

THE FIFTH MEDITATION COURSE

Day 1

Friday November 16th

7 am

INTRODUCTION

I'm sorry—it's only me sitting on the throne—but I can sit on behalf of you. Before, we didn't have any pictures of giving such English language meditation courses in our mind, but anyway, I will give you some brief information about how it happened that we came to do such a meditation course.

Our first European student—her American Russian name is Zina Rachevsky—asked many times if I would give such a meditation course for European seekers. She asked me many times but I rejected the idea. Finally, I asked my most venerable Guru Thubten Yeshe, and he instructed me that if it were beneficial, I should do it. So I did it. As there is a need for such a meditation course for modern seekers, he planned that I should give the meditation course twice a year. I think this is the fifth.

Anyway what are we going to do, what are we planning to do in this meditation course? The actions we are doing here are new actions that we haven't done before—actions of body, speech, and mind. These are not ordinary old actions. This meditation course is a holy method to make our mind, speech, and body holy. So, of course, there are many hindrances—billions and billions of hindrances. There are even great hindrances to do the ordinary temporal work of looking after oneself. If even such worldly action has hindrances, why not this? In general, there are many kinds of hindrances—inner, outer, and secret hindrances.

Therefore, first I am going to do a little puja in order to stop the hindrances to explaining the Dharma and listening to and practicing the Dharma, the holy method. This is a holy method that causes the body, speech, and mind to transcend into the vajra body, speech, and mind—which means indestructible holy body, speech, and mind. Transcend from what? From the impure body, speech, and mind that is the fundamental source of problems and suffering. It is clear that if you don't have such an impure mind, you don't have the problems. It is the same thing for the body—if you don't have the impure body there is no way for physical problems to arise.

Those of you who wish to should visualize the following as I do the puja.

Visualize the person giving teachings as Guru Shakyamuni, as an enlightened being, and from his heart visualize many thousands of wrathful deities emanating and chasing all of your outer, inner, and secret hindrances away. Visualize the hindrances in the form of wrathful spirits, and visualize that the wrathful deities chase all the hindrances away—beyond the Atlantic Ocean, beyond the world—causing them never to return. Outer hindrances, outer spirits are white and black. The black spirits always interrupt positive and virtuous actions, hinder good actions, and force or persuade you to engage in negative actions. The white spirits help to create merit and positive actions in order for you to become holy. The outer hindrances exist and find ways to disturb and hinder you if you have the inner and secret hindrances in your mind. It is because of these two that they find an easy way to disturb you. When these two hindrances are purified in your mind, there is no way the outer hindrances can disturb you—they can be ceased and stopped from doing so. It is totally like this—as

long as we are friends with the inner and secret hindrances in our minds, the outer spirits will find a way to disturb us and cause our practice and meditation to be unsuccessful. There are many way in which they do this, including causing mental diseases, craziness, and so forth.

All of these hindrances are only our own fault—they are caused by us. Some people spend years practicing meditation and sometimes they become crazy instead of receiving realizations in the mind. Many things happen due to the three hindrances, due to not purifying the first two—the inner and secret hindrances—in the mind. What is the inner hindrance? It is the ignorance of the absolute true nature of existence, the “I,” and the self-cherishing mind. The secret hindrance is the dualistic mind.

Visualize many wrathful deities coming forth from Guru Shakyamuni’s heart, chasing away the wrathful spirits—who are in essence all your hindrances—beyond this world. Also visualize the ground as a vajra ground, the walls as vajra walls, and the roof as a vajra roof—purely indestructible. Because of this vajra palace with vajra walls and roof, no one can interfere with your practice or the development of the holy mind. The vajra palace is also transparent—don’t think of it as made of iron or stone—it is very transparent like crystal, but indestructible so that no one can interrupt you or interfere with you.

[PUJA]

I don’t have any experience or realizations. I don’t know anything about Dharma, but maybe the Dharma recognizes and knows me well. My understanding of Dharma is like one atom of this universe. Therefore, I don’t have any hope that this meditation course can benefit you. But I’m happy to talk about new subjects with new minds—new subjects and new thoughts. As you and I are human beings for such a short time, I think it is fortunate to talk about such a holy thing.

First I would like to give you the introduction to the meditation course. Actually, this whole book is the introduction to the meditation course, so we have to spend one month introducing the meditation course. But maybe if I say a few words to introduce the meditation course—you may have many different connotations about the meditation course, but if I explain my connotations first...

Meditation course or Dharma, in my point of view, has to be the same. Meditation and Dharma have to be agreeable, have to be oneness.

“Dharma”—I think it is not English, I think it is Sanskrit. The Tibetan term is chö. Anyway, the meaning of Dharma, just to have an idea, is guiding or saving the mind from suffering. This is the meaning of Dharma.

But there are all kinds of suffering, thousands and thousands of different sufferings, not just one type. It is like this, another example—there are hundreds and hundreds, all kinds of different medicines, but they are all used for curing sicknesses, to save the patients from suffering. Even within “sicknesses” there are all kinds of different types of sicknesses. As there are different kinds of medicines for the different types of sicknesses, so in the Dharma there are all types of methods. There are numerous different Dharma practices, but they are all Dharma as all the different kinds of medicines are medicines. However, the effect of the chemical, external medicines and the effect of Dharma are as greatly different as the earth and the sky. Exterior medicine is only a temporal method because it cures sickness temporarily, not permanently. For example, if the person has the

problem of diarrhea, medicine can temporarily cease but not end the experiences of diarrhea. Even if the suffering of the stomach is cured at that time, in a few months or years it can come back, and the person can again experience suffering. It is the same with other sicknesses. This is easy, it is common to all of us. This example proves that the external chemical method is only temporal, and not the ultimate method. Even if you take medicine continually it causes other problems, other sicknesses in the body to arise. Even when you have sickness and get treatment, this cures one part of the problem, but causes another problem to arise. We can realize this when our wisdom is acutely perceptive. Sometimes even if medicine cures the physical problem it harms the mind. This also proves that it is not the ultimate method.

With Dharma practice, however, there is no problem—no matter how long we practice it always benefits us, we always profit. Dharma practice makes us more holy, more pure, and cleans our body, speech, and mind the longer we practice. There is no danger to the body or the mind. But of course if we practice wrong Dharma it is possible that we may get into trouble.

It is the same thing with drugs. If you carry on taking the drug believing that it will always give the same vision, the same feeling, the same effect, what will happen is that it will only drive the mind crazy or cause danger to the life. This is well-known, common to many people—as the first and second trip felt good, they continue to believe that it will give the same effect, so they carry on with it more and more. This makes the person more unconscious and undisciplined in body, speech, and mind, and also causes dangers to the life. This proves that drugs, as medicine, are not the ultimate method.

But those who meet and practice Dharma do not have to depend on drugs. It can be good, just like medicine, for people who have very limited minds and understanding and no idea of Dharma, of life, of past and future lives, and who only believe in the limited phenomena that they see in front of them.

Even daily life, protecting the body and mind from suffering and problems in the same way that lower creatures do—eating, drinking, wearing clothes, doing a job is also a temporal method. This also is not the ultimate method to completely cease the whole problem of suffering. No matter how much, how high an effort of exterior development is made, only doing that alone can never cease the whole problem. For instance I will give you just one example. In ancient times when there was not such a high development of material method or the mechanical development of modern times, there were problems. Even when the original human beings took root on this earth there were problems—problems in their minds, life problems, suffering, dissatisfaction. These days there is even more confusion, suffering, and fighting—there is more suffering than there is peace. That is what's happening now. This proves that only exterior development is not the ultimate method to stop the problem—it shows that there is something missing. Only that is not enough, is not sufficient.

A simple example—the country that is not developed materially and the country that has high material development both have problems. This we understand. You understand this better than me. So what is missing? We should not rely only on that. I am not criticizing or judging the scientific method—of course it is good, otherwise you would not have arrived so quickly to take the meditation course. I am not criticizing, I am just telling what is happening.

It is totally like this—why do the medicine, the drugs, the daily life that we do from morning to night not cooperate with the Dharma? The actions of daily life, done only for this short human life from birth until death, similar to what lower creatures do, and the high approach of material development—why is it that all of this does not cease the temporal problem? These methods never effect or destroy the cause of the suffering. This proves two things:

(1) The cause of suffering is not in the external conditions. This is important to understand. If you find this you find the proper reason to take the meditation course.

(2) This method never extinguishes the cause of suffering. Why is it that these external methods cannot cease the whole suffering and cause of suffering? Because the cause is not in the external condition—it exists within our minds. The cause of suffering is not something that is in the factors or in the food. It is within each of our minds. It is the same thing with the lower creatures, the same for us who walk on the earth, or crawl under the earth, or fly. The cause is in all our minds. Even if we go under the earth or land on the moon, physical and mental suffering cannot be ceased—I mean completely ceased, the complete end—that's what I mean by "ceasing."

It is like this: without wisdom, we do some other things to cease the problem without trying to cease the cause. For that reason we go to other places, like a person saying he has stomach pain and running around. Instead of getting better, he will become exhausted and hungry. We see this example as nonsense, as childish, but we are involved in the same thing and do not recognize our childish actions. Wherever a sick person may go, trying to escape by plane or train, without trying to recognize the method and the cause of the sickness—which are the body and mind—the problem will never be ceased.

So what method should we practice? What method is necessary to destroy all suffering and its cause? We need the inner method. Dharma is the inner method that can cease all suffering and its cause. The inner method, Dharma, is incomparable to all temporal methods because through practicing and achieving it, this one action, the billions of different sufferings and their causes can be completely ceased. This is like the example of the atomic bomb that can destroy so many things at one time—people, factories, and so forth. These things can be destroyed individually by small weapons, but a small weapon cannot destroy them all.

I think I will stop here.

9am

What is missing in our daily life, in our actions? Following the inner method is what is missing. Lacking, having not achieved the inner method, we are still not released from confusion, from the problem of the sufferings that we have to experience again and again. Relying and depending on an external method in order to extinguish the suffering and cause that is an internal factor is like trying to cut an iron bar with a thread, to use another childish example. Instead of cutting the bar, the bar will break the thread. This is only an exhausting action, and it is meaningless. If you try to cut the iron bar with wood it only causes the wood to finish. Do you understand my words? It is not the English language, and there can be many mistakes, so if you don't understand please ask. The iron bar should be cut with iron—it cannot be cut by thread or by wood. In the same way, the cause of suffering, which is an internal factor, should be cut off by the inner method—the Dharma, only Dharma. The founder of the Dharma—Guru Shakyamuni, the Enlightened One—has taught three

vehicles, three different Dharma methods: the Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. The total purpose of following these three vehicles is only to achieve enlightenment, the state of highest everlasting peace, the omniscient mind without one single obscuration, without one single suffering. These three vehicles were taught by the Enlightened One according to the different levels of different beings' minds.

Through this meditation course we practice all three teachings. Actually, this is called a Mahayana teaching, but there is also the practice of the teaching that is shown to the Hinayanist, the lower being. This refers to level of intelligence of different beings minds'—there are those of lower, middle, and higher intelligence. This practice is also fundamental to the Vajrayana Teaching; it is most needed in order to achieve the Vajrayana. However, the fundamental practice of these three vehicles is the discipline of the actions of speech, body, and mind. This means abstaining from the negativity of the actions of speech, abstaining from the negativity of the actions of body, and abstaining from the negativity of the actions of mind. This is the fundamental practice of these three vehicles. It is also called observing karma.

Why haven't we received perfect everlasting peace, the enlightened stage, the cessation of suffering, the cessation of death and rebirth? The reason that we haven't achieved this is because we didn't follow the disciplines of body, speech, and mind enough. To repeat, the discipline is always keeping these three away from negative actions, and always trying to keep your actions positive, to use the body, speech, and mind in a virtuous, meaningful way. By making the actions of these three pure, oneself becomes pure, a holy being with freedom and control over the negative mind of greed, ignorance, and hatred. So the whole thing depends on receiving enlightenment, the highest everlasting happiness—as it depends on creating positive action, virtuous action, good karma, and this depends on motivation. A virtuous action has to be created by mind, so in this way we can see the total purpose. The enlightened state is only created by mind, is only a mental creation. In order for the action to be positive, the cause of enlightenment depends on the creator, the motivation.

What kind of motivation is it necessary to cultivate? There are different levels or degrees of motivation. The first is the lowest motivation of creating the positive action, the virtuous action, the cause of enlightenment in order to benefit future lives or rescue future lives from suffering. The medium motivation is creating the actions in order to release oneself from the uncontrolled cycle of death and rebirth, which is called samsara. The highest motivation, the motivation that makes the action highly meaningful and most beneficial, is creating any action in order to enlighten oneself for the benefit of all other creatures, all sentient beings. This motivation is the cause for receiving enlightenment more quickly.

