart—as the person has that much good heart, they are happy to take on trouble for others, to experience the difficulties for others.

The one who has the more selfish mind, more concern for oneself than others, more thought cherishing oneself than others, that person has greater problems, that person has more enemies. Wherever they go, wherever they live, whomever they accompany—there is more bother, more distraction to that person. This is the common experience.

Also, you can tell by your own experience. For example, for somebody who is practicing, some years have been good practice; some years have been bad practice; some years you did strong practice of bodhicitta, with more effort in the thought of cherishing others, and then at other times it degenerated or didn't get done—you didn't get to continue the practice. Somebody who has been trying to practice can tell from their own experiences.

Just by looking back, the years that you have practiced well, with bodhicitta, taking others' sufferings, dedicating your own happiness, body, possessions, and merits to other sentient beings, exchanging oneself for others—in those years you had easy times. In those days it was very easy to get along with people. It was very easy even if other people stole your things, even if other people criticized you—it was very easy to handle, nothing bothered you, nothing was important, or you found what they did to be extremely beneficial. You found the harm beneficial for your own practice, the development of your own mind. There was much happiness and peace, continuously day and night, because the condition of your happiness is not outside. The condition of your happiness is within your mind. The condition of your happiness, the cause and the conditions are within you.

When you take care of your own mind in the good heart, then whatever the people around you do, harm or benefit, whatever, because you're practicing, you are controlling your mind, the disturbing thoughts, they don't disturb your mind. The changes of the people around you and their actions, whether harming or helping, do not upset you. They don't bring you up and down, these emotions. As you are able to practice that much good heart, bodhicitta, there is that much tranquility or peace, day and night, in life.

When you don't continue the practice, life becomes like a water bubble—the mind becomes like water bubble, like boiling hot water. Life becomes like that because the mind is like that, so there is no peace. Every single thing that other people do affects you a lot because you do not practice. A slight, small behavior, a slight movement or action, whatever the surrounding people do to you—even how the skin of the face appears to you, what it shows, tight and dark, upsetness. If the face has some wrinkles, narrow eyes, fine eyes, the mind is very happy. This face becomes so important for your mind. When you don't practice and take care of your mind, when you don't control your mind, the mind is completely dependent on external things. So it changes—ups and downs, upset, happiness, all the emotional life changes, because it is so much relying upon the outside, external expectations. When you don't practice, when you don't look after your own mind, when there is no practice, no

controlling, no guiding, when you don't take care of your own mind, your own life, then it's like that, then that is the problem.

In one way, it seems very silly, completely silly, because it is completely dependent on this size of face, whether it smiles at you, whether it's tight. Your life is completely dependent on that—happy or unhappy, the surrounding people, the face.

The basic problem is following the selfish mind. The selfish mind expects all good things to happen for you, and you become a friend of the selfish mind, you follow the selfish mind, and when what it expects does not happen, you collapse. When the selfish mind does not succeed, you collapse. Again, you see the very silly thing there.

You can see how everything—all happiness, problems, everything—came from this way of thinking. And through a skillful way of thinking, everything becomes happiness, the whole life becomes happy. With the unskillful way of thinking, you don't see happiness, and the conditions of life become miserable.

For example, when you find somebody is angry with you. Let's put it this way—as long as there's anger in your mind, there's the possibility for anger to arise. As there is the possibility for anger to arise, there's the possibility to find the enemy outside. If there is no possibility for anger to arise in your heart, there is no possibility to find the enemy outside. So whether you have an enemy or not is up to whether you have anger or not.

It is very clear from this that even if every person on earth, every dog, every bird, was angry at you, even if all the dogs were biting you, if there is no anger in your mind, you will not find even one enemy on this earth, among them all. Besides people I just added some more.

If your mind is rich in compassion, loving kindness, if your heart is filled with compassion toward other sentient beings, then even if all people and all animals are angry and harm you, from your side you see everyone as your friend or relative. If your mind has compassion, then all the sentient beings are your friend. You feel that everyone is close in the heart.

Therefore you can see the good heart, loving kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta are unbelievably precious, incredibly precious—and how unbelievably important it is to practice them. In your life, in every hour, you need to pay attention, and always to put every single effort into having a good heart. With this good heart, you see all the other sentient beings' harms as benefiting you, purifying you, finishing your own negative karma. You see so many ways that sentient beings' harming you actually benefits you.

As a mother who has one beloved child sees that one most beloved child, if your mind has compassion toward all other beings, loving kindness, and bodhicitta, then you see all beings—those who help you, and even those who harm—whatever they do, you see it all in beauty, like the mother sees her one most beloved child.

But if this mind is empty of loving kindness, compassion, bodhicitta, and the good heart, then no matter how much wealth you have, no matter how much education you have, no matter how much reputation you have, no matter how many things you have—there are continual problems, even more problems, and there is no peace in the life.

Therefore, even if you don't have even one dollar, even if you are homeless, living life by begging for each meal, if the heart is filled with compassion and loving kindness toward others, there is incredible joyfulness, unbelievable happiness, and peace of mind. Even if there is no reputation, no wealth, no education, you see everyone as a friend—you feel it in the heart—there is no thought to give harm, only benefit. Your life is full of joy. Every hour life becomes highly meaningful, beneficial.

Therefore, if you think carefully, if you examine well, transforming your own mind into the good heart, into the loving, compassionate thought of bodhicitta—this is the source of all happiness. When you understand the benefits of bodhicitta, loving kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta, both temporary and ultimate, and then you practice this, you will receive these benefits, seeing the teaching of the Buddha, whose emphasis is to not harm all sentient beings, to have compassion toward all sentient beings. On top of that, to benefit all sentient beings. You see the teaching of the Buddha as so precious, and in this way you receive benefit by practicing, by understanding the teaching, and you feel the kindness of Shakyamuni Buddha, and how compassionate he is. You feel near Buddha, you feel that you are protected, you feel that you are guided by Shakyamuni Buddha out of his compassion. When you practice, you have the experience of how unbelievably kind Shakyamuni Buddha is.

I lost my thought, I don't remember.

Because of this teaching, do not harm other sentient beings; benefit other sentient beings and have compassion for all other sentient beings. This is what every sentient being needs. Buddha is not telling us that they don't need it. This is what every sentient being needs from you. What every sentient being needs from you is to not give harm, to have compassion toward them and to benefit them. So Buddha is telling you what they need from you.

Practicing this, you will be protected. You will not create negative karma. By stopping giving harm to others, you don't create negative karma. Instead of that you create merit, good karma.

Like today, we abandoned eight harms, eight things that harm others directly or indirectly. Some indirectly because there are some things that stop you from developing your mind, causing others to build attachment, which obscures your mind and stops realizations. As it stops realizations, these disturbing thoughts disturb the development of your capacity—it makes you create negative karma, obscures the mind, and in this way makes it difficult to have realizations. So then, you cannot develop your capacity—the ability or power to help others, to benefit other sentient beings.

When you stop, when you prevent the development of your own capacity to help others with wisdom, with method, when you interfere with that, it is like indirectly harming others. Like killing, stealing and so forth, which are directly harming. And some of the branches, not wearing ornaments and so forth, abandoning doing these things out of attachment. Today we abandoned eight things that harm other sentient beings directly and some indirectly. We took the vow to not do these things, so we are creating good karma.

By practicing the Buddha's teachings, we stop creating the negative karma that makes us suffer, that makes us experience the problems of samsara again and again.

This is talking about protection—by practicing the teachings, you are protecting yourself from creating the cause and the result of problems in the future. This is only talking about one person, you. The main attitude you should have—seeing the shortcomings and problems of killing, living in the vow abandoning the negative karma of killing. As long as you live in even just one vow, abandoning killing, this is a method of guiding sentient beings.

When you take the vow to not kill any sentient being, it is not a vow to not kill the friend but to kill the enemy. It is not a vow to not kill the good ones but to kill the bad ones, to not kill the ones you like but to kill the ones you don't like. It is a vow to not kill any sentient being.

So now, all the rest of the sentient beings. When you take this vow, as Buddha has shown the method, for example, the eight Mahayana precepts, the particular one-day ordination, all the rest of the sentient beings do not receive harm and during those times that you have taken the vow, for one day, or for the lifetime until death, however many times you have taken the vow, living in this vow, the harm sentient beings receive from you becomes less. The longer you take the vow, the longer numberless sentient beings don't receive the harm of being killed by you. So the vow is unbelievable protection.

Just think of one precept that you practice. It's unbelievable protection, and an inconceivable number of sentient beings receive protection from you. They don't receive the harm of being killed by you.

So, as I mentioned this point, as the subject came to this point, now you can see how unbelievably important, how incredibly important—how living in one vow is unbelievable protection for the rest of beings. Then if you live in two precepts, adding not stealing, then again the harm that the rest of the sentient beings receive from you becomes so much less. On top of that, telling lies. The more you take vows, the less harm the rest of the numberless sentient beings receive from you—unbelievable protection.

Without thinking of your own benefit, your own suffering, your own problem, “I don't want problems in future lives, I want happiness and therefore I want to live in the precepts, therefore I want to take the vow.” That is nothing. If you think of all the benefit for sentient beings, so much harm becomes less and there is unbelievable benefit. As many vows as you take to not kill, to not create negative karma, to not harm. When you think this way, there is unbelievable benefit—you can see now that all the rest of the sentient beings completely depend on you. Their happiness, their suffering, depends on you.

If you think this way, you can see very clearly how all other sentient beings' happiness and suffering depends on you. So the more precepts, the more morality you practice, uncountable numbers of other sentient beings receive so much less harm and so much greater happiness from you.

You can see how, even simply from this, each of us are completely responsible for all the rest of sentient beings' happiness—not only starting from the family with whom you associate, eat and drink together, but all the rest of sentient beings—their happiness and suffering is completely dependent on you. It is dependent on each of us.

So now we can think this way. The person sitting next to you, in front, at the back, or on the right or left side, starting from there, the happiness and suffering of all the rest of the sentient beings is dependent on you. How much happiness and suffering they have becomes less

depending on you. So you see, each one of us completely responsible. So now you can see how incredibly important it is to protect karma, to abandon negative karma and practice good karma. How unbelievably important living in morality is.

If you do not change your own attitude, living life with a good heart, loving kindness, compassion, bodhicitta, cherishing others—one thing, patience. If there is patience in your mind, the harmful actions toward others get stopped. The harmful actions of body, speech, and mind get stopped. So you can see all other sentient beings have happiness. By stopping harm, they have happiness. So completely like this.

If you practice patience, so many other sentient beings receive happiness and don't receive harm from you. If you don't practice patience and you continuously follow anger, they continuously receive harm. Therefore, all the rest of sentient beings' happiness is completely in your hands. Suffering, not receiving harm from you, is completely in your hands, depending on you.

Now, to finish up—you can see today that by living in the eight precepts, other sentient beings, all the rest, are receiving protection. They do not receive harm, but happiness from you. All this is by the kindness of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's teachings—Buddha's holy words, to have compassion toward all beings. This depends on which way you train the mind. If you get more habituated to being selfish, then you dislike problems. When the mind is more habituated in this way then whatever appears to the six senses, everything, gets turned into the enemy. Everything appears as the enemy, disturbing. Then it is so difficult to find happiness, even temporary happiness is so difficult. If the mind is more trained in cherishing others, it likes the problems. By realizing the benefits of the problems, the mind gets habituated and trained in that way. When the mind is trained in this way, then even the biggest problem becomes like cotton. The way the person sees it and finds it pleasant is as light as cotton.

The conclusion is that if there's a good heart, there is so much happiness in life, without need to seek happiness from outside.

However, as soon as you are not aware, as soon as you don't attempt to find happiness from your own mind, only seeking happiness from outside, there are always problems. Even if you do find that sense object, you experience problems with that object. So not seeking happiness from your own mind, but seeking happiness from outside, that itself becomes an obstacle for peace of mind. In short, all the causes and conditions for suffering are there within your own mind. Same thing, all the causes and conditions to establish happiness are within your own mind.

Shantideva said in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, "There is no phenomenon that does not become easier by training." If you let the mind get addicted or habituated to the nonvirtuous thought, the selfish mind, dislike of problems, it becomes more that way, it develops. The mind becomes more and more difficult, and life gets more and more difficult. But if the mind gets more habituated with bodhicitta, instead of dislike, then there are less problems and more happiness, more temporal happiness, more success.

One thing that I left out to finish. When somebody is angry with you, beating you, criticizing you, whatever happens, the harm is completely coming from them, the problems are coming from them. When you think psychologically, "This problem came from them," when you put

the whole blame on them, your anger arises. You see the enemy there, you discriminate this enemy. So there's an enemy for this hallucinated mind, anger. In that angry mind there's an enemy. In the view of the angry mind, there's an enemy whose label is given by anger. Now in this way of thinking, you stop that part of the creation, your own mind and projection. If you think in the correct way, in the positive way, relating to karma, "If I didn't harm him, if I didn't create harm, give harm..."

[Tape ends]

There are verses, but I don't remember, they are from *Bodhicaryavatara*, I've forgotten. "In the past I created negative karma, harmed this sentient being, so therefore I'm experiencing the result, receiving harm from him." In other words, if I didn't create the negative karma of harming them, there's no reason at all for them to harm me, to disturb me. So therefore, there's no one to blame except myself.

Putting it another way, a clear way, "If I did not create negative karma, harming others, I wouldn't have this karmic appearance." What you see is a person, a male or female harming you—you have the appearance, like a dream, somebody harming you.

If you don't have mind, you don't have this appearance. You understand? To have appearance you have to have mind. So the kind of appearance, pleasant or unpleasant, depends on the mind. The appearance comes from the mind. We have the appearance of the table, but the table itself does not have the appearance of us, the table itself doesn't have the appearance of table. You understand?

This appearance is like a dream, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant is completely due to the mind. The karma created in the past left an imprint on your mental continuum. So this time, because it is not purified, this imprint is actualized, and you see somebody harming you. Even if that person becomes enlightened, free from anger, free from all the disturbing thoughts, since your karma is not purified you have the appearance. When the imprint of the mental continuum is ready to experience harm, you will have problems with that appearance. So now, even this becomes more clear.

However, it is said in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, by Shantideva, "My karma persuaded, I received this harm. Therefore sentient beings harming me is deserved. I'm worthy to receive the harm from sentient beings."

You can harm others but you don't want to experience it. That is completely selfish. What's the word? Huh? Dictator. You become a dictator.

The other thing, just one thing is that this enemy is like the stick beating the body, making harm, injury. There is nothing to blame in the stick because the stick is under the control of the person. This is similar to the person—blaming the stick, being angry at the stick is complete nonsense. Similarly, the person is completely overwhelmed by the anger, completely occupied by the anger. They have no freedom at all. The person is completely overwhelmed, completely invaded by the anger. So there is nothing to blame on that person, they are only an object of compassion. They are completely used by anger, they are a slave. By thinking this way, that there is no choice, strong unbearable compassion has to arise when you see that the person has no freedom at all and is completely controlled by anger.

I'll stop here.

[Dedication prayers in Tibetan]

Lecture Four: Labeling the I **10 December 1987**

Please listen to the teaching well, generating at least the creative bodhicitta thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the omniscient mind for the sake of mother sentient beings who equal space, who have been kind from beginningless time, from beginningless rebirths. Therefore, I’m going to listen to the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment. Also clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teaching according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.”

I didn’t make the conclusion last night, in the evening time, I didn’t make the conclusion of my talk. As I mentioned, one way of thinking is a problem, and with one way of thinking there is no problem during life. I gave several examples, particularly—if you follow anger, then he or she harms you. In the view of the anger there is an enemy. In that way of thinking there is an enemy, you have trouble, you’re receiving trouble and harm.

Now the other way—you stop thinking that way, and instead of spending time, instead of spending life in a negative way, instead of putting your life in pain, pain for yourself, pain for another person, creating pain by following anger, creating pain within your heart and pain in the mind of the other person, instead of this, thinking that this harm is of no use, use the situation that you are experiencing, the other sentient being harming you, to develop compassion to the person who has anger toward you.

Using the example of the stick—in the stick itself there is nothing—it is completely silly to be angry at the stick and blame the stick, because it is in the hand of the other person, no matter how much the stick injures you. The same thing—the person’s body, speech, and mind, the person is completely under the control of the anger, completely overwhelmed by anger. So the person has not the slightest freedom. So pitiful. Like the person riding the horse. It is not up to the horse, it is up to the person’s mind how the horse is used and led. If the person is completely used by the anger, they become a slave to anger. The person is completely lost to the anger.

When you look at it in this way, rather than thinking of yourself, my happiness, my problem, think of the other person’s suffering. Thinking in this way, there is no choice—unbearable compassion has to rise in your heart. You see the person as so pitiful, with so much suffering. This is one example related to the person who has great anger toward you, but later this same thing, this one example, you can use for many other problems.

If there is someone who is jealous of you, and always harms, always disturbs you to succeed in their own wishes, same thing. Again, meditate that they have no freedom at all, and are completely overwhelmed by the negative mind of jealousy. When you think this, suddenly your mind becomes pure. The anger and all the other bad thoughts stop. Suddenly there’s compassion, your heart feels compassion toward that person.

It is the same thing with the person who is completely overwhelmed by the dissatisfied mind, great attachment. You don’t need to use these conditions to be angry; you don’t need to use

these conditions to make yourself unhappy. You can make use these conditions to get satisfaction, to have real peace of mind in your heart.

It is the same thing with the person whose mind is filled with wrong views, heresy, and doubts, or the person who is filled with ignorance, harming you and others because of ignorance, because of not knowing. There is nothing to be angry with at that person—the person is doing these things, these harms, due to ignorance and not knowing. The person is completely overwhelmed by ignorance. It is the same situation.

Actually, if there's compassion, wherever you will look, any sentient being that you look at, the friend, enemy or stranger, since it is a sentient being, just seeing the sentient being is the cause of compassion, the cause for compassion to arise in you, without clinging, without believing that that is true, without letting yourself be cheated by your own hallucination, which is the projection of the wrong conception.

In other words, as I explained in the morning during the motivation of the Mahayana ordination, while it is clear, while it is true, while it is one hundred percent—in reality, all the time, day and night, what we talk about is, “I’m happy, I don’t want this, I want that,” even though it is so clear, in reality, what this “I” that we talk about is—that which is merely imputed on these aggregates. The actions of the I are merely imputed according to the aggregates, this body and mind, and whatever action it does, the actions of the I are merely imputed according to what the body and the mind does.

This merely imputed I is the one that experiences happiness, experiences suffering, stops the suffering, and obtains the happiness. This merely imputed I, by generating renunciation of samsara and entering the path is able to liberate from samsara, and able to achieve liberation—by generating bodhicitta, it is able to achieve enlightenment.

The I and the phenomena, the I, you, other phenomena—what exists is only what is merely imputed on the base and nothing even the slightest bit more than this. Something extra than this, other than that—you, I, others, and the rest of phenomena—does not exist at all. There is no way to find more than this you, I, or other phenomena that is merely imputed on the base by the thought, no matter how much you analyze. No matter how much you search, there is no way to find that these things exist as something more than that—nowhere, it is a complete hallucination because if you search, you cannot find it, even though it appears, even though you grasp it.

So the unlabeled I, the independent I, that which appears to us, to our thoughts, is completely empty.

Even intellectually, when you analyze, when you check how the I exists as mere name, being merely imputed on the base by the thought, you get the idea that the I and phenomena are under the control of name or under the control of mind, that they came from the mind.

Things exist, the I and phenomena, from the side of the mind—they did not come from there but they came from the mind. Nothing of this exists in the slightest from their own side.

Anyway, this might help you to get an idea. Before the parents met the child, before the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg, even if the parents had the thought to label “David,” there is no base—the association of body and mind.

[Tape ends]

...they had the thought and labeled, “David.” Before they made the child, they discussed the name to give. They agreed to label it “David.” But at that time David doesn’t exist.

Now, another one—they made the child, the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg, they had the child, but they don’t have the thought yet to give the name “David.” They had the child but they don’t yet have the thought to give the label “David.” Also, at this time David doesn’t exist.

There is this child, there is this association of body and mind, and then when the parents, or whoever, label “David,” whenever that person’s mind merely imputes “David” on that base, then David exists.

If you just meditate well, if you just think carefully, if you simply meditate on the meaning of dependent arising, how David exists—especially the subtle dependent arising, according to the Madhyamaka Prasangika school. There are four schools, and the fourth one is the Madhyamaka school. Within that, there are two sections, and the second one is the Prasangika school. According to the Madhyamaka Prasangika school, this is subtle dependent arising. That David exists on the base by the thought merely imputing. That is the way David came into existence, how he came to exist, how David came to exist. That’s the explanation.

So, on the base David exists as being merely imputed by thought. It is very clear. To meditate on the shunyata, on the emptiness, of David, this is enough. On the base David exists by being merely imputed by thought. So when you think, think that the David that exists on the base is what is merely imputed by the thought *there*. So, it is very clear, there is no David existing in the slightest from his own side.

David is imputed on the base by thought. He is *merely* imputed, merely imputed, so David does not exist in the slightest from his own side. The same thing, just on this point—something more than this cannot be found. Even though it appears, it cannot be found anywhere by analyzing. If it were true it should be found by analyzing, it should become more clear. When you start to analyze and it becomes more and more unclear, unfindable, that means it is false. It is empty—the unlabeled, independent David is empty, a hallucination, and that is the absolute nature of David.

Now, similarly, the mere appearance the aggregates is sitting on the cushion, and by depending on the mere appearance of aggregates sitting, your own thought merely imputes “I,” and because the aggregates, the body, is doing the action of sitting, you think, “I’m sitting.” When the aggregates, the body, stands up, then the mere appearance of the aggregates is that it is standing, and on that your own thought merely imputes, “I’m standing.” Then, again, as you see the mere appearance of the aggregates, the body, doing the action of drinking tea, on that appearance your thought merely imputes “I,” and because the body is doing the action of drinking tea, “I’m drinking tea.” So like this. I, same thing—you, others, all the phenomena, samsara and nirvana, the whole existence, the whole thing, nothing exists in the slightest, even an atom, from their own side. Everything is merely imputed on the base by thought. But constantly we think like this, and when we talk, constantly we are labeling, when we meditate, we are labeling—every time we think, every time we talk, we

are labeling. Without labeling, there is nothing to think about, there's nothing to talk about. Without name, there's nothing to talk about.

Constantly, when we think, when we talk, we are constantly merely imputing on the base. But we are not aware of this evolution, how we make things exist by labeling on the base, our own thoughts labeling constantly. We are not aware of this actual reality, because of the previous habit, the past habit, the habit from beginningless rebirths, the imprint. But this is the reality, this is the evolution—like David, everything exists by depending on the base and the thought that labels. By depending on the base and the thought that labels, things arise. So everything is a dependent arising, which means it exists in dependence on those two. When those two things are present, the thought and the base, the thought merely imputed on the base, things arise, so this is a dependent arising. So even though the whole thing exists, I, you, all the phenomena, everything exists by mere name, being merely imputed by the thought, *why* doesn't it appear this way? Why don't things appear as they exist in reality?

After we impute, everything appears to us as if it exists from its own side, constantly. Unlabeled, independent. Even our name. When somebody calls "Lama Zopa," Lama Zopa exists in my mind, and appears to exist from its own side. Even the names are unlabeled, independent, without depending on the base and thought.

When we think of the senses, the objects of the senses, even when we think of samsara, or nirvana, they are truly existent, independent, unlabeled. Everything that appears to our minds, subject, action, object, everything appears independent, unlabeled, completely contradictory, completely opposite to the reality. The way things appear is completely opposite to the reality. Because it is completely opposite to the reality, it is false. If I, phenomena, everything that appears, existed according to the reality, then that is a definition of true. If it is the opposite of reality, then that is a definition of false. In regards false appearance, there are two things: things exist but you look at them as non-existent, that's one false thing; and things don't exist but you look at them as if they exist. This one is something that doesn't exist but you look at it as if it exists.

Therefore it makes great sense—the merely imputed I appears to exist from its own side. The action of listening, which is merely imputed, appears to exist from its own side. The teaching, which is merely imputed, appears to exist from its own side. The whole thing—the subject, action, object—when we think of samsara, when we think of the path, the obscurations, cessation, liberation, enlightenment—everything appears to our mind as existing from its own side, independent, unlabeled. We are completely trapped in hallucination, by not having realized emptiness, not meditating, not practicing awareness—all these are empty of existing from their own side.

Because of the imprint that is left on the mental continuum by the ignorance of true existence, that which grasps, that which believes in a truly existent appearance, because of the imprint that is left on this mental continuum by the ignorance of true existence from beginningless rebirth until now, even if we are constantly imputing on the base, everything, subject, action, object, constantly imputing with our minds, but what we merely imputed with our minds constantly appears as if it exists from its own side, because of the imprint. Why does this happen? Because of the imprint, such a strong imprint, so many imprints collected in the mental continuum by the ignorance of true existence. Due to the imprint, the habit, our mind completely grasps that all these appearances are one hundred percent true.

When we let our mind believe that, this mind becomes ignorance. Instead of practicing awareness that all these appearances are false, that the way all these things appear as existing from their own side is empty, that everything exists in mere name—instead of practicing awareness of this reality, we allow our minds to believe that all these appearances—subject, action, and object—which appear to exist from their own side, are true. That’s how we create ignorance, when we let our minds believe these things. At that time the mind becomes ignorance. That’s how we constantly create ignorance and the hallucinating mind. That’s how we are trapped.

As Lama Tsongkhapa explained in the *Three Principal Aspects of the Path to Enlightenment*, sentient beings are trapped in the iron cage of self-grasping, the ignorance grasping the I as truly existent, as well as other existences. Following the ignorance of true existence, we’re imprisoned—we put ourselves into the prison, into the hallucination. This is the root of the whole problem, the foundation of all the other delusions, the ignorance not knowing Dharma, attachment, anger, the six root delusions, within which are the five non-views, the five wrong views, and the twenty secondary delusions, then the 84,000 delusions. It is said that the 84,000 teachings are against the 84,000 delusions. However, the whole thing is based on and came from and arose from this, all the delusions came from this base—the ignorance of grasping at the truly existent appearance.

So far, the reason we haven’t achieved liberation from samsara or ultimate happiness is because constantly we are swept away. We can see that this is the biggest suffering, this is the one which stops us from achieving liberation, enlightenment.

What I was saying originally—as we are completely suffering and trapped in the hallucination—in some ways it’s like this. The I that exists is what is merely imputed, but that is not what appears. The I that does not exist is unlabeled, independent, but that appears. So, same thing like this—everything, subject, action, object—everything appears that doesn’t exist. The one that exists doesn’t appear to us, doesn’t appear in that way. So when we look at other sentient beings, how they are completely trapped in hallucination, you can see that this is the problem.

Then, even in terms of temporary pleasures, which are experienced in dependence upon external conditions—their nature is only suffering but they believe it is real happiness, it is pure happiness. This is another suffering. And even the life, I, the consciousness, this body, even though these are of an impermanent nature, they constantly believe that everything is permanent. That’s another suffering. Then, even though the nature of their body is dirty, they constantly believe it is pure, clean—so this is another hallucination, another suffering.

Just looking at sentient beings, their nature, their conceptions, and their actions of body, speech, and mind—what they do is try to get the objects, try to get happiness with this hallucinated mind. So simply looking at a human being, just simply looking at their body, is the cause of great compassion. Male or female, whatever. Outside is a dress of a million dollars, many thousands of dollars, decorated—some appear as rich, some appear as poor, with many thousands of dollars of ornaments around the body. However, inside there is a skeleton. Eating thousands of dollars of lunch, or many hundreds of thousands of dollars—a Rolls Royce, a Mercedes. They may even live in a palace built with jewels—but inside they are a skeleton, pieces of bones joined with pieces of flesh. Outside there are many different shapes and many different things called the lungs, heart, this and that—there are so many pieces wrapped with veins, tied up with veins and then covered with skin outside. So that’s it.

This is without talking about the attitude, the wrong conceptions—just the body, the same. It is a very suffering nature. At the top there is something that is called a head, and some kind of hair—even just looking at the body, seeing the body of a human being, it is very pitiful, of a suffering nature. It is so fragile, so it is not worthwhile at all to get angry, to harm such a being. To harm such a being is completely crazy, completely one's own mistake, such a pitiful thing.

Then if you look at creatures, there is no question—the chickens, monkeys, spiders, snakes, lobsters, and scorpions—they did not take this body with free will, they did not take this body with choice. Out of disturbing thoughts they created karma, out of ignorance they created karma to take this birth. Being under the control of karma and delusions, without choice, without freedom *at all*, they have to take this rebirth. Their consciousness migrated to this body. So therefore, it is unbelievably pitiful. It happened without choice. They have taken this body without choice. So, it is completely pitiful.

That's what I'm saying—whomever we look at, any sentient being we look at is a cause of compassion arising within us. So, as I explained yesterday, think in those different ways to generate compassion for the person who has anger toward us. Thinking in this way, you don't find an enemy, and compassion arises. Instead of anger arising, compassion arises for the person. With that thought, you don't find the enemy there. With that thought, the enemy doesn't exist.

So the life problems are completely dependent on the way of thinking. One way of thinking there is a problem, one way of thinking there is no problem.

The conclusion is that since everything—happiness, suffering, samsara, nirvana, the whole thing—everything came from the mind, from one's own mind, and is dependent on the mind, therefore, it is extremely important to subdue your mind.

I'll stop here tonight, then I will do the *lung* of the Chenrezig mantra.

MANI PADME, MANI is method, PADME, wisdom. That is Chenrezig's holy name, MANI PADME, the unification of method and wisdom. Now, this MANI PADME contains the Lesser Vehicle path, and method and wisdom, the wisdom realizing emptiness, the mind renouncing samsara, the thirty-seven realizations according to the Lesser Vehicle path, and the eight noble path. All those methods are contained within it. Also, the Paramitayana wisdom and all the method, bodhicitta, the five paramitas—all those methods are contained there. Then tantra, such as Kriya Tantra—there are four divisions of tantra, including the lower tantra of method and wisdom, the path of creativity, or having a sign, and the wisdom path not having creativity or not having a sign—meditation on emptiness related with the skillful means of Kriya Tantra yoga. This is also contained in MANI PADME, as well as the Maha-anuttara Yoga Tantra of method and wisdom, according to the second stage, the illusory body, which is method, and the clear light, which is wisdom. All the methods that are mentioned and revealed in the Lesser Vehicle path, in the Paramitayana path, in the tantra path, which are cause to achieve the rupakaya, are contained in MANI. And all the wisdoms to achieve the dharmakaya are contained in PADME. So the whole path to enlightenment is contained in MANI and PADME. Everything that we need to listen, reflect, and meditate on is in MANI PADME. MANI PADME is calling Chenrezig's holy name.

HUM is like saying, when you call your mother, “Hi, mom!” Like that, “I’m hungry. I want a milkshake.” HUM is like calling “Hi!” This is persuading Chenrezig’s holy mind. That way we receive the blessings. Persuading Chenrezig’s holy mind with HUM blesses our own heart and mind. The definition of receiving blessings is making the mind, which is so cruel and so selfish, like a rock, like iron, to become like soft, well-fertilized ground that is ready to plant. It makes what is hard become soft. Receiving blessings, the mind becomes soft, subdued. By receiving this blessing in our own heart, we are able to generate the path, the whole wisdom, the method, the cause of the rupakaya and the dharmakaya, MANI PADME, the whole path. We are able to actualize method and wisdom in our own heart. Then, through this, we are able to purify ordinary appearance. Ordinary body, speech, and mind get purified and transformed. Doing Chenrezig practice, our own body becomes the indestructible holy body of Chenrezig, our own speech becomes the indestructible holy speech of Chenrezig, and our own mind becomes the indestructible holy mind of Chenrezig, the Compassion Buddha.

These three are simplified by the A-U-MA, the three syllables, which when you put them together become OM. OM signifies the result, the goal. MANI PADME is the path, the method and wisdom that makes us reach the goal. MANI PADME signifies the path, the vehicle. So now, if you get inside, if you allow oneself to be in this vehicle, the vehicle takes you to Chenrezig’s vajra holy body, his completely pure vajra holy body, completely pure vajra holy speech, completely pure vajra holy mind. Then with this, since there is omniscient mind, perfect power, and compassion for all beings, you are able to perfectly guide every sentient being without the slightest mistake, without any effort. You are able to continuously work for sentient beings.

Then please dedicate the merits. Due to the three-time merits accumulated by me and by other sentient beings, may I quickly achieve the enlightenment of Guru Chenrezig, the Compassion Buddha, and lead every sentient being to Guru Chenrezig, the Compassion Buddha’s enlightenment as quickly as possible.

[*Ge wa di yi....*]

[End of Discourse]

Lecture Five: The Merely Labeled I

11 December 1987

...somebody who is not crazy, somebody who is crazy is an exception. Someone who is not crazy would accept, if you explain it to them, that what is called table is a label, a name. The name has to come from the mind, the name was given by the mind, and not given by the substances. So, the “I,” the aggregates, you, others, samsara, nirvana, the path—everything is names. As far as debating, if the I is a name, then the I has to be a word, it has to be a sound. But for meditation, to think that everything is name is helpful. It is helpful for the experience, to lose the thought that grasps at things as concrete—meaning existing from their own side. It is very helpful to meditate like this. But all these things are names—I, you, buddhas, sentient beings—they are all called by name. Anything that exists, whatever it is called, is names, and they all came from the mind, not from the side of the base but from the side of the mind. If you meditate on this meaning, there’s some clarification.

Now, the whole point for us is that the I, the action, the object, anything, whatever we look at, whatever we think of, nothing appears to us as labeled, nothing appears to us to be merely labeled. So the mind is so gross.

When you look at the things that do not appear as merely labeled, which appear as unlabeled, when you think of yourself, the I, anything that appears as not merely labeled, that itself is the meaning of the refuted object, that itself is the meaning of emptiness, that itself means empty. When things appear unlabeled, that means that they are empty. This is what we should do, what we should be aware of, what we should realize. Things that appear as existent from their own side should be understood to be empty. That is the emptiness of the object.

All this “no...no...no,” —“no form, no feeling, no recognition, no volition, no consciousness,”—all this, “no...no...no...no,” when you put the “no” on all those things that appear, for example, no form, when you think of unlabeled form, form existent from its own side, you put the “no” on top of that. You put the “no” on that hallucination. In other words, when you say, “no form,” you’re supposed to see emptiness, no form. When you say, “no form,” you’re supposed to see emptiness by ceasing the hallucination, the refuted object, the truly existent, unlabeled form. So in “no form,” “no” is, in other words, emptiness. By saying “no form”, and applying “no” on the unlabeled, truly existent form, putting “no” on that, the experience that comes is the emptiness of form, stopping the hallucination of the truly existent form.

So each time we say “no,” we are not saying that form doesn’t exist, we are not saying that we don’t have form, that we don’t have feeling, that we don’t have recognition, that we don’t have volition, that we don’t have consciousness, that we don’t have an I.

If you don’t have form then you cannot fast, and there is no way to keep, to live in the precepts of not eating. Eating and not eating. If there is no feeling, then you cannot feel Kopan food. If you didn’t have the recognition that you are doing a meditation course at Kopan, then you wouldn’t be here.

Anyway, there is no truly existent form, no truly existent feeling, no truly existent recognition, no truly existent volition—so like that, no truly existent eye, no truly existent ear, and no unlabeled form, no unlabeled feeling, no unlabeled recognition, no unlabeled volition, no unlabeled eye, no unlabeled ear, nose, tongue, like that.

The most effective way to recite the *Heart Sutra*, to do the meditation on the *Heart Sutra*, the *Essence of Wisdom*, is you use the words. Apply the words to your perception, to your appearance, to the view of the ignorance, and then you will see that they are empty and false. This way you meditate on emptiness, and then by developing this wisdom of emptiness you are able to completely eradicate and cut off even the seed of ignorance of true existence, the root of all the cause and all the resultant sufferings. That’s how one is able to achieve liberation.

When the person has the function of president, when the person does the actions of the president, when the person takes the responsibility for the president’s work, people recognize that what he is doing is the president’s function, doing the things that the president does. In that person’s experience, he is a president, so the president exists on that base without choice. The president exists during those years when he’s doing the function of president, but when he stops the function of president, at the same time the president’s existence on that base is

stopped. That president exists during those years, while his body and mind do the function as president. The president exists on that. During those years, while the base, the person, or the association of body and mind, is doing the function of president, without choice the president exists on that base. That's why when they find the object of president they can complain.

Same thing—the nature of fire, a phenomena whose nature is hot and can burn things—when we see and experience that kind of phenomena, then without choice the fire exists. When we experience the base, when we see the base, without choice the fire exists on it.

When you fall in the fire that exists and you have the aggregates, which are samsara, caused by karma and disturbing thoughts and whose nature is suffering, when those aggregates fall in the fire, then no matter how much you try to stop to think and believe that there's no fire, it doesn't stop burning. By thinking the fire doesn't exist, the fire doesn't stop. By negating the phenomena whose nature is hot, burning you, and trying to believe that there's no fire, there is no way that the fire can become non-existent on the base of this phenomena whose nature is hot and burns you. No way! And there is no way, by simply believing and thinking that there's no fire that the base becomes non-existent, that that which is hot and burns you becomes non-existent, no way.

But it is possible, if one meditates on the emptiness of the fire, if one meditates on the emptiness of the I, if we meditate on the emptiness of the aggregates, it is possible that the burning become weaker, the burning becomes not as heavy as you believed it to be when you believed in the burning, and the independent, unlabeled I, the truly existent I. When you meditate on emptiness it stops burning you, or the feeling is not heavy. Meditating on emptiness itself becomes the protection to stop burning you, or your experience of the suffering and pain, even if it doesn't stop, becomes much smaller.

As I mentioned with the example of David and the I, things exist because of the base. Things exist—the I, the action, the object—things exist because the base on which they are imputed exists.

So in reality, as I often mention, when one's own consciousness took its place in the fertilized egg in the mother's womb, one labeled, "I took birth." The merely labeled I was born to the merely labeled mother, the merely labeled parents. Then...

[Tape ends]

...the merely labeled school. This is good—even if the words are nothing new, it is good to meditate. Another way, the same as the *Heart Sutra* here, which has "no...no...no,"—"no this, no that"—now it is the same. When we meditate this way we see emptiness. The experience that comes is emptiness—the emptiness of I, the emptiness of parents, the emptiness of school. By meditating in this way, which is the reality, by being aware and meditating on the reality, the result that comes in your experience is emptiness and awareness, the understanding of the emptiness of these things, of life.

The basic mistake in our life is not so much not knowing the teaching or the words. The basic mistake is not practicing awareness, the meaning of emptiness, the meaning of dependent arising, the unification of emptiness and dependent arising, in life. From there all the obstacles and all the confusion arises. One makes life difficult in this way, by not practicing

awareness, the unification of emptiness and dependent arising in life, which is involved with three things: subject, action, and object.

So one went to the merely labeled school, then did the merely labeled action of studying with the merely labeled teacher, then got the merely labeled degree, then got the merely labeled job, made merely labeled money, had a merely labeled marriage—the merely labeled “I” made a merely labeled marriage with a merely labeled husband, with a merely labeled wife, then had a merely labeled child, then had merely labeled worries, merely labeled fears, merely labeled separation—merely labeled meeting, merely labeled separation. Then, one ate merely labeled food, wore merely labeled clothing—ate food merely labeled from the side of the mind, wore clothes that were merely labeled from the side of the mind, then lived in the merely labeled house from the side of the mind. Then one experienced merely labeled happiness, or merely labeled problems from the side of the mind. The merely labeled “I” did merely labeled work in the merely labeled office, which was merely imputed and came from the side of the mind.

In Tibetan, *tok pai par tak sam*. *Par*, “there,” has great meaning; it means merely imputed by thought. *Tok par* gives the whole idea that the thing entirely comes from the mind, by the force of the mind, under the control of the mind.

The merely labeled I heard of the merely labeled Kopan Course from a merely labeled person or the merely labeled news, information, and came by merely labeled airplane, getting a merely labeled air ticket from the merely labeled office by paying merely labeled money. Then the person came to merely labeled Nepal, and up by merely labeled taxi to the merely labeled Kopan. The merely labeled I saw the merely labeled Kopan Gumpa, and the merely labeled Kopan monks. The merely labeled I listened to the merely labeled teachings, from merely labeled Zopa, in the merely labeled hut covered with a merely labeled sheet. The merely labeled I did the action of merely labeled listening to the merely labeled teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment in order to achieve merely labeled enlightenment for the sake of merely labeled sentient beings.

When we think like this, for somebody who is familiar with meditation, it becomes a meditation on the emptiness of all these things.

Then, the other way—according to our perception, according to the projection of ignorance, according to the hallucination of ignorance, in the view of ignorance, the way our mind’s ignorance views the whole thing, which is only a hallucination, the way it believes in life, subject, action, object, the unlabeled, real I in the sense of being unlabeled, independent, truly existent.

When I say “real,” you have to know that it does not mean that those things do not exist. You have to know that I’m putting the word real in the sense that describes the experience without putting philosophical terms that mean that they do not exist—that they are truly existent or exist from their own side, independently, in that sense. What ordinary people think of as real, and what those who know the teachings of shunyata think of as real—those who have realized shunyata completely, who have realized the unification of dependent arising and emptiness, see everything, sees that all these things exist, but like a dream. Not a dream, but like a dream. They see that all these things exist, but like a dream, false. All these things appear to exist from their own side, but the one who has the unmistakable realization of shunyata, the unification of emptiness and dependent arising, for this person—even if this

person has the appearance that things exist from their own side, there is no clinging, no grasping, no believing that they are true. This sentient being, the one who has the realization of shunyata, sees everything like a dream—all appearances are false, and things that are merely imputed appear to exist from their own side.

Especially for those who have not realized emptiness, they experience the real I, the real this and that—independent, truly existent, unlabeled. So now, the real I was really born to real parents, who are completely empty. It went to real school, really studied from a real teacher, who is completely empty. The real I married a real husband or wife, who are completely empty, and gave real birth to a real child, who is completely empty. Then, after studying, the real I went to real university and got a real degree, which are all empty. Then the real I came by real airplane to real Nepal, to real Kopan, and is doing the real one-month course. All these things are empty. The real I listening to the real teaching on the graduated path to enlightenment, real enlightenment for real sentient beings—all are empty. All of these things that exist are merely imputed.

It is very important to really meditate. Even if we study teachings of shunyata for thirty or forty years, listening, studying, debating, even if we listen to the teachings on emptiness, shunyata, the truth, it is extremely important that we know that we are not trying to discover something that is not possible or does not exist. We are trying to see the emptiness that exists. Not realizing this, not understanding it, we hallucinate all the time. We are always grasping, believing, and clinging to that, and this makes endless problems and endless suffering in samsara. If we tie ourselves up with this ignorance, if we keep ourselves in this cage of ignorance, if we make ourselves be trapped in the iron cage of ignorance, there is no end to the problems. Then we cannot guide or liberate other sentient beings from all sufferings and its causes. Therefore we cannot give real benefit to others, which means eliminating the cause of suffering that exists in their minds.

Therefore it is very important and very good—even when we live in the city, while we're walking, emptiness, absolute truth is there. Anything that exists, exists because of emptiness, because it's nature is empty. Therefore it is a question of putting the effort into understanding the shortcomings of ignorance, the benefits of the wisdom of shunyata; that this is the main thing that can liberate other sentient beings from suffering, that can cease all the obscurations and cause one to achieve enlightenment, OK? That is the main thing.

When one can continuously practice, when one can continuously do the meditation on emptiness, even in the home, living in the city, working, one can do retreat continuously on the awareness of emptiness—retreat from ignorance, from the hallucinations.

So now, for example, relating to now, think of the subject, I, merely labeled, so you think, I. So whenever you think I, merely imputed, whenever you think of I, that is what you have merely imputed. Whenever there is a thought of I, that I is the one that is merely imputed by you. There is no other I that exists. So, think that. So sometimes you can meditate just on that—that this I is merely imputed. For hours, many hours you can meditate on that. It is unbelievably worthwhile, just simply meditating on that.

This merely labeled I doing the merely labeled action of writing on the merely labeled paper, doing the action of merely labeled listening to the merely labeled teaching, the merely labeled I doing the action of merely labeled drinking the merely labeled tea. The merely labeled I doing the action of merely labeled walking on the merely labeled path. Whatever you're

doing today, you should meditate as much as possible like this. In the break time, and also in the session, some of the sessions—in some meditate on emptiness, in some meditate on dependent arising. It is better to meditate more on dependent arising. That itself becomes meditating on emptiness. There is no danger. As much as possible, practice awareness—every minute, hour, whatever you’re doing, as much as possible, whatever action you’re doing.

While you’re doing this, the delusion does not arise, doesn’t give any opportunity, and it becomes unbelievable protection. As many times as you’re able to practice awareness, delusion does not arise, so one doesn’t create negative karma—only good karma, no negative karma. This becomes unbelievable purification. Even a doubt in shunyata arising breaks samsara into pieces and leaves an imprint on the mind.

Meditation on shunyata is regarded as very powerful purification. The wisdom of shunyata is the *only* thing that can remove ignorance. Nothing else can remove ignorance. So this means you’re preparing for liberation. That many hours, you’re preparing for your own liberation. So it’s very, very important. This is the best TV, the best movie, and it is also very interesting. You’re watching a new thing, which you haven’t seen before. In the movies you always see the same thing—fighting, killing, or actions of attachment, desire, which you have seen many times, they are nothing new. Actions of anger, actions of attachment—they are nothing new. You have seen this numberless times but this one is very new.

[Dedication prayers]

Lecture Six: Labeling Appearances

11 December 1987, pm

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the creative bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all mother sentient beings who equal infinite space, who have been kind from beginningless time. Therefore, I’m going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment, also clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teachings according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.”

The original subject is the equanimity that is the foundation of bodhicitta, which is generated by training the mind in the seven techniques, Mahayana cause and effect, realizing that sentient beings are your mother, remembering their kindness, repaying their kindness, great loving kindness, and then great compassion, the special brave attitude, and bodhicitta.

As I mentioned before, the basic problem here is the rising discriminating thought of anger, attachment, discriminating some sentient beings closer and some far. It seems that the basic thing is, because of grasping at the happiness of this life, the happiness of this life is so important. Even for the person who has faith in reincarnation, that there is life coming after this and also past lives, even if the person has faith in the reincarnation, because of the basic problem, one hasn’t cut off the attachment clinging to this life’s happiness. In the mind, this life’s happiness is so much more important in the long run, all the way up to enlightenment, all the future lives, which are difficult to see. In the mind there is the attitude that this life’s happiness is more important than all those others up to enlightenment.

As there's attachment clinging to this life's happiness, when somebody interferes with that happiness, anger arises. You understand how it happens in your mind.

If there is no clinging to the happiness of this life, to the happiness of having comfort, receiving material, reputation, or praise, even if somebody interferes, or when there is discomfort, when somebody doesn't give you material or presents there is no problem. Even if you normally receive birthday presents, the year that you're practicing controlling the mind and attachment, nobody gives you a birthday present on your birthday. In the year you cut off the attachment clinging to the happiness of this life, on your birthday even if no one gives you a present, even one flower, or one candle, or a cup of tea, even if nobody said, "Happy birthday," there is no anger or upsetness. Even if the family gave birthday presents to other people on the same day. For you, the condition of not receiving materials from others is not a distraction to the mind. Getting materials, not getting materials—it is equal, whatever happens. Then the same thing—when there is bad reputation or criticism, you are not bothered, there is no anger arising as there is no attachment clinging to or seeking happiness, reputation, or praise.

In fact, you are even happier, because comfort, receiving materials, praise, and reputation make the mind confused, they make it develop delusion. Those things delude the mind. As the disturbing thought arises, it obscures the mind. You see the shortcomings of those things, so your mind is happier with the opposite conditions. Like this, the eight worldly dharmas are equalized for your mind.

Particularly we think, first of all, that the happiness of this life, the day-to-day life happiness, is so important—each hour, each present happiness is important. We have attitude, so we have attachment clinging to that. That's why even the person who benefited you in the past but today harms you and disturbs your happiness and your wishes becomes a big disturbance—because of thinking of this moment's happiness as very important, and the grasping and attachment clinging to this moment's happiness. This is what I think.

Because of that, if somebody bothers me now, even if he helped this morning, or in the past months, years, I only think of the attitude that considers this moment's happiness important. That attitude is there continuously; that is the main concentration. This is the expectation or the main concentration. It becomes a big distraction. Anger arises, and one discriminates that one as the enemy. What the person is doing is harm, that one is the enemy. That's how one discriminates. First one discriminates the action, what the person does, and afterwards one discriminates that as harm, and that becomes the reason to prove that that person is the enemy.

It is the same thing with the person who benefits, who gives help, who gives comfort, who gives materials, praise, or reputation. If there's attachment seeking this happiness, then you discriminate what the person does as benefit or help. Then your own creation, your own discrimination is used as a reason to prove that that person is a friend.

In other words—take the person who is angry at you, who dislikes you, who hates you, and the person who likes you. The person who hates you criticizes you, talking about your mistakes, faults, and incapacities—blaming you. Then there is another person who likes you and who praises you. First of all there is the perceiver, the one who discriminates. There is the perceiver of the enemy or friend. The discriminator, being oneness with the selfish mind. Being oneness with the selfish mind, living life with a selfish mind, oneself, I, is not oneness

with the mind, it is differentiable, but I'm putting it this way according to our attitude. So then there is attachment clinging to the happiness of this life.

These are the doers, the creators, the ones who make harm and benefit, who discriminate praising as help, and criticizing as harm. That person who praises is a friend, that person who harms is an enemy.

Out of this attitude, on that person's words, you label, "This is good, helpful, this is good." Then after you label that "good," you have the appearance of good. On that person's words, "You are so beautiful," or "You are so wise," you label, "It is good," "This is nice." After you have labeled "nice," you have the appearance of nice or good. Because of this, you label the other person "friend." Right after you label the other person friend, there is the appearance of friend to you. A friend appears to you.

What this person does is what the selfish mind wants, what the attachment seeking happiness for this life, clinging to the happiness of this life wants. What this other person is doing to you is not what the selfish mind wants. The selfish mind always wants the best for the self, always seeks the best happiness for the self. The selfish mind wants happiness for self, worldly concern, happiness of this life—nothing else but the happiness of this life. It's seeking only the happiness of this life. What this person is doing is not what the selfish mind wants—it's the complete opposite. What this person is doing is not what worldly concern wants, it's the complete opposite of what the worldly concern wants. Because what this person is doing is the opposite of the selfish mind and worldly concern, with this attitude, with this thought, you label that person's criticizing, talking about one's fault, as "bad." "This is bad." After you label, "This is bad," there is the appearance of bad to you. On these words "bad" appears to you. Then because of that reason, then you label the other person "enemy." After you label enemy, there is the appearance of enemy to you.

Now, the person who has never seen a Tibetan lama, who doesn't know what a Tibetan lama looks like, sees the body.

Even if he sees a Tibetan monk, wearing robes and with the appearance of a monk—no, let's put it this way. This person who doesn't know Tibetan lamas sees an Eastern person, a monk wearing robes. But because he saw many Hare Krishnas and is familiar with shaved heads, he thinks, "Oh, this one has his head shaved, he's a Hare Krishna." Without asking, he labeled "Hare Krishna," on that person. Seeing the shaven head, his mind figured out that's a Hare Krishna. So he labeled and he believed in his label, Hare Krishna, and then he has the appearance of Hare Krishna.

But when he comes near and asks, "Are you Hare Krishna?" and hears that this person is a Tibetan Buddhist monk, then he thinks, "Oh, Tibetan Buddhist monk." So then his thought labels, "This is a Tibetan Buddhist monk." And with the label there is the faith that he is a Tibetan Buddhist monk.

Right after he labels "Tibetan Buddhist monk" with faith, with belief, there is the appearance to him of a Tibetan Buddhist monk, and the appearance of Hare Krishna stops. He stops labeling, "That is a Hare Krishna." The appearance of Hare Krishna is stopped for that person's mind. So now, for this person who discriminates, as there is the belief that this is a Tibetan monk, he has the appearance of a Tibetan monk.

Like this it is exactly the same—the subject, I, the action, object, everything, whatever appearance we have right now here, your seeing me, myself see you, decorations, thangkas, flowers, tables, the mattress, the ceiling, the seats—the whole thing—all of these appearances are like the appearance of the Tibetan monk, or the Hare Krishna, on the person, on the same object. The whole thing comes completely from one's own mind. All that we see now here, right now here, the whole thing completely came from our own mind. What appears to you is what you have labeled, what appears to you is what you have labeled there. There's nothing that appears to you that you haven't labeled there. There's nothing! This is very important, a very essential thing to meditate on, a very subtle point—this becomes a meditation on emptiness and dependent arising.

When you go to the supermarket or the department store, there are billions and billions of objects, billions of objects appear to you. Even a primitive Tibetan person or a person from the mountains, a nomad or somebody in the supermarket in the West, in a department store or a supermarket, even though he doesn't know exactly the names to label, what appears to him is what he has labeled. The number of objects that appears to him in the department store or the supermarket, even though he doesn't use the labels because he has not been introduced to them, even though he doesn't know what for those things are, those machines and things, that whole room of make-up, cosmetics, what he sees is what he has labeled there. Then he's told, "This is perfume, what it does is this, this is lipstick, what it does is this." After he is introduced to the name of each thing, he has the appearance of, "This is lipstick, this is eyelash, this and that." So like this.

Same thing, when we're here, whatever we see, the objects that our senses contact, whatever we recognize, are all what we have imputed. When we go shopping, in each shop it's all like this. As I told you this morning, we buy something that our mind has merely imputed, which we have labeled. We buy something that appears to us by labeling.

For the person who doesn't know that there's toilet paper, there is no appearance that this is toilet paper. The person who doesn't know that this is toilet paper, who is not introduced, doesn't label, "This is toilet paper," and he has no appearance of toilet paper, that this is toilet paper. Now that is very clear. The example of toilet paper is very clear. The other person who knows what toilet paper should look like comes along in the shop and he sees the rolls of paper there in a pile, and thinks, "Oh, that's toilet paper." Or, "There's toilet paper," and then he labels. First he sees the rolls of paper, the base, that have that particular characteristic, and then he labels, "Oh, there's toilet paper." After seeing that roll of paper, that particular shape and character, he labels, "Oh, there is toilet paper." So then that person has the appearance that it's toilet paper.

So now we should think of and remember toilet paper. When we think of toilet paper, when we see toilet paper, the appearance looks like it has completely nothing to do with the mind. The appearance of toilet paper seems to have nothing to do with your mind at all. You who see toilet paper, when you analyze the appearance of the toilet paper that you see, when you are aware of the appearance, "How do I see the toilet paper? How is that appearance of toilet paper?" It seems to be completely independent, nothing to do with the perceiver—you the perceiver, your mind. That's completely wrong, completely false. The appearance of toilet paper is completely from its own side, the toilet paper exists completely from its own side, the toilet paper has been toilet paper from the beginning—it didn't have beginning. It did not depend on the factory, or on the person's ideas, the person making it.

Like this, all appearances, bad and good, everything completely came from one's own mind. The whole thing came completely from one's own mind.

You can think whether this completely came from the mind or not? The base on which you label toilet paper is another appearance—you labeled on another appearance, the appearance of the base. Appearance, what is it? The base. So now, *that* appearance, the paper, the certain shape, describes the purpose. So now, all that appears to you is again what you have imputed, what you have labeled there. So again, the base is also the thing that appears to you, so it is an appearance. That appearance came from your mind. When you think of the base of that label, again that is another appearance. It came from one's own mind.

The conclusion is that everything that exists is what is merely imputed on the appearance. Now you see, enemy or friend—now it is very clear—enemy, friend. The appearance of friend and enemy completely came from your own mind. Without your own label, the bad and good on the action, there's no label, there's no bad or good. Without your own label of friend or enemy, there's no appearance of friend or enemy. All these appearances completely came from your own mind. They are your own mind's creation.

So now, you can see that it is completely childish, that you create it with your own mind—this selfish attitude and worldly concern is made up, created, and then you get angry or upset with your creation, the enemy. Then, you grasp and cling to your own creation, the friend.

You can see now completely that no one makes your life up and down, except you following the selfish mind, following the worldly concern. You can see this point very clearly, one hundred per cent, very logically—no one causes your life to be up and down, or makes your life happy and unhappy, up and down. The main creator is yourself, your own mind. Everyday life, your emotional state, life up and down, your environment, the appearance of bad and good—no one else makes it except one's own mind.

That's why Buddha said that oneself is the enemy and oneself is the guide. When you do not follow, when you control the selfish mind, the worldly concern, when you protect your own mind from those, you become a guide. You do not create problems, so you become the guide, the doctor.

This way, one controls attachment and the dissatisfied mind, so all the problems, the heavy problems, stop. Drug addiction stops, alcoholic problems stop, don't happen, one is healthy, no smoking problems, the body is very clean, and one has a healthy, longer life, with a clear mind, and control. If there is control, then there is peace of mind. And then one is able to do the works of this life, Dharma practice, and obtain happiness beyond from this life up to enlightenment. One doesn't get cancer or all those other diseases, one is able to control the mind, the desire, and one doesn't get AIDS. Then, one doesn't create problems, so therefore there's no heart attack. One controls desire, one doesn't follow the selfish mind, and that way one controls the desire grasping the happiness for self. This stops all the relationship problems, and all the fears and worries.

Anyway, by not following the selfish attitude, there is no worldly concern arising, because the worldly concern seeks happiness only for self and that is only the happiness of this life. So there's no way for that to arise. By not following the selfish mind, one able to control desire, so one doesn't need to do abortions again and again and have so many other unnecessary expenses. There is so much anger toward the enemy, so if there is a very selfish

mind, there is so much worry and fear and that again makes one sick. Then, there is so much expectation to the friend, the permanent friend. There is so much grasping, so much expectation, and again by following the selfish attitude, one creates so much confusion, so many problems. Then the relationship problems become like a spider's web.

This brings so many diseases, basically by following the selfish attitude, and many other disturbing thoughts arise and brings so many diseases, besides other problems. Then there are diseases that do not have medicine—for those that have medicine there is some possibility to recover. There are so many unnecessary expenses, a house, cars, so many things, children, life insurance, then what else? Taxes, I don't remember other things, besides the usual expenses. Then, because of not practicing Dharma, the good heart, or not renouncing selfish mind, first one makes oneself unhealthy, and then one has to go to the doctor for x-rays, and operations, and there is a big debt, and then many other problems. Then, one has to go to the psychologist and this and that. One creates so many unnecessary expenses. Then when it comes to a very difficult point, there is no way to get more money, and it comes to the point that now it is easiest to steal. One comes to that conclusion.

That's the reason I said that you become the best doctor. By not following the selfish mind, you become the best doctor. You don't create the cause of problems, the cause of the sicknesses, so you yourself become the best doctor, the best guide. You become the guide leading yourself to enlightenment.

[Tape ends]

...enemy, to rise ill will, to rise anger, there's no point, there's no point *at all*. You can see attachment grasping so much at these objects—the friend, the appearance of friend, and anger, harm, the appearance of the enemy, which is your own creation. Now you can see that it is completely crazy. When we analyze like this, our attitude and our creation, giving up anger and grasping, we do not find differences between ourselves and those who are called crazy, doing nonsense things, believing in nonsense things, saying all kinds of nonsense things, having all kinds of appearances and doing many funny things. There is no difference between ourselves and those crazy persons, those others that you regard and point out as being crazy.

So, same thing like this with all the rest of the objects.

I'll stop here.

One thing about science. This is the best research, the best psychology. You can now see very clearly the root of the problem and what should be done. You can understand both from these teachings.

So today, and also tomorrow, in the session time, in the prayer time, as much as possible, practice awareness of the merely labeled "I," the merely labeled action, whatever action you are doing, the object, whatever you're doing with the mind, whatever you're doing with the body, with the speech, with the eye, with the senses.

Then also this meditation—my explanation of appearance is related with this. Each time you label subject, action, object, there's an appearance. So also you recognize that this came from your mind.

It's very important to intensively meditate—meditate at the breaktime, as much as possible, while you're talking, while you're reading a book, eating, and also when you sleep. I don't mean don't sleep. Also go to bed with this understanding, with this awareness. Actually, this is something very good to train in for five days, seven days—very, very good. Unbelievably worthwhile.

More on this merely labeled meditation of dependent arising, which is the meditation on emptiness. However many hours, however many minutes one meditates, however many times one meditates, one comes closer and closer to liberation, to the cessation of the cause of suffering and suffering.

[Dedication prayers]

Lecture Seven: The Eight Mahayana Precepts **12 December 1987**

Please listen to the teaching well, generating at least the creative bodhicitta thinking, “At any rate I *must* achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all the mother sentient beings who equal infinite space, who have been kind from beginningless time. Therefore, I'm going to listen to the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment.” Also clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teachings according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

I thought this evening to explain a little bit about the benefits of taking precepts, and in particular the eight Mahayana precepts, and then to continue the explanation on equanimity.

The basic idea is how to benefit others directly and indirectly by living in the precepts. As I mentioned the other day, it is very important to remember the days, even if you do not live in the precepts, even if you haven't taken vows. This is very good to remember, and you can easily understand, even without religious faith, without talking about karma and reincarnation, without going over that, even if there is no foundation, faith, reincarnation, and karma.

As I mentioned the other day, when you live in one vow, one precept, not to kill, for example, then every other sentient being does not receive the harm of killing from you. Every other sentient being does not receive the harm of killing from you. The harm that they receive becomes less, and that is happiness. That is happiness, that itself is benefit. Giving materials makes them happy, and explaining the truth, revealing the truth, explaining the cause of happiness, the cause of suffering, what is to be practiced and what is to be abandoned, what is right and wrong—this benefits them. You are benefiting them.

So now, here in this case, by not killing, by stopping the harmful action of killing on the object of sentient beings, by sentient beings not receiving that harm from you, they have happiness, they have peace. That is what they are receiving from you.

If you are living in two precepts, not killing and not stealing, then all the rest of the sentient beings receive less harm from you, and they have more peace. If you live in three precepts, including sexual misconduct, then the rest of the sentient beings receive less harm, and have more peace. If you live in the precept of abandoning the harmful action of telling lies, the rest of the sentient beings receive much less harm from you, and greater happiness. Then comes

abandoning taking intoxicants—by living in this precept other sentient beings do not receive harm from you being an alcoholic—direct or indirect harm, now and in the future. They receive much greater peace from you. It is the same thing for the rest.

Then, for example, a doctor needs the complete capacity, the complete understanding of the diagnosis and the methods, not only understanding the disease and its details, but also knowing completely all the methods, how to cure the disease. You need wisdom and method. If these are limited, then to be able to perfectly cure the disease is very difficult. Even though everyone relies upon you, from your side, if your wisdom is limited, if your method is limited, you cannot help everyone perfectly, even if people rely upon you.

So now, similarly, in this case somebody who doesn't have the complete understanding, the complete capacity, somebody who has only a very gross understanding, who understands only a few means to cure, or only some part of the diagnosis—then they can help a small number of people, not everyone. They cannot help perfectly. Because of not having complete wisdom and method, other sentient beings have to suffer with that disease. So from this example you can see that the doctor has complete responsibility, and the patients are dependent on them.

Now, same as this example, with those other precepts that have to do with attachment—following desire obscures the mind seeing the shortcomings of desire. When the mind is overwhelmed by strong attachment, even if you normally know the shortcomings of desire, at that time you don't remember the problems that can arise from desire. This obscures the mind from seeing the problems of desire, now and in the future, now and in the long-run. And then, during that time, the mind becomes very gross and superstitious. It is obscured to seeing emptiness, the absolute nature of the I, the absolute nature of existence. That also interferes with the mind feeling the sufferings of others. During that time, you cannot feel the sufferings of others, and the mind becomes very foggy, overwhelmed by attachment, so it is difficult to feel the sufferings of others, and difficult to generate bodhicitta.

Without the realization of shunyata and bodhicitta, there is no way that you can liberate others from all the suffering and its cause, and no way you can lead sentient beings to the peerless happiness of enlightenment.

Even though there are so many sentient beings with whom you have karmic contact, whom you can benefit, because of not having completed the Dharma wisdom and method, all the realizations, you cannot guide them. Even if the sentient beings are relying upon you; even though there's a connection, you cannot perfectly guide other sentient beings if the mind follows the delusions, if the mind follows the disturbing thoughts. Doing so interferes with the development of your own mind, and then you cannot understand their level of mind, characteristics, and every single means that will fit them, so you cannot perfectly guide them. That's how oneself following the disturbing thoughts interferes with other sentient beings' achievement of enlightenment. It interferes with oneself leading other sentient beings to temporary and ultimate happiness.

So, the conclusion. When you are living in the eight precepts, all the rest of the sentient beings don't receive the eight harms, directly or indirectly. So therefore, all sentient beings receive that much peace, they have that much peace. This happened by depending on you, by depending on your change of action, your change of attitude. Therefore, all the happiness and peace of all the rest of the other sentient beings is dependent on you, dependent on each of us.

Therefore, how much we're able to develop good heart, some good quality there in our mind—some have more, some people have less. However, there's something! It is a question of smaller or greater. The more we develop this good heart, the more our actions become subdued, doing less harm to others, and bringing more and more benefit. So all the rest of the sentient beings receive greater and greater benefit or peace. Here, each of us is completely responsible for all sentient beings' happiness and each of us is completely responsible for eliminating other sentient beings' suffering.

I think this point, for example, anybody can understand, except if the person is crazy. If you're going on a road or in the office, if you respect others, if you act humble, if you respect others with body, speech, or mind—in the office or on the road, or in the family, wherever it is—it pleases the other person. If you do the opposite, if you show arrogance to that person on the road or in the office, or the home or wherever it is; if you show arrogance or disrespect, or keep the nose in the sky—is that right?—you know, hanging the nose in space; if you show an arrogant manner and disrespect with the body, speech, and mind, it upsets the other sentient being. Everybody can understand this, except if the person is crazy.

The other person's happiness is dependent on how you act toward them. If you act with loving kindness thought, with compassion, if you smile at that person, it makes them happy. If you show them a dislike-face, it upsets that person, and makes them angry. In the family, in the office, in the Dharma center, wherever it is, even in day-to-day life, the happiness of other sentient beings is affected by how you act. Their happiness is completely dependent on you.

Even from this example we can see how we're completely responsible for the happiness of other sentient beings. This attitude is very important. The reason I repeat this again is that this is very important to feel in everyday life. It is a very simple thing, not like the merely labeled shunyata, or emptiness. If you try to think of merely labeled, it looks like it doesn't exist—but this is not like that, coming to the point that it doesn't exist. And then when you try to accept that it exists, it has to be independent, it should exist from its own side. It is not complicated like this. It is not like the subject that the mind can find complicated.

If we keep this idea, if you keep this attitude in your mind and heart continuously, thinking, "I'm responsible for all the sentient beings' happiness," then wherever you are, in the family, or office, east or west, wherever, there's always a thought to not harm others and to benefit them, and to give your happiness to others. So you are always aware of your manners of body, speech, and mind.

If we can bring happiness to others, those whom we see in everyday life, those with whom we eat in everyday life, those whose faces we see after we wake up, day and night, if we are able to bring happiness to them, and gradually if we are able to develop the good heart with them, then we're able to bring happiness into the world, into the minds of all sentient beings.

This is easy to understand, and the way sentient beings receive so much happiness by living in the precepts is the same. That's the basic thing. So this is something that we can easily understand even if we don't believe in reincarnation or karma. How it is extremely important, and how from this everybody can understand how we are completely responsible and how it is extremely important to develop the good heart and change the bad attitude, to abandon bad attitudes and actions, such as these nonvirtuous actions.

Taking the eight Mahayana precepts has great benefit according to the time. It is mentioned in the sutra text called *The Victory of Concentration, ting nge dzin gyalpo*, that a person with a calm mind who offers food, drinks, umbrellas, *par den*, which is one particular flag, part of the offerings— and garlands of light offerings, which means many lights lined up like when you look from an airplane at the city at nighttime, garlands of light offerings, toward many millions of Buddhas, *cha wa tak tik*—there are ways of counting but I don't know exactly, I don't remember, for eons equaling the number of the sand grains of the river Ganges. One explanation counts it also as the sand of the Pacific Ocean. A person living in one precept, day and night, during the teachings of the One Gone to Bliss, which means Buddha— anyway, when the teaching of Buddha degenerates, this merit is much greater.

What it is saying is that in a bad time, a very evil time such as this, the teaching of Buddha has degenerated, and if you live in one precept for one day, this has much greater benefit than making countless offerings with a calm mind of food, drink, umbrellas, banners, lights, and flowers to millions of buddhas for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges, or the Pacific Ocean. It looks like the latter should have much greater merit, but actually, in reality, the person who lives in the precepts for one day in this very difficult time, this very degenerate time, this very evil time, has much greater merit than the other one.

Therefore there is no question that in this incredibly degenerate time, if one takes the Mahayana ordination, reviving and purifying, if one protects these vows even just once in life, the merit one receives equals space, equals the infinite sky. As one is able to receive that much merit, that much one will experience perfect happiness.

Then, having a perfect body, having nothing wrong with all the organs, the senses, having all the needs, of a higher race, handsome, beautiful, with all qualities, and with perfect surroundings, all the wealth that one wishes, perfect surroundings, with people who are helping wherever one wishes, obedient.

However, if there's much good karma accumulated, if one continuously attempts to accumulate extensive merit, even in this life, now and in the future, especially in later life, then in the lives after this, until one becomes liberated from samsara, one always receives the body of a happy migratory being—whatever perfection that's needed, one receives. Then, highest enlightenment.

People who have much merit, much good karma that they have created in the past, now, just by thinking, just by the thought coming, the wish coming, things naturally happen, even without asking others. Things naturally happen, like somebody arranging it, like somebody knowing what you want. Actually, it's your good karma and merit that has been accumulated in this life and in the past. Who arranges your good karma? Your own thoughts—the virtuous thoughts that you have generated in the past.

You get surprised when miracles happen, when good things and success happen without expectation. Simply by wishing it, things happen. All this is due to having accumulated good karma. So actually, even though people don't talk about karma, or use the language of karma, or of cause and effect, they do talk about good luck and bad luck. Even the person who never heard Buddha's teachings, who has no understanding of them, who never heard any religious teaching about karma, normally in their daily lives talk about good and bad luck. When they don't succeed in the football match, when they don't win the football gambling or the lottery, or when they have a lot of difficulties when they travel, they talk about bad luck. And when

everything runs very smoothly, when they are able to climb over the snow mountains going the difficult way where there is no road, if they are able to climb, then they talk about good luck. Actually they are talking about karma. They don't use the word "karma," but they are talking all the time about karma.

The person who succeeds, who wins all the football matches or the lottery, or the horse race or whatever it is, is a very lucky person. That means the person has created much good karma for success. The person has created much luck. But the problem is they don't know how to create luck. Sentient beings want the result of good karma, they want the success of the good karma, success of the luck, but the problem is they don't know how to create luck. The result that they expect is happiness but the cause that they create in practice, with their actions, is nonvirtue, due to ignorance, due to not having Dharma wisdom, or knowing what is the cause of happiness and suffering.

In this evil time, this degenerate time, if we are able to take this Mahayana ordination, reviving and purifying *once*, even just once, it is extremely fortunate and has greater meaning than having found a wish-granting jewel equaling the number of atoms on all of this earth.

Now, comparing like this, we can understand. Even if we don't understand the wish-granting jewel, we can understand diamonds or dollars. If we own diamonds or dollars equaling the number of atoms of this much earth, but if we do not practice morality at all, then this much dollars, this many diamonds can't stop the negative karma that has been accumulated in the past, and cannot stop rebirth in the lower realms, or the rebirth of suffering migratory beings. After death, that alone cannot help us to not be reborn into the realm of the suffering migratory beings. This alone cannot cause us to receive the body of the happy migratory being.

Even if we don't own even one dollar or one diamond, leave aside the eight Mahayana precepts, if we practiced even one precept in this life, it would protect our own life. When death happens, it will protect us from the rebirth of the suffering migratory beings, and that becomes the cause to receive the body of the happy migratory being in the next lives—not just one life, but many lives. Even if we do not own one dollar or one diamond, if we practices, if we lived in precepts, practiced morality, we will be able to succeed in all the temporary happiness and ultimate happiness.

Is the number of people or the ants on this earth more? The number of the ants or the people?

[Answer inaudible]

Yeah? Why is this?

[Reply inaudible]

Why are the number of human beings very little when you compare them to the number of ants. The number of people, for example, in Australia or America, the number of people and animals, shells. Which is more?

[Reply inaudible]

Sorry, snails. The number of the people and the number of snails. You didn't go to the beach? Huh?

[Reply inaudible]

On the rocks, in whole piles, in the sand, shells, shellfish. So, in America, the number of people are more or shellfish? Australia? I think it's a very good meditation. This point, I think, is very important, a very, very important meditation, just to watch the ants and the number of people, then shellfish...

[Tape ends]

...the very, very tiny creature that stays on the leaf, this tiny white one—what do you call it? The tiny, white one that stays on the flowers, on the leaves, and is green. Aphids. Even that is unbelievable, in the very small flowers, in the plants, in the wood, especially the old wood—it is so easy for them to be born.

Compare by the numbers. If you don't compare, and just look at people, it looks like it is so easy to be born. It looks like a lot of human beings, but if you compare—perhaps you are thinking of birth control pills, but think of the time before birth control pills were made. If you compare, it shows that to be born as a human being is more difficult. If you compare with the animals, the creatures, even with just one type, generally in the world the number of human beings is very little. That shows that to be born as a human being is very difficult, but to be born as an ant is very easy, to be born as a chicken is very easy, to be born as a cockroach is very easy. I think this is a very good meditation, just this point.

Then, among the human beings, those who have received a perfect human rebirth—who have received a human body qualified with the eight freedoms and the ten richnesses,—is very, very rare. Being a human being doesn't mean having a perfect human body, having all the eight freedoms and ten richnesses. We see so many suffering beings and so few happy beings, so this describes the minds of sentient beings.