Some of you may expect that by taking the meditation course you will have some kind of vision, like those you experience from taking drugs, or that you will gain some black magic powers. Basically these kinds of thoughts are concerned only with the happiness of the temporal life, and exist on the basis of attachment to the happiness of this life without concern for seeking the cause of suffering or using the method to cut the cause of suffering. On the basis of this attachment, taking the meditation course and practicing meditation becomes a completely black, negative, evil action. Why is it an evil action? Because the creator of the action, the negative motivation, is evil. Why is it evil and negative? Because the creator of the action is attachment to the happiness of the temporal life. Why is that attachment to the happiness of the temporal life evil? Because that motivation, that negative creator, obliges you to create negative actions that get you into problems, suffering, and confusion. The result is unhappiness, suffering nature, and confusion.

For example, take these things. In the world, people try to make their lives comfortable in the best way. But no matter how they try to make life comfortable and happy—by having many relatives, properties, or possessions—no matter how they try to be as happy as they expect, their lives always end up with problems, and they always suffer with different problems at different times without choice or control. These are the results of negative evil actions. Also, these are the results of the negative mind, such as the motivation of attachment to the happiness of the temporal life. Also, actions created with ignorance of karma, of cause and effect, and actions created with anger or hatred are all negative actions.

As long as we engage in actions of body, speech, and mind during the course while meditating with these three negative motivations, our meditation is meaningless and we are only wasting time and creating the cause of suffering instead of creating the cause of peace and happiness.

My interest in giving the meditation course is for the purpose of rescuing many other future lives from suffering, to stop samsaric suffering, the cycle of death and rebirth, and to attain enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings. For this reason I have interest in giving the meditation course. This is the purpose of giving it, and this is also a good reason to take it.

Thinking in this way, with these three motivations, all the actions—listening to teachings or thinking or meditating—all become meaningful, beneficial, and the cause of everlasting peace. Also, all the actions become Dharma, so that the person practicing meditation with these three reasons is practicing Dharma, attending the meditation course. So taking the meditation course doesn't depend on what you look like, or how you sit with your physical body—it depends on mind, on the mental practice, as I have just explained. Anyway, the total purpose of the course is to discover distinctly and clearly which actions are the positive actions and which are negative—which are the actions to be avoided and which are the actions to be practiced with the understanding of the reason that we have to observe this.

One fault that we experience is that we have been suffering so far and have not been released from that—we are always finding different problems. Once one is solved another one comes—why are there always life problems like this? This is because we always make mistakes in our actions. Another problem always comes—it has been happening like this since childhood, since the time of conception up to now. This is the nature of samsaric suffering life—the fault of making mistakes in our actions that arises from lack of wisdom, not recognizing the difference between positive and negative actions, and the result of positive and negative actions. If we all really desire to achieve peace, to achieve the cessation of the whole problem, of confusion, then it is necessary to fully realize the actions that are to be practiced and those that are to be avoided.

Actually, it is like this. For people who believe and who are concerned and care about their future lives, of course it is necessary to practice this kind method, which is Dharma. Even for the people who do not believe in past and future lifetimes, who only believe in the existence of this one life, even for those people it is necessary to practice Dharma, to rely on this inner method. These people do not desire suffering; this is the basic thing. They do not desire confusion, problems, or dissatisfaction; they need, they desire freedom, even though they don't believe in Dharma, the truth, the reality, or the existence of past and future lives.

But they do desire freedom, peace, and not to suffer. So according to their desire, if the suffering has to be completely ceased, they want to achieve freedom, the peace that is freedom from suffering. It is necessary to cease greed, ignorance, and hatred, which are the cause and the source of suffering. There is no other method without depending on Dharma, the inner method; there is no other way to cease suffering. Even though they don't believe in Dharma but only in the one life, it comes to the point that they have to practice Dharma. This happens even though they think they don't have problems, that they are happy, that don't have to practice meditation. They think, "Meditation is only for hippies, not for us, we're okay." (I'm not sure if people think like this, but anyway there are many people who think similarly to this, and don't realize that their mind is in suffering). Even though they talk about confusion and problems, even though their minds are in this state, they say they don't have problems. That is not recognizing the suffering.

However, there is totally suffering in their minds because there is ignorance in their minds. As long as there is ignorance of karma and of the reality of the absolute true nature, there is always suffering. As long as that mind does not realize, does not see the reality, the absolute nature of oneself, of the "I," and as long as that person's mind has the wrong conception that conceives of himself in the wrong way, in a false way, there is always suffering. This is because the source of all suffering is in the wrong conception, in conceiving of oneself and objects in the wrong way with the wrong view, which is opposite to the true nature of the objects and of oneself. So even for the people who say they don't have suffering, whose minds are involved in the opposite of the reality of the pure view, there is always confusion and problems.

A follower of Guru Shakyamuni, the ancient great Indian pandit called Chandrakirti who achieved the high realization of the absolute true nature, said, "My mind sees that all delusions and sufferings arise from the wrong view, the wrong conception conceiving of oneself, the 'I,' in the wrong view—the wrong view that sees the 'I' as independent, which is opposite to the factual nature of the 'I.' So by realizing this, I, the yogi, will stop the wrong view, which sees the 'I' as independent."

Therefore, the wrong conception conceiving of the "I" in the wrong view, opposite to its nature, is the source of all suffering. So as long as one doesn't realize the true nature of the "I" there is no way to get out of samsara or out of suffering. Therefore, this great pandit said, "I, the yogi, will practice to avoid, to stop the independent 'I,' that doesn't exist at all."

However, achieving the total goal of enlightenment through the achievement of the different paths, the three vehicles of the Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana, and using meditation in a practical way, understanding the Dharma, understanding suffering, and understanding the need for the Dharma practice is all based on the fundamental understanding of the mind. If you understand the factual evolution of the mind it is like opening the door to the understanding of the Dharma. Through this, the whole practice of Dharma can be achieved, so it is necessary first to understand the evolution of the mind, and how the mind is beginningless.

Mystic Praise (Page (i))

"Selfless" means "non self-existent."

I think there is no hurry to explain this "Mystic Praise." If we try without understanding how the mind is beginningless it only makes us become exhausted and tired.

The Mind Is Beginningless (Page 1)

Paragraph One:

The point of the first sentence seems quite heavy at first but it becomes clearer. It seems like it is talking in space or in the ocean.

“Birth (rebirth)” —some believe in one life, others in many lives, so both words are correct, we can use both words.

Paragraph Four:

This is trying to say that since the person was born as a human being, until death time every situation of his life, every miserable or happy situation of his life or experience is not an unreasonable thing, so the life is not meaningless. What I am saying is this—the life is not an unreasonable thing, the life did not come into existence without reason. Just as experiences have reason, so does the existence of that type of life. And there is a reason—just as the life has a reason, there is a reason for him to be born as a human being. Taking a human rebirth is not a creation of some other being who is not him; it is only the person’s creation. For instance, my human rebirth is my creation. So the whole reason is my own creation, the reason for taking human rebirth is created by myself. Before I experienced my present human rebirth I had already created the reason—the reason was created before my experience of this present human rebirth. It was created by me, there was me existing before this human rebirth, there was me the creator, the cause, the reason of the result—this present human body. But it doesn’t have to be definite that the me who existed before taking this human rebirth is the me existing now—it can be of different shapes, different appearances, of a different body.

Anyway, as we read further this will be made more clear.

Paragraph Five:

Sentence One: This is the meaning of the mind as explained by Guru Shakyamuni, the Enlightened One.

Last sentence: Maybe you have logic—if there is a reason that the mind began to exist at the time the sperm and the egg conjoined, I would like to hear it. Does anybody have any reason? Can be possible that someone’s mind began to exist at the same time that the sperm and egg conjoined?

Anyway, this means that there is no such mind that began to exist when the sperm and egg conjoined. There is no such specific time that the mind began to exist. For example, it is not correct to say that my mind started to exist some years ago, some periods ago, or some eons ago.

Paragraph Six:

This is talking as if the fertilized egg is the principal cause of the mind. The fertilized egg partially comes from father and mother, and so the mind also has to come from them. Therefore all the rest of the human beings who have that continuity of the blood should have the mind of the other beings who have the same generation of that blood. And the original parents would contain all the

rest of the minds of those beings who received the generation of that blood. If this were the case, then there would be no reason to be born again as a human being, as one was already born as human being—the mind already took the human body in the original parents.

Also, within a person, two different personality minds cannot exist or function together. For instance, within one person, one mind that has the personality of patience and another that has the personality of anger—one mind subdued, the other unsubdued—cannot function together. This can be discussed later on, as you understand better, as we read more.

(Page 2)

Paragraph One:

This is talking from the wrong conception that as the blood relationship continues, the mind continues with it, that is, comes from the original parents. For instance, if the grandparents died, according to this wrong conception it is still possible that the mind is with us in our body, and so too with other relatives who have the same generation of that blood. Then it becomes like this: the person becomes dead and also alive, dead and alive because the minds of the dead parents still exists in the human body in other relatives who have the same generation of blood, as it originated from the original parents. For instance like this: I die, my body is burned, this body exists nowhere, but as my relatives still have the same generation of blood, my mind is with them in their body, so I would be dead and also alive. Actually this is not a difficult thing to understand.

Paragraph Two:

Why so much talk about wrong conceptions? This is to help solve the problems of the people who have different conceptions. If you think our minds came from our parents' minds, originated from their minds without having other wrong conceptions thinking that the mind originated from sperm and egg, it would follow that the knowledge and understanding within the parents' minds, their realizations, could be transplanted to us. If our minds come from the original parents, all their knowledge would be transplanted to us, so we don't have to study or make effort to receive the knowledge that the parents have gained. Therefore, in order to achieve worldly or enlightened knowledge we have to make effort from our side, and study.

Paragraph Five:

So if you have answers to that, it should be discussed.

Question: If you applied that argument to bodies then you'd say the original parents contained all the bodies of the blood relationship, so all those bodies should be the same; but they are not, although they should be according to your argument.

Answer: Generally there are bodies that look quite similar to the parents, but we are talking according to the mind as it is explained by the Enlightened Being. In that case the knowledge has to come from parents to children, as the parents had. And also what we should find out is the original reason that causes the original parents to exist, the reason that they came into existence. In this way we can discover deeper, profound, more logical evolution of the mind, such as the existence of the original being's mind, and why the original being's mind came into existence.

(Page 3)

Paragraph One:

Also, without trying to check up on the nature of our mind, other experiences, and new existence that we have not discovered yet, and not trying to achieve the wisdom perceiving that, we will always be doubtful of the different methods and the existence of different objects, such as the truth. If you don't try to achieve that wisdom the mind is always in doubt, never brings solutions, and is always in ignorance. In that way the mind can never be cut off or be relieved of confusion. As the person has doubt, it is necessary to check and try to discover, and that much more quickly the person's mind can be released from confusion.

Question: Do you have to believe in reincarnation to discover the enlightened state, the truth about oneself?

Answer: Without discovering reincarnation it is impossible to achieve enlightenment; without realizing (forget about "belief") reincarnation, the evolution of rebirth, and the reason for the existence of birth and rebirth, enlightenment is impossible.

Simply, we were born without choice, we were not born with choice. For instance, you were born in the west as an American, or English, whatever it is. Most of us were born without choice to this different color and different body without choice and without freedom. There is a reason that we took that birth and had to experience such birth, such a life without freedom. This lack of control itself is the suffering. In the same way, the experience of uncontrolled death is also suffering. The suffering of uncontrolled rebirth and uncontrolled death has reason and cause; the cause was created before. The result, uncontrolled suffering death and rebirth, and their principal cause are not born together, just as the mother and the baby are not born together.

Question: Is it karma that causes it?

Answer: Yes, karma.

So the principal cause was created before, the karma was created before. Not only in one previous life but in many previous lives.

So we forget about enlightenment—in order to achieve nirvana, the cessation of suffering, the whole path leading to that goal is based on understanding the suffering nature, and that the mind is beginningless. Without understanding that the mind is beginningless the understanding is limited. With the understanding that mind is beginningless, the understanding of past lives comes on the way. Understanding reincarnation and that the mind is beginningless is of the utmost importance in preparation for realizations. These understandings are most needed for preparation, they are the fundamental thing to discover the nature of the problems. "Believing" in it may not be important, but check whether it exists or not. That is the most important thing—try to clearly see whether it exists or not.

In the break times, as there are questions in the chapter ("Mind is Beginningless"), try to check them within your mind. Use your wisdom try to check up whether it is true or not.

It's quite interesting and we have to be concerned with the question, "Can one receive enlightenment without believing in the existence of past and future lives?"