These teachings are telling us that now in our everyday lives, if we do not watch our mind and take care of our mind, with remembrance and awareness, if we do not apply our body, speech, and mind in virtue, it is very difficult to be born as a human being and very easy to be born as one of those suffering beings—a narak being, a preta being, an animal being. Even one type of creature is unbelievable, uncountable, even at *one* place they are very difficult to count, even the ants just at Kopan are very difficult to count. The preta and narak beings are like this.

So there is no question about those who do not practice, those who do not know how to accumulate, how to practice Dharma, to practice virtue and to abandon nonvirtue, who don't know and who don't practice, no question. Even if we are trying to practice the virtuous thought, it is very rare. Even if we are able to generate a virtuous thought, it's very rare. Not all the time—mostly nonvirtuous thought, mostly attachment, and then the other ones, anger, jealous mind, pride, ignorance—many other disturbing thoughts arise.

It is so difficult because from beginningless lives our mind has been habituated with delusion, with the disturbing thoughts, therefore, it is so easy to be selfish, to be a friend of selfishness. It is difficult to renounce the self-cherishing thought. So it is difficult to protect the mind away from ignorance, anger, and attachment. The attitude is like this, so it is unbelievably

easy for the nonvirtuous thought to arise—the nonvirtuous thought arises like rainfall, like a waterfall, uncontrollably.

There is no question about those other sentient beings, those lower beings, the devas, the human beings—there is no question about those who do not know Dharma, do not practice Dharma—it is extremely difficult for a virtuous thought to arise for them, a thought unstained by ignorance, anger and attachment. Therefore, there are uncountable numbers of suffering beings, migratory beings—even the spider eggs are many hundreds, she carries all those eggs. It's unbelievable.

If you think like this, if you look at those natures, and at the suffering of other sentient beings, all these things came from the mind. All those that we see in the ocean, in the ground, in space, in the house, in people's bodies, even in human beings' bodies, in the animals, worms, in the food, the octopus, what do you call this? In the restaurant? The lobster, the red one that they bring in a big dish—in the restaurant they keep them in water, and then the person comes along and chooses whichever he wants to eat, and the hotel waiter takes it away and puts it in the boiling hot water. All these things are the result of the unsubdued mind. The conclusion is that karma is very important. The essence of the Buddha's teachings is to subdue the mind, all the emphasis is on the mind. As it is explained in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, "What is the need of so many other practices, so many other conducts, except the practice of protecting the mind." That is why the Buddha said to not accumulate even one nonvirtuous action, but to live in perfect virtue. Subduing our own mind is the teaching of the Buddha.

If we are able to subdue the mind, then we are able to protect our karma, and abandon negative karma and practice virtue. If we do not subdue our own mind, then we cannot abandon negative karma. So, continuously every present life, every minute of life, watch the mind to protect the karma. Even if we know the entire teaching of Buddha, sutra and tantra, billions of thousands of words, spoken or not, if we do not take care of this point, watching the mind and protecting karma, if this most important point is missed, not taken care of, left out, then nothing happens. Now and in the future the birth that we experience, the birth that we will take after this life—everything will be undesirable—it's not what we expect, it's not what we wish. Then also, we cannot benefit other sentient beings. It is very difficult to benefit them. We cannot benefit other sentient beings extensively.

I'll stop here.

[Dedication prayers]

Lecture Eight: The Benefits of Precepts **12 December 1987**

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the creative bodhicitta thinking, "At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all the mother sentient beings who have been kind from beginningless time. Therefore, I'm going to listen to the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment."

The particular subject is the benefits of taking the Mahayana ordination, the purifying and reviving ordination.

The great benefits are from the side of the place. In this impure realm, accumulating one virtue in the time it takes to snap one's fingers has much greater merit than practicing pure virtue in the pure realms for eons. This place, the world we are in now, is much more impure among the impurities. Even if we are able to keep the Mahayana ordination, reviving and purifying, the eight precepts, for the duration of snapping the fingers, even if it didn't last longer than that, the merit is infinite. If that merit of keeping the ordination for the duration of snapping the fingers was materialized, it could not fit into this world. If it became substantial, it could not fit on this earth.

Now, there are great benefits due to the nature of the ordination. It is said by Buddha in the sutra that it reveals morality completely, "One who is living in morality doesn't receive harm from the vicious poison, the great black naga, however vicious it is." The great black naga, the poisonous snake—no matter how vicious it is, how dangerous it is, the person who is living in morality doesn't receive harm from it. Therefore, there is no question of other harms.

In the place in India where I lived for eight years, where the monks who wanted to continue to study who escaped from Lhasa in Tibet lived—most monks who escaped from the three great monasteries, like universities—among the four sects, the Gelugpa sect does extensive study of philosophy in the debating way. This is the form of study. At this place, there were monks from all the four sects who lived together and studied, and did meditation together, puja. This place is called Buxa and was a concentration camp during British time. It's the place where Gandhi and Nehru were imprisoned. During our time, the Tibetan monks came, and that place was chosen for those who wanted to continue their study. Now they are not there, they moved many years ago to south India. This place is between Bhutan and India, and it is a very mischievous place, with many harmful creatures—snakes, leeches, mosquitoes, and I think all the possible bugs, outside and inside.

Anyway, the interesting thing is this, as it's mentioned in the teaching. The snakes were outside and even in the houses, between the roof and ceiling, between the ceiling and the walls. They made nests and sometimes they dropped on the monks' beds—the monks were around and studying, reading scriptures, and the snakes fell down on the bed from between the ceiling and the wall. Also, the snakes came from outside, from the ditches, inside. The monks often caught them and threw them away. But you never heard a story that a monk was bitten by a snake, although you did hear that the police were bitten by the snakes, and so were the villagers, the Bhutanese, Nepalis, or the Indians. They killed the snakes when they saw them—huge, long snakes—they put kerosene on them and lit them up. This is how the police killed them. But they got bitten by the snakes.

The person living in pure morality does not receive harm. Living in pure morality itself is abandoning negative karma. The person abandons creating negative karma, abandons the cause of the harm—the person lives in the practice of abandoning the cause of harm, and living in morality purifies past karmas. In the eight Mahayana precepts, for example, by bearing the hardships, the hunger, thirst, and fasting, one purifies the negative karmas to be born as a hungry ghost, as a preta. For example, generally when one eats or drinks, when one does these enjoyments with attachment, it makes the cause to be born as a preta. If one does these enjoyments with ignorance, it causes one to be born as an animal. If one does these enjoyments with the negative mind of anger, it causes one to be born as a narak being.

Then also living in morality, abandoning gossiping out of attachment, purifies and we don't create the karma to be born as many other results, such as birds that make noise all day. By living in ordination, in the precepts, practicing Dharma, doing meditation, listening to the teaching, bearing hot and cold—those things purify the negative karma to be born in the hot and cold naraks.

By living in the eight precepts we stop the eight negative karmas. Therefore, we do not experience the various problems that arise from negative karma, such as killing, stealing, engaging in sexual misconduct, telling lies, taking intoxicants, sitting on high, large, expensive beds, wearing perfumes, garlands, rosaries, and eating food at the wrong times with anger, ignorance, or attachment. Abandoning these eight negative karmas, we do not experience the various problems that arise from the eight negative karmas at all.

I think you went through the four suffering results of each complete negative karma, each complete nonvirtuous action. Each of these complete negative karmas, such as the ten nonvirtuous actions, has four suffering results: the ripening aspect result, birth in the realm of the suffering migratory being. Even when we are born in the realm of the happy migratory being, there is the possessed result, meaning that in the place where we live, there is much fighting, war, epidemic disease, many things which harm the life, the waters do not fit the body, the elements do not fit our health, and there are many things that harm us, and it is dirty.

Depending on which negative karma we have created, there is a particular possessed result that has to do with the place, and there is a particular problem, depending on which particular negative karma one has accumulated in the past. There can also be problems with the food, such as not having protein, being unable to digest medicines—so many things like that. Those are dependent on the ten nonvirtuous actions. In some places the crops and food have much protein, and in some places they have no protein and [crops] are very harmful to the body or are scarce, and there is much famine, drought, or too much water, floods, cyclones or earthquakes—all these things, so many different problems. These different problems differentiate the results of the different nonvirtuous actions of the beings who experience these problems with the place. They have to live in such unbelievably cold places, or unbelievably hot places.

They experience the harm that they caused to others—even after they are born as human beings they experience what they have caused others to feel themselves. Then, there is the result similar to the cause, which means that they do the action again and create the negative karma again, because of the previous habit, such as in the case of sexual misconduct.

Normally, even if you know that it's a foundation of problems, even if you think not to do it, you are habituated from past lives and you will do it again and again, and again you will get caught in the problems. So, on and on like that, without talking about future lives. Creating the result similar to the cause is doing the negative karma that you have done in the past again. *This* is the biggest problem. From these four suffering results, creating the result similar to the cause is the biggest suffering, the biggest problem.

Creating the result similar to the cause has four more suffering results. You did not do these negative karmas again because of wanting to experience the four types of suffering in future lives, but it happens uncontrollably, out of ignorance. Then again in the next life, even if you

are born as a human being, again you create the same negative karma, creating the result similar to the cause, and again that has four suffering results. So like this, it goes on and on.

For example, just looking at this life, even one nonvirtuous action, sexual misconduct for example, makes so many problems with this person, that person. Even one time it makes so many problems with so many people, and it goes on and on, on and on, like this. Then you have to go to court, you have to pay so much for lawyers, then go to prison, and so many things. The first mistake is following desire, clinging to the happiness of oneself, and secondly the happiness of only this life. So, that's the basic problem. The basic mistake is not controlling desire. So then, because of following desire, there is anger when somebody interferes. When the selfish mind, or the worldly concern doesn't get what it wants, or when someone bothers it, then anger arises, jealous mind comes, and many other disturbing thoughts arise from these things. That leads to killing others, ill will toward others, harming others with the body, speech, and mind, destroying others' possessions, destroying other's perfections, harming others' lives, then that also makes you steal others' possessions, others' surroundings, the husband and wife that belong to others—it leads to many other negative karmas. Following desire gradually leads to so many other negative karmas.

Even if you are not born in the narak realms, every day, even if you have a human body, because you did not control the mind, everyday life is like being in hell. Everyday life is such a disaster. Even if you have a human body, even if you are a human being.

The whole life passes just in problems, unable to cope with problems. One year goes, another year, one week goes like this, one month goes like this, one year goes like this. Then you are unable to cope with the present problems, and at the same time you create the cause of more problems, because of not controlling the mind. While you are experiencing the problem, experiencing the result, the shortcomings of desire, at the same time you are continuously creating negative karma.

The other main mistake is following the self-cherishing thought, following desire. Following the self-cherishing thought, you follow desire. However many years you live the life, no matter how long you live, it's like living in hell.

Each year it is enough just to not commit suicide. So many times the thought comes to commit suicide. So many times you have been about to do it, and so far it did not happen. Somehow by luck, so far it did not happen.

While you have received this precious human body, specially qualified by the eight freedoms and ten richnesses, which has an unbelievable opportunity, you can completely end desire. The precious human body, specially qualified with the eight freedoms and ten richnesses gives ultimate happiness by ceasing the desire, the disturbing thoughts, and you can win. Desire has been controlling you and taking over from beginningless rebirths. Now this time, you have found this perfect human body, you have the unbelievable opportunity to control desire, to completely cease the desire and make it vanish.

In that way, completely, you can end the whole entire suffering of samsara, all the problems of samsara. While you has this precious human rebirth, which gives this unbelievable opportunity to escape, you can completely eliminate the whole cause of suffering, the whole problem, by generating the path, wisdom and method, to liberation, to enlightenment, and you can lead an uncountable number of sentient beings to liberation and enlightenment.

In the few years that you have this precious human body, if you didn't get this opportunity done in the time when you have this precious human body, again you let yourself become under the control of desire, you become the slave of desire. Then even this precious human body is used to continuously create the cause of suffering, the cause of problems.

This way there is no peace; you don't live even one year in peace. And then, when death happens, there is nothing worthwhile that you have done for yourself. There's nothing to remember, nothing worthwhile that is done for other sentient beings, no benefit that you have given to others, there's nothing to feel happy about, "Oh, I have done this, I have done this great benefit for others." There's nothing to feel rejoicefulness about in the heart. You can't think, "It's OK for me to die, I have done enough preparation for the happiness of future lives." Within you there's [no] confidence, "I've no upsetness, I have done enough preparation for the happiness of future lives." There's nothing even for your own happiness, something that is satisfactory, something that is done—there's nothing. There is also nothing worthwhile that is done for other sentient beings. Then you see your life as completely empty, you lived the life completely empty, and your life is finished, being empty. Then, you have to die, the breath stops with an unhappy mind, with a dissatisfied, empty heart.

So, if we do not practice Dharma, controlling the disturbing thoughts, desire, then due to some other good karmas from another life, even if we get born as a human being after some time in the next life, then again we experience the suffering results of the nonvirtuous actions done in the past. We experience the same problems over and over, relationship problems, all these things again, over and over.

By living in the morality, which means abandoning and controlling desire, and abandoning negative karma, even if we cannot keep the other precepts but just one precept, abandoning sexual misconduct, just living in one precept, in this way we do not experience the four suffering results at all. If we do not practice Dharma, controlling the mind, the harmful thought, the desire, this negative karma from the ten nonvirtues, sexual misconduct, will be repeated and accumulated many times in this life. But by living in just this one precept, we do not create all those negative karmas for all those years, all those coming years. However, in this life, if we took the precepts for one day, like today, living in the eight precepts, even if it is just today, then we stop creating negative karma. Therefore we do not experience the four suffering results—we do not experience creating the result similar to the cause in the future lives. Therefore, we do not experience the four suffering results that come from creating the result similar to the cause. So because of that, we create the result similar to the cause, and again there are the four suffering results.

If today this negative karma is accumulated, it has four suffering results, and again that creates the result similar to the cause; that has another four suffering results and that has another four suffering results—and so it goes on and on without end, life to life, it continues on and on, until we abandon desire, it continues.

In this way, without abandoning the cause of suffering, desire, we have to experience the suffering of samsara without end, like this. Even from one negative karma, there are four suffering results, so it goes on and on without end, life to life. It is not that so many negative karmas accumulated in this life are experienced in the next life, but each one that is completed has its own four suffering results. If we understand, we should think well like this, how each of the negative karmas is harmful from life to life. So harmful, how harmful it is,

for temporary happiness and especially to achieve liberation, how harmful it is—then there is great pleasure in controlling the mind. We see the shortcomings of desire as very deep, endless, and then we are so happy to abandon it, to abandon it in this life. In this way, we abandon the desire with our free will, with great happiness. We see the unbelievable temporary and ultimate benefits, so easily. As much as we see the harm of desire and the benefits of abandoning it, the peace and happiness, all the way up to enlightenment, then we are happy, and there are no difficulties at all in abandoning desire, and renouncing negative karma. It's so easy, it's like drinking nectar. So enjoyable, no difficulties.

When we do not see karma, we do not understand karma; when we do not think well, when we don't practice awareness of the shortcomings of desire—for that person avoiding desire becomes like losing the heart, like losing some precious thing. Instead of great enjoyment, unbelievable happiness, that becomes the greatest pain, so difficult, so unbelievably difficult. For that person who is not aware of the shortcomings of desire, who has no understanding of karma, no awareness of the shortcomings of desire, it is easy to follow desire, but the result, the problems, are difficult to experience, the resultant problems are unbearable. It is so easy to follow desire, the disturbing thoughts, but the problems of this are so difficult, so unbearable to experience. Not only in this life, but until samsara ends, until we end samsara, we have to experience the problems of the disturbing thoughts.

The other way, it is so difficult to follow desire and so unbelievably easy to abandon desire. It is so difficult to follow desire. So, the whole thing depends on mind training, which way our mind gets more trained.

[Tape ends, next tape missing]

Lecture Nine: The Emptiness of the I **14 December 1987**

I prostrate to the Arya Triple Gem. Thus have I heard at one time...

[Rinpoche recites the *Heart Sutra* in English up to "...no attainment and no non-attainment..."]

Relating to experience, form is emptiness, emptiness is form, how it appears to you, how it appears to your mind, so relating to the I, the condition is first the association of body and mind, the aggregates. Depending on that, you label, your mind merely imputes "I" on these aggregates. Then the I that you have merely imputed by your thoughts on these aggregates does not appear as if it is merely imputed but appears in the aspect of an I that exists from its own side. After your thought merely imputes it on the aggregates, it does not appear as merely imputed. It appears to exist from its own side. But it cannot be found anywhere, there is no way it can be found. This I, which is unlabeled, independent, cannot be found anywhere from the tip of the hair down to the toes. Inside and out, it cannot be found anywhere. It is completely empty.

The I is neither all the aggregates nor form, substantial, feeling, recognition, the compounded aggregates, or consciousness. The I is none of those, not the whole aggregates, or any of them. Now when you analyze like this, it looks like the I exists separately from the aggregates, from the association of body and mind, and from the five aggregates gathered. It looks like it exists separately from this, but the I doesn't exist separately. From the previous

analysis it looks like the I exists separately from them, that the I is none of these and that the I exists. The I is neither the whole aggregates nor each of them. Of course the I exists, so then it seems it should be that the I exists separately from these aggregates, but in reality, to make it clear, the I doesn't exist as either oneness with the aggregates or separately from the aggregates.

How does it exist? Then the question, is there no I? No I is not our experience. The existing I is our experience. That the I is non-existent is not our experience. If there is no I, there is no suffering, there's no problem for this "I." So if you don't have problems, if there's no problem for this "I." This I experiences sufferings, problems that the I doesn't want. The I wants happiness and the I is experiencing problems that the I doesn't need, and the I is missing happiness, the I is devoid of happiness, which the I needs. So, if there's no I, there's no problems, and then why should we work, why should we keep busy, why should we spend thirty, forty years, why should we study from child time, why should we do all those studies to have happiness, to obtain happiness for this I, why should we keep busy to get a job? So, it's completely contradictory to the daily life experience, that there is no I.

If there is no I, then there's no you. Then you have no problems, there's no subject who experiences the problems, there's no receiver, there's nobody who receives the problems. There's nobody who gives problems, there's nobody who receives problems, there's nobody who experiences problems. You understand?

Also, if there's no I, in general worldly life, there's no need to rush, to get all this education to get a job. And then, if there's no I, there's no need of religion for happiness, no need, no reason. What for? You don't exist and others do not exist, so what for? If we don't exist, others don't exist, same thing. Then you don't need to meditate. What for? If there's no I. If there's no I then it becomes simplest; if there's no I, there's no need for action. What for? If there's no I, there's no action, no object. Then the omniscient ones, the fully enlightened beings, the holy beings, generating the good heart to benefit others becomes completely wrong, because others do not exist. Then Buddha revealing teachings—it comes to the point that the Buddha is hallucinated.

Just any thought of the I, without analyzing the different thoughts of the I, without differentiating, if all the thoughts of the I are wrong, hallucinations, that means there's no I, because if the object that the thought perceives or believes in is non-existent, then that thought is a hallucination, a wrong conception.

The way the thought perceives the I, the way it believes in the I, if that I existed, then that thought would be a correct, valid thought, not hallucinated. The way it thinks, the way it perceives the I would be a correct thought, that perception would be correct.

Without analyzing the I that exists and the I that doesn't exist, and the different thoughts that realize the I that exists and believe in the I that doesn't exist, the unlabeled, independent I,—there are two aspects of the way the thought perceives the I. For the thought, there are two. One is the hallucinated one and one is the valid one.

Simply think, check—if all the thoughts of I are wrong, then how can you generate great compassion, great loving kindness? There's no way to generate great compassion, great loving kindness. Great compassion not only thinks how wonderful it would be if sentient beings were free from all the sufferings, but thinks, "I want to cause the sentient beings to be

free from the sufferings and the cause.” So that’s great compassion, taking the responsibility upon oneself. “I will do it!” That is great compassion. So, if all the thoughts of the I are wrong, now the thought of great compassion is wrong—this mistake arises. Great loving kindness becomes wrong, because there’s no I, so that thought is wrong. There’s no I so there’s no action for that I to cause the sentient beings to be free from the sufferings and to lead them to happiness, to liberation, to enlightenment.

The holy beings, the bodhisattvas having the thought, “I will do this. I will bear the hardships working for other sentient beings. I will achieve enlightenment to accomplish the work to free sentient beings from all the sufferings and lead them to all happiness.” So you see now, in this case, bodhicitta becomes the wrong conception and the hallucination to be abandoned. Is it like that? Do you see it like that or not? Or do you see from a different way?

[Answer inaudible]

Or you can sleep. If you say that all the thought of the I is wrong, do you think then that the bodhicitta becomes a wrong conception? To be abandoned?

[Answer inaudible]

What?

[Answer inaudible]

There is a way to generate bodhicitta, is there? Huh?

[Answer inaudible]

It’s a good way to think, to analyze. Then in reality, there’s no one who takes responsibility, there’s no I.

The I neither exists as oneness with the aggregates or as separately from the aggregates, OK? So, then the question comes, is the I nonexistent? No! The I exists, but what it is and how it exists is not as oneness with the aggregates, nor separately, which means without depending on the aggregates—neither as oneness with the aggregates nor separately from that, but as being merely imputed on the aggregates by thought. In other words, the I exists on the aggregates as mere name.

Form is empty, emptiness is form. Relating to the I, which is the easy way to meditate, the easy way to realize emptiness, on the I. That’s why in the Madhyamaka teachings, it says that in order to realize the emptiness of the aggregates, first one should realize the emptiness of the I. Without realizing the emptiness of the I one cannot realize the emptiness of the aggregates. That is because it is easier, I think because of the base, it is easy to recognize the refuted object, the true existence of the I. It is easier to recognize that than to recognize the refuted object, true existence, the unlabeled, true existence of the aggregates.

So now, the I is empty, form is emptiness. Relating to the I, form is emptiness, emptiness is form. So the I is emptiness, the emptiness is the I, which is the easy way, easier to understand, easier to feel, by relating to the I, by meditating on the I.

So, now, the I is emptiness; the I that is merely imputed on these aggregates, on the association of body and mind. That I does not appear as merely labeled, but as a real “I.” This means the real self, the I, appears as independent, truly existent or existing by its nature or from its own side.

The I is emptiness. Now, where you are pointing out emptiness is on the real self, the refuted object, the real I that is appearing from above the I that is merely imputed on these aggregates. Where you are pointing out the I is emptiness. The real self that you feel is in a particular location in the body, not in the belly, not in the head, but around the heart, inside the chest. I don’t mean the heart, this bumping, physical heart, but inside the chest—the I that you feel somewhere in a particular location, that one.

When you say “I is emptiness,” the real I or the truly existent I, that which appears to you from above the I that is merely imputed by your thought on the aggregates. So, I is emptiness. This becomes empty, you see this as empty, it exists nowhere. That is because the I is dependent, and it exists by depending on the base, the aggregates, and the thought that labels. The I exists by being merely imputed on the base by the thought. Therefore, this I is completely empty of the independent I. This I is not the independent I, not the truly existent I, not the I existing from its own side. This I is completely empty of those. So, this emptiness is the absolute nature of the I. So the I is emptiness.

By relying upon the word, by using the word on the truly existent I, the I appears from its own side as real, merely imputed on this base by the thought. That is empty.

Now what comes as a result through this realization of the emptiness of the I, the result that comes in your experience is that the I is not completely non-existent, the I is not non-existent even in name. The I is not non-existent even in name. Not that. I exist! The definite understanding that comes in your heart by meditating and realizing the emptiness of the I is that the I is not non-existent even in name, that the I exists.

By realizing our own hallucination on the I that exists from its own side, we realize that the unmistakable refuted object is completely false, completely empty. The true existence of the I is completely empty.

Then, naturally, without choice, like the scales in the shops, if this is heavier, the other one comes up, if one is heavier, this one comes up, like that, so, without choice, that happens. So same thing—by realizing the emptiness of the I, that the I is empty of existing from its own side, then even if you don’t try to think that the I exists at all on these aggregates, naturally, without choice, very powerfully and strongly, the understanding that the I exists on these aggregates under the control of name comes very strongly and powerfully. Even if you don’t particularly try to think that the I exists, the definite understanding, the realization that the I exists, that it exists under the control of name, comes so powerfully.

So then, this time there’s no I from its own side but, from above the aggregates, there’s no I, but there’s an I on the aggregates. There’s an I from the side of the mind. There’s no I from its own side. From above the aggregates there’s no I existing, but there’s an I from the side of the mind. There’s an I on the aggregates.

There’s the definite understanding that the I exists, which is the realization of the conventional truth, or the relative truth, depending on the translation that is used in different

times. Relative truth, or conventional truth. So, there is the definite understanding that the I exists on these aggregates. The person clearly sees the way the I exists according to reality. Then, in a similar way, the person sees that there is the existence of negative karma and good karma, and there is the existence of happiness and suffering. In a similar way, he sees dependent arising. The perceiver, the one who experiences the happiness and suffering of the I, exists, then also from that, one gets the definite understanding of how negative karma exists and how good karma exists, and also the definite understanding of how suffering exists, how happiness exists, and how they are dependent arisings. How they exist and how they are dependent arisings, by depending on base and thought.

This gives us more faith in karma. Instead of losing faith in karma by saying there's no I, which makes us think, "If there's no I, what's the point of practice, of putting effort into abandoning negative karma and practicing good karma? If there's no I there's no action of giving harm others, and there's no action of benefiting others."

In this way it gives us stronger, greater faith in karma. Through this great faith in karma we are able to see how things exist, how things are dependent arising, and also we know, we have the definite understanding because they are dependent arisings. The negative karma, the cause of suffering, is dependent arising, so by depending on causes and conditions it can be stopped, it can be purified. Negative karma exists by depending on cause and conditions, so same thing, by depending on cause and conditions, it can be stopped. Suffering exists by depending on cause and conditions, so therefore by depending on cause and conditions suffering can be stopped. Happiness depends on cause and conditions, happiness exists by depending on cause and conditions, so it can be developed. So you have a much more clear understanding how you can stop suffering and how you can develop happiness. In this way it is possible to achieve liberation. It gives you a very clear understanding that you can achieve liberation.

The reason there is suffering is because there's a cause. The cause is a dependent arising, dependent on cause and conditions, and the delusion arises and produces karma—karma arises because it is dependent on cause and conditions, so therefore, you see now, there are six causes explained in the lamrim teachings, there are six things that cause delusions and disturbing thoughts to arise. By stopping those six causes, delusions cannot arise.

The disturbing thought arises, so like this, basically, when we meet objects, how does the delusion arise? How do ignorance, anger, and attachment arise? How do they arise? They do not arise without depending on cause and conditions. They arise by depending on cause and conditions, by the imprint that is left on the mental continuum by the disturbing thoughts and karma that was produced by disturbing thoughts in the past. By generating the remedy path within your own mind, gradually you can completely remove the seed and the imprint that is left on the mental continuum by the disturbing thoughts and karma.

If you don't have the imprint, if the mental continuum is completely pure, however many sensual objects, however many desirable objects are around, thousands, billions, however many desirable objects are around, it is impossible for disturbing thoughts to arise. However, many objects make the strongest desire arise, however many millions, even if you're always with them, continuously, all the time, without separation, it is impossible for attachment to arise even for a second.

In day-to-day life, there are six causes for disturbing thoughts that are explained. However, the basic thing is the imprint. So now, because the imprint is there, because you haven't removed it by generating the remedy path, when you meet the object, either you don't know because you haven't met the teachings that contain the advice on how to control the disturbing thoughts, and you don't have Dharma wisdom, or you know the teachings, meditations, and advice about how to control disturbing thoughts, but you don't apply them, you don't practice. Therefore, since you are not protecting yourself, just by meeting the object of desire, suddenly the desire arises, and just by meeting the object of anger, suddenly anger arises. Like lighting, or like when you strike a match and the flame comes. Like that, the imprint of delusion is there on the mental continuum, not having been removed, and you're not applying the meditations, not putting the teachings into the practice, so, by meeting the object, the disturbing thoughts arise. It is the same thing with jealousy, pride, and all the disturbing thoughts—they arise, and create karma.

That's how the delusion is a dependent arising, the cause of suffering, and how disturbing thoughts and karma are dependent arising. Depending on the cause, the imprint, and those six conditions, and the object, the disturbing thoughts arise. When you see how the delusion is a dependent arising, when you see this clearly, you have the definite understanding how you can eliminate the cause of suffering. Then you have the clear understanding of how you can stop disturbing thoughts from arising. Not only by keeping distance from the object, not only by using the teachings to control the disturbing thoughts, the lamrim teachings, the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment, not only that, but there are many things.

The second method is putting the teachings of the Buddha into practice when you meet these objects and there is the danger for disturbing thoughts to arise. The main thing is to generate the remedy of the path, which completely removes the imprint and ceases it, within the mind. If there is no seed at all planted in the ground, and if you take the seeds that are there out, it is impossible to grow a poisonous plant that harms life. So, same thing. In this way, you can make it impossible for disturbing thoughts to arise. That's how liberation is possible, how ultimate happiness is possible, and how everlasting happiness is possible. The definite understanding of how you can achieve liberation and full enlightenment comes from the understanding of dependent arising. It comes from the understanding of how the cause of suffering and suffering are dependent arising, how they are empty, how the subject—the one who experiences suffering and the one who creates the cause of suffering—is empty, a dependent arising.

What His Holiness often explains is that the Buddhist view is dependent arising, and the practice of conduct is not to harm other sentient beings. Here is the whole essence of the Buddhadharma, sutra and tantra, the Lesser Vehicle teachings, the Paramitayana teachings, the tantric teachings—all the teachings of Buddha, the whole essence of Buddha's teaching is contained in this.

Happiness and suffering are all dependent arisings. This also shows the need for compassion within you, within your mind—even for the reason of the happiness of self, and especially for the reason of the happiness of other sentient beings. There is a need to stop harming others and the need to benefit other sentient beings. In some ways, all the reasons come from dependent arising, because everything is dependent arising, and this gives the reason to have compassion and the conduct to not harm others and to benefit them.

The other one is more subtle; maybe I will explain the twelve links in the teaching.

When you see the emptiness of the I, then there's no I from above the aggregates, but there's an I on the aggregates. There's an I existing without choice on these aggregates under the control of name. This comes without the need to think, but as a result of your experience. This might be the realization of the subtle dependent arising of the I, that the I exists on these aggregates as merely imputed by thought.

This one is the realization of relative truth. After realizing emptiness, the experience comes that the I definitely exists on the aggregates. The truth of the illusive mind, *kun tsob kyi den pa*, or the truth of the all-obscuring mind, in other words, relative truth. This realization comes only after having realized the absolute truth, the emptiness of the I, the truth of the absolute mind. As the absolute mind sees the object, emptiness, it is the truth for the absolute mind. As the illusive mind, the all-obscuring mind, sees the ignorance of true existence as true for that, so it is the truth of the all-obscuring mind. So the emptiness of the I is the truth of the absolute mind, and the I itself is the truth for the all-obscuring mind. As the ignorance of true existence sees the I, it is true for that ignorance.

Form is emptiness, I is emptiness. So you see that emptiness is form or emptiness is I. Relating to the I, you see its nature as empty of existing from its own side. That is the I. You have realized the I is empty. I is empty of existing from its own side. The I whose nature is empty of existing from its own side, that is the I, so the emptiness of the I.

First of all, you see the real I. First of all the I appears, the truly existent I on the aggregates, and then you see that is empty. The I which appears to exist from its own side is empty from its own side. And then you see that the I that exists is imputed on the aggregates, so emptiness is the I. So it relates very well with experience.

The whole meditation is done on the I that is merely imputed on the aggregates—on that there is the appearance of true existence. This I is empty of existing from its own side. This I that is empty of existing from its own side, exists in mere name or being merely imputed by thought, or under the control of name, is I.

Anyway, you can check, you can meditate and check whether it is like that or not. I don't know! It might be like that. I'm not sure.

[Tape ends, next two tapes are missing]

Lecture Ten: Equilibrium Meditation

15 December 1987

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the creative bodhicitta, thinking, "At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all the mother sentient beings who have been kind to me from beginningless time, the kind mother sentient beings equaling the infinite space. Therefore, I'm going to listen to the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment." Also, clarify the righteous conduct of listening to the teaching according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

Here, the great equanimity, which comes before exchanging oneself for others, is having the equal thought and action to benefit without discrimination, equal toward all sentient beings. So, if we do the meditation elaborately, there are six ways to meditate depending on the all-

obscuring thought, the illusive thought. Then there are three ways to meditate depending on the absolute thought.

There are six ways to meditate, six ways to actualize the mind to become the great equilibrium depending on the all-obscuring thought, and three reasons why our own mind should be great equilibrium from the side of others or depending on others, and then three reasons why our own mind should be great equilibrium from the side of oneself.

There are three reasons why our own mind should be great equanimity from the side of others. As it is mentioned in the *Guru Puja*, “There’s no difference at all between myself and others, not desiring even the smallest suffering, not having satisfaction at all in happiness. Please grant me blessings to generate happiness when others are happy.”

Oneself and others are exactly equal, not desiring even the smallest problem, not having satisfaction at all with happiness, and desiring even the smallest comfort, pleasure, even in a dream. But if we are perfect, if we receive what we wishes, if we are comfortable, then we are happy. If others have perfection, if others receive what they want, if others are happy, then we feel jealous and dislike. So far because of not having changed this attitude, we did not become liberated from samsara, we didn’t achieve liberation, enlightenment. There’s no reason at all, while oneself and others are exactly equal, desiring happiness and not desiring suffering, to renounce some sentient beings and to cherish some sentient beings, not giving help to some sentient beings and giving help to some sentient beings. There’s no reason at all.

Think, “I must have equal thought and action to benefit all sentient beings. As I’m responsible, as I should eliminate suffering for this I, obtain happiness for this I, same thing, I should eliminate the sufferings for other’s I and seek to obtain happiness for them.”

Secondly, if there are ten beggars, they are all exactly equal, they all need food and drink. They are exactly equal, they all need food and drink, but if we discriminate and give food and drink to some beggars and not to other beggars, this is our own fault. They are all exactly equal; they all need food and drink. Like this, all sentient beings, leave aside that they are devoid of ultimate happiness, even temporary happiness is like stars in the daytime. They are exactly equal, because they are devoid of happiness and they all want happiness. So, there is no reason at all for us to give up, to renounce some sentient beings, to not help some and cherish some other sentient beings. We *must* have equal thought and action to benefit all beings.

Third, if there are ten sick people, they are all the same, exactly equal in being sick. So there’s no point at all in giving up some sick people, renouncing some sick people, not giving them help, and cherishing some sick people and giving them help. No point at all.

Same thing, all sentient beings are exactly equal, all sentient beings are suffering, they are exactly equal, suffering, under the control of the three poisonous minds, ignorance, anger, and attachment, and they are constantly experiencing suffering—either the suffering of suffering, or the suffering of change, of the samsaric temporary pleasures which depend on external conditions. Particularly those, the suffering of change, and pervasive compounding suffering. They continuously experience these sufferings. What pervasive compounding suffering means, without explaining the meaning of each word, is being under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts. You may not understand perhaps because the explanation of the twelve links, the evolution of samsara, didn’t come at this point, so some of you may not

get a clear idea of how in that way samsaric beings are under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts.

Anyway, to put it in a simple way, we can use the example of our everyday life, including birth. From birth, the beginning of this life, since the consciousness took on the fertilized egg in the mother's womb, starting from there until now, we have been experiencing pervasive compounding suffering, being under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts.

Having taken a human rebirth is good, but it would be much better if we didn't have to take birth at all, any samsaric birth. If we didn't have to take any birth in samsara, it's much better. Taking birth in samsara, compared to other rebirths that do not have the opportunity to practice Dharma, which have very heavy sufferings, compared to those, having taken this human birth is better. But the best thing is to stop birth. There is no need to take birth in samsara, therefore there's no problem with meeting the undesirable object, not meeting the desirable object or not finding or meeting the desirable object. And we do not experience all the problems of old age. We don't need to stretch out the wrinkles, we don't need to dye the white hair black, or whatever it is, to cover old age. We don't experience all those problems of old age, without choice we have to go through these. Then sicknesses and death.

The best thing would be to end taking birth in samsara. That would stop all the problems that come after the birth. In our everyday life, I think we can use the example in every hour, every day, every year, every month, every hour, every minute, always there's something that we have to experience without choice. There's some problem there, there's some undesirable thing, something we do not wish to happen, something that we don't want to experience. There's always something there. Simply we can use this example, how we are under the control of karma. The past karma, created in the past, that we are now experiencing, arises due to disturbing thoughts. The reason these things are happening, the main mistake, is that we allowed ourselves to be under the control of disturbing thoughts. Being under the control of disturbing thoughts is the very root, the main mistake.

We are experiencing the result now, continuously, the result of that karma that is motivated by disturbing thoughts. We continuously experience it, and while we are experiencing the result of the karma, one after another, as we meet the different objects, the various disturbing thoughts arise. As we do not practice, as we haven't removed the imprint by generating the remedy of the path, continuously we are under the control of disturbing thoughts. Then out of these we create karma, on and on.