If past and future lives are all real objects in existence, then it is nonsense trying not to believe in it. For instance, the clay elephant exists there, and it is nonsense for me to try and not believe in its existence—only ignoring oneself. It's like covering our eyes in order not to see an object that exists. It only makes our understanding limited. We call the mind that does not perceive the objects that really exist "ignorance." This is the connotation of "ignorance" to Tibetan lamas, Indian pandits, and Guru Shakyamuni. Ignorance is the main disturbance to receiving enlightenment. The meaning of "enlightenment" is the omniscient mind, the fully knowing mind, a state of mind that fully sees every single existence—all of nominal and phenomenal existence, and fully realizing every past, present, and future existence, without leaving one atom of existence. This stage is the most complete purified stage of omniscient mind and is called "enlightenment." Further explanation of enlightenment will come, but this is just to have an idea in advance since we will talk about it many times.

What is the purpose of reaching this stage? Not only for oneself, but it is to bring all beings to the state of everlasting happiness by showing different methods and paths as are suitable for different beings' minds, all with complete understanding of all living beings' thoughts and desires, without any obstacle to understanding. Anyway, if past and future lives are existent, then the understanding of it is of utmost need, especially for enlightenment. But if we think that these lives are not existent, then there is no purpose to achieve enlightenment in this lifetime—no purpose, no reason. No reason to seek a new method.

If there were no existence of past and future lives then there would be no existence of karma. Karma is any action of mind, and also any action of body and speech. Karma is something that makes the relationship between cause and effect, that brings effect from cause. In other words—concatenation, circling around—this is how karma works. If the life has a beginning, karma should have a beginning, but there's no such karma. Why does karma have no beginning? Because the creator of karma has no beginning. Negative karma, the karma that causes us to circle round from rebirth and death is created by ignorance, which is beginningless—as the mind is beginningless so ignorance has no beginning. When we take this present human birth, that is involved in karma—that karma was created before by the previous lives' ignorance and there's no such karma that we experience that was not created by us, created by some other being that is separate, that is god, that is not me. For instance, it is impossible to experience any karma that is not created by me—it is impossible for me to experience this, since the cause of that result was not created by me. For example, if my father kills a yak and I experience the result for which he created the cause. This is not possible. The suffering result of that karma has to be experienced by himself—whatever suffering he experiences, whatever happiness he experiences, the cause of that is only created by him.

It is good to check up like this: if the mind had beginning, the ignorance and the result that it brings—suffering—would also have a beginning. Then what is the reason for the existence of ignorance? If life has beginning, then karma, ignorance, and suffering too have beginning, and there is no reason to try to find the inner method or to practice meditation, which is different from worldly activities, which transcends ordinary actions and ordinary works. There is no reason to

follow the higher, pure actions. No reason, because as it has beginning, it would end by itself. Therefore there is no reason for us to put effort into such practice or to try to achieve new methods.

For instance, if life had beginning karma would also have beginning, then it could be possible to experience karma not created by oneself. But without a creator any existence cannot exist. All existence is creation, therefore without a creator how can creation exist? If this beginning karma is not created by oneself, but created by some other being, by one principal mind, one person, then this example could also be possible: one person eats delicious food and I experience the pleasure. For instance, he could eat steak and even though I don't eat any I could experience the pleasure. This could be possible if the other is possible. Or, one person could go to the west, to America and enjoy the luxury places, and another person in Nepal could experience the pleasures of whatever the person enjoys there.

It is the same thing with karma—the creator of this present life's karma is me, and the creator of this present life is me—the karma of this present rebirth was created in the previous lifetime. Therefore, there is existence of my past life. This also works in the same way for the future life.

Also, one thing—if my mind came from my parents' mind then I should experience the result of the karma created by my parents. Such a thing would be possible if my mind came from their minds. They have created much karma—billions and billions of different actions. Therefore it would be possible that I experience the result of these karmas. For example, physically I should look exactly the same and also be mentally the same. But this is impossible.

Question: Doesn't the parents' karma influence the children? For example, if your father taught you that it was good to kill yaks?

Answer: There can be influence, but the suffering of the son is his own fault. If he has wisdom and no ignorance, then the father cannot influence anything, cannot cause any danger. If the person has the understanding of the wisdom realizing karma and full renunciation of the creation of negative karma, he cannot be influenced by the father.

Even if the father influenced the son to do something—whatever action the son does, such as killing an animal—the result has to be experienced by the son himself. In any miserable situation that the son experiences, the karma that he creates is not the fault of the father. The main cause is created by himself, by his ignorance—if there is no ignorance, there is no reason for him to experience suffering since there is no cause of suffering.

The father can be cooperative, i.e. giving influence, but that does not mean that all the suffering that the son experiences is created by the father. If that were so, it would mean that to be released from suffering the son would have to kill the father, i.e. destroy the cause of suffering. Anyway more talk of karma will come afterwards.

The fact that each of us, our parents and ourselves, have different physical shapes proves and shows the result of karma created by us. Each of us created different karma that brings different physical shapes and faces—some have beards, some do not. Anyway, it doesn't matter. All this proves the karma that we created differently.

Question: Is it also the result of the son's karma to be born into that family where the father kills yaks?

Answer: Yes—hundreds of yaks. And great stores of yak butter.

But How Is It Possible To Receive Enlightenment? (Page 4)

Paragraph Four

It is like dirty clothes. The clothes are not one with the dirt—if they are one with dirt, it is impossible to make the clothes clean. Why is it possible to clean them? Because the cloth is only obscured by the dirt. The mind is like the white cloth and the obscuration to the clear light nature of the mind is like the dirt, but the obscuration of mind is temporal, as the dirt obscuring the cloth is temporal. Just like this—while the cloth is very dirty and very black, if one tries to dye it, it cannot take the color. For example, if you try to dye dirty white cloth red without cleaning it, the color doesn't take. First you need to wash it well until the dirt has gone, and then it becomes very white and can be dyed very red, like a new cloth.

Without trying to clean the mind with method, with the different levels of Dharma practice as shown by the Enlightened One, the mind can never become an enlightened mind because there is no place.

For instance, if you try to plant crops without fertilizing a rocky place well, without making it well conditioned, they cannot grow. Our unsubdued minds are like the rocky place, not well fertilized. As it is necessary to fertilize well to get good crops, so it is necessary to clean well, to subdue the unpeaceful mind by using different methods. For instance, the rocky place has to be fertilized with different tools. First you take out the rocks that prevent planting and growing, then the field has to be well-fertilized by using different tools. So there are different methods for fertilizing the mind.

Paragraph Five

There is always the possibility as the nature of the mind is eternally existent. Even though the present mind is not enlightened, because the clear light nature is eternally existent, there is the possibility to make it enlightened mind.

Question: What is a “temporary negative mind?”

Answer: Generally there are 84,000 temporary negative minds. Anyway the worst thing is that the source of these is ignorance. Ignorance is the temporary negative mind.

Question: The mind has existence of its own, though, is it eternally existent?

Answer: Yes.

Question: But the temporary negative mind is not separate from the person's mind?

Answer: Yes, just like the clothes and the dirt.

The Lineage of These Mahayana Teachings (Page 5)

The purpose of talking about the lineage is to prove that the teaching is holy, originating from an enlightened being with his experiences, and handed down to his numerous highly realized and experienced disciples who followed the path shown by Guru Shakyamuni as he experienced, and from those highly realized great pandits handed down to the highly realized yogis—they also experienced the path as shown by Guru Shakyamuni. This is the teaching that originated from Guru Shakyamuni, passed on to the highly realized Indian pandits, and then was handed to the great Tibetan yogis. And at present time the Tibetan monks are practicing these methods that were shown by the gurus, the highly realized Tibetan great yogis, with their experiences.

This is to prove that these teachings are holy, blessed, and undegenerated as they were handed down. It is also to say that these are not new teachings written by myself, which weren't revealed by Guru Shakyamuni, like a new theory. It is also to show that as they practiced and experienced the teachings and the same freedom, the same thing, it is also possible for present humans.

Paragraph Two

Maitreya is recognized as a future Buddha—this doesn't mean he is not enlightened now, but it means he will descend as Guru Shakyamuni at Bodhgaya, having the same history, and performing the twelve deeds, as did Guru Shakyamuni. He will descend as the founder of the Dharma in that future time.

Atisha:

This gives an idea of how these great yogis made practice, how the founders of these teachings followed disciplines.

(Page 6)

The Three Prerequisites

In ancient times the great pandits, by having these three things, wrote holy books on tantric subjects and philosophical subjects.

The Four Knowledges

1. This “difference” means this: these three are the path that can be achieved by one person. It is not that the person who follows the Hinayana path cannot practice the Mahayana teaching, or he who follows Mahayana cannot practice Vajrayana. These three paths can be practiced by one person, these three are not different as hot and cold are.

(Page 7)

3. Knowledge that one can achieve through the practice of the lam'dun.

Question: Could you possibly comment on the fourth of the great knowledges? It is very strongly worded.

Answer: That is saying, “I am Mahayanist, I am groovy, I do not follow disciplines, that is a Hinayana teaching,” Or, “I am not a Hinayanist, therefore I need not practice Dharma,” or, “I cannot achieve enlightenment by practicing Hinayana.”

Besides influencing oneself it influences others wrongly and it is very heavy karma the result of which has to be experienced for very long time. For such a person it is extremely difficult to find a happy life, to find peace, and to achieve realizations.

Actually, any other religion cannot be criticized—you can talk about it but cannot criticize. This is also a discipline. Also in Buddhadharma, it explains the different theories but cannot criticize.

6pm

Tonight we are going to do a short meditation for training the unsubdued mind. During the meditation there is a physical discipline and a mental discipline in order to make the meditation successful. The most important of these is the mental discipline. Of course, the physical is necessary as it is a cooperative cause and supports the mental discipline. But the mere physical discipline, the posture, is not meditation—alone this is not enough, it is not meditation.

As I told you this morning, meditation is a method, an inner method to progress the mind and make the mind transcend from its ordinary level. Meditation pacifies the unsubdued mind. So through this practice, which pacifies the mind, the mind becomes pacified, controlled, and subdued. On the way, the actions of speech and body also become pacified. When the speech, body, and mind are pacified and well trained, they never harm other beings or oneself. They become harmless—any actions of body, speech, and mind become harmless, and they only cause one to approach everlasting peace or nirvana, more quickly. Also, instead of harming other sentient beings, they only benefit.

For instance, take the bodhisattva—maybe it is a new title. A bodhisattva is a holy being whose mind is well trained, well subdued of unsubdued negative minds, such as self-cherishing and the negative mind that harms other beings, causing danger, problems, or degeneration in other people's perfection and peace. A bodhisattva is a holy being who has achieved the great beneficial mind, only concerned for other sentient beings instead of only concerned for oneself and giving up the interest of others. For those bodhisattvas whose minds are well trained in Mahayana practice, at the same time their speech and body also becomes well trained and well subdued through their practice. So there are many ways. All the benefits of the holy body, speech, and mind cannot be expressed—how much they benefit other beings cannot be expressed—the benefits are limitless, inexhaustible. Even just seeing the bodhisattva makes other people feel relaxed and peaceful and receive good vibrations. Their minds become happy, relaxed, and peaceful, they receive good vibrations and become happy just to see the bodhisattva whose mind is well trained, well subdued by the Mahayana thought training.

However many times this bodhisattva is seen by other beings, due to the power of his bodhicitta, the great beneficial thought, only working for other people to be happy, the other people always have the unsatisfied desire to see such a holy being. This is not like ordinary people who are seen as beautiful with a good personality for a few days, looking very friendly—after a few days the person doesn't maintain the same personality or the same behavior. If the relationship is carried on together for a longer time, after some time the other person becomes boring. At first he is seen as beautiful

and so forth, and then he becomes boring and you don't want to see him any more, you dislike him, and your feelings toward the person changes and you see them as more and more negative, cruel. But bodhisattvas can always be seen with the same personality, not the same as this ordinary example or relationship. As much as you contact and are together with this bodhisattva, your interest grows, and you develop more and more respect as see more knowledge.

What I am saying is this—the most important thing is the mental discipline that makes the meditation successful and meaningful. Through mental discipline the proper meditation comes, so the mental is more important than the physical discipline.

The Posture During Meditation (Page 40)

There are about seven physical disciplines.

1. As the mental discipline is more important, people who can't sit cross-legged don't need to get upset. But this is important if there is no specific handicaps or any troubles. If someone has problems with the legs or certain sicknesses, it is not necessary to follow the discipline of sitting cross-legged.

Also, someone who has not practiced this physical posture may find it difficult but should train slowly, slowly. Those who can sit cross-legged, try to sit cross-legged; those who can't can sit half cross-legged. If you force it then it may disturb the meditation. You may not get time to meditate if you wait to begin until you can sit cross-legged without pain.

3. The back should be straight, which helps to have clear thoughts, visualization, and meditation. The circulation of the blood inside the nadis, or veins, becomes easier. Due to this physical and mental situation, it becomes easier for the mind to visualize and have clear thoughts. The bones and the vertebrae should be straight. If they are bent the mind can easily be disturbed. Either you fall asleep or you easily get tired, and do not have clear thoughts.

7. The neck should not be bent back, but a little bit down, so that if we dropped a rice grain from the nose it would land at the navel. If the neck is bent back the mind can become disturbed and scattered and develop intense agitation so that you become unconscious of the object of meditation. If the neck is bent too far forward, the mind can also fall into sluggishness and sinking, not having clear thoughts, and drowsiness.

2. The shoulders should be straight and the arms kept loose and not attached to the body. The palms of the hands should face up and the thumbs should be joined together level with the navel.

4. The eyes should not be open because the object of the meditation is not the object of the eye, but the object of the mind. You should visualize and focus on a mental picture such as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. There are many different possible objects according to the meditation—it is not just looking at the flowers and meditating like this.

It is important if one is going to meditate on Guru Shakyamuni's holy body to see a good example such as a good statue or a good tangka. The more beautiful, the better shape it has, the more beneficial it will be. As you develop a good picture in your mind, try to remember and focus on it.

The eyes should not be completely closed since this can cause the mind to fall into sluggishness and sleepiness—as soon as we close the eyes, we fall asleep. Keep the eyes on the tip of the nose.

5. The teeth should be kept loose and the tip of the tongue should be attached to the upper palate. This helps to stop the spit from coming out. The mouth should be closed when you meditate.

For each of these seven postures there are benefits. Also, if we meditate in conjunction with this physical discipline there is less mental disturbance and it doesn't cause us to get tired very soon.

This is the posture of one of the Dhyani Buddhas called Vairocana (Tibetan: nam'par nang'che).

Practicing meditation with this physical posture causes us to become enlightened in the essence of the Buddha Vairocana.

Also, this physical posture and discipline is the specific technique of the great Tibetan yogi, Milarepa's guru, Marpa. This is his specific, profound technique.

Anyway, if you can do this it will bring great benefits. It will help your meditation a great deal and lessen distractions. For instance, even if we see a person just sitting in this physical posture, it makes us feel pleased and happy; it affects our minds just to see the person sitting. It causes devotion to arise and causes the mind to relax.

So, I think if it is possible we can try now.

BREATHING MEDITATION

Concentration on the Breath

This is the preparation for other meditations, clearing the mind of heavy thoughts.

First, check up what you are thinking—if there is tight attachment to the pleasures of temporal life, this is a negative, evil thought.

1. Breathe in through the left nostril, and visualize the air coming in as pure white light from the infinite buddhas, bodhisattvas, arhats, and other holy beings. This is their infinite knowledge and it fills the body with light and the mind with transcendental happiness.

Breathe out through the right nostril and visualize the air coming out in the form of heavy black fog that goes beyond the Atlantic Ocean and away from this world, never to return. This fog is composed of all delusions such as greed, ignorance, hatred, and illusions such as the self-"I" conception and self-cherishing. As it goes, the body and mind become completely empty.

2. Repeat, breathing in through the right and out through the left.

3. Then repeat again, breathing in through the nostrils together and out through both.

Day 2
Saturday November 17th
9 am

Before listening to the teachings, as we have the freedom, such a precious chance, such a fortunate chance to gain such a high advantage, it is important to wake up from our ignorant sleep and try to achieve the highest aim, the most pure goal.

Since we desire happiness and peace, and do not desire suffering, trying to make this temporal life comfortable and happy is not the final goal or the highest aim. It is not human beings' higher purpose or aim because even lower creatures plan and expect the present life to be happy and comfortable, and not to experience problems. Therefore, we, as human beings, should have higher aims—higher than what animals think. This gives our birth as human beings meaning in this time. This is a time, as we are born as human beings, to act differently than animals, higher than animals. Otherwise it doesn't make sense to be born human, if we are only going to use body, speech, and mind in the same way as a dumb animal, as insects and lower creatures.

At least we should try to ensure that our future lives are always in higher realms, such as to be born again in a human world. Even having a plan such as this such is higher than the way animals think—this is something that lower creatures do not appreciate, do not think, do not plan, and do not work for, so it is worthwhile to work for this aim. It is not something we are trying to attain that is impossible—rather, it is logical, it can be discovered by discovering the mental continuity and the evolution of mind.

Working for this, using the actions of our body, speech, and mind for this aim is meaningful, and makes the plan useful to other future lives, as the past life that created the cause to bring this present human rebirth is helpful for the present human rebirth. This is the reason that we have the chance to do any actions that bring higher advantage. This is due to the good karma of previous lives and to our positive minds, which are higher than and transcend the thoughts and actions of lower creatures. Through the experience of this present life we can guess how our previous lives worked, how the attempt to create the positive cause that brings such result with much difficulties was created in many other previous lives, and how the present life, and the freedom of happiness of the present life, was created in many previous lives—how there was a cause to bring such a happy, beneficial result. Our responsibility is what our future life will be. It is in the hand of the present life whether our future life will be suffering or will be peaceful and free.

It's like this: like the radio, when you want to hear music you have to turn the dial to the music or the news and so forth. What comes is up to the dial. In the same way, the present life has much responsibility—it is like the dial of the radio. Whether we hear interesting music or news or boring music, news, or information is up to the dial. So the present life is very important. Even if you want to hear Dharma and such higher subjects, everything depends on turning the dial. Therefore, wasting this life is very dangerous—not only for the present life but for future lives as well.

It's like this—without an electric company, there is no electricity to any other place, building, or country. There wouldn't be light; it would be dark everywhere, and there would be no chance to work or to see things. It is the same thing if we waste our present life or use present life in the same way that lower creatures, dumb animals, do—using every action for ignorance, with negative mind, not creating any meaningful actions that bring higher advantage. This makes our future lives dark,

black, without freedom and peace. It is the same when the electric company stops, and every place becomes dark.

Still, working for future lives is not the highest goal or the highest advantage, because still it is involved in suffering. It is necessary to escape from suffering. Therefore, to escape from suffering it is necessary to work to destroy the cause of suffering.

Releasing ourselves alone from suffering and gaining everlasting peace is still not the highest aim of human rebirth, of human beings. Not working to release other beings from the suffering they experience now and satisfying only ourselves in peace is selfish. Other sentient beings have the same desires, the same thoughts as we do, and experiencing great suffering. As we have freedom, we have the chance to be able to help them, to release them from suffering. Therefore that work should be done. In order to do that, it is necessary to be enlightened for the benefit of other sentient beings. Therefore the practice of the meditation course, the highest, actual aim of the meditation course is that—to receive enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings. Therefore it is necessary to have the purest, highest motivation or motivation for listening to the subject of the meditation course that brings this highest result. This work is the highest meaning of human life.

Right Impulse (Page 43)

It is important to discover how much meditation is useful and beneficial. The meditation you practice depends on motivation. It is a matter of pure motivation and impure motivation.

Paragraph One

“Lower realm” means a rebirth as a lower being, a lower creature, but more explanation of this will come later.

“I am a yogi, I am holy, I am perfect.” For instance, just one example—a person who has no understanding of actual peace, no understanding of actual suffering, and no understanding of the methods that lead to ultimate peace does something without understanding. This is like trying to do a meditation and not understanding the actual meditation, not discovering the effect of the meditation, but thinking “I am doing great,” while not having any idea of the root of the practice, the motivation, the root of perfection, of ultimate peace, and thinking that the method is the perfect method to receive ultimate peace. Also this is like not having discipline in terms of our bodily actions, or in terms of the actions of our speech and mind, but trying to act and make the outside look like a yogi, like something special.

Anyway, the whole thing is this—without understanding these important points it is difficult for the whole action to become useful and bring ultimate peace. There is a danger that most of our actions will only create more samsara and more negative mind, planting the seeds to remain in the suffering cycle of death and rebirth longer. Therefore I am emphasizing these points.

Paragraph Two

Just talking a little bit about bodhicitta, as we talked about the bodhisattva—how much profit the bodhisattva’s pure motive, the Mahayana thought brings. This is the thought which makes more

profit, which leads to actions that are more useful, beneficial, and effective, that are more powerful causes for bringing peace to ourselves and to other beings.

This Mahayana thought, this bodhicitta is the thought willing to receive enlightenment in order to enlighten other sentient beings. With the pure thought that is willing to give oneself up in order to enlighten other sentient beings, giving a bowl of food to an animal has much greater benefit, like incomprehensible space, much greater than offering charity or offering a world full of jewels to each sentient being without this bodhicitta. In terms of action, the action of giving jewels to each sentient being looks unimaginable, it seems that no greater charity than that could ever be made—but because there is no pure motive of bodhicitta, no matter how great that action looks, it doesn't bring as great a benefit as even a small action done with pure bodhicitta thought. The difference is made by the amount of benefit. Discerning which action is more useful and beneficial is dependent on the creator and the motivation. In this way we can understand how the motivation is important, and how benefit does not entirely depend on the action that we do.

It's like this—the more useful, beneficial, and powerful the actions are, the more quickly the person reaches enlightenment. That's why Mahayana practice is the shortcut path to enlightenment. Anyway, with individual practices we can discover more; this can be experienced and proven.

Paragraph Three

This is what we should think when we meditate. In order to have less distractions for the meditation and to make the meditation more practical and more pure we should think this before the meditation.

The thing is this—if we don't check up the mind before meditation, checking the motivation, there is a danger that we will use our meditation for the happiness of the temporal life, which means we are meditating in order to remain longer in samsara. So this is important, because in that way there is also danger in wasting time and life. Therefore, we should first check before meditating, or before any action in general, and try to be conscious of the thought—ask for what reason you are doing it, this is the most helpful thing. By checking the motivation, the creator of the action, you can make the action correct. You might think the action is positive before you check up. For example, like the thief who takes possessions knows that he is stealing, but doesn't understand that he is creating a negative action, thinking instead that this is a good action that makes him happy and comfortable. It is possible to make mistakes in actions like this if you don't check up first.

Actually, whatever meditation you are practicing is supposed to make you correct and pure—not evil, but holy. The practice you are doing is recognized as a holy action because it makes your mind holy as well as your body and speech pure and noble. Therefore, it is clear that it is important not to have mistakes in the action—in any action, and especially in the practice of meditation. Many people meditate but the way of practicing meditation, of making yourself pure, is through correcting your actions, making the actions of body, speech, and mind pure with the help of meditation. And through that you become pure, perfected, holy, noble, and enlightened. That is the purpose of meditation. No matter what meditation you are doing, it is supposed to affect you and work in that way. Whether you meditate on flower, sun, moon, whether you meditate on ego—whatever meditation you do should be beneficial in that way. Then that meditation becomes worthwhile.

Question: Are you saying that there is such thing as a pure thought, a state of pure thinking?

Answer: Yes there is—a lot of pure thinking. It is difficult to make a choice.

First of all it is like this—we want to meditate, but usually underneath, in the depths of our heart, if we check up, our motive is only concerned with our own life, with the comfort of this life and attachment to it. Most of the time we have this, if we check up. Every time we eat, sleep, or meditate we do so with this negative thought. It is quite difficult to recognize it, to see it, but it is there even though we think, “I don’t have negative thoughts, I have a pure motivation, my mind is clean.” However, most of the time this negative thought is underneath. By checking the motivation, first you discover that you have the negative thought. Then what should be done? It should be avoided, you should try to cultivate pure motivation, pure thought, and then you start the meditation and the meditation becomes pure, actual Dharma practice.

For instance, it is traditional all over the world to go to the temple and worship. Usually people think that this is a good action, a pure action, worshipping God. But if you check up on the motivation before you do the action, mostly you will discover that the motivation is impure, because even though you think, “I am doing some good thing,” your reason for doing it is the motivation, “Oh yes, it’s a special day, it’s pleasant to go, it’s nice to do.” Or sometimes your motivation may be to show yourself to other people. The whole point is that actually you are not worshipping God but yourself, because you do it for your own comfort, so you feel happy, pleasant. You are using the objects that you see. Even if you offer something, actually it is used for your own comfort and pleasure. It is the same as going to see the cinema. It is the same because you dress well, as nice as possible. When you go to the cinema, what you see and how you dress is for your own pleasure. It is the same thing going to church with this motive—bringing nice things and so forth are all done for you. From the point of view of the Buddhadharma, this is not recognized as a pure offering, it is recognized as a dirty offering, because it is actually dirty. Even if your offering, whatever the material is, is dirty, that is not the real dirt. The motive is actually dirty, and that inner dirt is much worse than the outer dirt because it is the source of suffering, problems, confusion, and the source of making life unhappy. Also, it is the destroyer of ultimate peace and even ordinary peace for future lives. If you check up with wisdom, it is the same as going to see the cinema—you can see that it is the same—something used for your own pleasure even though you think you are doing something good.