Sentient beings are exactly equal, being under the control of the three poisonous minds, and they continuously experience suffering. There is no reason at all to give up some sentient beings, to not give them help, and to cherish some other sentient beings, to help them. Think, "I *must* have equal thought and action to benefit all sentient beings."

Now, we may think, "It doesn't matter from the side of the sentient beings, so why should I benefit them? Why should I have concern to benefit them? From my side why should I have concern for benefiting them?"

There are three reasons that we should have the great equilibrium thought, the equal thought and action to benefit all sentient beings. Three reasons from our own side.

By depending on the kindness of sentient beings, we achieve liberation, and by depending on the kindness of sentient beings, we achieve enlightenment. All our past, present, and future happiness we receive from them, from the kindness of sentient beings, and sentient beings have been our mother, father, and friend, and benefited us so much in the past, and also in the future they will benefit us. By this reasoning, this conclusion comes, “Without discriminating, I must have equal thought and action to benefit all sentient beings.”

Then the question comes, that sentient beings benefit but they also gave harm. The question comes. But the duration of times the sentient beings harm us is only occasional; it is not all the time. It is only from time to time. Sentient beings benefit directly and indirectly, so the benefit is much greater than the harm. The length of time of the benefit is much more than their giving harm. So, even by looking at the present life, our own life, we can understand.

Indirectly, if there are no suffering sentient beings there wouldn't be bodhicitta, there wouldn't be compassion. If there were no bodhicitta, there wouldn't be any bodhisattvas. If there's no bodhisattvas there wouldn't be Buddha. Without Buddha, there's no Dharma, there's no Sangha, and we don't have the opportunity with the holy objects, the great opportunity to purify any negative karma that we have accumulated in the past, to stop experiencing obstacles, to achieve the realizations of the path, to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings.

In this way we can see the incredible opportunity that we have to purify the cause with Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—it completely came from the kindness of sentient beings. Even though we have been evil, selfish, and we have created so much negative karma and given so much harm to other sentient beings from beginningless lives, and we have accumulated negative karma, the cause of problems—all this we can purify.

By practicing Dharma, what the Buddha taught, and then by actualizing the actual refuge, Dharma, within us, we become the Sangha and can benefit and guide other sentient beings. We can cease completely the cause of suffering and the whole entire suffering of ourselves, and also liberate others from all sufferings. We are capable of all of this, by actualizing the actual refuge of the Dharma. We can liberate all other sentient beings from all suffering and its causes and be able to lead them to peerless happiness and enlightenment. Now there is all of this unbelievable fortune and great opportunity, completely by the kindness of sentient beings.

Buddha gave teachings, so we know what the cause of happiness is; we have Dharma wisdom. By meeting Buddha's teaching, by listening, reflecting, and meditating, we have Dharma wisdom knowing the unmistakable cause of suffering and the cause of happiness. We have unbelievable freedom.

Leave aside helping others by explaining and sharing the wisdom, by teaching others, by explaining to others, by revealing to others what is right and wrong, what is to be practiced and what is to be abandoned, what is Dharma wisdom. Leave aside all that opportunity to benefit other sentient beings. Just thinking of our own happiness for our own self, having unbelievable freedom with this Dharma wisdom, knowing what is right or wrong, what is to be practiced, what is to be abandoned, the cause of suffering, the cause of happiness. With this Dharma wisdom, there's free will, and every day, then how many years, how many months, how many weeks we have this perfect human rebirth, and even within one hour or minute or even a second, if we wish for great meaning, the happiness of future lives, any

future lives, the good body of the happy migratory being, deva or human being in the next lives, by having this Dharma wisdom even for one second, we create this cause of happiness.

Even if we wish to achieve ultimate liberation, everlasting happiness in this second by having this Dharma wisdom, we can create the cause. We can practice the three higher trainings, moral conduct, concentration and great insight. Even if we wish to achieve enlightenment with this free will, if we wish to achieve enlightenment in this second, by practicing bodhicitta we can create the cause.

With Dharma wisdom we can make free will, with Dharma wisdom we are free, we have free will; if we don't have Dharma wisdom, then we don't have free will. So with this Dharma wisdom, if we practice and attempt, we can achieve whatever we wish, these three great meanings, by creating their cause. Whatever we wish we can obtain by creating the cause, and however much we wish we can create so many causes even within a minute. All of this is an unbelievable opportunity for happiness, even for us, and all of this is completely by the kindness of sentient beings. The Dharma came from the Buddha. If we refer back, we can see that the opportunity for whatever happiness we wish to achieve is completely given by the sentient beings.

All the happiness of the three times, of the past, present, and future, all this came from good karma, not from negative karma. It did not come from nonvirtuous actions but is the result of virtuous actions. So, the virtuous action is Dharma, the virtuous action is the Buddha's action, Buddha's action that is possessed by the mind of sentient beings. Buddha has two actions, one action that is possessed by the Buddha's own holy mind and one that is possessed by the sentient being's mind. So all of our own past, present, and future happiness came from virtue, and the virtue is Buddha's action, and that is Dharma, and Dharma came from Buddha.

By referring back, the Buddha came from bodhisattva, bodhisattva came from bodhicitta, bodhicitta came from the suffering sentient beings. Therefore, all our past, present, future, all happiness is completely given by sentient beings. So, now you can see how all the three times' happiness completely came from sentient beings' kindness.

Now let's think this way, you can see friends quite easily, even though you don't see enlightenment, liberation, and how all the past, present, and future happiness came from the kindness of each sentient being. You think your friends are good, helping. They are called "friend" because they benefit you for the happiness of this life, the happiness that you desire. By that, you label the person "friend" by your thoughts.

When you don't see the extensive kindness of sentient beings, what you see is what they do only in this life—your understanding of the kindness of others is so limited, so little! So narrow, so little. It is only to do with this life. Even that more related to this year, this month, today, so little the kindness that you see.

When you think in the wide way, the extensive kindness, each time you experience happiness, each time you have comfort, either happiness by practicing Dharma, by having realizations, even the happiness of having a good reputation or being praised by other sentient beings, even drinks, house, clothes, these enjoyments; every time you experience happiness, it comes from all sentient beings, it is given by all sentient beings.

Now in this way, include the friend and then the stranger that you don't feel kindness toward at all, and especially the enemy that you don't feel kindness toward at all. Now, with this understanding of the extensive kindness of sentient beings, you see that all sentient beings are in these three, either friend or enemy or stranger. All sentient beings are contained into this, relating to you. Now you can see all sentient beings, friend, enemy, stranger, actually all giving is this happiness all the time, so indirectly you see how they continuously bring benefit to you. By thinking of this long evolution.

Even the enemy, when you think this way—with the buddhas there is no opportunity to practice patience at all because the Buddha does not have anger toward you. There's no disliking thought. Now what's left are the sentient beings. With the Buddha there's no opportunity to practice patience at all. So, now what is left is only the sentient beings.

Sentient beings come in these three. The person who helps you, the person who likes you, that is what is called "friend." That person has no anger or disliking thought toward you, so there's no opportunity for you to practice patience at all.

What's left after that is strangers. Most sentient beings are strangers. Strangers do not have anger or disliking thoughts toward you. The person who doesn't have that thought that likes you so much, loves you so much, and doesn't hate you, doesn't harm you, is called "stranger." Strangers do not have anger, therefore there's no opportunity to practice patience at all.

The only object that is left out, with whom you have the opportunity to practice patience, is the person who has anger toward you, the person who has disliking thoughts toward you, who hates you. If you do not practice patience with that person, there is no object at all with which to practice patience. The person who makes you angry, the person who disturbs you, if you do not practice patience at all with that person, there is no object at all with whom to practice patience. Therefore there is no way to develop your good heart. Your mind, which is in the nature of anger, won't get tamed or subdued, and there will be no liberation. Then you do not give liberation to yourself.

By completing the practice of patience—among the six paramitas, the paramita of patience—by completing this you are able to achieve enlightenment; without completing this there is no way to achieve full enlightenment. Then what happens is you don't achieve enlightenment, and if you do not attain enlightenment, you cannot do perfect works for all the sentient beings. Whatever happiness they're seeking, you cannot cause them to have happiness, temporary happiness, liberation, enlightenment. You cannot do this perfectly.

This is the greatest loss, that you are incapable of this. While you have all the opportunities to do perfect works for all sentient beings by attaining enlightenment; while you have all the opportunities to extensively benefit all sentient beings, then not practicing patience in order to for this to happen, simply following the side of the anger instead of following the side of patience. There's no greater loss than this, there's no greater defeat than this.

There's no one else with whom you can practice patience except this being who has anger. So therefore, the person who hates you, the person who dislikes you, the person who has anger toward you, is unbelievably kind. Their having anger toward you is unbelievably kind. If they do not have anger they won't receive the label "enemy;" by having anger they receive the label "enemy." So this is the most kind person who gives you the reason to practice patience,

this is the most kind teacher who helps you to put the teaching of patience that Buddha taught into practice. So they are as precious as the Buddha.

Buddha gave teachings on the practice of patience, and by practicing this we can become enlightened. In the same way, this person gives us the opportunity, reminding us of the teachings, reminding us of our practice. So by practicing with this sentient being, we become enlightened, we are able to complete the paramita of patience, we are able to achieve enlightenment, which has all qualities, having ceased all the obscurations and having all the qualities of realization. Think, “That person is my practical teacher, my guru, who gives me enlightenment, who gives me realizations to complete the practice of patience and to achieve enlightenment, in the hand. So unbelievably kind.”

They are precious like Buddha, they are precious like Dharma, they are precious like Sangha. Dharma, why so precious? Because by practicing it ceases all our causes of suffering, it ceases all suffering. It liberates us from all suffering and its causes. It is able to lead us not only to temporary happiness but also to ultimate happiness. So same thing, by practicing patience with this sentient being who has anger toward us, that’s the same thing. Practicing patience with them, who give liberation and enlightenment. It’s so precious.

The Sangha inspire us to practice, and the same thing, this person, this sentient being who has anger toward us shows the reason, the need to practice patience, inspires us to practice patience. So, so precious.

Think, “Even if the whole world was filled with jewels and I offered them to that person every day for millions of eons, I could not repay their kindness in letting me control my anger with them. I am able to control my anger by practicing, and their kindness gives me this opportunity. The tranquility that I receive by practicing patience is unbelievable.”

In this way even the enemy, the sentient being who gives harm, who hates us, is a most kind friend, dearest friend, because they give unbelievable benefit to our mind.

[Tape ends]

...and then as I mentioned the other day in the morning of the ordination, during the motivation, everything, the comfort of everyday life, depends on other sentient beings and came from other sentient beings. They have been our friends, relatives, helping us, all those things. Even the harm that they gave us was due to ignorance. We recognize them as an enemy, but actually they are friends—they are our most kind friend and teacher. We cannot find an enemy this way, we don’t find someone who is giving harm. Therefore, there is no reason at all to renounce some people and to cherish others, to not give help to some and to give help to others. So we must have equal thoughts and actions benefiting all sentient beings.

I’ll stop here.

[Dedication prayers]

Here we need the *lung* of the Vajrasattva mantra, the most powerful deity to purify obscurations and negative karmas, and also the oral transmission of the Vajrapani mantra.

All the buddhas' power is embodied in this form of a wrathful deity. "Wrathful" doesn't mean that the deity is angry with the sentient beings, it doesn't mean that. The buddhas show wrath to our selfish mind, the disturbing thoughts that bring all the problems. This selfish mind and these disturbing thoughts are the ones that don't bring us happiness, liberation, and enlightenment, so the wrath is shown to the selfish attitude and the disturbing thoughts. Out of this we create negative karma, and that's how we get diseases, the samsaric problems of the diseases—AIDS, cancer, all the diseases. There are also other sentient beings who become conditions for these things, such as devas, nagas, spirits, and so forth, and also coming under the control of disturbing and self-cherishing thoughts.

Vajrapani-Hayagriva-Garuda. Vajrapani is there, and then on the top there's Hayagriva, with a green horse head, and on top of that, Garuda. All these are manifestations of all the Buddhas' power. This is very powerful. The aspect of Garuda, the Buddha manifested in Garuda, that is very powerful against the nagas, the landlords, against those outer conditions that give harm due to the inner cause, the self-cherishing thought, the disturbing thoughts, the ignorance of the truly existent I and karma. Infections, cancers, leprosy disease—all those are caused by nagas.

Doing meditation-recitation becomes protection against all those harms, so we don't experience those diseases or if we have a disease, it heals that. The horse is powerful against different types of beings, the outside conditions, kings and so forth, which causes crises, which cause us to become unconscious, spirits called *tsen*. Vajrapani is the opponent of those spirits or planets called *de*, which cause paralysis, and all those diseases such as epilepsy. It is a common experience that those who have a very heavy disease that medicine does not cure, do this practice and then cancer and many other diseases get cured.

Think, "I'm going to take this *lung* of the Vajrasattva and Vajrapani mantras in order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all the kind mother sentient beings."

[Oral transmission of mantras]

[End of Discourse]

Lecture Eleven: Equanimity

16 December 1987

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta, thinking, "I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all the mother sentient beings who equal infinite space, who have been kind from beginningless time; therefore, I'm going to listen to the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment." Also clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teachings according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

The mind training in bodhicitta, equalizing and exchanging oneself for others, in order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all the kind mother sentient beings. Now, the great equanimity, the extensive meditation which makes the mind to become the great equanimity, there are six ways of reasoning by depending on the all-obscuring thought and three ways of reasoning by depending on the absolute mind.

There are three reasons from our own side. I'll just finish the three reasons from the side of others, why we should have equal thought and actions to benefit all sentient beings. So, from this section, the third one.

The example is of criminals in prison, who are going to be executed tomorrow. There's no point at all in giving some help and not giving others help. There's no point at all. It's the same. There is no point in being angry at some people and grasping at some. No point at all.

Same thing, sentient beings are in the prison of samsara. We and other sentient beings are caught in the prison of samsara by karma and disturbing thoughts, and this is particularly related to this. It is definite that everyone will die, but the actual time of death is uncertain. We are all exactly the same in being caught in the mouth of impermanence and death. Here there's no Wheel of Life, is there? Where? Others who cannot see it can visualize it.

The Wheel of Life is the painting that shows the true cause of suffering and the result, true suffering, and the evolution of the suffering, how we enter samsara, and how we circle in samsara. The Wheel of Life is held in the mouth of the Lord of Death. That signifies any being who is born in the six realms is not beyond the nature of impermanence and death. To show this, the Wheel of Life is held in the mouth of the Lord of Death.

In other words, we are living in the mouth of the Lord of Death, in the jaws, in the mouth of the Lord of Death. We are living in this, but we are not sure when the jaws will close. Like in the oceans, there's the largest animal, the whale, as large as a mountain, and for fifteen days it opens its mouth, and during those days, many birds and animals come to live inside the mouth. Then on the special day, on the fifteenth, on the full moon, this animal closes its jaws so that all those inside are killed, and the ocean becomes red. It is like this.

In reality we are living in the mouth of the Lord of Death and we are not sure when the jaws will close. Death is definite but the actual time of death is not certain, when it will occur. This is the nature of life and this is very good, very powerful, very effective for the mind, very effective to control the mind. Therefore, there's no reason at all to give up some sentient beings, to not give help to some, and to care for some, to cherish them; to be angry to some and to grasp others, be attached to them. There's no point at all. Think, "I must have equal thought and action to benefit all sentient beings." Make the determination like this.

Equanimity means simply cutting off the anger and attachment, the discriminating thought. During this mind training in great equanimity, when we do meditation, if we have an enemy now, somebody who hates us, either here or somewhere else, somebody who dislikes us, somebody who hates us, that's what is labeled "enemy." So, if we have one, it is very good for us. It is not good for them but having an enemy is very good for us, so that we can apply these meditations. For us it's very useful because in this way we can practice, we can train the mind, we can use that for meditation and we can train the mind and later there is no attachment, no anger, no discriminating thought; there is equal thought and action benefiting other sentient beings.

Is there anybody who doesn't have an enemy? It doesn't have to be here, but it can be anywhere.

[Reply inaudible]

Yeah, what?

[Reply inaudible]

No! I'm saying, does that include the Buddhas?

[Reply inaudible]

When I say, is there anybody who doesn't have an enemy, does that mean all living beings? Is there? Oh, it's here, it's not there.

[Reply inaudible]

I'm not asking the being who doesn't have an enemy whether he has got an enemy, I'm not asking that. I'm not asking the being who hasn't got an enemy whether he's got an enemy. I'm not asking that.

Anyway, like the military training, before the army joins the real war, actually fighting the enemy, they have to train for some years, acting as if the enemy is coming. Then, they act like they are fighting, they do some years of training to prepare themselves for when the actual enemy comes, to win over the enemy, to destroy them.

Even if we cannot think in the present of a particular person who criticizes us, who talks about our faults, who hates us, remember somebody who hurt us very much in the past. Even if there's no person we can think of at the present, think that someone is talking about our faults. Either think of the friend talking about us, criticizing us or talking about our faults—whatever is the most hurtful for our mind, think they are doing that. Then use the reasons—think that they are criticizing us, talking about our faults, this and that. Then the mind reacts with superstition. Dislike and anger arises. By interpreting what the person is telling us is bad, that they are bad, anger arises. Anger arises by interpreting, “This is hurting me, this is bad, this is criticizing me.” When we think this is bad, what the person is doing is bad, then that makes anger arise. But if we think what this person does is beneficial, not harmful but beneficial, good; if we label it that way, if we interpret it that way, like the examples I gave in the past, that wouldn't arise. Even if there are the same words, if we understand it in that way, if we look at it in that way, it doesn't cause anger, because we've labeled it beneficial, good, so this doesn't cause anger to arise.

In this way we should train the mind in equanimity.

Now, the three reasons depend on absolute mind.

Because somebody helps us, we discriminate them as a friend, and because somebody criticizes or harms us or doesn't give us material things, we discriminate that person as an enemy. So now what the illusive mind labels as “enemy” or “friend” appears. As the illusive, superstitious mind labels friend and enemy, that is what appears.

Now the question is this, if this appearance were true as it appears to the superstitious, illusive mind, then Buddha should have also enemies and friends. But for Buddha, even if somebody offers perfume or massage, or if somebody cuts the flesh in pieces with an axe, for Buddha, there's no discriminating thought, “This is a friend,” discriminating closer, or “This

is enemy,” discriminating far. Buddha doesn’t see the slightest difference between these two persons, one who is offering perfume on one side of the holy body and the person who takes off the flesh in pieces from the other side. For Buddha’s holy mind these two sentient beings are exactly equal. There’s compassion for both and there’s the thought to benefit and the action to benefit, equal for both sentient beings. The friend and enemy are only the appearance of the superstition, the hallucinated mind. So there’s no point at all in discriminating, giving up some sentient beings and caring for some sentient beings, with anger and attachment discriminating the friend and enemy.

The second reason. The enemy and friend that appear, appear as if they are fixed. When we analyze the appearance, when we think of the enemy, when we remember the enemy, when we look at the enemy, it looks like they are the enemy forever. It is a fixed enemy, they are an enemy forever, they are a permanent enemy. When we think of friend, when we look at the friend, it looks like a fixed friend, permanent. This is a friend forever. If we look at the appearance, if we analyze the appearance, it appears like that. If that were true, if the enemy and friend existed in reality, not just as the appearance of the hallucinated mind or the projection of the hallucinated mind, then Buddha should have an enemy and friend, you understand? Now here, in the second reason, if the friend and enemy that appear fixed existed, the friend would be a friend forever and the enemy would be an enemy forever. In the reality there wouldn’t be any change: the enemy could not become our friend and the friend could not become our enemy.

But the enemy and friend do change. The enemy becomes the friend when they see that you are benefiting them, when they see that you are kind, when they see that you are benefiting them, helping them. The enemy becomes a friend when you take their side and do what they wish. When you take their side, and do what they wish, that’s OK. When you take their side, they become your friend. When you don’t take their side, then they become the enemy; when you take their side, they become your friend. That is the condition. So, with this enemy, when you take their side, they become your friend.

Now with this friend, if you don’t take their side or do what they wish, in that minute when they see this, they see that you are against their wishes. Either you change the condition from your side or the friend interprets that you are against their wishes. Either you change the condition or the friend interprets it that way. By that change of the condition, the friend becomes the enemy.

The present friend and enemy happened basically with these reasons, with these conditions. Whether the enemy or friend interprets it or you from your side change the condition, if you don’t take your friend’s side you become the enemy, and when the enemy takes their side again, they become the friend. So it is a dependent arising.

The relationships with friend and enemy have changed from beginningless time until now and will change from life to life. It changes within a year—a friend becomes an enemy, an enemy becomes a friend even within a year, even within a month, even within a week, even within one day, even within one hour.

It is said in the sutra text *Ting Nge Dzin Gyalpo, The King of the Concentration*, “The father becomes son, the mother becomes wife and the person who has been the enemy becomes the friend. All these are only in the nature of changes; therefore, nothing is definite in samsara.”

There's no reason at all to discriminate that this sentient being is enemy and renounce them; and this is friend and help them. There is no point at all. Think, "I must have equal thought and action benefiting all sentient beings."

You have visualized the friends and the enemies, and then you must make the decision to have equal thought and action to benefit them, and then the same for all the rest of the sentient beings. When you meditate, you should make the conclusion like that.

Here you apply the meditation, that nothing is definite, the friend and the enemy, and bring up the meditation, the six ways of thinking of the sufferings of samsara. The first one is that nothing is definite.

There is a story about Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's disciple Shariputra, who among the disciples was regarded as one who had supreme wisdom. One day Shariputra went for alms, and as he was looking through the door of a family inside the house, he saw the son and his wife who was carrying a child on her lap, and they were eating a fish, giving bones to a dog and beating the dog. He saw all the changes in those relationships. The father of the son used to catch fish from the pond behind the house. When the father died, he was born as a fish in the water pond behind the house. The mother was attached to the house, and when she died she was reborn as the dog of the family. And the son's enemy was attached to the son's wife, so he was born as their child. The fish they were eating was their father. Shariputra, seeing all this, said, "Eating the father's flesh, beating the mother, because that dog is the son's mother. Carrying the enemy, who was born to them, on the lap. I laugh at samsaric existence!"

Like this, the relationships were completely changed. It is exactly the same with our present family, our relationships are like this. Cows, cats, dogs, whatever we have at home, there has been a relationship like this. Therefore, those fish, those lobsters, the red ones, huh? Crabs, lobsters, those things that we see in the restaurants, in the water, that we eat—it is similar to this story.

Normally when I sit in the restaurant or see people who are catching fish with so much craving for this, I think that these fish, these lobsters or these crabs, could have been sitting next to the pond carrying the long stick, waiting there for hours in their past lives. Comfortably sitting on their chair, spending their whole day like that—and now they are in the form of fish or lobsters or crabs. It makes me think that.

Just before this life as a fish, they might have been human beings, but they didn't get to live their life in virtue and were unable to practice morality and things like that. Some of the recent karma is actualized, and some may be from many lifetimes.

Without a reason, however many people there are in the family, including cats, without a reason they wouldn't be there, they wouldn't be with us—without a reason from the past, without causes and conditions. The present families, these people, these animals, wouldn't be with us.

So, the conclusion I explained before.

Now the last one, the third one. It is said in Nagarjuna's teaching, *Lab du*, "I and others are dependent, like here and there."

I left out that one. I left out the previous one, when we think, there is nothing definite in the changes of the friend and enemy. But in the past each time there was the appearance of an enemy or a friend, it appeared to be fixed forever, as if this was an enemy forever or a friend forever. We did have those appearances, but in reality, it did not become true, because the friend has not been a friend all the time and the enemy has not been an enemy all the time, from life to life. Now same thing—even if we have them now, even when we look at the appearance, it looks like they are completely fixed, that the friend is the friend forever, the enemy is the enemy forever. It looks like this, but they will continue to change in the future. Therefore, this perception, this appearance, is a complete hallucination, it's wrong.

The third one. Where you are, from your side, you call “here.” Where I'm sitting, from your side, you call “there.” Where you are sitting, you call here. From your side where I am is what you call there, and where you are, you call here. You call here and there as if they existed from their own side, as if they are independent, without depending on where you are, without depending on the base, and without depending on your thought labeling “here” and “there.” So without depending on the base, where you are, and without depending on your own thought labeling here and there. Without depending on these things, if there's a here and there existing from its own side, if here and there are independent, then when you come here to where I'm sitting, this one should be still there and the other one should be still here. The place where you came from should be still here. When you look from where I am, it still should be here and this one should be still there. You see now the mistake that arises if it's independent, without depending on the base where you are and then your thought labeling.

If you call this one “there” and that one “here,” if you say it like this, you may get an injection, the doctor might give you an injection, or you may have to go to the institute. Because where you are, if you call “there,” that's not conventional truth, that doesn't exist—calling that point “here” is not conventional truth, that doesn't exist. Many people might get worried, parents and friends.

When you come here where I am, then what you used to call “there” before becomes “here” and what you used to call “here” becomes “there.” So it is a dependent arising. Depending on here, there exists, so they depend each other. Similarly, exactly like this, this is also very good meditation on shunyata. Normally when we talk about here and there, it looks like here and there is something that exists from its own side, but when we analyze this, how it is merely imputed on the base by the thought, depending on where you are, here and there that appears to you exists in mere name. Here and there exist in mere name. When you see here and there exist in mere name, you can feel the emptiness—that the concrete here and there that are independent and real are empty.

Similarly, by depending on others, you label “I” on your aggregates. Then on the aggregates possessed by others, which belong to others, on those that don't belong to you, on the aggregates that you haven't taken, that you don't possess, that are possessed by others, on those aggregates you call “others.” But the others and I exist in mere name like this, by depending on the base, the aggregates, and your thought that labels. The I exists being merely imputed on your own aggregates by your own thought, and the others exist on the other's base, the other's aggregates, and your thought that labels. But I and others do not appear to us as merely imputed by thought. I and others, which you have merely imputed, appear to you as independent, really existing from their own side. This appearance, the way the I and others appear, is completely empty, a complete hallucination.

If they were true—the I and others, what you label I and others, the I and others that are merely imputed on the base by your thought, that appear as if they are independent, as if they really exist from their own side—if they were true, then for others you would be I and they would be others. If these existed from the object's side, not from the mind, then for others it should be the same thing—for others you would be the I when they point or talk to you, I, and they would be others. Except you, every other person would be others. From your side others and also from their side others.

Then when your parents died, you wouldn't get the money, because others would get the money. I'm sorry, it's a bad example. When you relate this to the conventional truth or to life, it doesn't fit. Then, even if they left a will for you, it would be for others, because you are others. No, what I'm saying! Now I'm confused! You, the I, wouldn't get it, so this mistake would arise. From the other's side, they think their own being is I and you are other, from the other's point of view, they think like that. So, now same thing—as this appears independent, as if they were independent, what others think of themselves, the person themselves, I, then the rest are others, so then, independent. If it's independent, then from your side also you have to be other. Then, anything that you want to get, you have to ask others to give. Anything that others need, you have to ask the I. So, it becomes like this, contradictory. So the independent I and others as it appears to us now is a complete hallucination.

Like the here and there, from your side, you, the I, then separate beings, others, and from their side their own being is I and you are others. They depend on each other.

There's no I and others that exist independently, except what is merely imputed by thought. Also, what you think and see, everything is only how you look at it, how you look at the object and how it appears to you. There is no true existence, there's no I and others, there's no friend and enemy that exist from their own side. How you see things depends on how you look at them, how your mind looks at them. You look at the self, the I, and you look at the separate being as others, so you see I and others. You look at one person as a friend and you look at another person as an enemy—you look at it that way so that's why you see friend and enemy. One person you look at as an enemy, one person you look at as a friend, and by judging, by labeling what one person does as good and what one person does as bad, you see friend and enemy.

One hour before you looked at the person who is angry at you, who harms you, you looked at that one as the enemy, so you see enemy. But in the next hour, you practiced thought transformation, you practiced patience, and you meditated how that person's action is not harming, it's actually benefiting, so you look at that person as your best friend. After, by looking at them as best friend, you see them as best friend.

All these things are up to how your mind looks at them. It's up to how you look at them and see them. Seeing them depends on how you look at them. The conclusion is that nothing exists from its own side, therefore there is no reason at all to have a partial mind, to give up some sentient beings, to care about some sentient beings, to give help to some, and not give help to some. Think, "I must have equal thought and action to benefit all sentient beings."

This discriminating thought of not giving help to some and giving up some sentient beings, this discriminating anger and attachment is the butcher of the naraks. This leads you to the naraks, and to suffer, to experience being cut and chopped, all that, hot and cold, all these things. This discriminating thought of anger and attachment is the butcher of the narak realm.

It is your worst enemy, who cuts off liberation and enlightenment, who never gives any happiness in the past, present, future, or any peace in your life.

Having equal thought and action toward all sentient beings is the one path that all the buddhas of the three times have proceeded through. This is the heart practice of all the three-time buddhas, all the bodhisattvas, the holy beings, so it doesn't matter whether sentient beings help you from their side, or whether they harm you, it doesn't matter what they do from their side—from your side, think, “I *must* put every single effort into having equal thought and action to benefit all sentient beings.” Make a very strong determination.

Khunu Lama Rinpoche, a great bodhisattva, gave the commentary on the *Bodhicaryavatara* to His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the teaching of equanimity. I don't remember word by word, but Rinpoche talked about the communist philosophy of equanimity, people sharing material things, physical things, from the outside, but with no equanimity from the mind, from the inside. Equanimity with force, from outside. Therefore, as long as there's no equanimity in the mind, equanimity never works. That does not bring peace.

I think this is what His Holiness meant, that the original idea is good—Marxism? The Marxist idea is the same as Mahayana practice. When the equanimity comes from the mind, there's no need for force from outside. Equanimity comes with free will, when it comes from the mind it comes with free will, so there's much happiness. That's how there's equanimity, more peace.

I'll stop here.

[Dedication prayers]

I thought to mention last night that nowadays there's much danger in Lhasa. When I was in Sera Monastery, there were about thirty-five or sixty or seventy young monks. They were not very small, maybe twenty years old, very peaceful, debating in class, having an incredible time, enjoying Dharma so much, preserving the teachings by living in ordination, purely. These days there aren't many left in Sera College. Most young monks are put in the corner of the mountain somewhere, way inside the corner of the mountain. Most of them have had their legs, limbs or hands broken, and have had electric shock. When they are given electric shock their bodies are banged on the other side of the wall and the brain is broken, and then they are unconscious, their backs are broken, so most of them cannot function. They were made kind of useless and put in the very corner of the mountains.

These days there is even trouble at Ganden College, where they are capturing the monks and all that. Even the small number that were allowed to study, a very small number, nothing compared to the past—even that was destroyed. People are living full of fear with so many armies coming from mainland China and guarding them day and night on the roofs and in the streets. They cannot go outside with their robes on, it's very dangerous. Many people get captured unexpectedly. They come to the house to capture them and many of the monks get killed secretly.

So please strongly dedicate all the merits to generate bodhicitta, equanimity, equalizing and exchanging oneself for others, and bodhicitta. Dedicate for those who terrify, who harm, who terrify the world, especially for their minds, and then for the rest of all sentient beings, and then to fulfill immediately all the wishes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

[*Jang chub sem chog*....]

On this earth we have the complete teachings of Buddha existing for us to achieve enlightenment. According to the level of mind, we can practice the teachings of Buddha and then gradually achieve enlightenment. The whole entire teachings of Buddha existing on this earth *now* is solely by the kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Without His Holiness it is like the body not having the head. Without His Holiness there's nobody who can keep it all together or preserve the whole teaching of Buddha. It is difficult to find such a good example.

By meeting Buddhadharma we can make everyday life highly meaningful, even just by understanding lamrim, the very abbreviated teaching, which is the essence of the whole Buddhadharma. We know how to meditate, we know every day how to make life highly meaningful, and we have the great opportunity to make preparation for the happiness of future lives, liberation, and enlightenment. All of this is completely by the kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. By his existence, by his keeping together the teachings, preserving the teachings, spreading the teachings, starting the monasteries and continuing the education of Buddhism, many people receive an education and are able to benefit many sentient beings. So it is very important that we are responsible and pray for the success of His Holiness's wishes—his wish is for all sentient beings to be free from all sufferings, and to have all happiness; for sentient beings to have all happiness and be free from all sufferings.

[His Holiness's long-life prayer, *gang ri ra wai*....]

[End of Discourse]

Lecture Twelve: The Cause of Happiness **17 December 1987**

[Inaudible question from student]

The last one, I think it's very important, but I didn't get it.

[Inaudible comment from student]

It depends on what you mean by free will, it depends on your interpretation of free will. If having free will means independent, there's no such thing. If the free will is a dependent arising, it exists.

If you are expecting a free will that doesn't exist, that's something else, like expecting milk from a horn, like oil from sand, like pressing sand trying to get oil.

[Inaudible reply]

Yeah. But if free will is dependent arising free will, then you can make that, because it is a dependent arising. The free will that you like to have, which is dependent arising, that one you can make. That one you can make with your mind, you can make it exist, you can make it be experienced, you can make it accomplish; but the free will that you're looking for, independent free will, which doesn't exist, that is like trying to drink mirage water. Like running toward the mirage water to drink it. It's like the thirsty person running toward the

mirage water believing that it is real water and wanting to drink it. So, it depends on the interpretation of free will.

[Inaudible reply]

It is like that, but it is not only that.

I can say every minute that we create good karma, the causes for happiness that we desire, that we would like to enjoy. When we create good karma we are creating free will, because happiness is what we want, so by creating good karma, we get what we want.

[Inaudible reply]

Yes, it can depend on that. But you can develop it. It can depend on past good karma but in this life, while you have all the necessary conditions to create much more extensive good karma, it gives you the chance to have greater success and happiness, temporary or ultimate, whatever it is.

[Inaudible comment]

Without Dharma wisdom, it is very difficult. What I can say is that it is very difficult.

[Inaudible comment]

Yes, isn't that? Or somebody would like to have free will to have suffering? Except if somebody likes free will for suffering, then for that person free will is different.

[Inaudible comment]

Yeah, you mean not what it appears, but what you wish to do?

[Inaudible comment]

What you wish to do and what you want to do. Oh, I see. That I missed. Because that's a word I never use, so that's why I didn't understand. What?

[Inaudible comment]

Yeah, there's always the problem of what you wish. Yes, I think sometimes maybe people who have wisdom, who are trying to practice Dharma, who have some understanding of Dharma, what is the right thing to practice, what is the wrong thing to be abandoned, who wish for the best thing and want to do the best thing, should create the causes for that, the highest goal, the most beneficial thing. For that kind of person, what they wish for is what they should do, which is similar. But for most people, what the person wishes and what they should do are opposites, so that's a problem due to lack of Dharma wisdom—what the person wishes and what the person should do are contradictory.

[Inaudible comment]

This person's wishes and what they should do are contradictory. There is much less opportunity for free will because of the lack of understanding and the different wishes are the opposite of what the person should do.

[Inaudible comment]

Huh? What do they do? Which the person chooses?

[Inaudible comment]

It could be hallucinated free will. Why hallucinated free will? While the person is creating the cause of the problems during those times they are happy because nobody stopped them from doing it. Nobody stopped them from creating the cause of problems. Whatever the person wants to do, whether they want to commit suicide, that person thinks that this is the right thing to do. In the view of that person they think that's the right thing to do, this moment, this is the only thing, this is the only solution—that's what they think. And if somebody stopped them, they may think their freedom is stopped. But they don't see the negative karma of committing suicide, killing oneself—the heavy karma they don't see, because they don't see the result. They are ignorant of the result, unable to discriminate that this is the cause of suffering. What they want is happiness, but actually that's not the method, so that's hallucinated, that's ignorant in terms of means. Their interpretation is free will.

According to their own ignorance, they interpret that if nobody stops them, that is free will. If people stop them from creating negative karma, then they think they don't have free will. That's the interpretation from their ignorance; it is not the interpretation of free will from wisdom. Do you understand? So I think it's like that.

Now the point is this. Is the free will that is interpreted by ignorance what we want or not? If we don't want that, then we should not think that way—we should choose the free will that by definition is done by wisdom, not by ignorance, if we want happiness.

Student: Can we affect other people's karma?

Rinpoche: You can affect it, yes. If somebody is sick, you can give them medicine, you can cure them, but that is also part of the other person's karma, the result of their good karma. Not finding anybody to help or even if there are people helping, nothing curing the person's disease—this is also their karma.

[Inaudible comment]

Yes, the reason why we are together is karma, there's a collective karma.

[Inaudible comment]

Yes, yes, collective karma. Due to collective karma this world exists.

To repeat again, as I mentioned, we can experience dependent arising free will, we can create the cause, while we have so much free will, so much opportunity to purify obstacles and negative karmas and to accumulate much merit, to have happiness in the future lives up to enlightenment, by taking all the opportunities to create good karma. In this way there is free

will and you will achieve the result of happiness that you are wishing for. But, if you think you have free will to experience happiness without depending on the mind, without depending on the creator of the free will, there's no free will to experience. Analyze and check.

[Inaudible comment]

I think the best way to enjoy is without desire. The best enjoyment is without desire. The best enjoyment is without desire.

[Inaudible comment]

No, you can experience happiness with nothing wrong. To experience happiness does not depend on having desire.

Maybe there's one or two questions that I can answer.

[Inaudible comments]

This afternoon the discourse was planned to be on the twelve links, so maybe you may get some idea from that. The cessation of the cause of suffering is ultimate happiness. The cessation of the cause of suffering includes the three poisonous minds, ignorance, anger and attachment. Cessation, the ever-release from the attachment, or the cessation of attachment, the cause of suffering, is the ultimate happiness, nirvana. The being who has achieved nirvana has attained the blissful state of peace, the cessation of attachment. That is the cessation of attachment, so that means for that arya being, that arhat, it is very clear that they don't have desire and they are in the blissful state of peace, everlasting happiness.

Same thing with Buddha—the one who has complete happiness is the Buddha, the one who has complete enjoyment is the Buddha, the one who has completed enjoyment or happiness, with nothing more to gain, by completing the cause, merit, and having ceased all the mental stains, the obstacles. That happened by ceasing all the mental stains, which includes attachment, desire. The Buddha doesn't have the slightest desire or attachment, but has peerless happiness, complete enjoyment.

[Inaudible comment]

Yes, what you are talking about, according to experience, appears like that. It appears like that to the person who didn't have the experience of practicing renouncing desire, renouncing worldly concern. What you are talking about is according to ordinary people who didn't have the experience of practicing renouncing desire, so it appears like that.

But the people who have the experience of practicing renouncing worldly concern, they understand, they see greater happiness by renouncing worldly concern than by having worldly desire.

[Inaudible comment]

It appears like that; that without desire there is no happiness. It appears like that for the common people who do not have the experience of actually practicing Dharma. The reason it

appears like this is because that person's every enjoyment—why it appears like that and why the person makes the definition, what makes it to appear to them, what makes them think this way, “Without desire I cannot experience happiness,” is because in their life all the time, in everyday life every enjoyment has been done out of desire. That has been their life, almost every single thing, every sense pleasure, is done out of desire. So it is understandable, according to that mental state, how their life has been. From the side of the person who didn't have the experience of renouncing desire, it appears like that, “Without desire how can I experience happiness?”

But, after meeting Dharma, with Dharma wisdom, when we practice, when we renounce desire, as we get the experience, the happiness is not on the surface. The real happiness is inside the heart, renouncing the desire really joyfully in the heart, not on the surface. In some ways it can be said to be kind of artificial. By understanding Dharma, what Dharma means, how to practice Dharma, we have much more happiness. We have greater happiness by renouncing desire. This is talking about a different experience of practicing or not practicing.

The nature of the mind is clear light. The mind is dependent arising, depending on the aggregates, on which the I is labeled. The mind is colorless, shapeless and formless; its nature is clear and it perceives objects. Therefore, our mind, doesn't exist from its own side—that is the absolute nature of the mind and that is what clear light means. This is what is called the potential of Buddha, the race of the Buddha or the seed of the Buddha. Some say that this is pure because it is not oneness with the disturbing thought obscurations. The nature of the mind is not oneness with the disturbing thoughts of ignorance, anger and attachment. The nature of the mind is temporarily obscured but it is not oneness with the disturbing thought obscurations.

The rest of the phenomena—for our mind, the sentient beings' mind, the nature of things appears to be not merely imputed by the thought on the base, but as if they are existing from their own side. We don't see everything as if it's merely labeled—we see it as unlabeled, independent, and as if this is their nature. When we don't analyze our perceptions, without meditating on emptiness, without analyzing, if we just examine, if we just look at the appearance, all of these objects that we see now, all of these objects that have been merely imputed appear to exist from their own side. We believe this is their nature. When our mind is not aware that they are dependent arising and emptiness, and we have this appearance that things exist from their own side, we think it is their nature. We think this is how they are in reality.

According to reality, what we think is their nature—that the way things appear is as existing from their own side—this is a complete hallucination. It is completely contradictory to the nature of things which is reality. The way things appear to us is as existing from their own side. We believe this is their nature, but this does not exist in the nature of things. This does not exist. Things appear to us to exist from their own side and we believe this is the nature of things, but they do not exist at all in their nature. So, by that it is pure.

In other words, the imprint left on the mental continuum by the ignorance of true existence projects and actualizes true existence on the things that we merely impute. So, this is a decoration—a creation that our consciousness, our mind puts there—that things are really existing from their own side. Things don't exist in their nature. By that we say that these things do not exist like this in their nature. Why? Because their nature is empty; their nature is emptiness.

The nature of things is emptiness, which is not like ordinary emptiness. The nature of the tea in the mug is emptiness, which is not the ordinary absence of tea in the mug—not having tea, the tea not existing even in the name in the mug, the absence of tea, not that. That is not the nature of the tea. If there is the nature of the tea, there should be tea. Having the nature of the tea and the tea not existing—that you can understand is not possible.

The nature of the tea is emptiness. This is not the absence of the tea, the tea not existing in the mug. There is tea in the mug, so now, the nature of the tea that is emptiness has to be something else. The leaves that are used for the tea are put in the water, and produce the energy or the color, or the taste, and that is put into the mug. Seeing that base, such as color and taste, becomes the condition, and by seeing that liquid our thought labels “tea.” That’s how the tea exists, as merely imputed on that liquid. Therefore, there’s no tea existing from its own side. That is the nature of the tea, which is emptiness, empty of existing from its own side. This nature of the tea, which is unstained by true existence, the tea existing by its own nature, the tea existing from its own side—that is what is called pure. So it’s like that with everything.

[Question and comment]

While there’s an alarm clock there on the table, then you say this alarm is empty—it means it doesn’t exist from its own side. That’s right.

[Inaudible comment]

Yes, we can live in emptiness. The reason that I used the example that the mug is empty of tea and the emptiness of the tea was meant to clarify what emptiness means. The nature of the tea, which means the emptiness of the tea. In Tibetan, *tong pa nyi*, emptiness only, empty, *tong-pa*, and “ness” is *nyi*. This usually means to cut off something. What it cuts off is the ordinary emptiness—meaning that there is no tea. That is what it cuts off. So something else has to be empty. *Nyi* cuts off the ordinary emptiness, the absence of tea. While the tea is there, something about it has to be empty. Do you understand? Something there is empty.

The meaning of the word that comes before *nyi*, “empty” refers to the tea that appears to exist from its own side, as independent. This is empty, because first you see the liquid in the mug, then you say, “Oh, there is tea.” Like this, the tea exists as merely imputed on that particular liquid, which has such a taste and color that you asked for. Do you get the idea? Emptiness.

[Inaudible comment]

Right, that’s right, perfect. That’s right. In reality, if you think about evolution, how the tea comes into existence, from there you see the reality, you understand? You can have some idea of the reality. How the reality is opposite to the way the tea appears to you after you have imputed it.

Maybe today we will do a little bit of meditation—sitting, then maybe walking, practicing awareness, and meditation on dependent arising, which is meditation on emptiness with the action of walking.

Before this, maybe we will have the Manjushri *lung*, the oral transmission of Manjushri's mantra. All of the Buddha's wisdom is manifested in the holy body of the deity, this particular aspect, having one face and two arms, golden in color, the legs crossed in vajra position, having a youthful aspect, looking at sentient beings with loving kindness and with a compassionate smile. He is adorned with divine scarves, dress, underskirt and ornaments, and with all the holy signs of the Buddha—the sambhogakaya's holy signs and holy exemplifications. His left hand is in the mudra of expounding the Dharma, holding the stem of a lotus between the two fingers. In his right hand is a sword and in the left hand is a lotus that opens against the ear. On top of the lotus in the left hand is holding the Prajnaparamita scripture, radiating [light].

[Discussion about translation]

Then think, I'm going to take the oral transmission of the prayer, *Praise to Manjushri*, and the mantra in order to achieve enlightenment quicker and quicker.

[Oral transmission in Tibetan]

Praise to Manjushri

Homage to my guru and protector, Manjushri!

You, whose intelligence shines forth as the sun, unclouded by delusions or traces of ignorance,
Who hold to your heart a scriptural text symbolic of seeing all things as they are,
Who teaches in sixty ways, with the loving compassion of a mother for her only son,
To all creatures caught in the prison of samsara,
Confused in the darkness of their ignorance, overwhelmed by their suffering.

You, whose dragon-thunder-like proclamation of Dharma arouses us from the stupor of our delusions
And frees us from the iron chains of our karma,
Who wields the sword of wisdom hewing down suffering wherever its sprouts appear,
Clearing away the darkness of all ignorance;
You, whose princely body is adorned with the one hundred and twelve marks of a Buddha,
Who has completed the stages achieving the highest perfections of a bodhisattva,
Who has been pure from the beginning.
To you, oh Manjushri, I bow.

OM AH RA PA TSA NA DHI [Three times]

You can think that nectar beams are emitting from the Guru Manjushri, purifying all the obscurations, all the ignorance—the ignorance of true existence and the ignorance of not knowing Dharma, the ignorance of not knowing karma, the ignorance not knowing the absolute nature. You and all sentient beings are purified of all this ignorance and all the obscurations with the mantra.

Now recite together, OM AH RA PA TSA NA DHIH DHI DHI DHI DHI DHI ...

Now we'll begin the meditation with refuge, bodhicitta, and the mandala, and then we'll meditate.

Think, "I and mother sentient beings equaling the infinite sky so far have been wandering in samsara, suffering, and this is due to the mistake of not having realized the two truths. At this time I have received a perfect human rebirth, and I have all the necessary conditions to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all the kind mother sentient beings: the perfect human rebirth and meeting the virtuous teacher and the teachings of the Buddha."

You can think of the Mahayana virtuous teacher that you have met, that you can meet, who can reveal the complete path. Think, "I have met the Mahayana teaching, and I must make it possible to achieve enlightenment by realizing the two truths. So therefore, I am going to meditate on the two truths. Please, Guru Manjushri, who is the embodiment of the guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, grant blessings to me and all sentient beings right now on this seat, at this moment; grant blessings to realize the two truths."

Refuge and bodhicitta, mandala offering, then meditate.

I go for refuge, until I am enlightened,
To the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Highest Assembly.
From the virtuous merit that I collect
By practicing giving and other perfections,
May I attain the state of a buddha
To be able to benefit all sentient beings.
[Three times in English, then in Tibetan]

[Mandala offering in Tibetan]

Please make this request by offering the mandala to Guru Manjushri,

Due to the merits of offering the mandala to you, Guru Manjushri, and all the three time merits accumulated by me and by other sentient beings, I'm requesting you to make it possible for great bliss to arise—the transcendental wisdom of the simultaneously born bliss—within me and all sentient beings, and to cut off the stain of the hallucination that has arisen from the ignorance holding things as truly existent, which is abiding within me and all other sentient beings. May I and all sentient beings cut off this hallucination, this stain of the ignorance of true existence, and cut off the doubts, cut off the cage of doubts, and be able to quickly become like you.

IDAM GURU RATNA...

Now again recite the mantra and do the purification.

OM AH RA PA TSA NA DHI [Several times]

Think that all the obscurations and all the ignorance are completely purified within our own mind, and in the minds of all sentient beings. All the obscurations, all the ignorance not knowing the absolute nature of the I, and the ignorance not knowing karma are completely purified.

Now Manjushri melts into light and descends above your crown. Manjushri melts into light and absorbs into your own heart, your own mind.

Think, “I have received all the immeasurable qualities of the holy body, holy speech and holy mind, all the wisdoms, clearly seeing all existence, all the two truths, directly perceiving all the two truths at the same time.”

Now think, as you are meditating, feeling your mind is oneness with Manjushri’s holy mind, now slowly think, question yourself, “What am I doing? I’m sitting, I am meditating. Why do I say I’m meditating, I’m sitting?” There’s no reason at all except the base, the aggregates on which the I is imputed, the consciousness is meditating, that’s all. There’s no other reason. There’s no reason why you say “I’m sitting” except that the aggregates on which the I is imputed, the body, is doing the action of sitting. That’s all. This is the definition that “I am sitting.”

Now place the mind in this state. One part of the mind is aware of the physical body sitting, that this is the reason, and a part of the mind looks at what happened with the self, the I, the appearance of the I. What happened when you put the reason that the mind is meditating, the body is sitting, that’s all, nothing else? “I’m meditating, I’m sitting.” At the same time, while you are meditating this way, a part of your mind looks at the effect on this I. What happened with the appearance of the I? Is there any change in that or not? Check!

“Where am I? I’m now at Kopan doing the meditation course.” Why do you say, “I’m at Kopan”? There’s no reason at all except your aggregates are here at Kopan. No other reason at all except that the aggregates on which you’re imputed are here at Kopan.

Whenever the mind gets distracted from practicing awareness of the dependent arising of the I, how this is merely imputed on this base by the thought, then again with awareness, remembrance, remember the meditation object, how the I is dependent arising. Have the awareness that the mind is distracted, and then bring it back and again put the same question. Whenever the mind is distracted, look at the I, and whether you see a difference there and before when you were practicing the meaning of the dependent arising of the I. While you’re meditating on the meaning of how the I is a dependent arising, merely imputed on the base by thought, and then when the mind is distracted, whether the I appears any differently. You should pay much attention this.

When you practice, when the mind is distracted, when you look at the I, the I appears to exist from its own side, as real. But when you practice awareness of the meaning of dependent arising, how the I is dependent arising, the real self and the I that exists from its own side, this appearance you find nowhere—this real I exists from its own side, and you find it nowhere, it becomes unclear, and that is excellent, that is the correct meditation, the correct result by correctly meditating on the right meaning of dependent arising.

Each time when the mind is distracted there’s the I that you see differently, a real self that exists from its own side, independently, which is different from the previous one. When you meditate, the I that you feel when you are meditating on the meaning of dependent arising, how the I is dependent arising. At that time, the real I is invisible, unclear, lost, and becomes non-existent.

It came back, the real I, the I existing from its own side, the appearance is there. When the mind is distracted from meditating on dependent arising, this I that you find different from that time, when you are meditating on the meaning of dependent arising, this I, the real one, appears to exist from its own side, and this is what is called the refuting object. This is what is empty. This is what is called emptiness.

While you are meditating, you stand up with the awareness, “What am I doing?” Continuously you see, “Now I’m standing up.” Be aware, continuously questioning yourself as you do different actions. Standing up, think, “What am I doing? I’m standing up, and there is no other reason at all to say that that I’m standing up except that the aggregates are standing up, the body is standing up.”

The body is standing up, so then when you put that reason, what you feel in the heart, what your experience tells you, is the emptiness of the I. By giving the reason that the aggregates are standing, the body is standing, when you think how this is a dependent arising, you see that I is empty. When you have the experience that the merely labeled I is walking, is standing, at the time you are seeing the emptiness of the I. The I that you saw as empty before, empty of existing from its own side, this I exists as merely imputed on this base by the thought, so the emptiness is the I. The emptiness of the I, your experience tells you.

When you go out, climb up the tree, walk around the hill, with much awareness, constantly putting questions. Go around the hill, then come down slowly, then go back to tea. And also do the same thing with the tea, think like that, meditate.

[End of Discourse]

Lecture Thirteen: The Bodhisattva Vows: Lama Lhundrup

This is a brief exposition on the bodhisattva vows.

Whether we reflect on things from the point of view of self or from the point of view of others—whatever point of view we have, our main objective is to achieve enlightenment at any cost.

As explained in the lam-rim teachings, the suffering nature of our existence in samsara and its causes are the result of our own selfish attitude or self-cherishing mind. The conclusion or the main essence of the lam-rim teachings is to generate a strong motivation—the strong thought to benefit sentient beings at all cost. The reason for this essential conclusion is that all our happiness, including the smallest, is solely due to the kindness of others.

The benefit we can accomplish is to fulfill what others wish and repay their kindness. What others want at all times is happiness and what they don't want is suffering and pain. Just as it is for others, it is also the same for us, and as it is for us, it is the same for others as well.

We learnt in the teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment that to find happiness and to eliminate suffering, the responsibility belongs to us completely. Although we have complete responsibility for fulfilling all the happiness of others and eliminating all their suffering, we do not have the potential to fulfill this at the moment.

Is it possible for us to actualize or to attain such potential? We can achieve this potential.

Is a person with such potential a possible phenomenon in the world? This is also a possibility. Who can we identify as such a person? That would be the Buddha himself. If we put in the effort, we can achieve such a state ourselves, because we can accumulate the causes for this result, enlightenment. In order to achieve the result of enlightenment, we need to train in the methods to achieve it.

The main method to achieve enlightenment is bodhicitta, the altruistic aspiration towards enlightenment generated out of the mind of compassion. Bodhicitta, the altruistic mind seeking solely the welfare of others, needs to be enhanced limitlessly. It is not enough just to habituate our mind and generate or cultivate the altruistic mind in our meditation—besides generating the altruistic mind, we also need to actually venture into the deeds of such a mind.

The main deeds of bodhisattvas, the beings who have bodhicitta, are the observation of a high code of ethics. How quickly or slowly we achieve enlightenment is solely dependent on how purely we observe bodhisattva vows. These vows need to be received or taken from a lama and then all the various aspects of the vows need to be observed.

Of these various aspects of the bodhisattva vows, the root vows are this set of eighteen. We must abandon:

1. Praising ourselves and belittling others

If we have received bodhisattva vows and engage in actions such as praising ourselves with the desire to achieve material things or respect and so forth—if we have that kind of intention, and the view of gaining things that glorify our qualities and put down others—when we have bodhisattva vows and undertake such an action, then we break the root vow. This is a very brief explanation of the first vow.

This is one of the most dangerous vows, because we are likely to break this vow very easily due to our strong, self-cherishing mind. There is a danger of breaking this vow very often because of our selfishness, and also because we very easily disparage others, including our guru, when we see the slightest faults or mistakes in them.

2. Not giving material aid and Dharma

This vow is usually broken when we are miserly. When we have an abundance of material things and somebody asks for material aid due to their great poverty or lack of something, but we refuse, then we accrue the second transgression. If we have no sense of miserliness but refuse to give because it may cause obstacles or hindrances to our Dharma practice, then under these circumstances, not giving is validated.

Secondly, there is miserliness regarding teaching Dharma. We feel miserliness over imparting these teachings and we also feel lazy to explain the teachings sometimes. That's the second way to break the vow. The only circumstances when it is valid not to give teachings is when this would not benefit someone but would cause harm, and in that case we can refuse to give teachings. Generally, in giving Dharma teachings, the kind of people that we should teach are those with much aspiration and enthusiasm towards the teachings.

3. Not forgiving others, and even if someone apologizes, not listening to an apology

The third vow is broken, for example, when we fight with somebody and that person apologizes afterwards or gives us a material present, but we refuse to listen out of anger, upset feelings or hatred. If we hold a grudge and refuse to accept a material gift or listen to an apology, then we break the third vow. So, for these sets of vows it is essential not to hold onto anger or a grudge after we have had a fight or disagreement. If we hold onto a grudge or anger, then it is difficult to accept an apology later on.

4. Abandoning the Mahayana Dharma

The downfall of abandoning the Mahayana Dharma is accrued in circumstances such as when we are engaging in Mahayana practice and later we decide, “I might as well train in the Shravaka path, or the Hearer’s path, which is a faster way of attaining arhatship.” We abandon Mahayana Dharma under these circumstances.

5. Taking offerings which are meant for the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha

This occurs when we take for ourselves offerings made to the Triple Gem. This includes materials to make a statue or to print scriptures or to make clothes for statues. Of the three types of offerings, if we use offerings made to the Sangha for ourselves, no matter how small they are, then the karma is very heavy. It is said that if we take offerings made to the Buddha and the Dharma, the negative karma can be completely purified, but if we take offerings made to the Sangha, even if we purify, some result has to be experienced despite the purification. It can be something as minor as picking a flower, a twig or a leaf from the garden. We are taking that which has not been given to us.

6. Abandoning the Dharma

This means abandoning the practices and teachings belonging to the Hearers’ Vehicle, the Shravakas, the Solitary Realizers’ Vehicle or the Mahayana Vehicle. We see one or other of these teachings as not being suitable for our practice.

We may say, for example, “What’s the point of meditating on the whole lamrim? I might as well just do the breathing and contemplate on the mind. That’s all!” Even just saying that is abandoning Dharma.

7. Evicting monks from the monastery life

This vow includes things like, for example, taking away robes that belong to monks, or causing someone else to take the robes away.

8. Committing the five heinous crimes

We commit these heinous crimes when we kill our father, mother or an arhat, cause a Buddha to bleed, or cause disharmony within the community of the Sangha.

9. Holding wrong views

Holding wrong views refers to believing in the non-existence of cause and effect, past and future lives, and the non-existence of the three objects of refuge and so forth.

10. Destroying towns, cities or places where many people are living

We break the tenth vow if we intend destroying a town or city. Whether we start some sort of fire or use water or other means, we have the intention of destroying that whole town or city.

11. Teaching the profound teachings to those who are not fit receptacles

An example would be somebody who is on the bodhisattva path and when we expound the teachings on emptiness, the person gives up or turns away from the Mahayana path. Instead of helping the person progress, we cause that individual to regress. That would be an example of teaching the profound to someone who is not ready.

12. Turning someone away from complete enlightenment

The twelfth downfall occurs when, for example, somebody has full aspiration towards complete enlightenment and we influence the person by saying that there is not much benefit, and that it is better to work for our self-liberation through either the Solitary Realizer's path or the Hearer's path. If we influence the person to turn away from full enlightenment through our talk, we incur this twelfth downfall.

13. Encouraging others to abandon the self-liberation vows

The transgression occurs when we tell people that the self-liberation vows, such as the monks' and nuns' ordination vows, are not necessary. We tell people to just study the Mahayana Dharma and generate bodhicitta. If we talk and influence people in this way, we incur the thirteenth downfall of abandoning self-liberation vows.

14. Causing others to hold distorted views

We incur the fourteenth downfall when we cause others to hold distorted views. An example of this is when a person has received a lot of material presents and respect through giving teachings, and out of jealousy, we feel that this person's gains are unbearable. We say, "Why do you listen to his teachings, why do you give him so much respect and so forth?"

To differentiate the first root downfall from the fourteenth, the fourteenth one mainly arises out of a jealous mind, as the other person is getting so many enhancements, and that is causing our own downfall. We are losing out by the other person gaining and we feel unbearable jealousy over that, so it mainly has its base in jealousy.

15. Expressing a great form of lies

This downfall means telling profound lies and saying we have realizations when we don't. An example of the fifteenth root downfall, the expression of profound lies, is when we haven't realized emptiness, but we say, "I have realized emptiness, so I am going to teach you this emptiness out of my experience."

16. Taking material things that belong to the objects of refuge

An example of the sixteenth vow is when we intentionally fine someone who is ordained so that we gain material things.

The sixteenth vow refers to any property that belongs to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. We either forcefully confiscate or take away property belonging to the objects of refuge, or we influence or cause someone else to take the property away. If we have a fight or a duel, or something like that, we take things belonging to the objects of refuge.

The next vow is putting together rules or disciplines that are not valid. An example of this downfall is when a gelong is practicing very purely and we make certain rules and regulations that would disrupt his progress. We do this out of jealousy for that person who is doing his practices purely, and in order to distract him away from his meditation.

Lama Lhundrup: How many have we got? Eighteen?

Students: No, seventeen.

Lama Lhundrup: Seventeen? We missed out the fourteenth one, which is disrespecting or criticizing the Hinayana teachings. Then, the other one is abandoning the bodhicitta mind. Does that make eighteen? What happened? No, I think it's eighteen.

The Eighteen Root Vows

1. Praising yourself and belittling others.
2. Not giving material aid or teaching the Dharma.
3. Not listening to someone who has previously offended.
4. Condemning the teachings of Buddha and teaching distorted views.
5. Taking offerings to the Three Jewels.
6. Despising the Tripitaka and saying these texts are not the teachings of Buddha.
7. Evicting monks from the monastery.
8. Committing any of the five heinous crimes.
9. Holding views contrary to the teachings of Buddha.
10. Completely destroying any place by means of fire, etc.
11. Teaching shunyata to those who are not yet ready.
12. Turning people away from working for full enlightenment.
13. Encouraging people to abandon their vows of moral conduct.
14. Causing others to hold distorted views about Hinayana teachings.
15. Practicing, supporting, or teaching the Dharma for financial profit and fame while saying that your motives are pure, and that only others are pursuing Dharma for such base aims.
16. Telling others even though you have very little or no understanding of shunyata, that you have profound understanding of shunyata.
17. Taking gifts from others and encouraging others to give you things originally intended as offerings to the Three Jewels.
18. Taking away from those monks who are practicing meditation and giving it to those who are merely reciting texts.

Lama Lhundrup: This is not very good—there are things missing. Are there eighteen now?

[Further discussion]

Lama Lhundrup: Most are OK, most are correct. Right?

These are the eighteen root downfalls. If you observe these eighteen root vows purely, then the forty-six auxiliary vows are already included in these root eighteen vows.

The Four Conditions

There are four main conditions that have to be fulfilled in order to incur the complete transgression of a root vow. The first of these conditions is having broken a vow before and still wishing to break it in the future. Secondly, we are not able to abandon that downfall and we wish to pursue the downfall again. Thirdly, we feel very happy to break the vow and we don't see any faults or disadvantages to our actions. Lastly, we don't have any sense of shame or consideration for others. If these four points are present, there is complete transgression of the root vow.

We explained these eighteen root downfalls very briefly, but if we explain them elaborately, each vow branches out into many, many different points. Two of these eighteen vows do not require the fulfillment of all four conditions in order to incur the full transgression. These two vows are giving up bodhicitta and the generation of wrong views. These two vows do not require all four conditions to be present for complete transgression. The moment you give up or totally disregard bodhicitta, that naturally causes the root downfall, without the presence of any of the four conditions. Also, the generation of wrong views is powerful enough to cut off the continuum of virtue. So, these two vows do not require the presence of the four conditions, but the remaining sixteen require the presence of all four conditions in order to incur the full downfall. If all four conditions are not present, we incur only the shortcoming of breaking that particular vow.

Of these four conditions, if we have one point that says if we don't see the fault or the harm in that transgression, we have a medium level of contamination. Literally it's called "medium contamination," and we have the middle or half of it, in comparison to full transgression.

If we engage in one of these root downfalls and we see the faults or the shortcomings of undertaking that course of action, we incur only a small contamination. If we have this particular condition but do not have the other three conditions, by being aware of the fault in this action, it becomes only a small shortcoming.

Having understood these eighteen root downfalls, because they can be so easily accrued, if we constantly familiarize ourselves with the shortcomings, then it helps us to avoid engaging in them so easily.

The fourth condition—having a sense of shame or consideration for others—refers to the fact that if we engage in a particular transgression, we will experience the expected, ripening result, and having that awareness, we try to abstain from that negative action. That is having a sense of shame.

Also, if we have consideration for others in the sense that if we engage in a particular negative action, then others will come to know of it and the Buddha will know of it. We abstain from the negative act out of consideration for others.

These two points are essential for practicing Dharma. If we have a strong sense of shame and consideration for others, then we do not easily incur the transgression of vows. So, it is essential that we observe this sense of shame and consideration.

Do you have any doubts or questions about these points?

[Inaudible comment]

Lama Lhundrup: Yes, it is very easy. When we study and meditate on the graduated path to enlightenment, the first and foremost point is renunciation, in order to realize the shortcomings of cyclic existence. If we are attached to our possessions or the pleasures of this life, there is no way to generate renunciation, and if we do not have renunciation, there is no way to generate compassion, and without compassion there's no bodhicitta.

Lama Lhundrup: Okay, you can use for others. Your motivation for others, not for your motivation selfish, for others. Eating chocolate, I eat for beneficial all mother sentient beings. All right? So then whole day you want chocolate, you have, no problem. All right? Yes, depend your mind. It looks easy. If you have control of your mind, then okay. Right? Simple.

Student: What happens when vows overlap? For example, walking up to Kopan Hill, many people ask me for one rupee, but the rupees in my pocket are to study the Dharma. How does that work?

Lama Lhundrup: I think, OK.

Student: Which one? To give the rupee or to buy the lessons of Dharma?

Lama Lhundrup: Maybe you can first buy lessons for the Dharma, then later you can give to the world. All right.

Student: So there is a priority?

Lama Lhundrup: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Otherwise, you cannot get opportunity to listen to Dharma. All right?

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: Yes, that's you can see, nuclear, atom bomb.

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: Because we have strong selfish mind. Still we have vows, but strong mind, strong selfish mind. So, there's somebody destroying, disturbing him and make something very bad things to do with him, so then he is very angry. So then anger makes incredible, many bad things they want to do, you cannot control, whole I want _____, they take.

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: Some beginning ordinary being can take these kinds of vows, yes, no problem. Yes, they can take.

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: Military, army? Possible. Some people first they have vow, then somebody put them in the army, so they can do like that kind.

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: If you can say truth, then destroying other person, so then maybe you can say something change words. The bodhisattva, this kind of lying, if really beneficial, you tell lie is beneficial for them, then you can say by your motivation of compassion you can say. Otherwise, you can tell that destroying their own peace. Yes, by your motivation, motivation is very important, motivation of compassion to your Mum, all right? So then okay, you can say.

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: You can say this, but after you have conception, Oh, I told Mum lying, so then after night time you have purification. All right?

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: You can try just motivation, try never kill any sentient beings, I don't kill animals, just you have motivation, you can say like this. So, doesn't matter any animals or whatever then you can just this kind of motivation, then you can pick up, died animals, then you did kill. But you don't have, I kill animals, you don't have motivation for killing. But if you can see something then you can do for them OM MANI PADME HUM or whatever you do for them beneficial.

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: If you took bodhisattva vows then you can do sessions for your whole life, you become Mahayana path, yes. This is more comfortable.

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: That's difficult. What example you can tell me? Why giving back? Reasons?

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: That kind if you have some good reasons, then you can ask guru and if guru says OK, then you have. Yes.

Student: [inaudible]

Lama Lhundrup: Root or what? Maybe you can say what.

Student: [inaudible]

[Inaudible discussion]

If we have a strong bodhicitta motivation, then these seven nonvirtuous actions of the body and speech are allowed in the case of bodhisattvas who have bodhicitta. They have an exemption over these nonvirtuous actions depending on the circumstances.

In this case, we are talking about people who have spontaneous, genuine, intuitive bodhicitta. They have exemption from these seven nonvirtues of body and speech. We are not talking about somebody who just has it verbally or by making effort. It is not an exemption for those who do not have bodhicitta; it is an exemption for those who have bodhicitta. These people are allowed to do these actions under circumstances that will give the most benefit.

In our undertaking of a particular nonvirtuous action, we should feel completely tolerant of any result that we might incur.

[Question inaudible]

There's no harm in that particular one because there is no truly existent Christianity and therefore we can see Christianity and Buddhism as oneness in nature, because the essential point of Buddhism is non-violence, or not giving harm. That is the essential point. It is concordant with Christian philosophy and it is the main point of Buddhism too. So we abide in that nature, in that point.

[Question inaudible]

If we have a teaching from Christian teachers and it is a way of developing ourselves and developing our bodhicitta, then we can still practice it. If, instead of developing us, it undermines us and degenerates our mind, then we have the wisdom to differentiate.

Student: So, the very broad meaning of practice is simply practicing bodhicitta, practicing to develop your mind? That's all?

Lama Lhundrup: Yes, true mind, true bodhicitta, true love, that's all. Thank you. OK, thank you very much.

Lecture Fourteen: Samsara and the Twelve Links

19 December 1987

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the creative bodhicitta thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all the mother sentient beings who equal the infinite space, who have been kind from beginningless birth; therefore, I'm going to listen to the teaching on the graduate path to enlightenment.” Also clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teaching according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.”

Today I thought to give a little bit of introduction to samsara through the explanation of the drawing of the Wheel of Life, before giving refuge and precepts. The part on the great equilibrium meditation is finished and then the general topic on exchanging oneself for others was already spoken about—that subject was already discussed during the explanation of equanimity. But again, it's more precise, to have a clear understanding, to integrate it with the commentary on the *Eight Verses of Thought Transformation*. The *Eight Verses* contain all the answers, all the solutions to day-to-day life's problems—how to deal with them, not just to

stop them—that's not the main point. It can stop problems, it can transform problems into happiness, but that's not the main point.

The main point is to make the problem that we are experiencing worthwhile, to use the problem on the path to enlightenment, to make it beneficial for other sentient beings. That's the main point of this teaching, the *Eight Verses of Thought Transformation*. This contains the solution, the fundamental methods for our problems from now up to enlightenment, until we achieve enlightenment. This contains the basic methods to cut off the obstacles from this minute up to enlightenment, until we achieve enlightenment, which means including the subtle dual view, the last obstacle. Even the very last thing, when we are near enlightenment, there's no disturbing thoughts, nothing is left, only the subtle imprint, the dual view is left, so then even that problem gets eliminated by the realization of the path that is revealed by the teaching of the *Eight Verses*.

Now, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, whose holy mind has completed the training in compassion toward all sentient beings without any discrimination, who is extremely kind, the purpose of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha descending on this earth is only to lead sentient beings to liberation, to enlightenment. Only for that purpose. He taught 84,000 teachings, but the foundation of all these 84,000 teachings is the four noble truths. It is explained in Maitreya Buddha's teaching, *Do de gyen*, "The disease is to be known and the cause is to be abandoned. Abiding in happiness is to be achieved. And medicine is to be relied upon." This refers to suffering, the cause, cessation and path.

What Maitreya Buddha is saying is that a patient who wishes to abide in happiness and recover from disease should first know the disease. This makes the patient seek the cause of the disease. When the patient finds out the cause, the patient realizes that this is what he should abandon. By ceasing this cause, being free from this cause and the result, the disease, the patient comes to know what is needed to achieve that, what is needed to experience that. Then, the patient recognizes happiness, which is the release from that cause, the liberation from that cause and the result, the disease; that this is happiness and that is what the patient should have. The patient seeks that happiness and as he seeks that happiness, he checks the medicine. Following a skillful doctor, the patient relies upon the medicine and takes the medicine. In this way, the patient is able to recover from the disease.

Similarly, we, the sentient beings who are experiencing samsaric suffering, should first realize that all the suffering of samsara is what we should be free from. For example, in the West, even if they don't feel pain, people go for a checkup every year to see whether they are healthy, whether there is something wrong, some disease, so that it can be stopped before it gets worse and becomes a serious problem. This is regarded as good. Even though you don't believe that you are sick, by going to the hospital to check the blood and x-rays, to have the diagnosis, the doctor tells you that you have cancer, or high blood pressure, or AIDS, or a virus. I think especially maybe the ladies check more in the hospital.

Even though you don't believe that you have this and that disease, because you don't know, you don't recognize it, but after the doctor checks up, he tells you that you have cancer or you have this and that. If you have a disease but the doctor cannot recognize it, it is considered unsuccessful, but if you have a disease and the doctor does recognize it, this is success, this is good. So in this way, recognizing the disease that you have through the doctor's explanation, through the doctor's proof, blood, x-rays, or whatever the signs, that makes you see the cause.

As the patient wants to know the cause, the doctor explains the cause and then the patient knows—what am I saying? I got mixed up.

Like this, same thing with the suffering of samsara, the problems of samsara that we don't know, that we experience but we don't know. Through hearing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's teachings from a virtuous friend, we are able to recognize the sufferings of samsara that we were not aware of before. Similar to the patient, we wish for cessation, ultimate happiness, the cessation of all suffering and its causes, and to achieve this we should know the entire suffering of samsara. The problems of samsara that we know of are only a small part of it. As for the rest, such as the suffering of change and pervasive compounding suffering, we are not aware, we always experience it, but we are not aware.

We become aware by depending on the virtuous friend who teaches the teachings of the great compassionate Shakyamuni Buddha, like a skillful doctor. Now, same thing, by realizing true suffering, we see the cause, whether it has a cause or not. Then by knowing the cause, karma and disturbing thoughts, the true cause of suffering, we know what ultimate happiness and liberation are, and that we should achieve them, and that this is the complete cessation of the whole entire suffering of samsara and all the karma and disturbing thoughts. We understand this by depending on the teachings of the Buddha. That's what Buddha explained, true suffering and true cause of suffering. Then, whether there is a path, the complete cessation of suffering and its cause, this is what we should achieve. So there is a path, there is a means to achieve this. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself practiced this path and generated this path to the holy mind and achieved liberation, not only liberation from true suffering, the true cause of suffering, but great liberation, which means liberation even from lower nirvana and from the subtle obscurations. Buddha himself practiced and generated the path, and achieved liberation and enlightenment.

Not only Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, but uncountable numbers of pandits, great yogis, those who have practiced Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's teachings, uncountable numbers of them, have achieved enlightenment. All the qualities of realizations and all the qualities of cessation of the obscurations, all the qualities of realization, all the qualities of cessation, all the qualities that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has achieved—they have all achieved the same thing, exactly the same.

Then, besides uncountable numbers of disciples, uncountable numbers of great pandit-yogis existed in Nepal, in those different places. There were uncountable number of yogis and pandits in Tibet who practiced, who listened, reflected and did the meditation practice of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's teachings, and the commentaries written by the Indian pandits, who put all those teachings into practice; uncountable numbers of them all achieved the graduated path to enlightenment.