Any action or practice of meditation, even if you are in the toilet or wherever you are, when your action is done with a pure motivation, that is the actual, true worship. This is because the actual purpose of worship, making charity, and offering, is to achieve ultimate peace. That’s why positive actions are the best kind of worship, because these positive actions bring the real peace of enlightenment without causing danger to ourselves or to other beings. Within the two types of worship, the external one causes danger to oneself, and by this it indirectly causes danger to other beings.

Any pure action of body, speech, or mind can be a meditation. These positive actions are the real worship, because these are the actions that the enlightened beings wish us to do—such as following the laws of karma, avoiding negative actions as much as possible and trying to create positive actions as much as possible—this is the best worship and the best offering to the enlightened beings, to the Triple Gem of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and to the holy beings. It pleases them if you do these actions as they wish, as they instruct in their teachings. And these kinds of actions, such as observing karma, avoiding negative actions and creating positive actions with pure motivation is also

the work of other sentient beings. It also brings ultimate peace for other sentient beings and helps them to be released from suffering.

Anyway, it is not necessary to talk much.

Question: How is it possible to create this positive action when we meditate to become more centered and feel happy?

Answer: If the basic thought that creates the action is detached from the happiness of the temporal life and if the mind is concerned with other beings' suffering and does the action for that reason, it is not negative. Being nervous with a negative mind is always disturbing to oneself and to other beings, so try to stay away from that nervous negative mind, that's always good.

When you discover that negative thought in your mind, think like this to change the motivation. In order to change the motivation you have to see it, recognize it as a negative, evil, harmful thought, and as the cause of suffering. If you recognize it in this way then you will have the will to change it, but if you do not recognize it as the cause of suffering then you may continue to do it. This, then, is the method to recognize evil thoughts and deal with them (see paragraph three, page 43).

"... and finish with spiteful, distracted, deluded minds."

Finish what? For example, imagine that one person is always bothering my attainment of peace, always disturbing me and causing problems. In order to stop the problem, the mind is spiteful of the harmful actions that he does to me, and being spiteful I should want to kill and destroy him. In the same way we should work with the negative mind. This is just an example to show us how to work with the negative mind—I am not saying it is exactly the same. The main enemy, the main disturbance, is not the person but the negative thought. We destroy other people, disturb their perfection and comforts—but instead of doing this we should disturb the negative mind, which is the real enemy. By eradicating this mind we can stop all problems with living beings and with non-living things. With no problems, no confusion, there is freedom. Wherever we go there is always peace—peace doesn't depend on the place—it is a mental thing, not a country or apartment. Such ultimate peace is a state of mind. Even if a peaceful person is in such a complicated war, still the person is at peace. Even if others are suffering with worries and much confusion, the person who did such work always has peace.

This is the method to recognize the negative thought as evil and disturbing. By using this method, dislike and spitefulness toward this negative thought arise. Just as in the example—when we think of the enemy, we think, "He is disturbing me more and more. One day he did this, another day he said that." We think more and more of this person and what he has done to us, and as we think more and more in this way hatred for this person arises and comes out of here, and as it comes out of here our face changes, we can no longer sit on the bed, but have to do something. It is always worthwhile to work with the evil thought in this way, while the other action [of generating hatred toward the enemy] is never worthwhile. This action never gives harm, always keeps our mind in peace—creating peace in one's mind without expense.

The person who is checking like this and meditating like this is wise. The ordinary mind being spiteful to other sentient beings instead of with to one's own negative mind, thinking how to disturb

other beings and being angry, is unwise, unskillful, the cause of suffering, and a distraction to other one's own and others' peace.

So once the hatred of the negative mind arises, by following this method of remembering the harmful actions of the negative mind, then meditate on the breath.

(Page 43 (a))

It is quite useful when the mind is distracted, or at a very low level, to use this breathing meditation and then meditate on higher subjects.

How does this help? The technique is this—concentration on the breath is easier than concentration on other objects, and there are many other meditations. In order to keep the mind out of distractions, this object is easy for the mind to concentrate upon.

Also, starting to meditate at a time when we are angry or very greedy is very difficult. During that time the mind is not the place for meditation, because that place in the mind is occupied by greed or anger. In this case it is difficult to easily start the meditation.

Even in terms of the person who tries to practice and meditate on patience—when that person is angry it is difficult to accept patience. In the same way the meditation cannot be started straight away in a mind occupied by greed, anger, or other negative, evil thoughts.

Pure thought and impure thought cannot both be at the same place in the mind at the same time, just as two people cannot sit in one person's place at the same time while this one person is there. In order for one person to sit in another's place the first person has to get up. Just telling him to get up, "You get up," will not make him get up, so you have to tell something so that he will get up and leave a place to sit. For example you could say, "There's some beautiful things happening outside," or something like that—playing tricky with that person. In the same way we have to play tricky with the negative mind by using the breathing meditation to make a place for our further meditations.

First, recognize the negative thought, then remember the faults, and allow the dislike of negative mind and the desire to avoid these things arise. Then do the breathing meditation. After you do the breathing meditation the mind is not virtuous and not evil—it is in between, like the seat is empty after the person gets up—if you check up, you will see that the mind is indifferent. Then the mind is much more relaxed, more quiet than before and there is space for meditation.

But if the breathing meditation is done with purification it is more beneficial than just the concentration on the breath. If it can be done with purification it is more beneficial. And also, according to your individual faith and devotion to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, to the bodhisattvas, the arhats, and the holy beings, you can visualize that you are receiving their knowledge in the form of light, and by the practice of this meditation you can receive their blessings in accordance with your individual level of devotion.

What about receiving blessings? What is the reason? The more blessings are received, the more they take in the person's mind, and the more quickly that person's realizations can be developed. The person will find it easier to receive realizations. It is possible, like this. In ancient times there were

many pagans, many anti-Buddhists, who had many thousands of texts learnt by heart but had no realizations. Still the mind was not purified; it was still very gross and impure.

So anyway, when the breathing meditation is done in this way it becomes more meaningful and more powerful for whatever meditation you are going to do next.

Checking Meditation (Page 44)

This page is about the need for the checking meditation. For instance, the graded path of enlightenment has to be achieved by depending on the two forms of meditation. Checking meditation is meditation that is made with the support of logic, by reasoning, trying to prove, trying to clearly see the object of the meditation through many different types of logic and reasons. For instance, it's like this—if there is a person who is a thief, then we try to see him as a thief through reasoning. We think, “He's a thief because in such and such a place, at such and such a time, he took such and such a thing.” By reasoning like this, we see this person as a thief.

For instance, in terms of Guru Shakyamuni, we think that he is truly the Enlightened One because he showed the whole path to great numbers of ancient pandits, and great yogis. They also followed this path; they checked with their wisdom and they followed the path and practiced it. As they did so they received realizations as Guru Shakyamuni explained and experienced. So Guru Shakyamuni's great number of followers proved that he was truly enlightened because they also became truly enlightened through the path that was shown by him. The great pandits of India and Nepal have also shown the path to the Tibetan yogis by their realizations, and those yogis also achieved the experience of the path. So this proves that Guru Shakyamuni was the enlightened being, and that his teachings are true. Why is he an enlightened being? Because the teachings and path shown by him are true. Even now there are great numbers of beings who are experiencing the result of these meditations that we are going to try and practice.

The other kind of meditation is samadhi meditation, which means focusing on one object without doing the checking, following meditation.

(Checking meditation: Tib. che'gom; following meditation: Tib. zhu' gom)

It is certain that if we study the teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni and also practice with the mind, through this, gradually, everything can be proven by yourself, with your wisdom, as Guru Shakyamuni explained. Many things, such as the existence of beginningless life, of absolute nature, of karma, can be proven with your understanding, wisdom, and practice. Study alone is not enough, experience of the realization of the meditations has to come through correct practice. But for us to clearly see as Guru Shakyamuni explained, we should study and listen to the teachings from the guru with correct understanding, and practice them through meditation. In this way we can fully discover as the mind approaches the gradual levels of the path.

Why is there the need for study, listening, practice of the meditation, all these works? Because it is a new subject, a new path that our mind didn't travel before, a new experience, a path on which our mind has never made a trip. Therefore, the mind has to be familiar, has to be habituated to this path through the practice of meditation.

It's like this, so without doing all these things, contradicting and saying, "There is no such thing as past and future lives, no such object, no such thing as mind which is formless, not matter, no such thing, no such thing as reality; no such thing as path." Anyway, this is like this: contradicting like this is like me trying to contradict people who landed on the moon, saying, "They never landed on the moon, they never saw such a place as that." But if I go in a rocket then I discover. So we have to try anyway, make the experiment; like scientists who made experiments with non-living things, living things, many things—they try to make the experiment and see, they have to work for the experiment, it doesn't come like that. So just like Buddhadharmā, if I talk like that—"They didn't land on the moon," you see me as foolish, as deeply ignorant. So it is the same thing contradicting what the Enlightened One explained. It is like this—I cannot contradict because it is their experience to land on the moon. How I contradict their experience? All the new subjects of the Dharma are the experience of Guru Shakyamuni, which his holy, omniscient mind saw. Without reaching the same level as his holy mind, we cannot contradict his experience.

Paragraph One

Simply talking like this: without the guru, even though we read a book it is difficult to receive realizations of the meditations. Also, there is the danger that we will make mistakes in the practices if we do not check our experiences. This is necessary also in Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana teachings, whatever the practice. In the Vajrayana it is the most important thing, especially in the guru yoga practice. There is no way to achieve the shortcut without having the guru. For instance, in the Vajrayana teachings one has to receive enlightenment through the practice of the special methods of the different deities, through initiation from the guru—so without the guru enlightenment is impossible, and achievement of the Vajrayana path is impossible.

Also in the Mahayana teaching, the follower has to receive realizations and achieve the goal through teachings from the guru's experiences. There is much to talk about it, but slowly.

Paragraph Two

This is a big wrong conception, thinking that any thought is a disturbance, that any thought should be cut off. There's no way to practice the graduated path by completely cutting thought, never having thought. Practicing by cutting thought is impossible since the mind has to be conscious of something, some object. As the mind is conscious of something there is always thought. Even if you are just thinking about emptiness, the mind is conscious of that object. The cognitionless, sleeping mind is not called meditation—otherwise all those deep sleeps should be called meditation, the states of mind of all those animals. Then meditation becomes easy, and you don't become tired, don't need books, or the guru. The animals practice so well—dogs, pigs. It is not possible, actually, living the daily life, working, and cutting all thoughts, not thinking anything. How can this be possible?

Anyway, it is important to check up this kind of meditation that tries to think that nothing exists. It is extremely difficult, anyway, to develop the mind, to develop wisdom with this kind of meditation. It is impossible that such practice can help develop wisdom. Wisdom realizes something, some subtle object beyond matter, beyond what you see. With this kind of meditation, there is no way to make less negative mind. Such method can never destroy negative mind, make less greed, ignorance, or hatred, or destroy the ignorance that is the root of all negative minds.

The total thing is this—the reason that method, thinking that nothing exists, trying to cut off all thoughts, doesn't eradicate or diminish ignorance is because it cannot help in order to prove that the object of the ignorant mind is not true, is false. For instance, by thinking, "I don't exist, there is no me," does that help to solve the problem? You think you don't exist, but when you are in the problem you think, "I", "I", "I." So that meditation doesn't solve the problems of daily life—sleeping, eating, working, making pee-pee—all those things that are included in daily life—feeling hungry, thirsty, liking and being dissatisfied, pain, feeling cold and hot, many things. By only thinking this, this problem cannot be cut off.

If it is logical and true, as this practice, these problems should be ceased, cut off, and there is no reason for these daily life problems to arise. Because there is no "I," how can there be daily life problems? It is not like a miraculous person, such as when a magician transforms an object with the power of mantra. That miraculous person doesn't exist—it is created by a magician, it doesn't exist, doesn't have problems. That lady or man, whatever it is, doesn't have mind, or life, or problems. We are not like that. That kind of object is seen due to the illusive sense of the eye, powered by the mantra of the magician. It's like the person whose eye sense organ is defective, and who sees a double moon. The double moon doesn't exist, because the whole eye, the organ that doesn't have any defect, can see only one moon.