Even now there are so many meditators. Even in the present in these countries there are many meditators who have generated bodhicitta, realized shunyata, the renunciation of samsara, who have realized also the highest tantra path, the generation stage, the completion stage, to achieve the unification of no more learning. Many meditators even nowadays have achieved the second stage realizations.

Even nowadays so many meditators have the correct unmistakable understanding of the teaching of the Buddha, and with correct understanding they are able to practice correctly. So many of them are experiencing the path, like scientists making experiments on the path,

developing the mind in the path year-by-year, month-by-month, in the three higher trainings, the higher training of concentration and great insight. There are meditators who have accomplished those realizations even nowadays and are proceeding on the path to enlightenment.

So, there is a path to achieve liberation. The teachings of this path, which make us achieve liberation, were revealed by Buddha with his own complete experience. He himself practiced the teaching revealed by his guru and achieved enlightenment. Then, after he revealed the teachings, the pandits checked whether there was a mistake or not. Then the great yogis put that into practice, and they had realizations.

This is a teaching that was already checked; it is not a teaching that needs to be checked, this teaching of the Buddha. Many yogis experimented by putting it into practice and they all achieved enlightenment. And still we can see—that's why there are so many holy places, so many caves that we can make pilgrimage to, and we can meditate in those caves and do retreat. By making pilgrimage to those places, praying, doing practices, we are able to receive blessings from these holy places by doing practices there, and we are able to quickly develop the mind.

In relation to all those common teachings, sutra teachings, tantra teachings, all those commentaries of the path written by those yogis, pandits, those Tibetan lamas and others from other countries, there is still the great opportunity to study, and be able to experience the same realizations as they had by studying their teachings that were written with experience, that were taught by them with experience. We can see examples like Milarepa's hymns in his biography, which are his teachings, and which give unbelievable benefit to many sentient beings—not only Eastern people but also many people in the West are able to receive so much benefit. There are so many things—Milarepa's life story, the unbelievable teachings of his experience of the path to enlightenment, by following his guru Marpa.

Therefore, the path that is revealed by Buddha is not just done by simply applying faith. The path that is revealed by Buddha was taught to the disciples, who practiced it and achieved liberation and enlightenment, and then they taught it to their disciples. It had been handed down like this, from their experience, until now. So, I can refer like this, until my present gurus. Not only His Holiness the Dalai Lama, but I have many other gurus, who, even in the general view, have much experience of the common path, the three principal aspects of the path to enlightenment, and the tantric path. So, down to my gurus, like that. All the gurus that I have, even those who don't show enlightenment but in the common view have the attainment of the tantric path on the basis of the three principal aspects of the path, and the teachings being taught with experience, not just from scriptures.

Therefore, there's no reason at all why we cannot understand the teaching of the Buddha, and why we cannot practice, why we cannot actualize the path. Even Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, before he became enlightened, before he generated the path, had the same problems that we have. But Guru Shakyamuni Buddha did the practice before us and generated bodhicitta, renouncing oneself and cherishing others, and by having generated bodhicitta then completed the realizations of the practice of the six paramitas and became enlightened.

Without talking about Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the pandits, the great yogis, and even the present meditators are the same—the bodies are the same, having flesh, skin and bones inside, filled with blood and so forth. Those meditators are having realizations of the path to

enlightenment month by month, year by year. Why are they able to have realizations? Because they practiced. Why didn't we have realizations so far? Because we did not practice. We did not change our attitudes, we did not put the teachings into practice continuously. Milarepa lived in a cave, and just ate nettles—he didn't live on ice creams, chocolates, steaks or barbecues.

Anyway, in regards the conditions, you can see when you do pilgrimage, you understand how they lived, you can see the caves, very isolated places—there's no heater, no shower, no—what else? Huh? The living conditions are like this and what they eat is extremely simple, nothing like what we eat—different kind of vegetables, different kinds of food, not like that, nothing like that. Different food, different changes, various types of food, nothing like that. The Tibetan meditators lived on *tsampa*, flour from barley, just that. They wore very ragged clothes; very old, ragged clothes. The conditions were like this.

But they generated the whole path to enlightenment, they generated bodhicitta, they generated the tantric path, and uncountable numbers of them became enlightened and taught sutra and tantra, with experience, to their disciples.

If you go to see those lineage lamas of the lamrim path, if you go to see their places, you can see. We are living such an unbelievable luxurious life, therefore there's no reason why we cannot have realizations, why we cannot practice. We have so many medicines—even when we travel, we carry a whole bunch of medicines in case a problem happens, from the hair down to the feet.

The practices are not stopped by the conditions, food, clothing or place. After having met the Dharma, it is just a matter of practicing. One way of thinking is like this. It looks like enlightenment is so difficult to achieve, but the thought comes in my mind, whether we are able to generate realizations of the path or not, whether we achieve enlightenment or not, I think the whole thing is up to the decision. Whether we are able to generate realizations of the path or not, whether we are able to achieve enlightenment or not, it is up to our decision. It's not that this physical body becomes square, the physical body becomes round or square, triangle shape, changing something, it's not that. The decision is through the mind; it is to do only with the mind. The physical body doesn't decide. When we make a decision, the physical body doesn't make a decision. When we make a decision, the decision is made by the mind, the mind that we cannot see, the mind that the physical eye cannot see, which is intangible, colorless and shapeless.

Now, why is enlightenment up to the decision? Why is the realization of the path up to our decision? Why is enlightenment up to our decision? By ceasing following the desire of this life, just by that, we become a pure Dharma practitioner, and whatever we do with our body, speech and mind becomes pure Dharma. Everything becomes virtue, all the activity, all the actions become virtue. Now, when we believe in the truly existent appearance, we are creating the cause of samsara. But if we stop believing in the truly existent appearance as true, if we stop believing that things that are merely imputed exist from their own side, there's liberation.

This way, with the wisdom realizing that everything is a dependent arising, empty, practicing awareness of everything as a dependent arising, the unification of dependent arising and emptiness, we stop grasping or believing in the truly existent appearance. This way, we do

not create the cause of samsara. This cuts off the root of samsara, so there's liberation. So this is also a matter of making a decision in life.

If we follow the selfish mind, there's no enlightenment. If we follow bodhicitta, there's enlightenment. So, again that's a matter of making a decision. It is not that we have to make the sky into the earth, and that we have to make the earth into sky. It is not like that. Do you understand what I'm saying? It is not like that. That is very difficult! To make all the rocks gold, to make the whole earth into gold, if this is our aim, to make the whole earth into gold, the whole sky into earth, that is very difficult.

You can see that these are just decisions, which way to think. Which way should the mind think? You can see it's very simple. It's simply talking about which way the mind should think. So, whether we can have realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment in this life, and enlightenment in this life, that is up to the decision, today, right this minute—whether the mind will follow Dharma instead of following desire for this life and whether we follow the wisdom of the absolute truth instead of following the ignorance of true existence. Cherishing others instead of cherishing ourselves and making the decision to stop ordinary conception and appearance. Making a decision to stop ordinary conception and appearance. By stopping this ordinary conception and appearance, there's pure thought and pure appearance, so that is the tantric practice.

We become enlightened within a few lifetimes or we become enlightened in this life—so you see now, the whole thing is related with the mind, the whole thing is dependent on the mind making the decision, making the complete decision. The decision in every hour, the decision in every minute, the decision in every day. By making the decision, which is mental, which is just simply a change of attitude, which means a way of thinking, this will lead to realization. There are no obstacles. There's liberation, there's enlightenment. You can see now that this is so much easier than making the sky into earth or the earth into the nature of the sky.

I have one teacher, the first teacher who taught me the alphabet—actually, I have two teachers who taught me the alphabet, but the first one had a beard and often carved mantras on the rock in Solu Khumbu. People sponsored him to carve mantras, the *Diamond Sutra*, the *Heart Sutra*, on the stones and rocks on the road. After he finished carving the rocks for the benefit of others, people, animals, travelers would come and circumambulate, to purify and accumulate merit. The Sherpa custom is that after they finish carving the rocks, they invite the lamas and offer *tsog*, and they bring a lot of wine in a big pot made of wood, and they make a big party. First, they do *puja*, the ceremony, then after that they sing songs and dance and drink a lot of wine. Then making a lot of jokes they go away, they separate.

My teacher used to tell me that the whole problem is not having made the decision. The whole problem, the reason there is no progress, is because of not having made the decision. I remember this frequently, and at that time I didn't understand that it could relate to all the wrong conceptions, from disrespect for the virtuous friend up to the subtle dual view. I didn't come to this understanding; this understanding did not come at that time but as he advised, the reason there is no progression is the mistake of not having made the decision. It sounded very simple, but I remembered it many times. It is one word containing so many answers, one word containing extensive advice.

So you see now, from guru devotion working up to enlightenment completely depends on our own mental determination. When we make the wrong determination, there's no development,

there is no realization, and when we make the right determination there is progression and realization happens. The whole thing is completely up to the mind, completely up to our own mind, not somebody else. It's our own decision, it is not somebody else's decision. Our own enlightenment and liberation does not depend on somebody else's mind, it depends on our own mind.

By relying upon the virtuous friend, like the skillful doctor, the skillful guide, by practicing the path revealed by that skillful guide, we are able to achieve liberation. It is explained in the sutra, the *Tsa lu jang pa*, as Buddha said, "The bhikshu who sees Dharma, one who sees dependent arising, will see Dharma. One who sees Dharma will see Buddha." Buddha, by holding a plant in his hand, said, "Bhikshus, one who sees dependent arising will see Dharma, and one who sees Dharma will see Buddha." So the one who sees dependent arising will see Dharma, I think this means emptiness. By realizing emptiness, by developing the wisdom realizing emptiness, we are able to remove the obscurations, we are able to remove the disturbing thought obscurations and the fully knowing obscurations, which means the obscurations that interfere with the mind becoming fully knowing.

By developing the wisdom realizing emptiness, we remove completely the disturbing obscurations and fully knowing obscurations, the obscurations that prevent the mind from becoming fully knowing mind. By completing the wisdom realizing emptiness, we are able to cease all the obscurations and the mind becomes the fully knowing mind. We see Buddha by becoming Buddha. The Buddha, through the development of the wisdom of shunyata, when we cease all the obscurations, it becomes enlightenment, the Buddha becomes our own experience. So through our own experience we see Buddha. That might be the meaning of this.

Then Buddha explained the twelve links. How one sentient being circles in samsara under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts. How one sentient being circles in samsara, from one life to another life. First of all, ignorance—how ignorance is created. Ignorance is the root of samsara, from where the rest of the twelve dependent originations, the twelve dependent arising limbs come. The originator of samsara is ignorance. The main creator of samsara is ignorance. The mind that is the main creator of samsara is ignorance; ignorance not knowing the nature of the I.

So now, a little bit of detail on this point. There are imprints left on this mental continuum from beginningless rebirths by the ignorance of true existence. Each time the ignorance arises, it leaves an imprint. Each time we follow ignorance, each time we create ignorance, in other words each time ignorance arises, it leaves an imprint on the mental continuum. From beginningless rebirths it has been like this. The imprint of the ignorance of true existence is left on this mental continuum. Now because of that, things that are merely imputed by the mind appear to exist from their own side.

When you label "I" on these aggregates, that is the thought of mere I. Now, at that time, the thought of the I is not the ignorance, but after the thought of I imputes I on these aggregates and the I that is merely imputed on these aggregates appears to exist from its own side, unlabeled, independent, not merely imputed, and when the thought of I starts to believe in this appearance, this thought of I becomes ignorance. Before that the thought of mere I is not ignorance. When you start to believe, immediately after that, that the I that is merely imputed on the aggregates appears to exist from its own side, the thought of I becomes ignorance.

That's how you create ignorance. When you believe in the appearance of the truly existent I, that it is completely true, that thought of I is ignorance.

So now you can see very clearly how ignorance is dependent arising. Ignorance, the base on which we label ignorance, is that thought of I when it believes that the merely imputed I exists from its own side. So now you can see that by believing in that, the mind becomes ignorant.

If you practice awareness, and if you generate the wisdom realizing emptiness, when you have the realization of the wisdom realizing that this truly existent I is empty, you can see the object that ignorance believes is empty. So in this way you see that there is no space in the mind, and when you see emptiness, while you are seeing the emptiness of the I, while you are seeing that the I is the unification of dependent arising and emptiness, there is no thought of I clinging to the thought that this is truly existent. There is no space for that.

When you know this, however, when you have realized the emptiness of the I when you have realized shunyata, you know that the thought of this ignorance, the thought of the truly existent I, is completely false. You know that the object in which you believe is completely false. And this is the root of all other disturbing thoughts, karma, and all the problems of samsara. When you have this experience, then you have the definite understanding that you can achieve liberation, that liberation is possible. When you have this experience from your side, besides having faith in the teachings, it becomes your own experience that liberation is definitely possible, from this experience of the realization of emptiness. You have the confidence, the faith, the definite understanding that you can achieve liberation, that liberation is possible when you receive this experience.

And you know that this hallucination, this ignorant, hallucinated mind, this ignorance of true existence, is the basis of all other disturbing thoughts and karma. Then from there, the whole entire result, all the problems of samsara come. Therefore, you know the cessation of the whole thing, liberation, and that it is definitely possible for you to achieve that; that it exists.

That's why I mentioned before that each time we believe in this appearance of true existence, each time, we are making ignorance—it leaves an imprint continuously on the mental continuum.

So now, ignorance. Here Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained the twelve links, relating to the external evolution, the plant. Ignorance is the originator, the creator of samsara, and it is like the farmer. The karma that is motivated by ignorance is like the field from which you get various crops. Similarly, from karma we receive various rebirths—happy rebirths, suffering rebirths, various rebirths—they come from karma, so it's like a field. The consciousness on which the karma leaves an imprint is like the seed, because the seed holds all the potential. One small seed holds all the potential—the trunk, the tree, all the billions and billions of leaves, branches, flowers, fruit—all that potential is held by the seed. So now similarly, the consciousness holds the potential, or the imprints left by karma. From the imprint, the seed, come various lives—happy lives, suffering lives, various lives. All the seeds of these imprints are held and carried by the consciousness. So the consciousness is like the seed of the plant.

Now the craving, grasping and becoming. Craving and grasping are like the water and the heat, the warmth. The water and heat, these conditions, make the seed ready to sprout. Similarly, the imprint, the seed that is held by the consciousness, is made ready to bring the

future life's aggregates, the future life's samsara. The seed that is held by the consciousness is made ready to bring out and actualize the future life's aggregates, or the future life's samsara, by this craving and grasping. So this imprint and seed that are held by the consciousness are ready to bring the future life's aggregates. This is becoming, and this is like the external seed that is ready to bring a sprout.

Next, after this, when the consciousness takes place on the fertilized egg, name and form are actualized. That is birth. That is the future life's aggregates, samsara. That is like the stem that came out.

Now, knowing the number and example is not enough, but we should relate these twelve links to our daily life. This makes it very clear how everything came from mind, how everything is to do with karma, how all our own happiness and suffering life came from our own mind. From that consciousness, the nearest one, there is ignorance, karma, then there is consciousness. This present life's birth, all the aggregates, this samsara, the foundation of all the problems...

[Tape ends]

For example, the bodhi tree at the Tara place. It came from the seed; its potential was contained in that. So this birth, these aggregates, like that tree, came from this consciousness, came from this tiny seed, which is our own consciousness. The imprints were carried by the past life's consciousness, held by our own past life's consciousness up to the time that consciousness took place on the fertilized egg. Since the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg, this has been the consciousness of this life. But before that, before the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg, it was the past life's consciousness. All our aggregates came from that. So this is how samsara came from our own consciousness.

Now same thing, besides these aggregates, the action, the objects, the six sense objects, what these aggregates use, enjoy, or suffer with—everything came from the consciousness. The undesirable imprint left by nonvirtuous actions on the consciousness manifests, is actualized, and that's why we have the undesirable appearance, perception, the undesirable view. The desirable objects come from the imprints left on the consciousness by virtuous actions, they manifest, are actualized, and the desirable objects are an appearance of that. What we feel disgusted with and what we feel attached to—all this is an appearance, a manifestation of the imprint. So all objects come from our own consciousness.

Today, from this morning until tonight, indifferent objects, desirable objects, undesirable objects, bad and good, all these things that we see from this morning, since we opened your eyes, from this morning until tonight, all these things come from our own consciousness. Like this.

What we see on the TV is not up to the screen, it's up to the figures and imprints that are left on the negative film. When it is associated with the machine, electricity and light, it projects there.

Similarly, from this morning until tonight everything that we see—how we see the people, how we see the place—the whole thing comes from our own consciousness. Exactly like the negative. When we travel, we see mountains, trees, villages, cities, we see many different things, ugly, good, many things—and all this, each moment, each hour, each different

appearance— deserts, snow mountains, clear sky, fogginess—all these things look like they are nothing to do with our mind, like they just came from there, from their own object, from the side of the object, nothing to do with our mind. They look like they are nothing to do with our mind. But everything, not only the sense of the eye and ear, but everything that we feel moment to moment comes completely from our own mind, just as what we see on TV comes from the negative film.

Meditation on these twelve links is very effective if we relate firstly like this. Especially when there are problems with others, relationship problems. All these appearances—thinking this is a bad person, this is a good person, this is an enemy, this person is helping, this person is harming—the whole thing comes completely from our own mind. Therefore, when we think of the actual evolution of our world, it came from our own mind. All these things, subject, action, object. There is nobody to blame on the outside except ourselves, except our own disturbing thoughts. All these problems, all these bad things are the result, the mistakes of our own mind.

Even when we go to the shops, to the city or to a beautiful park, or when we go to a desert or some very dirty, filthy place with mud and cow *kaka* all over—whatever, the whole thing came from our own mind and consciousness. How all these things come from the consciousness is because of the imprint left by karma. Karma is our own thought, motivated by ignorance. Karma is the thought arisen from the consciousness. Then from that action comes the action of body and the action of speech. So while there is a thought, there is an action arising from the thought, and that is the thought that accompanies the actions of body and speech. So karma is our own thought. The whole thing, the whole life from birth until death, all subject, action, object, our whole world, our whole appearance, completely came from karma. The karma came from our own ignorance, completely hallucinating the nature of the I. We believe the merely imputed I, that which appears as if it is unlabeled, existing from its own side. We believe it is true. We believe that it is true, while it is completely empty.

The whole samsara, our whole samsara, our whole samsaric existence, everything, came from our ignorance, our mind. While we are human beings it is like this; when we are devas it is like this; when we are born as animals it's like this—whichever realm we're born into, it's like this.

Therefore, you can see how extremely important it is to realize shunyata. It is extremely important to eliminate ignorance, the originator. The only remedy that can remove ignorance is the wisdom realizing emptiness. Therefore, in everyday life, practice awareness, meditate and study the teachings of shunyata. Leave as many imprints as possible by studying, practicing awareness of the unification of emptiness and dependent arising in everyday life. It is the utmost need, an important practice. Like the earth, it is the most important foundation for happiness up to enlightenment.

[Dedications]

[End of Discourse]

Lecture Fifteen: Refuge
22 December 2018

The teachings are beneficial, the meditation is beneficial for the mind, to bring happiness, either wanting happiness of this life or happiness of future lives, or liberation, enlightenment, whatever it is. It is beneficial to control the mind, effective to control ignorance, anger, attachment—those disturbing thoughts that give problems. And when you wish to practice these teachings, when you wish to meditate, to train the mind in the lamrim, the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment, relying upon this, putting the teachings into practice, training the mind in these teachings, actually this is taking refuge. Refuge is already taken. The refuge is gone. It's not that it has to come.

The teaching that you apply to solve the daily life problems, to control the mind, and the path that the teaching reveals has to be revealed by somebody, and this is revealed by the Buddha. So therefore, naturally you rely upon the Buddha, even if you don't understand all the teachings taught by Buddha.

We understand some teachings and some teachings we do not understand; some teachings are difficult to understand, even though they are simple. It may even be difficult to understand reincarnation. Generally Tibetans and Eastern people think shunyata is the most difficult thing to understand, and karma and reincarnation are kind of usual things, like usual coffee and tea. But for Western people it's different. It seems shunyata is easy to understand, it appears that shunyata is easy, but reincarnation is difficult.

Even if we don't understand the whole teaching, there are many teachings that we really see are true. Sometimes we do not have enough discussion to clarify the points. Or we have not analyzed the points well, we have not spent enough time to analyze the points in the mind. Then sometimes when things are not clear, it is due to a lack of not having studied, a lack of not having received a clear explanation. Sometimes it is like that. But for some people, it doesn't depend on a logical explanation; it doesn't depend only on receiving a clear explanation.

For a few people, for a small number of people, the view that there's one life, that there's no reincarnation, is very fixed, of the past life's karma and wrong views. This is experiencing the result similar to the cause. If you talk about karma, if you talk about the different results of karma, it will be the result of this. There are three negative actions, three nonvirtuous actions of the mind: ill will, heresy, and covetousness. Even though karma and reincarnation are many people's experience, it is very difficult to break this fixed idea, the view. Even though in reality having one life is no one's experience. I don't know why we should have this one birth and why we even took this one birth, it's very surprising. Whether we say there's a creator or not, this one birth. Whether this birth has a cause or not.

First of all, it's very important to search in the world whether there is anybody who has realized there is just one life. I'm not saying whether there is anybody who has this philosophy or theory; anybody can have a philosophy, anybody can write a book in their own way of thinking—but is there anybody who has realized that there are no past lives or future lives. Search in the East and the West. You can go to the moon to search there, whether there is one being who has realized this. People can remember past lives and see future lives, even those who haven't met Buddhism. There are many children in the East and West, and also people can remember as they develop the capacity of their mind through meditation. There are so many, non-Buddhist, Buddhist, Hindus, so many. There are people who are born with the capacity to read other people's minds, to see other people's thoughts. But this capacity of mind is not common.

If something is the object of a valid mind, then it exists. If it is not the object of a valid mind, it doesn't exist. Whether things exist or not is up to the mind, whether it is a perceiver or not. If a valid mind discovers an object, it exists. If it does not have a valid mind discovering it, it doesn't exist. Anything that exists has a valid mind discovering it.

Therefore, if reincarnation is not existent it should be realized—it is something that can be realized and discovered. There is no book that says that somebody has realized that there's no reincarnation, that there's only one life. But there are, of course, many—of course, it depends on the philosophy, the society in which we live, what ideas we studied.

This idea of one life, no reincarnation, has not been analyzed well, or well-checked, with experience and logic, with reality and logic in the world.

Therefore, we need checking and analysis. There is a whole scripture, the *Pramanavarttika*, translated from Sanskrit—there's a whole text, eight chapters, and the second chapter is mainly all the proof for reincarnation. There was no Christianity mentioned in the teachings, but so much about the Hindu views, in the form of debate. The Buddhist pandits debated with the Hindus and explained how their views are wrong.

This is something that you can analyze so much. The more you analyze, your understanding becomes deeper and clearer about reincarnation and karma. It is like science—the more they check the atoms, the more subtle their understanding becomes, the more they relate it to the mind, rather than relate it to the object. I heard that the most expert scientists, by checking atoms so much, finally discovered that how we see atoms is much more to do with the perceiver's mind. That's very, very true, that is exactly Buddhism.

Also, besides just believing the philosophy, you need to do analysis of it. Then also, because you have met only one culture, you haven't met all the cultures in the world, your belief depends on what culture you meet. Your own philosophy depends on that. This doesn't mean all the other cultures are wrong. However, it doesn't mean also all the other cultures are right. So, one thing is having studied only Western culture, but not having studied Eastern culture extensively, not having analyzed well—whatever you learn early in life, you believe that. Except a few people, who due to their strong karma feel reincarnation by themselves without needing any Buddhist teachings. They feel it from their own side. Some people who have very, very strong karma, who practiced recently in past lives, the life before this, who meditated, have a very strong impression in their mind, so without depending on society or the culture around them or what has been taught, they feel it naturally.

So now, who sees and realizes past and future lives? Uncountable numbers. In regard to logic, infinite things can be explained. In regard to the statement that there is no reincarnation, there is nobody who has had this realization, there is no valid mind that sees this, so that means it doesn't exist. There is no omniscient mind that sees this, there is even no ordinary being's valid mind that sees that. I am not talking about a hallucinated mind, I'm talking about valid mind. The hallucinated mind can see anything; I am talking about a valid mind realizing that there is no reincarnation. There is not one single logic to prove that there is no reincarnation. Even if the person put a reason, after one or two reasons, then finished. Then stuck there. It's like this.

It's not so much to do with the clear explanation, logic, but even if there is a very strong, clear explanation and logic, it is very hard to break, very hard to feel, even though what the person believes is not according to their own evolution. It is not according to their own experience. It is not according to their own evolution. Even though it's contradictory, it is difficult to see that it is wrong.

That is the result of the past life's karma. There are three nonvirtuous actions of mind. There is the past life's wrong view that there is no reincarnation, that there is no karma. For this one, what is needed is purification. However, the important thing is to feel that this is reality, to be able to relate it to yourself, and even with clear, logical explanation, for some people it's not enough. What is needed is purification practice. By doing practice of purification, the mind becomes more and more clear, then you can relate, you can feel. Like how the mind doesn't feel the emptiness at all. Emptiness is like a rock. For your own mind, emptiness is like a rock. It's very hard to feel the I is empty. Very hard to feel that, isn't it?

It seems impossible that we renounce ourselves and cherish others, it seems impossible, because in our life so far we have been cherishing only ourselves, so how is it possible to change this attitude? To cherish only others, how is it possible? According to this present state of mind, it looks like it's impossible. But, through intensive, strong purification and mind training, accumulating merit, so much merit, it is possible. Putting into practice the six paramitas, such as charity, morality and so forth, taking as the object sentient beings and practicing patience, loving kindness and compassion. By doing the practice with the holy objects, by making offerings, prostrations and so forth, all those various practices, by accumulating extensive merit, training our mind in the actual path, bodhicitta, then gradually more merit accumulates, more purification is done, and after some months, after some years, the mind feels more cherishing of others. Before, nothing, only oneself, unbelievably selfish. Then continuing, then after a while we completely renounced and we only cherish others.

Same thing with the realization of emptiness. Because the mind is a causative phenomena, dependent on cause and conditions, it can be changed. It is a causative phenomena, dependent on causes and conditions. If it were independent, it would not depend upon cause and conditions and then you could not change it, there would be no way to change it—whatever it is now, it is going to be forever like this. Whatever the mental state is now, if it is angry at this moment, then it is going to be angry forever, if it is independent. If there is attachment, then there is going to be attachment forever. However, even without meditating, the mind changes. Anger arises and stops, then attachment arises, or indifference. So even without meditating the mind changes all the time. That is because it is a causative phenomena.

Therefore, by accumulating merit, doing the practice of purification, mind training in the path, with these causes and conditions, the mind can be *definitely* changed.

In regard to reincarnation, I'll stop there.

What I'm saying is, finding the teachings beneficial for the mind, even though we don't understand some of the teachings; we may find them difficult to understand, to accept, to feel, but we wish to put them into the practice; when we meditate in order to transform the mind into the path that is revealed by the teaching, that is taking refuge. So we took refuge in the Dharma. For that, there's the need of somebody to reveal the Dharma, and who revealed this is Buddha. So naturally we have taken refuge in Buddha. Take the example of people who have realizations, like Milarepa, like those great yogis, like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Take

their example, as we want to have the same realization as them; we want to have the same fantastic life as they had. The same experience and mind control as they have. So that is taking refuge in the Sangha. When we rely upon them, it means we are taking refuge in the Sangha. When we rely upon the holy beings, that means we are taking refuge in the Sangha. Like this.

Normally, when we are sick, we take refuge in a doctor. To make food, we rely upon a cook. We rely upon food to not starve. When there is rain, we rely upon an umbrella or a house. When there is hot or cold, we rely upon the house. We rely upon money, we take refuge in money. All the time it's like this. When we have problems, we take refuge in the psychologist or psychiatrist. In some ways taking refuge is nothing new, relying upon something is nothing new.

In this case, this is the most important protection. Among all the various problems that we have in life, the most important protection is protection against taking a rebirth as a suffering migratory being—as a preta, animal, or narak—due to the cause of negative karma. Leave aside those beings, just think of the creatures that we see in everyday life, that we don't want to be even for a minute, that we don't even want to look at. A preta is one who has the heaviest suffering of hunger and thirst. A narak is one who has the heaviest pain of the six realms, the suffering of hot and cold. Animals we can see, so there is nothing to talk about.

Protecting ourselves from rebirth as a suffering migratory being, to stop going in suffering, in these evil-gone realms, is the very crucial, immediate protection that we should accomplish. It is immediate protection because death can happen any moment. Therefore this protection we need to get done right now. Even now, if there is no belief in reincarnation but in case we die, in case there is consciousness continuing, in case there is a next life, it is more skillful that we make preparations. It doesn't hurt. But when we are dying, there is no time to practice, there is no time to make preparations. So that's a good thing to think about, to keep in our heart—whether what I say is true or not.

The rebirth of the suffering migratory beings can be stopped by taking refuge in Dharma, by taking refuge in Sangha, by taking refuge in Buddha. Without taking refuge in all three, even with one, we can be protected. By living in morality, by taking refuge in Dharma, by living in the morality, living with a good heart. Even if we don't know reincarnation, even if we don't understand karma, reincarnation, and have no faith, but live with a good heart, that is Dharma. We rely upon Dharma, practice Dharma in that life, the good heart, therefore, we have good karma, strong good karma, and we don't get reborn in the lower realms. Or by reciting and hearing the mantras, by remembering Buddha at the time of death, by relying upon the Buddha or hearing the mantras at the time of death, we are protected from the lower realms. Or the Sangha, also.

But that's not enough. Not being born in the lower realms; being born as a human being or deva is not enough. That's still not sufficient, because being in the human realm or the deva realm, we don't cut off karma and disturbing thoughts, the cause of suffering, which bind us to samsara, which tie us to samsara, which keep us caught in samsara. As long as we don't break this bondage of karma and disturbing thoughts, even if we are born as devas or human beings—look at us now—we are born as human beings, but full of problems, not free from karma and disturbing thoughts, pervasive compounding suffering.

As long as we don't break the bondage, the chains of karma and disturbing thoughts, even if we are born as a deva or a human being, it's like bringing a prisoner out of the prison for sightseeing. They go around the city for some hours for sightseeing and then go back to the prison again. The deva or human being is not a human being or a deva forever. Because there are so many negative karmas, that being will again get reborn in the lower realms and again create nonvirtuous actions. It circles like this, on and on. Therefore, even devas and human beings are completely only in the nature of suffering. The whole entire samsara is only in the nature of suffering. As you have heard, there are the six types of suffering, the eight types of human suffering, all that. To stop all these problems, to completely cease them, to never experience sorrow, we must cease the cause of samsara, karma and disturbing thoughts.

To be liberated from this, for the ever-release from the samsara, then one [refuge object] is not enough—not only Buddha, we need Dharma, and even that's not enough, we need Sangha. Just as a serious patient has to rely upon the doctor and the medicine and the nurse. It is the same thing with the very serious patients, the samsaric beings, we have the sickness of delusions and to get completely free of samsara we need to rely upon Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, all three. Not only for ourselves, but for the sake of all sentient beings.

Think, “To achieve the greatest liberation, enlightenment, the ever-release from samsara, I must achieve this for the sake of all sentient beings, therefore I'm going to the Buddha as the founder of refuge, Dharma as the actual refuge, and Sangha, who are like the attainers of the actual refuge, Sangha are the helpers to achieve the actual refuge, the Dharma, within my mind.”

Without taking the particular precepts, even without taking the precept of killing, there is only refuge *upasika* vow. There is one vow like this. With this, if you can take one precept, two precepts, three precepts, five precepts, whatever number you are taking, then one vow, two vows, three vows, whatever number of vows you are taking. If it's only refuge, then only take the refuge *upasika* vow.

One thing normally I explain is that by taking refuge in the Dharma, in order to receive protection from the Dharma, what you should do, what you should abandon, is giving harm to others. Among giving harm to others, the heaviest one is killing, the most dangerous one for other beings is killing. Even though there is only the refuge *upasika* vow that you can take without precepts, from those five without particulars, you have to abandon harming others, therefore killing is regarded as most dangerous for the other beings. It is very useful, because there are big differences between not killing and not living in the vow, and living in the vow. Even if you don't do killing, if you are living in the vow, there are big differences. Living in the vow you have good karma continuously, every minute, even if you are sleeping or unconscious, until death.

For the person who has taken a vow until death, they are continuously creating good karma. The other person who doesn't live in the vow and doesn't do killing doesn't have merit continuously accumulating. In that case, the person who is mute, the person who cannot speak, the dumb person, the person who doesn't have limbs cannot kill others—and they will create a lot of good karma. If it did not depend on taking the vow, that person is creating much good karma. The person who is mute would create much good karma of speech. People who don't have limbs or cannot move, so there is no way to kill anybody, would also create a lot of good karma.

Those who are taking precepts, make three prostrations, first to Buddha, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha...

[Tape ends]

...If you are going to do lamrim meditation, there might be many different ways, elaborate ways to do it. Before you meditate on lamrim, the graduated path to enlightenment, the teachings you have received, there are the preliminary practices—elaborate and short ones. There is an elaborate practice called *Jorcho*, the preparatory practice. The prayers that we have been reciting during this time are from this, and this is the main practice done by anybody who meditates on lamrim.

Accumulating merit is the necessary condition for realizations. In order to generate the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment within your mind, you need to accumulate merit. The basic practices of the seven limbs and the mandala offering and so forth are the necessary conditions—they are the means to accumulate extensive merit, the necessary conditions for the realization. Refuge, confession and Vajrasattva practice also purify obstacles to the realizations, which interfere with the realization of the graduated path to enlightenment in our mind.

This also involves guru yoga practice. In order to receive the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment we need to enter the blessings of the guru within our heart. In order for a seed to bring forth a sprout we need to pour water to make it wet; similarly by doing the practice of guru yoga we receive the blessings of the guru, the virtuous friend, in our own heart and then through that our own mind is fertilized, is ripened. For the mind to become like the seed that brings the sprout, it must ripen in order to generate realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment.

We begin with the practice of refuge, which is the door to entering the teaching of the Buddha. Similarly with bodhicitta, after refuge, and bodhicitta—that is the door to the Mahayana path—to be able to enter the Mahayana path and practice it, and also to accumulate extensive merit and purify obscurations. After refuge, normally we do refuge and bodhicitta and the four immeasurable practices, which are the means of extending bodhicitta. We do this to feel more compassion, to make the compassion stronger, the loving kindness stronger, and the special attitude stronger, taking the works for other sentient beings upon ourselves, completely as our own responsibility, generating immeasurable joyfulness. Practicing this makes the bodhicitta stronger.

Then relating to tantra comes special bodhicitta—to achieve enlightenment quicker and quicker for the sake of all mother sentient beings. After that comes the seven-limb practice, the mandala offering and the requesting prayer to the lineage lamas in order to receive blessings. Then, after the mantra, one of the most important things to do in everyday life, since there's the wish to develop the mind, since there's the wish to achieve enlightenment, in order to offer greatest benefit to all sentient beings, since there is this wish within our mind, it is very important to recite the lamrim prayer, the prayer of the graduated path to enlightenment.

One Kadampa geshe—I don't remember a hundred percent, Chengawa, or Khamlungpa—asked the question, “What is better, having the lamrim realization, having the realization of the graduated path to enlightenment, the mind renouncing samsara, bodhicitta, shunyata;

which is better, to have this realization or to have the siddhis, the five types of psychic powers?” This refers to remembering past lives, being able to see past things, being able to see other people’s minds, and very far, distant things. With stable concentration one can concentrate for eons, without distraction. So, which is better, to have these powers or to have the realization of bodhicitta, renouncing samsara, or shunyata? One Kadampa geshe answered this question.

The Kadampa tradition was handed down by Lama Atisha, who came from Nalanda, the great university, from India in ancient times. In Nalanda there were many fully distinguished pandits, who were not only expert in words, but whose holy minds were rich in sutra and tantra realizations and paths. Lama Atisha was invited by a king of Tibet, I don’t know the century, the year, however, there had been much degeneration in Tibet, so the king of Tibet, Lha Lama Yeshe Ö, and Lama Atisha re-established Buddhism in Tibet. Atisha eliminated all the wrong conceptions that people had in terms of not knowing how to practice sutra and tantra together, or understanding that the whole teaching taught by Buddha is for one person to achieve, the gradual practice to achieve enlightenment, the teaching of the Lesser Vehicle path, the Paramitayana path and tantra.

According to what they requested and the problems they had, Atisha wrote this text called *Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment* and from that the title *lamrim*, the graduated path to enlightenment, arose. All the teachings taught by the Buddha are set up in the graduated practice for one person to achieve enlightenment, the integrated essence of the Buddhadharma.

Now we have the opportunity to practice the whole graduated path to enlightenment without any confusion, without finding any contradiction—it’s so easy and so integrated, so easy. By understanding this, by understanding the teaching of the lamrim, the graduated path to enlightenment, it is like opening the eye to understanding all the sutra and tantra teachings. We can understand and see that all the teachings of Buddha are to be practiced so we can achieve enlightenment.