It is important to check up how whatever action of meditation we do helps the mind. Does it help the mind, that is, decrease the negative mind, decrease greed, ignorance, and hatred? Because by decreasing this we create peace, build peace bigger and bigger in our mind, as we diminish the negative mind more and more. Otherwise, if it doesn't help the purpose of decreasing the negative mind, decreasing suffering, what's the point of doing that meditation? Better to do some other thing. For instance, when I get angry with the person, thinking that he doesn't exist there doesn't help to diminish or stop the anger; or thinking that I don't exist doesn't help to stop the anger.

Anyway, even if we spent eons and eons, ages and ages, in such meditation, we can never harm even a tiny atom of the wrong conception, the ignorant wrong conception of the self-existent-"I", or of self-"I" consciousness. This is the source of all suffering, all ignorance, all delusions. Any action or meditation that we practice is supposed to be a method to harm or destroy the wrong conception of the self-existent "I" consciousness, either directly or indirectly. As long as it doesn't harm this wrong conception we can never purify the wrong view of such wrong conception, we can never release ourselves from total suffering, we can never get out of the circle of the problem.

This kind of practice is like this—having a thief in your house stealing food, and always thinking that there is no thief, meditating there is no thief will never help to stop him from stealing. As he steals food there is none left for you—then there is a problem, you are creating a problem for yourself. By thinking this, instead of solving the problem you only increase it. You end up with no food left in the house. For instance, it is the same thing if we are in a place on fire, experiencing much burning and much suffering, and trying to think that there is no fire, no burning, no suffering. This doesn't stop it, that is not the method. No matter how much time we spend, even eons, thinking like this, the problem of fire burning us will never cease. In order to cease this problem of suffering, which arises from contacting the fire, it is necessary to follow a true method that cuts off the cause of that suffering. It is wise to seek such a method as that which is the experience of Guru Shakyamuni and those ancient great yogis, a method that is explained by them with the experience that they achieved. This is wise.

Paragraph Four

Maitreya is the buddha to whom Guru Shakyamuni handed down the graded path of extensiveness, which means method. This is Maitreya giving instruction on how to study and practice the Dharma.

Without correctly listening there will not be correct understanding. Without correct understanding there will not be transcendental wisdom, there is no way for the transcendental wisdom to arise. So it's really important at the very beginning, before you make the decision to follow a certain method, to put your life in that, it is important to check up to see if it is a real method, a true path which leads to the cessation of suffering. Without checking, just following it due to hearing that there is something, method or meditation, without checking it in this way, there is the danger that you will meet the wrong method, and that it will lead you the wrong way and you will waste your life. This is like a dog seeing meat, running to it and just eating it without checking, and then after he gets sick, vomits, gets pain in the stomach, many things. In order to not be like this example, the checking is important.

Last Paragraph

For instance it is like this: if someone is going to do samadhi meditation, the meditation of quiescence, first it is important to receive the techniques of that meditation correctly from a guru who has the experience of that meditation. Then listen correctly and you check up, make yourself clearly understand the subjects. Then practice it. Without having completely clear understanding of the subject from an experienced guru, even if you go somewhere and try to practice you will always find and not know the cause, you will not achieve the meditation, not know how to develop concentration or treat the mind, not know which method should be used with different thoughts.

Page 44 (a)

Paragraph One

This is also wrong conception, thinking that all meditation is like samadhi meditation, that all meditations are one-pointedness, that one specific meditation is the whole meditation. This is like the example of seeing one man and thinking that all lamas are like that.

Also Guru Tsong Khapa, who is a manifestation of the Buddha of Wisdom, Manjushri, and is the founder of one sect in Tibet, and also the author of the teaching that we practice, said, "Picking up one specific meditation like samadhi meditation and saying all meditations are one-pointedness is like picking up one grain and saying that all grains are like this one grain."

(Meditation Session)

6 p.m.

First we do the physical postures as we did last night, the seven forms of the physical posture. First, cross-legged; then back straight; neck a little bent; shoulders straight; the right hand on the left with the palms up; keep the eyes on the tip of the nose; keep the teeth loose and the tip of the tongue contacting the upper palate; keep the breath natural.

Check up your motivation to see if it's evil, indifferent, or virtuous.

If there is negative motivation, strongly grasping or attached to temporal comforts, think, “This is the source of all suffering, this is the enemy that has been causing all the sufferings in all the previous lifetimes, and it has been always interrupting the achievement of enlightenment, ultimate peace, nirvana, and all the other perfections. While I have received human rebirth and met the Buddhadharma, the Mahayana teaching, and have had the chance to practice and achieve enlightenment, this negative thought, besides causing suffering in previous lifetimes, even now it is disturbing, interrupting the arising of these advantages, it is interrupting and causing me to lose such precious freedom and chance. If I do not destroy this evil thought it will carry on harming me, also causing suffering in the future lifetimes. I will never follow this evil thought.”

Now think, the wrong conceptions of the self-”I,” the self-cherishing mind, dualistic thought, and all obscurations are in the form of fog coming out through the right nostril. Try to feel emptiness in the body and mind—the emptiness of obscurations and delusions—nowhere existing, like the fog went away from the valley, and the fog, the essence of which is the delusions, went beyond this world and disappeared, became nowhere existing.

From all the enlightened beings, bodhisattvas, and arhats, all the holy beings who are in the ten directions, I am receiving all their knowledge and supreme powers and compassion in the form of light, which is coming in the left nostril.

Now your whole body is filled up with light, the essence of which is the knowledge of the holy beings, and think that you have received all the realizations from the guru yoga practice up to enlightenment. Your whole body becomes transparent like light, like a water bubble.

Try to feel infinite pleasure.

Do this two more times, and vice-versa, purifying from the left nostril and receiving knowledge through the right nostril, three times.

Do three times purification through both nostrils, receiving knowledge in the form of white light coming in through both nostrils.

In front of you, straight from your forehead, in space, the same height from the ground as the height from the ground to your forehead, visualize a very large square throne adorned with many jewels, held up by eight white snow lions, two on each side, facing each other. On the throne visualize a lotus, an open lotus, not a closed lotus; and visualize a moon, flat and luminous. Then visualize a sun, flat, round, and shining. Visualize Guru Shakyamuni in the form of bhikshu sitting on it. You can visualize as large as possible, this doesn't have to be visualized small, and he shouldn't be visualized as a statue or as an ordinary man. You should visualize his holy body as a body of light with golden color, and wearing robes that do not touch the body but remain four inches from the skin. He is very beautiful looking, with a smiling face and a small little ball on top of the head. His hairs curve from left to right, they are not mixed like ordinary people's hair, and they are very soft and black, very dark. The eyes are long and small and looking at you. But also, when you look at him you see he is looking at you, but he is looking also at other sentient beings in the different directions, and you can also see that he is looking at them. This is also the power of the Enlightened One that we have not achieved. His legs are crossed, and his left hand is palm up at the navel, holding a bowl in his palm with nectars in it, non-deluded nectars, and his right palm is upside down on the right knee.

He is surrounded by rays, actually beaming, the rays beaming to all the realms of sentient beings in all the universes, but we see the rays as the length of the two hands stretched out, beaming rays that long. And through the rays numberless Guru Shakyamunis the size of atoms or molecules come out of his holy body and to the realms of sentient beings, working for them by showing different methods. And also countless Guru Shakyamunis return to his holy body through the rays after finishing working for sentient beings. It's like a big office, people coming out and going in, or a bunch of people going in and coming out.

And his holy mind fully sees every living being and every non-living existence, and fully sees every sentient beings' desire and thought at the same time, the whole time.

And his holy body transforms into countless billions and billions of transformations, and works for sentient beings by showing different methods.

His holy speech has knowledge that can show the Dharma in the native language of different sentient beings and explain the Dharma in their language according to the different levels their minds.

Totally, his holy speech has also power as his holy body and holy mind. Also, his holy body has power of his holy speech and holy mind. And it is the same thing with his holy mind, which means his holy speech can also take many billions of different manifestations. It is the same thing with his holy mind and holy body.

Now visualize light rays coming out of his holy body and absorbing into your body, purifying all the mental defilements. All the mental defilements are dissolved in the form of darkness as the light is received and absorbed in the body. Think that you are receiving all of the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni's holy body, speech, and mind in the form of light.

So, repeat the prayer, and the mantra. The prayer includes taking refuge, prostrating, making offerings, and asking the buddhas to grant blessings. Recite the mantra in order to receive the infinite supreme knowledge of his holy body, speech, and mind. Your body becomes oneness with his holy body, your speech one with his holy speech, and your mind becomes oneness with his holy mind.

Repeat this prayer and mantra with the visualization of Guru Shakyamuni as you did before, with the rays coming out of his holy body, the rays that are the essence of his infinite supreme knowledge, great compassion, and supreme powers. You are receiving it, and as you are receiving it you are purifying all your mental defilements that are interruptions to the realizations.

(Page 20)

TA YA THE means it is like this.

OM has many meanings; it is for auspiciousness and success, but totally it includes the whole knowledge of Buddha, the Enlightened One's holy body, speech, and mind. All the enlightened knowledge is included in the meaning of OM.

Anyway, the meaning of just the OM, if it is going to be explained, it is not something that can be finished within a life. It takes many lives to be able to achieve the teaching of what OM contains, the knowledge of what this syllable letter contains. When we achieve enlightenment we have completed the knowledge that OM contains.

MUNIA means control or ability. There are two meanings—control, control, which means power or ability.

MAHA means great; MAHA MUNIAYE means great control.

SOHA means to receive the blessings of his holy body, speech, and mind, and to absorb them within our mind.

This is just a very brief meaning of the mantra so that we have some idea when we recite the mantra.

The first “control” of the three is control over the suffering of the three lower realms; that means the realms of the three lower creatures. There are different types of suffering sentient beings: one type is called preta, and one is animal, and one type is the narak being. “Narak” is a Sanskrit term—in English this means “hell,” the hell beings. There are three types of lower suffering beings, so this means having control of the uncontrolled experience of these sufferings—the sufferings of pretas, animals, and narak realms.

The second “control” is control over samsaric suffering, control over the ignorance that is the root of the suffering.

Three is “great control;” this means control over the dualistic mind, the subtle dualistic thoughts.

Also the three “controls” can be like this:

1. The wrong conception of the self-“I”,
2. The control of the self-cherishing mind,
3. And the control of the dualistic mind.

This means he has complete achievement of the pure stage, not having any defects of these three negative minds. As he has those three total achievements, control, and knowledge, we are requesting him in order to grant these three controls, knowledge, that he has achieved, to us.

So by this we become enlightened as he is, and enlighten other sentient beings as he enlightened other sentient beings.

Anyway the whole teaching, the whole path, the whole knowledge that Guru Shakyamuni has included in this mantra. All the past buddhas received enlightenment through this mantra as well as the present buddha, and also the future buddha, and enlightenment cannot be received without achieving the knowledge that is included in this mantra. Also, through the practice of the Mahayana thought training, the graded path, we are trying to achieve the different levels of knowledge of the enlightened being that are included in the meaning of this mantra.

Again visualize Guru Shakyamuni as we did before.

Now think, “He accepted and he is pleased as we requested him to grant this infinite knowledge of his holy body, speech, and mind, and as we requested him that our body, speech and mind become one with his holy body, speech, and mind.” The throne, including the white snow lions erecting the throne, gradually absorbs into the lotus, then into the moon, sun, and that is absorbed into Guru Shakyamuni. Now think that Guru Shakyamuni comes down on the center of your head and absorbs into you, and your body becomes one with his holy body, and your speech one with his holy speech, and your mind one with his holy mind. The whole impure body, speech, and mind is completely purified, nowhere existing, like becoming a new being, and the whole body is of golden light as we visualized before.

Try to think that you really became the real Guru Shakyamuni, having all the perfected forms and knowledge, sitting on a throne, lotus, moon, and sun.

Also repeat the dedication prayer:

ge.wa di. yi nyur.du dag
la.ma thub.wang dub.gyur ne
do.wa chig.kyang ma.lu.pa
kyo.kyi sa.la go.par shog

The meaning of this prayer is this: “May I quickly achieve the state of Guru Shakyamuni in order to lead every and all sentient beings to his enlightened stage due to these merits.”

The merit is this—for instance, today we listen to teachings and meditate with pure motivation—any action that is created with pure motivation we dedicate the merits for the sake of all sentient beings.

There are many reasons to dedicate the merits. One reason is that if the merits are dedicated to be able to achieve enlightenment, then any negative thoughts cannot destroy the merits or make the merits incapable of bringing the result, just as the grain burnt by fire has no ability to bring the stems and the results. It is the same thing—if you don’t dedicate the merits, you created many merits, and don’t stop the worst negative mind of anger and heresy from arising, then these can destroy the merits and stop them from bringing enlightenment. So it is important to dedicate the merits also for that reason.