The followers of Lama Atisha were Kadampa geshes, and their disciples, who preserved and who practiced the teachings that had been handed down from Lama Atisha. They are also called Kadampa geshes.

Why are they called “Kadampa” and why are they called “geshe”? They have the Dharma wisdom to be able to discriminate what is right and wrong—what is to be abandoned and what is to be practiced. Not only do they have the intellectual understanding, but they have realizations. Like infinite space, like the infinite sky, they have infinite realizations. Even though they have very high tantra realizations, they live life very humbly. No matter how much they have realizations, knowledge, intellect and wisdom, they live the life very simply, very humbly. They are great hidden yogis. Even if they have very high tantra, even if they have many psychic powers, they don’t show or reveal them to others. They are all great hidden yogis, the holders of the whole entire teachings—the teachings of the Lesser Vehicle, the Paramitayana and tantra. That’s why they are called geshes.

The Kadampas, the geshes, the meditators, the Tibetan lamas, the meditators, do not leave out even one syllable from the Buddha’s teachings. There is nothing to leave out, even one syllable—they see it all as advice. They see even one syllable as advice to achieve enlightenment. Besides the Lesser Vehicle teaching, the Paramitayana teaching, the sutra and

tantra teachings, besides those teachings taught by Buddha, they do not leave out a syllable—it is all advice for us to achieve enlightenment.

So Kadampa—*ka* is the Buddha’s teachings, and *dam* is advice—so all the Buddha’s teachings are seen as advice for us to achieve enlightenment.

Chengawa or Khamlungpa asked another geshe a question: “Is it better to have the realization of the three principal paths, the graduated path to enlightenment, or is better to have the five psychic powers, such as stable concentration that will last for eons?” The Kadampa geshe answered, “Leave aside having the realization of the graduated path to enlightenment, I would prefer even questioning what the graduated path to enlightenment is to having stable concentration, the five psychic powers, and so forth.” The Kadampa geshe explained that we have had those five psychic powers numberless times in the past, but we have not had the realizations of the lamrim. That is true. If we did have realization of the lamrim—bodhicitta, shunyata and renunciation of samsara—if we had those realizations in the past, by now we wouldn’t be like this.

It’s very true, what the Kadampa geshe said—those psychic powers, concentrations, we have had numberless times. Even Hindus have concentration. Due to this they are born without wisdom—the concentration is there, but there is no shunyata, no bodhicitta, no wisdom of shunyata, no complete renunciation of samsara—so they are born in the realm of form and formless, still in samsara, those deva realms and god realms. When the karma finishes, they are born in the desire realm, as naraks, pretas, animals, human beings or devas. When they’ve finished that karma to be born in the realm of the form and formless, their other karma is ripened, and then again they are born in the realm in which they were born before. They circle continuously in samsara until they are able to develop the wisdom of shunyata, the mind renounced of samsara.

Reciting this lamrim prayer [*The Foundation of All Good Qualities*] includes the whole 84,000 teachings that Buddha taught. The whole path to enlightenment is revealed here, is condensed here. It is revealed by this prayer. Not just the sutra, but tantra too, very briefly. Each time we recite this lamrim prayer we leave the imprint of the whole path to enlightenment in our minds. Each time we leave the imprint, by reading this mindfully, we become closer—so each day as you read this lamrim prayer mindfully it leaves an imprint on the mental continuum, so each day our mind becomes closer to the lamrim realizations. Like this, we become closer, day by day, to enlightenment. Without leaving imprints of the path on the mental continuum, there is no way to generate the lamrim realizations, no way to transform the mind in the path to enlightenment.

To get an idea, if we are going to do lamrim meditation, some practice every day, then do this with the short preliminary practice, the graduated prayer that we have been doing. Doing a lamrim retreat is extremely important. You can see that from these Kadampa geshe, from their experience, from those who have actualized the whole path.

Even questioning the lamrim, the path, the graduated path to enlightenment, is much better than having those five psychic powers and stable concentration. Therefore now, the same thing—within a minute, even half a minute, just reading a short lamrim prayer, reading the teachings mindfully—if there is no question that questioning the lamrim is much better than those attainments, then this is [much better] as well.

A lamrim retreat—even if you do meditation for one or two days, or one week, or especially one month, it is unbelievably worthwhile. There is nothing left in the world, in life, nothing more beneficial than this. You cannot find something more beneficial than this anywhere, for yourself or all sentient beings.

The Foundation of All Good Qualities

The foundation of all good qualities is the kind and perfect, pure Guru;
Correct devotion to him is the root of the path.
By clearly seeing this and applying great effort,
Please bless me to rely upon him with great respect.

Understanding that the precious freedom of this rebirth is found only once,
Is greatly meaningful, and is difficult to find again,
Please bless me to generate the mind that unceasingly,
Day and night, takes its essence.

This life is as impermanent as a water bubble;
Remember how quickly it decays and death comes.
After death, just like a shadow follows the body,
The results of black and white karma follow.

Finding firm and definite conviction in this,
Please bless me always to be careful
To abandon even the slightest negative action
And accomplish all virtuous deeds.

Seeking samsaric pleasures is the door to all suffering:
They are uncertain and cannot be relied upon.
Recognizing these shortcomings,
Please bless me to generate the strong wish for the bliss of liberation.

Led by this pure thought,
Mindfulness, alertness, and great caution arise.
The root of the teachings is keeping the pratimoksha vows:
Please bless me to accomplish this essential practice.

Just as I have fallen into the sea of samsara,
So have all mother transmigratory beings.
Please bless me to see this, train in supreme bodhicitta,
And bear the responsibility of freeing transmigratory beings.

Even if I develop only bodhicitta, but I don't practice the three types of morality,
I will not achieve enlightenment.
With my clear recognition of this,
Please bless me to practice the bodhisattva vows with great energy.

Once I have pacified distractions to wrong objects
And correctly analyzed the meaning of reality,

Please bless me to generate quickly within my mindstream
The unified path of calm abiding and special insight.

Having become a pure vessel by training in the general path,
Please bless me to enter
The holy gateway of the fortunate ones:
The supreme vajra vehicle.

At that time, the basis of accomplishing the two attainments
Is keeping pure vows and samaya.
As I have become firmly convinced of this,
Please bless me to protect these vows and pledges like my life.

Then, having realized the importance of the two stages,
The essence of the Vajrayana,
By practicing with great energy, never giving up the four sessions,
Please bless me to realize the teachings of the holy Guru.

Like that, may the gurus who show the noble path
And the spiritual friends who practice it have long lives.
Please bless me to pacify completely
All outer and inner hindrances.

In all my lives, never separated from perfect gurus,
May I enjoy the magnificent Dharma.
By completing the qualities of the stages and paths,
May I quickly attain the state of Vajradhara.

Lecture Sixteen: The Suffering of Samsara

Generate creative bodhicitta, thinking, “I must achieve the omniscient mind for the sake of all the mother sentient beings who equal infinite space, who have been kind from beginningless time, from beginningless rebirths. Therefore, I am going to listen to the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment.”

Also clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teaching according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

I thought maybe to go into a little bit more detail on the graduated entrance to samsara. This is our own experience, but we are not aware. It is said by Lama Tsongkhapa in the *Hymns of the Experience of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, that if we do not attempt to realize the shortcomings of true suffering, the wish seeking liberation won't happen.

This is the same thing that I mentioned yesterday—if we do not recognize or attempt to find out what the disease is and how the disease is harmful, there is no strong wish to find the medicine to cure it. So, if we do not attempt to think of the shortcomings of true suffering, the wish to seek liberation does not come. As the wish to seek liberation does not happen, the person is not liberated from suffering. If we do not generate the wish to seek liberation

continuously, then just as we have been suffering in samsara from beginningless rebirths, we will experience suffering by circling in samsara without end.

Also it is extremely important to attempt to understand the shortcomings of all the suffering of samsara. Not just a part of it, but all of it. In that way, the liberation that we seek will be liberation from all suffering. Otherwise, if our understanding of suffering of samsara is limited, then the liberation that we seek will be limited. It doesn't become complete liberation. It does not become actual, ultimate liberation.

Even if you don't experience that problem, even if you are able to stop experiencing the suffering of suffering or the suffering of change, even if you live in the realm of form, where there is no suffering of suffering, or the formless realm where there's not even the suffering of change, where you live in equanimity, nothingness, infinite sky, infinite consciousness, the tip of samsara—even in this case, because you don't have the mind renouncing the pervasive compounding suffering, being under the control of karma and delusions, when that karma is finished, other karma gets ripened. So again you are reborn in the realm of desire and experience again the suffering of suffering and the suffering of change.

Therefore, to make it clear—as long as you don't have the mind renouncing pervasive compounding suffering, realizing the shortcomings of that, there is no way to be completely liberated from all the suffering of samsara. No matter how much you think, “I am practicing the path to achieve liberation,” no matter how much you believe in that, how many eons you live in a solitary place, not eating, not meeting anyone, not talking to anybody, it is finished just by mere belief. There is no way to achieve ultimate liberation as long as you don't have the mind renouncing all the suffering of samsara, which includes pervasive compounding suffering. This is the most important thing.

In this way, by realizing the shortcomings of this suffering, you can generate the wish seeking the unmistakable liberation. In other words, unmistakable, ultimate liberation.

Lama Tsongkhapa said, “If we do not reflect on the all-arising ways of entering into samsara, the graduated ways of entering samsara, we don't know how to cut off the root of samsara. We should cherish the understanding, we should practice, we should rely upon the aversion, the regret, and the mind renouncing the samsara. Then we should cherish the understanding, what binds us to samsara.”

Lama Tsongkhapa wrote like this, “I, the yogi, practiced in this way, and I beg you, I ask you, the seeker of the liberation, to practice in this way.”

You have gone through the outlines and done the meditations on true sufferings, so you have some idea of the shortcomings of the true suffering of samsara.

Now, reflect on the graduated entrance into samsara; in other words, the graduated evolution of samsara. How you enter in samsara, from one to one. The meaning of all-arising might be—this is just my own guess—all-arising could be the disturbing thoughts, karma, and from that arises the whole entire suffering of samsara. From where? From the disturbing thoughts and karma. So that could be the meaning of all-arising. “All” is the whole entire suffering that arises from karma and disturbing thoughts. This could also have this meaning—what arises all the time is the disturbing thoughts and karma that is motivated by the disturbing thoughts,

and what arises from that is only suffering. So all the time, from these two, all the time only suffering arises. It could have that meaning.

Maybe I'll go over this, then you will get a more detailed idea, so when I explain the Wheel of Life, go over the painting, it will be easy to understand.

Understanding the suffering of samsara, if you do not wish to experience this, then what you should do is abandon the cause. Then, in order to abandon the cause of samsara, you should recognize the cause. That is the all-arising. So that has two, karma and disturbing thoughts. The principal one, the main one, is the disturbing thoughts.

Why is the principal one the disturbing thoughts, not karma? In the fertilized field, even if you have planted a seed, if it does not have water and minerals, even though the seed was planted it cannot give a result. This is said in the teachings, the *Pramanavarttika*, this teaching called *Logic*, which is meant to develop the intelligence, the analytical mind, and the wisdom. This text is studied in order to extensively, deeply understand other subjects—all other Buddhist teachings, other subjects—to be able to analyze them well, to be able to debate well, and then in this way to get a deep, unshakeable understanding, an unmistakable, unshakeable understanding.

It is mentioned in this teaching that when you have crossed over, away from the craving of the samsara, the disturbing thoughts, you cannot throw karma any more. You don't create the karma to take another [rebirth in] samsara. If you have crossed away from the craving of samsara, you don't create any more karma to take another samsara. So, the simultaneous-born condition is finished.

In the case of a person who has accumulated the karma to be born as an animal, a narak or a preta, before that person experiences the karma, if they achieve liberation, that karma becomes empty. It cannot bring the result, it cannot give the result of birth as an animal or in those other realms.

It is said in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, by the great bodhisattva Shantideva, “Even if the devas, the asuras, and the non-devas all become an enemy to me, they cannot lead me into the fire of the unbearable suffering state of the narak. But the enemy, this powerful delusion—even if Mount Meru, the great mountain, gets destroyed, it doesn't leave even the dust.”

What he is saying is that even if all sentient beings—devas, non-devas, human beings—become our enemy, none of them can lead us into the fire of the unbearable suffering state of the naraks. But delusion throws us into the naraks in one second. In one second, as the anger arises, already the karma is created to go into the naraks. The delusions, such as anger, throw us in one second into the naraks.

Even if all sentient beings become our enemy, they cannot bring us into suffering in the next life. But if we meet this enemy, the disturbing thought, it makes us experience heavy, intensive strong suffering, and it destroys us. What the delusion, the enemy delusion, does to us is nothing other than this. So it is definite what the delusion does to us.

The definition of delusion, disturbing thoughts, are the thoughts that make our mind unpeaceful, or in other words, unsubdued.

The definition of attachment, for example, like a person who is healthy, who has a leftover disease. There are some diseases that the person has when they are healthy, but if they eat the wrong diet the disease comes out, like hepatitis. A person has not completely recovered from having something, and by eating something the disease comes out, and immediately the pain comes. Like that, the disturbing thought, attachment, is—how to say, unconscious? What’s the word? Subconscious, latent, subconscious. It is there in the form of an imprint, latent. It is very difficult to separate this from the mental continuum, like oil on paper. When oil gets on paper, it is very difficult to separate it from the paper. Seeing the beautiful object, a man or a woman, whatever we think is beautiful, whatever we might interpret as beautiful—beautiful houses, beautiful beach, beautiful sunshine, various objects, food and clothing, ornaments, whatever beautiful object we see, it’s like the wrong food that makes the diseases that are there come out, rise up. It’s the same thing, these objects—I don’t know the word, procrastinating? Procrastinating the imprint. When you put baking powder in the dough and then the water meets the seed—activating, that’s right. These things activate the attachment. Then it gets actualized, it rises up.

Then you want to look at it, you want to touch it, you want to enjoy it. The thought painfully arises, the thought to want to touch it, to look at it, to enjoy it. It painfully arises. A kind of tightness arises. That disturbing thought is attachment. How to do the practice, to control the attachment...

[Tape ends]

...the attachment becomes visible, actualized, which means it becomes visible. The visible attachment stops all other thoughts, all other gross thoughts. What is there during that time is only attachment, so the visible attachment stops other gross thoughts and superstitions. Then, unbearable attachment rises. So we should immediately try to recognize this, then we should apply the remedy and also make a determination, “Whenever this attachment arises, I’m going to practice the remedy.” We should make the preparation and decision like this.

If you are going to kill, if someone called “Robert” or something like that is the person you are going to kill, then first you should know exactly all his figures—what he looks like, his face, everything—you should know exactly without being mixed with another person. You should make sure that you definitely understand. Then when you have that understanding, when you recognize that, then do whatever you need to do—using an atomic bomb or a spear. Kadampa Geshe Ben Gungyel said, “How I practice Dharma is, at the door of the delusions, I am holding a remedy, a short spear.” This means he is always prepared, he is always there with the remedy. If there is an enemy, a thief, who is going to come, he waits at the door, at the gate, with the spear. Then as soon as he recognizes him, as soon as he comes, without waiting he puts the spear on the head.

Same thing—always hold the spear, the remedy, all the time, at the door of the delusions. As soon as the delusion comes, then destroy it.

I’ll stop here.

[Dedications]

There are some people who need it, so this is the *lung* of the prayer confessing the negative karma, the downfalls, by reciting the Thirty-Five Buddhas' holy names. Think, "I'm going to take the *lung* of *Confession of Downfalls* in order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings."

[End of Discourse]

Lecture Seventeen: The Five Views

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the creative bodhicitta, thinking, "At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all the mother sentient beings who equal infinite space, who have been kind from beginningless rebirths; therefore, I'm going to listen to the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment." Also clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teachings according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

The nature of attachment is like oil in the paper, like the flies that got caught in the spider web. The problem is very difficult to separate away from. Like the fly or the ant that sank in the honey, very difficult to separate—the wings, everything got stuck, very difficult to wash, very fragile, very difficult to separate. If you analyze the nature of that thought, it's difficult—the mind is stuck on the object, difficult to separate away from the object, so that is the pain and that is the suffering. That is the suffering, that is the problem.

The nature of anger is that when we see the enemy or the undesirable object, there is an unpeaceful mind, there is a thought to hurt. What is the other label? Violent. For the object, there's coarse and rough, so same thing for the mind, coarse or harsh. That's right, harsh. Coarse or harsh, same? Harsh, harsh mind to hurt. Harsh mind, thinking, "With what means will I give harm?" When the anger is very intense, very strong, it is like a coal fire burned by the wind, in the heart. That disturbing thought is anger. The essence of that is the harsh mind to hurt others.

Because of the grasping at the I, the ignorance of the truly existent I, there is the disturbing thought that I'm better—by race, by wealth, by qualities, by beauty, by the flexibility of the body, such as yoga, tai chi, the Japanese—anyway, all those. Acting, the circus, all that. The aspect of thought is kind of lifting up and it is difficult to separate from the object—anger is to hurt, but the aspect of this thought is feeling up, filled up.

Then, ignorance—that is like the example of a house that doesn't have light. In that house there are no windows, no doors, and no light comes. In that house, even though there are many materials, different colors, shapes, so many things, because of darkness, there are no windows, doors, nothing, you cannot discriminate what is there, the different colors, white and black, all those different colors—you cannot discriminate in that room. You don't know. Like that, the disturbing thought of ignorance has the function of obscuring karma and the four noble truths, absolute truth and so forth—all this reality, all the nature, as it is, *chi ta wa*, the object of the omniscient mind—*chi ta wa*, *chi nye pa*—how do you translate? One is absolute truth, the other one is conventional truth. These two truths include all existence. The disturbing thought whose function is obscuring the action and result, the four noble truths, absolute truth, and so forth, the nature of the absolute truth, conventional truth—in that way the disturbing thought makes it unclear—and that is ignorance, unknowing mind.

In the house that doesn't have any windows or doors, and no light comes, it is unclear and you are unable to see all the objects in the house—the different colors, different shapes. It makes it unclear for you to see things. Same now, the disturbing thought that obscures action and result, the four noble truths, ultimate truth, the two truths, and the objects of all the two truths, is ignorance, the unknowing mind.

Then, doubt. Doubt in the Triple Gem, action and result, and so forth, which are explained from the teaching of the Buddha—are these true or not? Doubt interferes and is the disturbing thought that thinks the Triple Gem, action and result, and so forth, which are explained in the teaching of the Buddha, are true or not? It has two points of mind, and interferes with having a definite understanding of the object. This is doubt.

Now pride. There are seven different types of pride, and they are in many translated books, so you can study from that.

The five—pride, ignorance, doubt, attachment, and anger are called the five non-views.

Now, there are also five views. The first one is the view of changeable objects. That's the clearest. You can understand from the meaning that this refers to the view of the changeable aggregates, the view of the changeable group.

Anyway, you can this from the definition. There are five aggregates, the base of the I, the base on which the I is imputed. The changeable group is the group of the five aggregates. The five aggregates are impermanent. What came into existence in the first second does not last in the second second, and what came in the first second doesn't continue, doesn't exist any more in the second second. The continuation is there, the continuation of that exists in the second second, but the first one doesn't exist in the second. The aggregates of the first time don't exist in the second, but their continuation do exist. What am I saying? The continuation of the first time exists within the second. Otherwise, there is no second second of the aggregates. If there is no continuation of that, if there is no continuation of the first second of the aggregates in the second second, then there is no second second aggregates. There are no aggregates in the second, third, fourth, fifth.

If there were no continuation of the past life there would be no present life. If today there was no continuation of yesterday's I, there wouldn't be today's I. Today's I is the continuation of yesterday's I, but that doesn't mean today's I is yesterday's I. If that were so, then if we kept the eight precepts today, then the I that killed in the past life would be today's I, the killing one, who does the opposite.

Same thing—today's I would also be the I that exists by depending on the fertilized egg in the mother's womb, before taking the shape of a human being. And that means you would have a liquid body. The continuation of the blood and sperm.

The aggregates that exist in the first second do not last in the second second—they change, and that's why this is the changeable group. By depending on these aggregates, the changeable group, the aggregates, the thought, the I, is imputed. But the I doesn't appear in that way. It appears to exist from above the base, from above the aggregates. If you relate to the experience, "from" in English may not be correct, but the experience is that it is "from above the aggregates," not "on the aggregates." On the aggregates is correct, but from above, the "I" appears, the "my" appears, which means that it is existing from its own side. That

appears and then the disturbing thought, the deluded wisdom, grasps this as true. So that is a view.

Here it seems if you relate it to the action, it makes more sense. Here in this case, this is my own interpretation, my view, so with deluded wisdom, grasping, this “I,” this “my,” appears to exist from above the aggregates as true. This view is the deluded wisdom believing that this is true. This is the view of the changeable group.

The changeable group is just simply the base. When we say “view,” it is to do with the I, how the I appears, the wrong way it appears, the I that doesn’t exist, which is a hallucination. The view relates to that and also the deluded wisdom believes and holds onto that. Short way, *jig ta*, or “view of change” in English, because it doesn’t have this “group” there.

The second view is the view holding extremes. It is very important to understand that this is wrong, that it is a wrong conception. The deluded wisdom holds the I that appears from above the aggregates to be truly existent, and believes that this I is permanent, and that there is no continuation from this life to the next life. It believes that when death happens it stops. This is what is called the view holding extremes. Is the I permanent or not? No. Why? [Reply inaudible]

What makes it impermanent? [Reply inaudible] Who changes? What changes? [Reply inaudible] It’s created by delusions? It’s impermanent because? Created by delusions, right? [Reply inaudible] Which one? [Reply inaudible] That alone is permanent? [Reply inaudible] Dependent arising. [Reply inaudible] Dependent arising is permanent. It could be said, that could be said, but that doesn’t mean everything that is dependent arising is permanent. But generally dependent arisings are permanent, that could be said.

OK, now, is the emptiness you meditate on impermanent? [Reply inaudible] When you realize emptiness, is that emptiness permanent? What am I saying! Is that impermanent? [Reply inaudible] No, is that emptiness impermanent? Is that emptiness created by delusion? Anyway, you check, OK.

Now what she was saying, that is the very good answer. For example, that is what I was going to say—in the mind, space is permanent. Now like this, for example, put it this way. If the I exists separately from the aggregates, if it does not have a base on which it is imputed, then that I would be truly existent.

The other thing is, on the basis that I is imputed, even if the I exists separately from the aggregates, on the basis of the idea that the I is imputed on this base, that there is a name given to something, if the base were not a causative phenomenon, it must be an uncausative phenomenon. In that case, the I becomes permanent. The experience of the I, the actions of the I are referred according to the actions of the base, and the base is unchangeable, uncausative. It is uncausative—there is no cause that makes it change—so it is permanent. So therefore, the I imputed upon that is permanent.

What Alison said is also very interesting, a very good thought, very well thought out. Something to discuss, to debate.

The other thing is that if the I existed separately from the aggregates, it wouldn’t have a base, and that means the I doesn’t exist, you understand? If the I existed separately from the

aggregates, that is not a base. This is the same as—if I had a million dollars I would buy one very good apartment, one very good car, a big television, what else? Showers, what's this, china. Then, have marriage, have children, you gave a lot of names but they don't exist, and also they marry, gave so many names, but none of this exists now, none of this exists today. Do you understand? None of this exists today. So it's like this. If the I existed separately from the aggregates, without a base, it would become like this, non-existent. The definition of existence is because of the base.

The view holding extremes is important. The deluded wisdom looks at the I that appears from above the aggregates as permanent, thinking that it does not continue from this life to the next life.

No, what am I saying! No, I made a mistake. The way I described the I, the truly existent I, that is what, what's your name? What he said is true. The truly existent I doesn't exist, so therefore there is nothing to join from this life to the next life. There is nothing to join, because it doesn't exist. Because it doesn't exist, there is nothing to talk about. In reality there is nothing to talk about, saying it is permanent, because it doesn't exist. There is nothing to talk about in terms of this joining to the next life, because it doesn't exist.

But this view perceives that the I that exists on these aggregates, the I that is imputed on these aggregates, that it is permanent and that it does not join from this life to the next life, that when death happens the I ceases. It perceives that the I, which exists on these aggregates, that this is permanent, and that this does not continue to the next life, from this life. It perceives the mere I, the general I, without describing the aspect. That is completely wrong, because the consciousness continues to the next life, so the I continues, that which is imputed on that. The base is impermanent, so the I is impermanent. These beliefs, these views thinking that the I is permanent, that the I does not continue to the next life, are the opposite of reality.

But also, this makes sense. The I that appears from above the aggregates, existing from its own side, that which is held and believed by deluded wisdom, and which deluded wisdom looks at as permanent and as not joining with the next life. Even though the deluded wisdom looks at this I, even though the I does not join from this life to the next, it perceives that the I exists in this life, but then after death, it no longer exists. However, that is wrong. This I that is held by the deluded wisdom does not exist at all. And the deluded wisdom that looks at that I as permanent and just existing in this life is wrong.

When you think straight, not joining from this life to the next life is true, but the way of understanding, implying that this I exists in this life is wrong. I think you have to think on that point.

Isn't there something talking about a soul as permanent? Consciousness is permanent, soul is permanent—soul in the sense of consciousness, the mind. In Christianity or Hinduism, don't they talk about the soul going to heaven? [Reply inaudible] Anyway, it's very nice to hear that. It seems to make it clearer. It seems when you talk about heaven and hell, and the soul going, even if the person doesn't know what he is saying, it seems that the person is talking about the consciousness, the mind, the one that joins from one life to another life. So that is basically talking about the same thing, even using the terms "heaven" and "hell" and "soul." It seems the soul is permanent, so the I is permanent. I mention this so that you can analyze this.

[Inaudible comment from audience]

Permanent, changing? What do you mean by permanent? Oh, I see, it doesn't have an end. But that does not mean—you called it permanent because it doesn't have an end. [Inaudible comment] What is that? What? Who told you about buddha nature?

So, what about the elements? Are the elements permanent? No, in that case. [Reply inaudible] No, are the elements permanent? Huh. Eternal, they are eternal? No, because it's eternal, it should be permanent. [Reply inaudible] No, no, I'm questioning the elements. [Reply inaudible] So, they are permanent, the elements are permanent? [Reply inaudible] Elements are eternal. The elements are eternal, so they are permanent. They should be permanent according to that view. The elements are eternal or not? They are not? Have they got beginning? The element has a beginning, the element has an end. [Reply inaudible] OK, nothingness. No? It doesn't go anywhere. The wind doesn't go anywhere. [Reply inaudible] So, it's absorbing. [Reply inaudible] The wind completely stops? The air completely stops? Doesn't go anywhere? [Reply inaudible] Then it's not sure whether the element is eternal or not. It's not sure whether it's permanent or not.

Where did the air come from? [Reply inaudible] The very first time. [Reply inaudible] OK, so it didn't have a beginning, the continuation of air did not have a beginning. [Reply inaudible] It came from the sea. [Reply inaudible] The continuation of air. [Reply inaudible] The air that started this earth continued from space—that is the continuation of the air that was in space, right? That came from another space, right? So then that air in that space came from another space originally. So the continuation of air did not have a beginning. [Reply inaudible] No, no, I'm just checking whether it has continuation or not. [Reply inaudible] So wind did not come from wind, the air did not come from the air?

[Tape ends]

...the next one, holding the view of the best—this is the deluded wisdom looking at the person's aggregates and holding that any of these wrong views is the best, pure view.

The next one is holding moral conduct as best. The Hindus can remember past lives but they cannot see future lives, so they may see that in their past life they were a dog and then because they are human in this life, they make the conclusion that to be born as a human being again they have to act like a dog. There is no question of virtue or nonvirtue. So they take on the moral conduct of acting like a dog—walking on all four limbs and barking, eating like a dog and so forth, in order to be born human in the next life. They think this is the best moral conduct.

Then they shave their hair, keep skeletons, or they fast and live in the fire, put the body in the fire. Then looking at the sun with one leg. Not cutting it off, just standing with one leg. Then naked, putting ashes on the body. Not hashish, ashes. Then living in silence, thinking that these things are the best conduct to achieve liberation.

Also, by looking at people who practice this, the deluded wisdom looking at the aggregates—it could be your own aggregates, not only others'—looking at the aggregates from where this conduct of morality comes, you wish to achieve liberation. The deluded wisdom thinks that this morality, this conduct, is the best way to achieve liberation. You have to understand, these things are not involved with bodhicitta, these things are not involved with shunyata,

with emptiness. These practices are not involved with the mind renouncing the whole entire samsara, so you have to understand what is missing there.

If these three things are missing, none of this is the cause for liberation. Of course, behaving like a dog, there is no way to become a human being; no way for this to become a cause for a human being. Even those others, shaving the hair, fasting, all these things—the attitude that does these things doesn't have the mind renouncing all of samsara, doesn't have bodhicitta or shunyata, emptiness. Therefore this does not become the cause of liberation. This alone does not become the cause of liberation.

Shaving the hair, Buddhist monks and nuns [do this], there's also fasting in *nyung näs*, but it involves a very profound attitude, the three principal paths. You have to understand what causes fasting, shaving the head or similar things, to become a cause to achieve liberation or not. It is dependent on having these realizations, the mind renouncing samsara, the realization of shunyata, the emptiness of the I. Without these two there is no way to achieve realizations, without bodhicitta there is no way to achieve enlightenment. There is no way for these things to become the cause of liberation, no way for them to become the cause of enlightenment.

Now the next one, wrong view—there is no cause, action. Before talking about that, even washing, purifying with water, doing purification with water. Even though there is a similarity in purifying with water, like when there's disease, pollution, things like that, and the initiation material. But the basic thing, why that is wrong—the negative karma is not washed away by water, but in Hinduism there is washing with water, there is something, drinking water and purifying, all this, taking initiation, or if the person is sick or mute, cannot speak or has paralysis or a disease, by purifying with water, their disease is healed. That is different.

The other one is believing in the water from a worldly being, such as Brahma, Indra, Krishna—who could be buddhas manifesting for some people, but generally are worldly beings, not beyond samsara, not free themselves from all fears, from all the suffering of samsara, not having achieved all the qualities of realization or cessation. That water does not have that power, and that object of refuge does not have that power, because of not having ceased all the mental stains, all the realizations. Therefore, it doesn't have the power to lead us to refuge. It can bring some power in this life, some wealth in this life, some success in this life, or it can make us recover from disease, but it cannot guide us to liberation, to enlightenment.

But Buddha has ceased all the mental stains and completed all the realizations, therefore, this object of refuge has power. Because of the attainment, enlightenment, the object of refuge has power. So therefore, blessing the water with that object of refuge, who has all the qualities, infinite compassion, perfect power, omniscient mind, depending on the person's understanding and level of mind, and how much devotion and qualities the person has, there are much greater blessings and purification with that water. Then also, again, these things are done with bodhicitta, again with all those preliminaries. So it is very different—even if it looks the same on the outside, there is so much to understand behind it.

Now wrong view is that which criticizes, saying that there is no action and result, no karma, no past and future lives, and that this world is created by Brahma, Krishna, and Vishnu. As I mentioned, this world exists and is actualized due to the collective karma of the sentient beings who enjoy this earth and live on it. As I explained, everything came from our own

mind labeling. Second thing, I explained the twelve links, which came from ignorance, karma, consciousness, everything, subject, action, object—everything came from there, so it all came from our own mind.

All these days we talked about and meditated on how we see things being dependent on how we look at things—how we look at the object, how we interpret that. We talked about the enemy, all those many days, so that’s the reality—our mind is creating it, it is not somebody else creating our world, we create our own world. Our world is created by our own mind, therefore, this is the reality, and therefore we have freedom. We have incredible freedom. If we always guard our own mind, if we subdue our own mind, then all the happiness and good things happen—if we do not subdue our own mind, if we do not practice the good heart, then everything turns out as the enemy, suffering, distraction.

The conclusion comes, as I talked about the decision the other day—it is completely in our own hands, what we want, all the future lives, the coming years—now and up to enlightenment, our happiness or suffering, the endless suffering of samsara—it’s completely in our hands, what we do with our mind, what we do in every minute with our mind, whether we protect our mind in virtue or not. In Buddhism the whole emphasis is on the mind, our own mind. The whole practice is on the mind. So that answer is correct according to our experience.

[Dedication prayers in Tibetan]

Now we will take Medicine Buddha’s initiation, the *lung* of the mantra. We do Medicine Buddha, then Tara mantra.

Generate the motivation of bodhicitta, the Medicine Buddha’s mantra. Now Tara, OM TARA TUTTARE TURE SVAHA. [3x]

Geshe-la will explain the benefits of the practice of the Medicine Buddha, so I don’t need to explain. It is very, very worthwhile. If somebody practices healing, this is very, very good. I think that’s all.

For success this is very, very powerful, especially the more the time gets degenerated. And then Tara is the embodiment of all the Buddhas’ actions, therefore, it is a very common experience that when there is success, and wishes to fulfill the success, temporary happiness or ultimate happiness, by praying to Tara, offering to Tara, taking refuge in Tara, doing meditation-recitation, there is success, and all obstacles are pacified.

So then Samayavajra, do you have a book? This is different, this is an old one, the very first one. This is the *lung*, the oral transmission of the Samayavajra meditation and mantra. If you want to purify the particular negative karma accumulated, if you have degenerated samayas in the relationship to the virtuous teacher, your own guru, then this is the particular practice to purify.

[Oral transmission in Tibetan]

[Dedications]

[End of Discourse]

Lecture Eighteen: How to Practice Dharma 22 December 1987

The Heart Sutra

Thus did I hear at one time. The Bhagavan was dwelling on Mass of Vultures Mountain in Rajagriha together with a great community of monks and a great community of bodhisattvas. At that time, the Bhagavan was absorbed in the concentration on the categories of phenomena called “Profound Perception.”

Also, at that time, the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara looked upon the very practice of the profound perfection of wisdom and beheld those five aggregates also as empty of inherent nature.

Then, through the power of Buddha, the venerable Shariputra said this to the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara: “How should any son of the lineage train who wishes to practice the activity of the profound perfection of wisdom?”

He said that and the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara said this to the venerable Sharadvatiputra. “Shariputra, any son of the lineage or daughter of the lineage who wishes to practice the activity of the profound perfection of wisdom should look upon it like this, correctly and repeatedly beholding those five aggregates also as empty of inherent nature.

“Form is empty. Emptiness is form. Emptiness is not other than form; form is also not other than emptiness. In the same way, feeling, discrimination, compositional factors, and consciousness are empty.”

Normally emptiness is form, and form and emptiness of form are one essence, one in essence, maybe different in name. One in essence, different in name. Therefore, here it is saying that emptiness does not differ from form, emptiness is not other than form, which means in essence, emptiness is not something that exists separately from form. Do you understand? What makes form exist? What makes form, do you understand? Dependent arising. Dependent arising makes the form. Do you understand? So now, emptiness, the dependence, the emptiness of the form makes the form exist.

Like the example, bread. If you put the flour separately from the bread, separately from the cake, the flour exists separately from the cake, and then you have figured out how the cake exists. You have to think about what makes the cake. What makes the cake, do you understand? What makes the cake is the flour. If you separate the flour from the cake, only the cake exists, and you are going to make it out of egg and sugar. The cakes I have seen are made of flour, mostly. So same thing, form is made by emptiness. You can say, form is made of emptiness. Form where? Form came from emptiness. Like the cake, like the bread, made of flour. Same thing, form is made of emptiness. This form is emptiness. Putting the conventional truth, the nature of the bread as flour, putting the example, putting the conventional truth nature.

Because form is empty, it exists. If the form were not empty, there would be no way that form could exist. So therefore, you cannot separate emptiness from form, just as you cannot

separate bread from flour. You cannot say that bread exists separately from flour, because there is no way for bread to exist without the flour.

Therefore, in some ways, form is merely imputed on the base by a thought, so you can see, form is empty. There's no form that exists from its own side, so form is empty.

Same thing when you hear Kopan, when you talk about Kopan or when you see Kopan. What is called Kopan is name, that which is merely imputed on the base, the monastery, the mountain. This mountain, this particular location, Kopan, is what is merely imputed on this particular base, merely imputed by thought on this particular base. So therefore, Kopan is empty. When you think about Kopan, when you say Kopan, "I'm going to Kopan," or "I'm at Kopan," if you are talking about this, if you are thinking about Kopan as the subtle meaning of subtle dependent arising, that it is merely imputed by thought, in this way your experience tells you that Kopan is empty, that there is no Kopan from its own side.

So now, the same thing when you think of the I, it is empty. You are empty, in the same way. Everything we talk about, all the subjects, actions, objects, the whole thing, in reality, without trust, if we put ourselves in prison, without analyzing our perceptions, the appearance of the subject, the I, the action, and the object, without analyzing whatever is appearing now, if we just live life trusting the subject, action, object, I that is there, that is merely imputed on the base by thought, they appear to exist from their own side, unlabeled, independent. If you live life only like this, if you put yourself in prison, in this hallucination all the time, if you don't think beyond this, beyond this appearance, beyond this hallucination, if you just live life in this hallucination, then that's it. Then you cannot see emptiness—it blocks you from seeing the nature, the I as empty, the action as empty, the object as empty. As I mentioned yesterday, from the text, trusting the appearance, this hallucination, obscures you from seeing things—the I, the action, the object, their nature—that it's empty.

Without trusting these things, practice awareness, when you see, when you talk, when you think, if you follow the reality without trusting the appearance, which is a hallucination, that which is merely imputed, the I in which you believe, the one that is merely imputed by the thought on the base. So when you are practicing awareness, or when you have the realization of emptiness or even if you don't have a realization of emptiness but practice awareness in this reality, in this way you see everything as empty, as mentioned in the *Essence of Wisdom*.

According to reality, if you look, if you think, if you analyze, if you meditate, if you practice awareness of the way things exist, without trusting, without living life just on appearance, which is a hallucination, then you see what the *Heart Sutra*, the *Essence of Wisdom* says is completely true. So in this way, for the entire twenty-four hours you are meditating in the *Essence of Wisdom*, while you are working in the office, while you are cleaning house, while you are cooking, or while you are studying, or while you doing preliminary practices or while you are traveling.

“Shariputra, likewise, all phenomena are emptiness; without characteristic; unproduced, unceased; stainless, not without stain; not deficient, not fulfilled.”

Just to make the conclusion that I started to talk about. So I think in the case of “differ,” as in “emptiness does not differ from form,” I think, as it is mentioned in Tibetan, the prayer, “emptiness is no other than form” means that emptiness is not separate from form and form is not separate from emptiness. The emptiness of form and emptiness, the emptiness of form

and form, the two truths, the absolute truth of form, and the defective mind truth—these two are one in essence, different in name. What we are talking about here is not in essence, but what we are trying to say is that the essence is one—emptiness, form.

Perhaps you can say it like this, for example—the flour of the bread, the bread of the flour is one. Something like that.

“Shariputra, therefore, in emptiness there is no form, no feeling, no discrimination, no compositional factors, no consciousness; no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; no visual form, no sound, no odor, no taste, no object of touch, and no phenomenon. There is no eye element and so on up to and including no mind element and no mental consciousness element. There is no ignorance, no extinction of ignorance, and so on up to and including no aging and death and no extinction of aging and death. Similarly, there is no suffering, origination, cessation, and path; there is no exalted wisdom, no attainment, and also no non-attainment.

“Shariputra, therefore, because there is no attainment, bodhisattvas rely on and dwell in the perfection of wisdom, the mind without obscuration and without fear. Having completely passed beyond error, they reach the end-point of nirvana. All the buddhas who dwell in the three times also manifestly, completely awaken to unsurpassable, perfect, complete enlightenment in reliance on the perfection of wisdom.

“Therefore, the mantra of the perfection of wisdom, the mantra of great knowledge, the unsurpassed mantra, the mantra equal to the unequalled, the mantra that thoroughly pacifies all suffering, should be known as truth since it is not false. The mantra of the perfection of wisdom is declared:

TADYATHA [OM] GATE GATE PARAGATE PARASAMGATE BODHI SVAHA

“Shariputra, the bodhisattva mahasattva should train in the profound perfection of wisdom like that.”

Then the Bhagavan arose from that concentration and commended the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara saying: “Well said, well said, son of the lineage, it is like that. It is like that; one should practice the profound perfection of wisdom just as you have indicated; even the tathagatas rejoice.”

The Bhagavan having thus spoken, the venerable Sharadvatiputra, the bodhisattva mahasattva arya Avalokiteshvara, those surrounding in their entirety along with the world of gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas were overjoyed and highly praised that spoken by the Bhagavan.

[Lion-face Dakini prayer, mandala offering and other preliminary prayers]

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the creative bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all the mother sentient beings who equal the infinite space, who have been kind to me from beginningless rebirth; therefore, I am going to listen to the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment.” Also

clarifying the righteous conduct of listening to the teachings according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

Before going through the subject, maybe if there are one or two questions. [Question inaudible] Emptiness is permanent. [Comment inaudible] Yes, that's right. [Comment inaudible] When the book is not there, emptiness is not there. When David is not there, the emptiness of David is not there. [Comment inaudible] Emptiness does not change by cause. It is, I don't know the, emptiness can be stopped, I don't know how to translate. When the subject is stopped, when the subject of book is stopped, the emptiness of the book stops, the emptiness of book is not there. Book changes by cause, but emptiness doesn't change by cause, so therefore emptiness is permanent.

[Question inaudible]

How do you label emptiness? Is emptiness imputed or not? Does emptiness exist from its own side? Does emptiness exist? Isn't what is called emptiness a name? Huh? What is called emptiness, is that name or not? [Reply inaudible] Why is it that what is called emptiness is not name and what is called nothing is name? Can you explain? [Reply inaudible] Yeah. You have no perception of emptiness, but emptiness is perceived by your consciousness. But emptiness is not perceived by you, right? Like that? Huh?

[Tape ends]

...you say "mug" is name, "mug" is word, "mug" is sound? Is mug a sound or not? [Comment inaudible] No, no, I'm not asking does it make a sound or not. [Comment inaudible] I think, I tell you, first one thing. I suggest one thing, I think it is better to explain how she explained it. It is inexpressible, life is inexpressible. When it comes to the unclear point, you have to say simply, it's beyond words. No, I'm joking! [Comment inaudible]

Is everything dependent arising? Yes. [Comment inaudible]

Emptiness depends on emptiness. Emptiness has meaning. So the thing that exists in the meaning of, the thing that has that meaning, you call empty, you call emptiness.

In your pocket is the absence of a million dollars, OK? There is the absence of a million dollars because there is no million dollars in the pocket now. There could be later, but not now. So there is the absence of a million dollars in your pocket. Even when you have a million dollars in your pocket, still that million dollars is empty. Because a million dollars doesn't exist from its own side without depending on the thought labeling and the base, the paper that has the figures, numbers. Without depending on those two, there is no million dollars existing from its own side. That nature is called emptiness. On that nature, your thought labels emptiness. So therefore, emptiness doesn't exist from its own side. Is it a little bit clear? [Comment inaudible]

Yes, right. On the base which is the nature of that thing, which doesn't exist from its own side. So that nature. [Comment inaudible]

It is labeled, again it is labeled. For example, the earth element absorbs, and it is labeled a change of the body. The body becomes skinny, then the person gets a vision of sinking into the earth. Therefore, before they die many patients want to get up—their body becomes quite

heavy, kind of solid, so they stretch their hands and they ask the surrounding people to pull it up, and they try to grab things. I think during those times they get this vision, so on that it's labeled, the earth element is absorbed. [Comment inaudible]

Oh, I see! The wind absorbing in the channel. [Comment inaudible] The subtle wind absorbing in the heart chakra, I don't know. There is a wind absorbing, but I don't think that's a subtle wind, but a gross wind—what absorbs through the central channel, what enters in the central channel is called a subtle wind, abiding at the heart, in the central channel. [Comments inaudible] That I didn't hear. I haven't heard that.

They stopped. [Comment inaudible] The elements? The subtle wind continues to the next life. The subtle wind continues to the next life, why? Because that is the base of the subtle consciousness. So like this, at death time, when the person has the vision of clear light, at that time there's only the subtle mind. All the gross thoughts have stopped, consciousness has stopped. And in this, did you do the meditation? As you did the meditation anyway, the indestructible seed, which is half white and half red, in the central channel, by counting from the two breasts, straight.

Now I have one question. In the West the mind is in the head, right? In the brain. It means like wearing a dress—your body is inside the clothes—like this the mind is in the brain, like a box. Now, I have one question: the mind doesn't exist in the rest of the body, right? And when you are sitting for a long time during my discourse, the leg pain sends a message to the brain.

There must be many unemployed ones in the brain. Now, if the mind is not in the rest of the body, when people get angry, do they get angry in the head? Because the mind is only in the head? Do the people get angry in the head? [Comment inaudible] Why not there? Because there's no mind. [Comment inaudible] There is no mind to support it—if it's in the brain, anger should be in the brain. When you get attached to something so much, it should be from the head. [Comment inaudible]

That is your understanding or according to society's understanding? [Comment inaudible]

The heart rate, the speed of the heart is increasing? Yeah. The body makes the rest of the anger arise? [Comment inaudible] So the anger is in the brain? Is anger thought or not?

Student: Anger's a thought.

Rinpoche: Yeah, what you're saying is, anger is only in the brain. [Comment inaudible] Is that your experience? [Comment inaudible] No, no, is that your experience or not? [Comment inaudible] You mean by taking sleeping pills? [Comment inaudible] So no matter how much you give harm—is that person's mind clear?

Student: No, not at all!

Rinpoche: Zombie?

[Comment inaudible]

Rinpoche: No matter how much harm is given to the person, there is no anger at all? [Comment inaudible] Does that make the person's mind slower to think? Does it take much time to think? [Comment inaudible] What about if you tell them to get angry? [Comment inaudible] That makes them very slow to think, very, very slow to think, no? The energy of the mind is very slow. [Comment inaudible]

It's possible to get angry very slowly, remembering the person whom you dislike. When you think of that, you get angry very slowly. [Comment inaudible] Are they capable of thinking better? [Comment inaudible] If everybody who got angry had this one, most people would be patient.

So that's good to think about. When we feel jealous of somebody, we don't feel it in the head, we feel it from the heart. When we get angry we feel it from the heart, when strong attachment arises we feel it from the heart—not from inside the skull, in the head. So that's the experience, whatever the philosophy is.

But also you can numb the body by chemicals—isn't that what is given during an operation? [Comment inaudible] Certain nerves in the body that are very important, that the mind is dependent on, by endangering them, it can cause us to have an unclear mind, to slow things, many things.

But also when compassion arises it is from the heart, when devotion arises it is from the heart—not from the head. This is our daily life experience and what is explained in tantra, not talking about meditation tantra but the basic evolution of how the body is, the heart, where the subtle consciousness is abiding. So there is a relation.

This half red, half white is the indestructible seed, so during the vision of the clear light, there is the subtle mind, all the gross thoughts stop and the subtle mind is all that is left, and that is physical. After that, there is the subtle mind of death. The red seed from the navel that is received from the mother comes up, the white seed from the father comes down from the crown chakra, and they meet at the indestructible seed, and the person gets the dark vision. Before that, as the white one comes up there is the white vision; as the red one comes up there is the red vision; and then when they meet at the indestructible seed, there is the dark vision, and when they split, there is the clear light vision. When the clear light vision stops, the indestructible seed opens and the consciousness goes away.

The subtle mind becomes the direct cause of the intermediate state being's mind and the subtle wind becomes the cooperative condition for the intermediate state being's mind. The subtle wind becomes the direct cause for the intermediate state being's body and the mind becomes the cooperative condition for the intermediate state being's body. Then again the vision happens backwards—after the clear light, there is the dark vision, so right after the clear light is stopped, the consciousness goes away from the indestructible seed and immediately becomes that being. As soon as it went out of the indestructible seed, it became the intermediate state being, even though for a few seconds inside the body it is an intermediate state being.

So this how you go, and it becomes more and more gross, and the continuation of the subtle mind and wind goes from one life to another life. Otherwise, if the gross doesn't continue, it is the same thing to enlightenment.

The disturbing thought that makes the nature of the “I” unclear, the nature is ignorance.

This is similar to when at dusk time we see the rope there on the road curled like a snake. The darkness makes it unclear, on the road at dusk. The wrong conception, the wrong view, believes that is a snake. Like that, the view of the changeable aggregates—that this I exists from its own side. This ignorance, this view of the changeable group, is the root of all the disturbing thoughts—anger, attachment, all those other disturbing thoughts, pride, doubt—and then we create various negative karmas and experience various problems in this life and future lives.

Why are the six root delusions called “root”? Each of them is a separate root, but on the basis of each one, many other disturbing thoughts arise, therefore, they are called the six root delusions.

It is explained in the *Pramanarvarttika*—if there is an I, then there is a discrimination of others, and by discriminating oneself and others, anger and attachment arise. Relating to this, all the problems, all the negative karma arises—this means not just the I and others but the truly existent I and truly existent others. On the basis of these wrong conceptions, believing in the truly existent I and others, anger and attachment arises, and all the negative karma, all the problems arise.

Also ignorance, the wrong conception of the truly existent I, this is the view of the changeable group, this is the very root of all the delusions. If this is not completely eliminated, even without the seed of the disturbing thought, the imprint left on the mental continuum by the delusions, then when we meet the object, delusion arises—the object of anger, object of attachment, ignorance, or indifferent object. When we meet these objects, delusion arises. This is one cause of delusion. How is that translated, the first one, the first cause of delusions? Dependent? Dependent or basis—that is the first—by depending on that, delusion comes. Because it is due to the desirable object, by depending on that, by seeing that, attachment in the form of an imprint comes up. It is the same thing with that object. There are six causes of delusion and this is the first one.

Because the anger is in the form of imprints there, attachment is there, jealous mind is there, all the disturbing thoughts are in the form of imprints there, and depending on the imprint, the delusion arises. So the first cause is the imprint.

The second one is the object. In dependence upon the enemy, friend, indifferent being and so forth, anger, attachment, and those other disturbing thoughts arises.

The third one is distraction. For example, in order for strong desire to arise, you may get attached to talk that causes strong desire to arise—talk about sex, things like that. The mind is attached to these things. Looking at it as if it is suffering is the practice, but looking at it as a practice, as attraction, this is distraction.

Then also the conduct. Interest in worldly things, worldly actions, reputation, power, many things. The mind is attracted to the happiness of this life, and the body is busy. So here in the text it talks about the bad friend who has extremely great delusions and also bad conduct, and depending on this distraction, delusion arises. The conclusion is this—in short, whichever way we are trying to get the happiness of this life, the mind is attracted to that, and when we work for this, the mind is distracted from Dharma. During this time, we are unable to practice

Dharma. In other words, *du zi* is maybe what we might interpret as enjoyment of such talks, conduct, although they are actually distraction. These things actually increase delusions. The Tibetan word is *du zi*. It is interpreted as enjoyment, but it is distraction. That is number three.

For example, this is simple—there is time to meditate, there is a lot of time to meditate, even though there is work in the daytime, there is a lot of time to meditate. Now, if we have the pleasure of sleeping, the comfort of sleeping, if we have too much attachment to that, then there is no time to do meditation in the morning. The mind is attracted by that comfort, that enjoyment, so it doesn't leave time to do our meditation. So that is a *du zi*.

There is time to meditate, time to do practice, preliminaries, lamrim, mind training in the graduated path to enlightenment, but because the mind is attracted to gossip, as I mentioned before, or the happiness of this life, the time goes in that enjoyment, which we are interpreting as enjoyment. Whether the happiness of this life is gossiping or doing something at the house, if there is no TV, or no other people—there is always something, all the time.

Even on Sunday or Saturday, when there's no work, when we don't have to go to the office, wherever it is, we think there is something to do for the happiness of this life. The main aim is the happiness of this life, there is something to do. That mind, that life got distracted by these things—so like this, one week goes, one month goes, one year goes. Then when we are like this, there is no time to practice. One month went like this, one year went like this. Then three years go like this, and the whole life finishes in that—there is a danger like this.

Actually, there is a lot of time. If we do not follow the worldly concerns, there's plenty of time to do practice—even if we have to work in the daytime, there is a lot of time to do the practice.

When we think of the perfect human rebirth, how each freedom, each richness, how with each one we can achieve the three great purposes, the three great meanings, in each second—just the first freedom, not being born in the naraks, having this precious human rebirth, having the freedom to practice Dharma—by having this freedom, in one second, we can achieve great meaning, the happiness of future lives, by creating the cause. Then, morality, doing those preliminary practices, making offerings to the Triple Gem. With this freedom even if we wished to achieve liberation in that second, we could create the cause. Even if we wished to achieve enlightenment we could create the cause by generating bodhicitta. Even with this one freedom, we can achieve and make it possible to achieve and attempt to achieve the three great meanings.

On one side, compare like this—if we did not have this freedom of not being born in the naraks, having the freedom to practice Dharma, having this precious human body, even if we owned dollars and diamonds equal to the number of atoms on the earth, this alone could not stop rebirth in the lower realms. This alone cannot cause us to receive the happiness of future lives or liberation or enlightenment. Even if we did not own even one diamond or dollar, if we had the freedom to practice Dharma by not being born in the narak realms, we could achieve the three great meanings even in one second.

If you compare the value of this many diamonds, this many dollars, according to the number of the atoms of this earth, and this one freedom—it is incomparable, those possessions are completely lost. Those possessions are completely nothing compared to this one freedom to

practice Dharma by not being born in the naraks. So you see now how unbelievably precious this precious human body is. Each freedom is like this, unbelievable, so precious. Each freedom, each richness, is unbelievably precious. Nothing on this earth, in the material, nothing in this world, nothing is more precious among the possessions in this world—nothing is more precious than this precious human rebirth.

This precious human rebirth is qualified by the eight freedoms and ten richnesses, and is even much more precious. It is much more difficult, so much more difficult, much more rare, much more difficult to receive this than even the freedom of having the opportunity to practice Dharma by not being born in the naraks. This precious human rebirth, qualified by the eight freedoms and ten richnesses, this is so much more rare, much more difficult, much more precious.

So, this we have.

Even thinking of this one freedom, such as this highly meaningful freedom, having the opportunity to practice Dharma by not being born in the naraks, this is difficult to find again. This freedom is difficult to find again, and it does not last forever, it is very easy to decay and can be stopped any minute, lost any minute. Death can happen at any minute.

If you think, if you look at, if you follow the worldly concern, there is no time to do practice. You can never find time to practice. But if you follow Dharma wisdom—understanding that the perfect human rebirth is meaningful and can be stopped any minute, because death can happen any moment—with this Dharma wisdom, if you look at your life with this Dharma wisdom, with the thought of the uncertainty of death, there is plenty of time to meditate. There is plenty of time to practice, to do retreat, to do practice at home.

Whether you have time or not is dependent on which mind you follow—whether you follow the worldly concerns or whether you follow Dharma wisdom, especially the thought of impermanence and death, the uncertainty of death. When you think this way there is plenty of time, and you see so many things that are unnecessary, that there is no need, and there is plenty of time to do practice. You see the need for Dharma and for other things you see no need.

With worldly concern, even if we feel that there's the need for Dharma, we always put it off. Even if we think Dharma is good, we always put it off—“Maybe first I'll go to Rajasthan, or first I'll go to Goa”—we are always finding excuses, always finding something to do. Then we always put off the Dharma practice, what we have the opportunity to do now, we put off for later and again later and again later.

The fourth one, the explanation. The nonvirtuous friends have not abandoned delusions but talk as if they have achieved liberation. This makes delusion increase. So that's the explanation of the fourth one.

Then the fifth one, habit. Because of habit, we are so habituated with either anger or mostly attachment—the nonvirtuous actions, that we have been so much habituated to—and then because of the habit, delusion arises.

Then the sixth, inappropriate attention. Thinking that this person gave us harm, this person is benefiting us, and then attachment arises if it's a friend, and anger arises if it is an enemy, so

it is discriminating. By discriminating this is friend, this is enemy, attachment arises again with a friend and anger arises with the enemy.

The other thing is, a person has done very heavy negative karmas but still they are happy, still their life is successful, things are going well. This person did many bad things but still things are going well. Thinking, “Maybe karma is not true. Maybe action and result are not true.” For example, people who lived much of their lives as butchers and are now very rich, very successful, they have very good cars, a very rich apartment, this and that, no worries of not finding job, and so on. In terms of karma, something should happen for them, but nothing is happening, even though they killed many thousands of animals every day. So we think, “Maybe karma is not true.” This is unrighteous attention. This makes the delusions increase.

However, today, having a long life and being comfortable now is not a good sign. The Dharma practitioner who has a lot of problems, who is experiencing a lot of problems, a lot of sickness, that is a good sign. Those people who never practiced, who never changed their attitude, who never do purification, who have a long life and are very comfortable, with a relaxed life—that’s not a good sign. They have no sickness, are healthy every day, like that; they are relaxed because they don’t know the karma, they don’t see the future. But actually, if they could see the karma, if they could see the result, their future lives, they could not eat food at all, they could not sleep for even a minute. However, it is bad sign.

[Tape ends]

...now having a lot of problems is good. That is good because all the past heavy karmas we experience now in the form of small problems don’t need to be experienced for so many eons in the lower realms. That is purification. Some people who are very wealthy, who are creating a lot of negative karma, who have a long life and are healthy and look like they are having a lot of success. They are like the dirty cloth that is not put in water. The Dharma practitioner who experiences a lot of trouble once he starts to practice Dharma is the same as the dirty clothes that are being washed in the water. The other one is not washed, so therefore dirt doesn’t come out, but this one is being washed. When it is put in the water, with water and soap, the dirt comes out. Same thing, when you practice, the harder you practice, the more intensively you practice, you purify more—so that’s a good sign. You should realize that. By doing Dharma activities, working for other sentient beings, doing retreat, whatever you do, whichever Dharma practice you do.

Then, the six causes of delusions. So just to finish.

Those who have taken birth under the control of the karma and disturbing thoughts are not beyond death transference, joining the next life.

Death has nine conditions, summarizing. We finish the length of life that is our karma, due to past karma. There is also untimely death—when there is still life left to live but then due to diet and conduct, death happens. So there are about nine death conditions.

After death, will there be suffering or happiness? After death, what benefits, what harms? That is karma, virtuous and nonvirtuous karma, the actions of the mind, the actions of the principal consciousness and the actions of the thought, which accompany the actions of the body and speech. Virtuous actions of the principal consciousness are the ones that benefit. Nonvirtuous actions harm. Because the sufferings that we experience after this death came

from them, they harm. The happiness that we experience after death is benefited by our virtuous actions.

For somebody who has done much virtuous practice, very powerful virtuous practice in this life, it is possible at the time of death to have very heavy experiences. For the person who created very heavy negative karma, having a comfortable life, the comfort that the person is experiencing now is not the result of these negative karmas of the past, but the result of another good karma that they accumulated in the past. They are experiencing that result now. So the Dharma practitioner, at the time of death, can experience heavy karma, the result of the past negative karma, but after death, after the mind leaves the body, there is happiness, which is the result of the past good karma. After death there is heavy suffering, and that is the result of past negative karmas. Therefore, very foolish people might think that maybe karma is not true by seeing these things, but that is wrong.

Then there is a question, among so many karmas accumulated from beginningless rebirth, what karma will be experienced at the time of death? How is it decided which one is going to be experienced? There is also an explanation of that. I will leave out that one.

In our everyday life however we train our mind more, either in virtue or nonvirtue, at the time of death that thought comes. Before the breath stops, when it's about to stop, at that time the mind is the gross dying mind. The breathing out is stronger and the breathing in is weaker. Then at that time, the way we trained more, in virtue or nonvirtue, our thoughts transform. Therefore in our everyday life we need to put every single effort and all of our attention to training in virtue, to transforming our actions into virtue. That is very important.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama said that if you want to wear make-up, if you want to dress up, you should dress up for birth and death. In other words, where we should be good-looking, where we should be better-looking, where we should be nice, where we should wear make-up, is at death and birth. It is very important to keep this in the heart.

After the outer breath is stopped, until the inner breath stops, the subtle dying mind, the subtle mind of death, is present. At the time of the gross death mind, there is discriminating enemy, friend, anger, attachment, remembering the Triple Gem, gurus, and so forth, remembering the meditations. Then, if we do not remember the meditations, the practices, because of disease, our Dharma friends—those with whom we have good relationships, faithful, good relationships—can remind us of the practice and also say mantras.

Even for a very evil being, reciting Buddha's mantras at the time of death, hearing this, that person never gets born in the lower realms. So things like that—Medicine Buddha's mantra, Milarepa, Chenrezig, many things—by the person hearing the mantras, even if the person has a very evil mind, a very evil life, and much negative karma, hearing those mantras can change the person's birth from the lower realms to the upper realms. Again, that is to do with their good karma, having somebody reciting mantras at death time. Maybe this person never heard Dharma but at death time the person met some high lamas or a very good meditator, and then there is the transference of consciousness to a pure realm, things like that. Again, that is to do with individual karma. Same thing with animals.

The subtle death mind at that time is nothing—virtue or nonvirtue, nothing appears. That is the indifferent mind, how is it translated? Unprejudiced mind, I don't know what it means. Maybe because it is not prejudiced by virtue or nonvirtue.

For the person who practiced virtue, generally speaking, at death time there is much less harm, no fear, or much less fear. This depends on how much virtue the person practiced. Then the person sees beautiful objects, beautiful things—going from the darkness to the light. The person gets the appearance like this. Whenever a virtuous or nonvirtuous person dies, at the time of death there is strong attachment to the body. Then by that cause, the consciousness leaves the body. As the consciousness leaves the body, immediately, as I mentioned before, one is born as an intermediate state being. One takes the complete form of the intermediate state being according to the next life. If the being is going to be a narak being then the body is like a tree, the log of a tree that is burnt. If the person is going to be animal, then the intermediate state being's body is like smoke. If it is going to be a preta, the body is like water. If it is a desire realm god or a human being, the body is like gold. If it is going to be born in the form realm, it is a white color. And then if the intermediate state being is going to be a deva it goes up, if it is going to be a human being it goes straight, and if it is going to the lower realm, then it goes down.

Within the forty-nine days, the being sees the parents having sex, copulating. Then if it is going to be a man, I think they are angry at the man, I'm not quite sure. They are angry at the man and attached to the female. Then the consciousness takes place on the fertilized egg. If it is going to be a woman then they are angry at the female and attached to the male. If it is going to be born as a narak, probably by the cause of having done the action of killing, it sees the being there as the object of killing, and by seeing that then it gets born in the narak.

So I'll stop here.

Like this, there is a pig in the center of the Wheel of Life, which signifies ignorance, the view of changeable groups, the ignorance of true existence. From the pig's mouth comes a pigeon—the pig's mouth is holding the pigeon's tail and also a snake's tail. That means ignorance is the base, the originator of anger and attachment. Attachment is signified by the pigeon and anger, hatred, is signified by the snake.

Now this side is black and this side is white. Describe the disturbing thoughts here. Remember that I went through the five non-views and the five wrong views, but I didn't go over the twenty secondary delusions—there are many books you can go through, OK?

Now, disturbing thoughts. The black and white are karma, motivated out of the wrong conception of true existence. Negative karma comes from there, of course, and there is also good karma accumulated from there, out of the wrong conception of the truly existent I. Now for us who have no realization of shunyata, no bodhicitta, whether all the good karma is out of ignorance we should check, we should analyze.

For example, this black one is negative karma, and the white one is good karma. The disturbing thoughts are karma and all arise from the true cause of suffering.

There is the naked one kind of chained and coming down, which is the intermediate state being, who goes to the lower realms by creating negative karma. There are people going up on the white path, those who have created good karma, virtue, and go to the realm of the happy migratory beings or the pure realm. Among the realms to be born in, the five or six, sura, asura, all the devas, human beings, narak, preta and animal—the narak, the animal and the preta show the suffering of samsara, the suffering of suffering.

Having the drawing of the human world with all the four continents, east, west, north, and the suras and asuras fighting, and all the human beings' enjoyments, that shows the suffering of change, the suffering of samsara, the temporary pleasures.

Now, there is the world of form. By being bored with the sense pleasures we seek the inner pleasure, but without having the renunciation of all of samsara, without having renunciation of karma and disturbing thoughts, the pervasive compounding suffering, and without having the wisdom of shunyata or bodhicitta. We just seek inner pleasure through concentration, shamatha—from this attainment then we get born in the world of form, like those Hindus. Then we get bored with the inner pleasures and seek equanimity. With this wish, but no renunciation of the whole entire samsara, and without shunyata or bodhicitta, we are born in the formless realm, still in samsara. This shows the whole entire form and formless realm where there is no suffering of suffering, or even no suffering of change. So, equanimity. This shows the whole idea of samsara.

This is very important. According to our qualities, just simply seeking peace, wanting to have peace, wanting to have mental peace, simply wishing for inner peace, tranquility, but having no renunciation, no bodhicitta, no shunyata; even if there is no interest or attraction to sense pleasures, but if there is the wish for inner peace alone, having this wish only causes rebirth in samsara, in the form and formless realms.

There are more details on how this happens from karma and disturbing thoughts through the twelve links. You can study that, and those who do retreat may receive teachings on that.

The whole Wheel of Life is held in the mouth of the Lord of Death, and this shows how sentient beings, who are in samsara, are not beyond impermanence-death. We are in the mouth of impermanence-death. The Wheel of Life being held by the two hands of the Lord of Death shows that as long as we are not liberated from samsara, we are bound to samsara by karma and disturbing thoughts, the two hands of karma and disturbing thoughts.

So now, here is Buddha. On this side there is a verse written. "Attempt and renounce. Like the elephant sank in the quagmire of worldly life, stop the host of the Lord of Death. Anybody who practices this holy Dharma, Vinaya, with great carefulness, will abandon the birth of samsara, will end the suffering." That signifies the true path.

And here there is Buddha, in bhikshu aspect, holding the white moon in his hand—so that signifies the cessation of suffering. Like this, by practicing the true path, which is wisdom, the very essence of the wisdom, the real essence of Buddhadharma, the very essence of Buddhadharma, the wisdom realizing emptiness, and especially the nature of our own mind. Why it is called the *Heart Sutra*, the *Essence of Wisdom*—there are so many phenomena outside and inside, and they have absolute truth, but especially the absolute truth of the inner phenomena, our own mind, the essence of that—so the wisdom realizing that is the essence of wisdom. The wisdom realizing the nature of our own mind is the *Heart Sutra*, the *Essence of Wisdom*. This is the very essential true path. Directly perceiving this is the true path.

By realizing the true path we cease ignorance, signified by the old man, the blind man, and that ceases karma, shown by the person who is making many clay pots.

Then, craving and grasping, touching, drinking wine or something like that, or sometimes eating fruit—so craving and grasping is fifth. These three delusions are fifth. The three delusions are ignorance, craving and grasping.

Then, two actions—the compounding action, signified by the person making many plates, then becoming, signified by the lady who is pregnant, that’s sixth. By ceasing that one, the result of rebirth, from rebirth up to death, and all the problems between that relating to human beings—separating from desirable objects, meeting undesirable objects, sicknesses, old age and death—all that completely ends. The cessation of suffering is signified by Buddha holding the moon.

This is a brief introduction of the Wheel of Life.

Now I will do the *lung* of the *Eight Verses*. The *Eight Verses* contain the basic practice of the two bodhicittas. Absolute bodhicitta, then the all-obscuring thought truth—the two bodhicittas, the altruistic mind to achieve enlightenment for other sentient beings. The main body of this practice of the *Eight Verses* is—even if we become liberated from all of samsara, that’s not sufficient. Seeking happiness for self, the self-cherishing thought, is the source of all suffering and cherishing others is the source of all the happiness, all the success, all the good things. Therefore, all the happiness, everything comes from bodhicitta, as I explained the other day. All the happiness, every good thing comes from bodhicitta. Therefore, every single happiness, every success, all the good things came from sentient beings’ kindness. Therefore, we are responsible—all our comfort and happiness completely come from the kindness of each sentient being, so therefore we are completely responsible to repay them. They are dependent on us, their happiness is dependent on us; we are completely responsible for eliminating their suffering and leading them to the highest happiness, enlightenment.

Therefore we need to achieve enlightenment, to be able to perfectly guide them, and for that reason we need to practice bodhicitta. Without bodhicitta, no enlightenment. Therefore, we need to practice what is contained in the *Eight Verses*.

[*Lung* of *Eight Verses* in Tibetan]

I would like to thank everybody for all your sincerity, all your effort, trying to understand Buddhism. Even though it is difficult to understand, difficult to feel, you are trying hard, which is very skillful, unbelievably worthwhile, to make effort and time for yourself and especially for other sentient beings. All your patience sitting here during my talks for many hours. Then doing the meditations—for all your effort I would like to thank everybody from my heart.

Since I came here, I mumbled, during these few weeks, but I hope there is some benefit in your life. I hope there is some benefit. So you analyze and if it’s worthwhile, practice. The other thing the Kadampa geshe advise is that you have hundreds of thoughts, hundreds of things you have thought, but the mistake is never once having the thought of impermanence-death. That one thing is missing—impermanence-death, which we are going toward every minute, every second.

Even if there are so many things which are done, we’re overwhelmed by one thing—the self-cherishing thought. Our life is not getting better, not having development in the mind; if we do not meditate on impermanence-death, if we do not keep this in the heart, then the perfect

human rebirth that we have received has no meaning, doesn't become meaningful, and having met a virtuous teacher isn't made meaningful. It wastes having received a perfect human body, having met the teachings, and the virtuous teacher.

By not practicing Dharma, even if the breath is not stopped, even if the life is not stopped, the body is like a corpse. When you do not practice Dharma, you are like a zombie, that you mentioned. Even if the breath is not stopped you are like a corpse, like zombies.

When there is the boat, you should take the boat to cross the ocean. When there is a host of many powerful people, you should use them to defeat the enemy. When you have a field, minerals, and everything, you should plant the seed. So same thing—while you have this perfect human rebirth, the virtuous teacher, many holy beings that you can meet, who are qualified, and the complete teaching of the Buddha, from beginning to the end, to enlightenment, you should take the opportunity, you should practice, you should attempt to practice the graduated path to enlightenment. So by taking this boat of the human body, you can cross samsara and go to enlightenment. It is important to take the opportunity.

Then if you can, do the Vajrasattva mantra at the end of the day, before going to bed, that is an extremely wise thing to do. Even if you do retreat, or don't do retreat, recite the short one twenty-eight times or the long one twenty-one times. If you can do this it's very wise, it makes the negative karma much lighter.

If you have time to meditate, if you are planning to meditate on the graduated path to enlightenment, you can use the *Essence of Nectar*, with commentary, which is a complete lamrim, a pocket lamrim, the graduated path to enlightenment. At the moment if you are not clear on the whole path to enlightenment, read a little bit every day and meditate a little bit. Try to get the whole idea. Then after doing this for a few months or a year, you can train the mind in guru devotion, mind training, perfect human rebirth related with impermanence-death—do that meditation one day. Then the third one, whichever bodhicitta technique you practice, start to train the mind in that, and then there is also shunyata. You can start one day, doing four or three or two meditations, if you want to train the mind. On top of this, if you have refuge you can take tantra initiation and also train the mind in the tantric path and do meditation on shunyata with the tantric path.

In this way, before death you have the whole realization of lamrim and tantra, and become enlightened in this life—or if you do not have lamrim realization and tantra, at least bodhicitta, and if not, renunciation, shunyata. You can make some progress and the life becomes highly meaningful. You can make that much development, so then in the next life you can do the rest of the path. Like this, you are able to become enlightened quickly for the sake of all sentient beings.

It is very good, even if your life is very busy, with many things to do, many obligations, to do some retreat, on lamrim and associated with the deity, together. If not, just do lamrim, that's very good. Or do the preliminary practices associated with lamrim. Also, deity meditation, but associated with lamrim, and then you have lamrim realizations and all that. Take the eight Mahayana precepts as many times as possible; this makes the life highly meaningful and makes much preparation for the happiness of future lives.

I think I'll stop here.

[Mandala offering]

Dedicate all the merit from listening, explaining, all the merit that we have accumulated during this time, to generate bodhicitta within our mind and others, and for those who have to be developed.

Also, in this very brief lifetime, without delaying for even a minute or a second, to become like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, Lama Atisha, Lama Tsongkhapa, Milarepa, to have all the realizations and to be able to benefit all sentient beings. To make it short, it's very important to dedicate like this. We should be able to do correct practice, like them.

The root of the path is devotion to the virtuous friend. Dedicate to be able to find a qualified virtuous friend, now and in all the future lives—like the Buddha, Lama Atisha, Lama Tsongkhapa, all those being the actual guru—and then to be able to do correct practice without rising the slightest heresy, wrong views, always to see in purity.

Then for the teachings of Buddha to exist, particularly Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings, that which you have been hearing, which you have been practicing, the whole entire teaching of sutra and tantra of Lama Tsongkhapa, to spread and to last a long time until samsara ends.

Then all the holy beings, the one savior of all the sentient beings, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and all the rest of the holy beings who live for other sentient beings to have a stable life until samsara ends and for all their wishes to succeed immediately.

Also pray that our guru, Lama's reincarnation, is able to benefit all sentient beings, like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, like Lama Tsongkhapa.

Having this opportunity to do the course is principally by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and particularly by Lama Yeshe's kindness. To continue the course each year is particularly due to Lama's infinite kindness. By realizing this, please dedicate the merits for the incarnation and for other holy beings.

Also, for all the father and mother sentient beings to have happiness, to cause this by oneself alone, and for the three lower realm beings to be empty forever, and to cause this by oneself alone—and wherever there are bodhisattvas, for all their wishes to succeed immediately and to cause this by oneself alone.

As the three-time buddhas have dedicated their merits, I will dedicate my merits to achieve enlightenment.

I will do the short lam-rim prayer in Tibetan.

[Tibetan]

[*Jang chub sem chog...*, *ge wa di yi...*; long-life prayers]

[End of discourse]

[End of entire teaching]