Also in this way the merits that we create are sacrificed, given up for the sake of sentient beings, because we dedicate the merits to be enlightened only for the sake of sentient beings. This action is part of the bodhisattva’s deeds. Anyway, it is a powerful practice for purifying such things as miserliness—we cannot have miserliness for any possession, so besides not having miserliness for any possession we cannot be attached to any possession. Dedicating the merits is a great bodhisattva action.

Generally it is karma that when one does some good thing there is disturbance either from the outside or from our own inside. So one time in the life, taking the meditation course, it is good to try the best we can.

Day 3
Sunday November 18th
9 a.m.

Visualize Guru Shakyamuni as you tried this morning, in your presence, the height straight from your forehead—if you make prostration lying full length on the ground, that distance away. Each of these things has much explanation, but according to time we can try to explain. Also, visualize the light rays, which are the essence of all the infinite knowledge of his holy body, speech, and mind, and infinite supreme powers and compassion, and yourself receiving them—especially the great knowledge to understand the subject of the meditation. As you are thinking this in the mind think the prayer lama tonba and so forth, and the mantra. (Pages 19 and 20)

The highly realized Indian pandit Shantideva, Guru Shakyamuni's follower who had great achievement of bodhicitta, said, "This perfect human rebirth is extremely difficult to find. To again find such a highly meaningful perfect human rebirth it is necessary to create the cause in this present lifetime. If no benefits are created in this lifetime how can it be possible to receive such a highly meaningful, perfect human rebirth again?"

Actually just this quotation can be explained many ways—it contains many subjects.

So the most beneficial, most wise, skillful method, the most useful cause, is the training of bodhicitta, the practice of bodhicitta. As this holy being said, the practice of bodhicitta is the quickest cause also to receive the final goal, enlightenment. And the practice of bodhicitta is also the quick method to get out of samsara and the cycle of death and rebirth. And the practice of bodhicitta is the quick method, also it is the best cause, to receive the highly meaningful perfect human rebirth in the next lifetime. Besides bringing more quickly and easily all those future goals, even in this lifetime it is also beneficial to the person himself and also to other living beings.

Also the whole other practice, the whole other meditation such as Vajrayana meditation, would be transcendental, beneficial, and useful if done on the basis of the practice of bodhicitta. Just like a box, a metal box which has many decoration of jewels, gold, and diamonds—because of all those decorations, all those jewels, that iron box becomes rich. But without those decorations the box won't look rich; it looks very simple. But with all these it becomes very rich, expensive, and precious. Without the decorations the metal box cannot be precious. So it is the same thing, any other meditation done with bodhicitta is like this—it is very powerful, rich, useful—like the much decorated box. It is the same thing—this practice makes life highly meaningful and perfect and holy, just like the box. Therefore, it is important to keep the box, as it is very precious.

Just as this example, it is important to make the practice on bodhicitta as we have the chance. And it is important not to waste time, the life, while we have chance to create such powerful cause in such short time, such meaningful cause in such short time, with the practice of bodhicitta. So therefore it is necessary that the action of listening to the teachings be possessed by the motivation of bodhicitta.

So think, "I am going to listen to the profound Mahayana teaching in order to receive enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings."

So we finished Mind is Beginningless, How is it Possible to Receive Enlightenment, the Lineage of the Teachings; the Importance of Right Impulse, and came to the necessity of the checking meditation.

Paragraph Two

The example (the armless rock climber) looks interesting, quite funny. For the person who listens to the teachings or reads the Dharma book to understand oneself, not to judge something, by planning to make oneself pure, holy, and realizable, and discover, for those reasons, it is necessary to discover all the hindrances, the vices, the negative parts that one has, which hinders enlightenment and ultimate peace. So for that reason first we have to discover our mistakes, recognize our mistakes, in order to stop the vices. Without recognizing, how can we stop the negative actions of body, speech, and mind, and the negative creator? We can't discover intuitively, without making study, making practice, without listening to the Buddhadharma. So with such plan, such desire, such thought, if with such expectation one reads a book, listens to a teaching, the subject that you read or listen to becomes effective to the mind, becomes useful. With this expectation, as you listen you can discover your mistakes, your wrong conceptions that are the negative creator, the destroyer of your peace. So to stop the negative creator it should be discovered; without recognizing the thief there is no way to kill the thief. If there is a thief in amongst us, then if someone wants to kill the thief, without recognizing the thief here he may kill a friend or another person, which causes danger, which is meaningless. So it is the same thing—without discovering the negative creator, there is no way to make yourself pure, positive. So with such expectation, wanting to be pure, then one can, from the Dharma, discover one's rubbish, the wrong conceptions, just as you find spots, ugliness on your face by looking at the mirror. So when one listens to teachings, reads books, the Dharma should be used as a mirror to check up on oneself, to check up on what's ugly. The purpose of the mirror is not to keep yourself ugly, the purpose is to make yourself perfect, good.

Also, as the subject comes, those people who heard the subject many times should not have pride, thinking, "I know that subject, I have heard that, what's the use of hearing it again and again and again, I know that." Pride arises; pride is the opposite of Dharma practice. If one is practicing Dharma one should not have pride.

Even if you heard the subject of the graduated path a hundred times, if there is no change in your actions, if your mind is not clean, it shows you didn't practice the teachings, didn't listen to the teachings correctly, didn't use it as a mirror. So as you listen you should be conscious of your mind and actions.

If your mind has knowledge, lives in the discipline as the Dharma explains, then you should rejoice in it. This is a point when you can feel happy, pleasure, you can rejoice. But you shouldn't have satisfaction in only that; it is necessary to progress until enlightenment is reached. And if you discover as you listen to teachings the mistakes, the wrong action, wrong thoughts which contradict the Dharma, interrupt your Dharma, then your responsibility after discovering this is to make it clear, to abstain from those wrong conceptions or negative actions. For this reason listening to Dharma is necessary.

It is necessary to check up, instead of allowing pride to arise, if you have the realization of the meditation or not. If there isn't the realization it means you have to listen and practice it. Even if there is the realization, the subject is not something you avoid, throw out, or have to forget. Still it is necessary to progress, to make progression.

Anyway, it is totally like this—as long as the person does not practice the graduated path, there is no way to get out of suffering or receive enlightenment. As long as the person does not follow such a

path the person has always to be in suffering and confusion, continually. So either the person is in suffering, the mind in an illusive state, or enlightened—there are only two ways; there's no place for the person to be indifferent, between those two, not being in suffering and not enlightened—there's no such place for the person to be.

Paragraph Three

The whole practice is the practice of the graduated path for the three levels of intelligent beings.

1. Actually the samadhi meditation is general. It is not a specific meditation that is only in the Buddhadharma. It is also in other religions, the common term is "samadhi." But for those who practice Buddhadharma, it is not sufficient to practice common samadhi alone, to reach enlightenment, to get out of samsara. It should be done at least on the basis of the refuge. For the Mahayana practitioner even that is not enough, it should be done with bodhicitta to reach Enlightenment, so that is why this is put in the practice of the higher intelligent beings.

2. Such as the three trainings: conduct, concentration, and wisdom.

3. And understanding of impermanence and death, and so on

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This is some method that was practiced by some ancient mediators, yogis. This is to have some idea of how to recognize the hindrances to the meditation and how to treat them, how to solve the hindrances when we make meditation.

2. The Drowsy Mind

This is, for instance when we do retreat or in the daily meditation the mind is drowsy, sinking, like dipping in the ocean, not having clear thoughts, feeling darkness. Then this technique that was practiced by such great yogis can be helpful.

Concentrate that the mind is in a drop at the navel. Then it is in the tube, and the drop shoots out the tube. When it is very high the drop splits and the mind becomes one with space.

It is like this—when you are in a room for a long time, feeling drowsy, not having clear thoughts, sinking down, then you go and look into the sky or stand on top of a mountain, and then the meditation can become better than before. As this example works so can it work just visualizing that you are doing this with the mind—the physical body not coming out of the room, just making it with the mind.

So the graduated paths are those we have to achieve to reach enlightenment and are rooted in the path of the lower being, which depends on the realization, fully realizing the perfect human rebirth. So this is the first checking meditation.

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As the highly realized Tibetan yogi, the transformation of the Buddha of Wisdom, Guru Tsong Khapa said, “Please grant blessings to realize the perfect human rebirth, which received once is extremely difficult to find and greatly meaningful and easy to decay, and that for the thought wanting to take the essence to arise unceasingly all day and night.”

(The thought of taking the essence means working for enlightenment. For instance, for people working in an office, taking the essence day and night is a monthly salary. For Dharma practitioners it is enlightenment. So what he means is practicing Dharma day and night.)

The reason why I take such a holy being’s quotations and words is because it is effective to our minds just to remember their words, because their words are said with their realizations, not just with an empty mind. So their teachings that are said with their experienced realizations are very tasty and very effective, like medicine to cool the suffering of the mind. So as this highly realized yogi who had the achievement of the graduated path said: to have the energy, the capability, and the essence to work day and night, it is necessary to have the knowledge that the perfect human rebirth is highly meaningful, difficult to find and easy to decay, perishable. To have this realization it is necessary to fully discover the perfect human rebirth. So therefore, as he experienced, as he practiced in that way, we are also trying to receive the experience to follow the experiences that this great yogi has achieved.

THE PERFECT HUMAN REBIRTH

The six samsaric realms are the human, sura, asura, preta, animal, and narak realms. There are many other sentient beings who are not human beings. There are many others; our not discovering them or seeing them doesn’t mean they do not exist. There are many beings that most of us don’t see that can be contacted by great yogis, saints, and even by some ordinary human beings. Just because we don’t see them doesn’t mean that we can contradict this fact. As we said yesterday, we cannot contradict others’ experiences.

Also, there are many different worlds of living beings that we don’t see, don’t perceive, due to the karmic obscuration of the mind. Anyway, more explanation will come as we go further. If we have the understanding of the mind as beginningless, the clear understanding, then it makes sense when we meditate on just the words of the first sentence—if we clearly understand that the mind is beginningless, just this thought circling and suffering in the six samsaric realms can give a big shock to the person, that he intuitively has to renounce attachment; a shock that makes him intuitively not be attached to the objects of the senses. It has big sense, it has big meaning.

As we read the book, all the people here have different feelings according to the intelligence and the level of fortune, level of collection of merits, which means fortune. As I talk each person would have different feelings, different sensations. The checking meditation on the reason why the mind is beginningless comes first. If the person has no understanding of the evolution of mind, that mind is beginningless, the rest of the meditation doesn’t make any sense, like a heavy rock, a big mountain, the rest of the subject seems useless. They may prefer other fairy tales, like children’s stories; they may prefer these more than seeing these meditations.

Anyway, it is important that if you still don’t have the idea that the mind is beginningless that you think on it—the more clear this idea is, the rest of the meditation makes that much more sense.

Anyway, we don't have interest in the Dharma but it is necessary, as we have the wisdom, to check whether it is true or not, whether it is really existent or not, through study and practice. Actually practicing, studying this subject, practicing this method, these meditations, actually we are studying science, learning science—inner science not exterior science; studying science in order to discover the inner existence that is not the object of the sense of the eye. We are studying science to fully realize the inner factor, suffering and cause of suffering, ultimate peace and the cause of ultimate peace. These are not the object of the eye, so without relying on such method, the practice of the Buddhadharma, just going around the whole world, there is no way to fully discover the inner factor, even if the person spends his whole life from childhood seeing different mountains, different trees, just going around. Even though he does that, to do that he is not free, there is a problem, he is not free—there are many places that he is not free to go, to make the external trip. That is the lack of not having full, deep knowledge of the science of the inner factor, not having the complete achievement of the knowledge of the inner factors. Even though the person thinks this is the way to develop wisdom he is not free. This is simple; this can be our experience.

So through the complete achievement of the knowledge of the science of the inner factor, at the same time one also achieves knowledge of the outer existence. At the same time, without relying on all the physical trips.

Question: Would you please repeat that ?

Answer: Repeat in what way? ... I think I forgot.

Anyway, as we completely achieve the knowledge of the inner factor, inner existence, which means fully discovering the whole inner existence, that which is not the object of the eye sense, at the same time we achieve this we can completely achieve the knowledge of the outer existence. For instance, one example—we can never make, never find, make the perfect research, checking like the scientist, checking the outer existence to discover what it is, how it is; we can never make that research to find the cause of death and rebirth in the outer subjects. The principle cause for why animate beings have to die and be reborn can never be found in the outer object, no matter how many eons we spend, without relying on the inner science of Buddhadharma. There is no way to be the scientist discovering the cause of death and rebirth in the outer objects without knowing the Dharma—we can never find it—in the food, in the house, in the mountain, in the corpse, in the dead body. It can only be found in the mind, so we have to study, so one have to study the science of the mind, the inner factor, completely study the inner factor. For instance, the reason why in ancient times beings could live one thousand years but now beings cannot—what is the reason for that? In past ages people lived for one thousand years, but these days people can't—what is the reason for that, life getting shorter?

Question : How do you know that people lived one thousand years?

Answer: That's easy, it is very clear. There are many logical histories of those such as the original human beings, the ancient beings, how they lived on the earth, what personality of mind they had. It is all clearly explained in the Buddhadharma as the Enlightened One clearly sees it. Besides that, the evolution of the earth, the original human beings' minds is also clearly explained, besides the past, also our future, as it is. As the Enlightened Being Himself clearly saw and explained, so did his followers, the great meditators, through the achievement of the higher graduated path. As one reaches the higher and higher on the path, that much more the person's mind and wisdom develops.

So as that happens he sees the past more and more, deeper and deeper, and the same with the future. This knowledge progresses as the person goes higher and higher on the path. This is not only one person's experience, this is many people's experience, the numberless buddhas. Even in the present age it is the object of the mind of the great saints, the mind that is non-dualistic and purified.

Rinpoche: So why don't people live for 1000 years?

Answer: The age of degeneration of mind.

Rinpoche: Why is there degeneration of mind? First of all, how does degeneration of mind do this?

Answer: Because of the lack of consciousness of mind in individual beings, but stretched over many large numbers.

Rinpoche: I think it is very deep—I didn't understand.

Answer: Too many people producing bad karma on this earth at present.

Rinpoche: But how does it make the life short?

Answer: It affects the lifespan.

Rinpoche: But how does the karma affect the life, making it short?

Answer: I didn't raise my hand.

Rinpoche: No, but I raised my hand.

Answer: I don't know.

Rinpoche: Yes, thank you so much.

So think as we did about the meaning of the dedication prayer and repeat this: Gewa di.yi ... (Page 156)

3 p.m

Like we did this morning, visualize Guru Shakyamuni seated on a throne, lotus, moon, and sun, with rays coming to you purifying the obscurations to enlightenment, and say the prayer and mantra.

Actually, the "graduated path" does not mean a specific teaching written by one specific guru or pandit. The whole path, the graduated path, is shown by Guru Shakyamuni. Guru Shakyamuni has shown 84,000 divisions of teachings in order to dispel the 84,000 delusions of the sentient beings, and that whole teaching is included in the graduated path, is the explanation of the graduated path. Therefore, these coming meditations were explained by Guru Shakyamuni, and were achieved by Guru Shakyamuni and his followers, the great realized pandits. And the Tibetan gurus have also experimented with these meditations through practice as these pandits have shown. So we are not doing something separate that was not experienced by Guru Shakyamuni or the ancient holy

pandits. It is possible for us to have the experiences of these meditations if we do them correctly and practice them. It is a matter of decision of mind, depending on that. Also, through the study of this science of the inner factors we can discover the principal cause of death and rebirth of animate beings, that which scientists cannot discover only on the material level, through only the study of external science, the science of external factors. We can also clearly discover this through the study of the science of the inner factor. We can find every answer as we discover new existence. “New existence” means new for the mind that starts to discover, existence that exists there already although our ordinary mind does not perceive it. So through the practice of this kind of science we can discover all those existences that are beyond the matter, not seen by the ordinary limited mind, and can find the whole answer, every answer.

The Eight Freedoms (Page 46)

1. The narak realms; in English, “hell.” The Tibetan term is nyal wa. It is only creation of ... if you created karma with the delusions, the creation of the karma projects and brings the creation of the hell for that person. As each individual has created karma with delusion that projects such a suffering realm, such a suffering place, each one suffers in that suffering stage. If there is no delusion or karma created by such a delusion that projects such a suffering stage, for that person there’s no hell. If he has no delusion or karma created by delusion, for him there’s no narak stage, for him there’s no hell. And such a suffering state can be under the ground and also in the world here; it is not definite. But more explanation will come afterwards.

For instance like this, if we talk a little bit. We may think there’s no such thing as this, there’s no such suffering state like hell, rejecting it, reasoning it, because it is not seen by me in the world. However, the reason that we don’t see it as we see countries when we travel is because the time for us to be born in those states is not ripe. The karma makes the time ripe, so at that time the person is born in the state of his own creation. From his own karma he is born into such a state and suffers. Just like this, another example: when there is a terrible war or a terrible explosion the negative mind creates karma and karma makes the time ripe, so when the time comes the place changes, and what comes is a lot of hindrances, a lot of dangers, so many things happening from the sky, from everywhere, and people suffer and worry, which wasn’t the case before. This completely changes the whole place. If someone asked those people who suffer, “Will there be a miserable situation like this?” before that war and those terrible times, those people wouldn’t believe it because it’s in the future and they don’t perceive it. They may reject it because their mind is limited, and they can’t perceive the future due to obscurations.

Just as this, there are many different realms that the present mind cannot see due to limitations. For instance, many common people believed that Tibet wouldn’t be overtaken by the Chinese. Many people believed that because their understanding was limited. The mind that has the capability of perceiving the whole future and what is going to happen sees as nonsense what the others reject as ridiculous. The reason there is so much suffering going on in a certain country is the same thing. They are fighting each other, even now at this hour, there is much suffering, killing each other—the situation is completely the opposite of us, like earth and sky. That is because time is not ripe, the time didn’t come up. The karma to experience such suffering under such conditions didn’t ripen. We may have created the cause to experience such suffering in the future, but the cause has not yet been experienced. We are not under such suffering conditions now, even though we have created the cause, karma, to experience such suffering; that is because the karma or the cause of such suffering created by the delusions is not yet ripe. The suffering is like the fruit that hasn’t ripened yet. It is like

the seed to bring the stem and the fruit—as long as we have the delusions and the action of the delusions that causes us to experience such miserable situations, although it has not yet ripened the fruit is on the way. The karma has not ripened yet, so we are not in such a situation at this moment. Therefore, we are talking about freedom that we have at the moment.

So as we have time, such short free time, it should be used in the most beneficial way, to cut out suffering. It is not sure—for instance this year we are taking the meditation course, something like this, but next year under some miserable condition, we may be dead, finished—who knows? We always think we will live longer. Anyway, totally we don't know what will happen in the future because we don't perceive the cause, the karma we created, or what we have in our minds—we don't realize it or recognize it, we are not conscious, aware, and not realizing the future happenings.

So anyway, if you are in such a place, in such a terrible place with too much distraction, there is no freedom to practice Dharma or listen to such a precious subject, to meditate. Life finishes under such worries, such useless fears. If you are born in the narak stage, the time only passes in suffering. In those stages of the hot and cold sufferings, because of the karma, if you are born in those states even a tiny hot suffering is unbearable. If all the fires on earth were made one and compared with that, they still could not compare, because that tiny suffering is incredible, thousands of billions of times hotter than fire in the human world. Even a tiny hot suffering is much greater there than on earth—this is a creation of the karma. Just like this: some people have to be in a country even if it is that hot; they have to spend their life there. There are cold places. However terrible the place is, the people have to live there. This is our experience. Some countries are terribly hot, some are cold—this also is a creation of the karma of the beings who experience that. But when there's no delusion, when there is no cause of samsara, we are out of karma, and out from the control of ignorance. For that person there's no hot or cold, that person is out of suffering. Even if the country is hot for this mind it is not hot, because for this mind there is no reason to suffer from that experience, for that person there is no cause of suffering.

The best change of the condition is changing the mind, making change inside. Making change in the mind is the best way of changing the external conditions. For the person who does this there is change in the external conditions, for him there is no hot—this way it is quicker. It is possible, quicker, easier, and more practical this way than without trying to change the inside, and instead trying to change the outside condition. What I mean is, only relying on the external change, believing that it is only caused by the external condition is not a practical method because it cannot last—even though we can change the condition it won't last, it won't always work that way. Even if it's possible to change the external condition, some problem will arise after some time.

So totally, if we are in hot, boiling water it is impossible to meditate. Also, if we are asked to meditate with a red-hot needle put into the body, it will be impossible because of the suffering. So if we were in such a suffering state as a narak realm it is impossible, because even the tiny suffering of that is greater than all the sufferings on earth in the human realms, it is impossible.

Therefore, since we are not in such suffering on the human earth, and especially not in such a suffering state, there is freedom to practice Dharma. This is one freedom.

2. Pretas. Pretas are also suffering beings who live under the earth and on the human earth. And also their suffering of feeling hungry and thirsty is much greater than our feelings of hunger and thirst. And besides these there are many more sufferings. If we are born as a preta, our whole life finishes

like this, feeling hungry and thirsty and experiencing other sufferings. The body of these spirits is very ugly, very fearful looking. Anyway, more explanation will come later.

Like the narak beings, these beings' feeling of hunger and thirst is much greater than ours. Our feelings of hunger and thirst is incomparable to theirs. Their suffering is not for one or two days, but for ages—so how can one practice Dharma or meditate, feeling hungry? This is our experience. For instance, if we don't have food in one day, we cannot think anything, we can't meditate, it is unbearable to us, we cannot do other work. In one day of feeling hungry we have not experienced the suffering of a preta being. They experience this suffering for long time, without choice or freedom, due to karma. Our hunger and thirst is nothing compared with them—it still is pleasure.

If you can't meditate even with this small suffering of feeling hungry, how can it be possible to practice Dharma or meditate if you are born as this being who has such unbearable suffering?

So the second freedom is not being born as a preta, and for that reason we have the chance to practice Dharma.

3. Animals. Usually when we see animals we don't try to discover their mind, what their experience is, what they think. We often judge their bodies. In this way, we can't discover their experiences, what they are thinking. What are their worries? If at the moment you are a dog, let's say, there's no freedom to listen and to understand Dharma and practice, there's no way to communicate such subjects—it's impossible. Generally, if one explains the whole suffering of the animals it is infinite, it is something that cannot be finished explaining because the suffering is so immense.

Depending on the type of animals, there are different problems. Totally, the problem of being an animal is being foolish, deeply ignorant, dumb, and the suffering of being eaten one by one. Even among the small creatures, always there is another creature who kills one; even among the middle sized animals, there is always one who kills another; even among the big sized animals, there is always an enemy who kills another. Animals always have some other enemy to attack them. The animals flying in the sky or crawling on the earth always they have suffering of being dumb, being ignorant—even if we talk they do not understand the words, and they feel cold and hot, and feel hunger and thirst.

These are the general sufferings of the animals. This is just to have idea of the sufferings of animals, but there is much to say. If you try to talk about the details of the animal sufferings, if you really understand the sufferings of animals, it is a subject that will make you scared to be an animal even for a minute.

Anyway, as an animal, it is impossible to practice Dharma, to meditate, to study Dharma, to teach Dharma—it is impossible. There's no way to understand the meaning of Dharma. So the fact that we at the moment have not been born animals and have the chance to practice Dharma is a freedom. This is one freedom.

If I tell all the details then it doesn't go quick, so as we go further more explanations will come.

4. Gods. There are different types of gods. These gods are called "gods" because their enjoyments and pleasures are much higher, much more transcendental than ours. However these gods do not have omniscient mind, are not out of samsara—these beings are still in samsara, still experience

death and rebirth, and still have ignorance. But their possessions and enjoyments are much richer, much more transcendental than ours.

There are some gods who are conscious at birth and death, but in-between are unconscious for eons, as if they were sleeping for a long time. No matter how long their lives, in that state, in that reality, for eons they are unconscious. So there is no freedom to develop the mind, to practice Dharma, to meditate, to reach enlightenment, to understand suffering—their whole life is unconscious except at birth and death. We are lucky not to be born as this kind of being; therefore we have the chance to practice Dharma.

Also some gods have very rich possessions; for example just one god has many thousands of goddesses. Anyway, the pleasure they have is much higher than ours. They don't have to depend on food, and their food is not like ours—they enjoy only nectars, not food like ours that grows from the earth, that makes kaka. Everything there looks very rich—even their palaces are all formed of jewels, and their palaces and their bodies shine with light. It is not like the human world where there can be rich and also poor things. In the human world there are all different kinds of things—here everything looks very rich, so there's no way to see any examples of suffering. Therefore their minds are too distracted by the rich objects of the senses, always distracted by them, so there is no way to practice Dharma. Even though they're not cognitionless, their minds are always distracted by the rich objects of the senses. Because of this they have no freedom to practice Dharma.

For instance, just an example: if we have many possessions, so the mind is always distracted by thinking of objects such as other people, the apartment, many things. As there are so many possessions that the mind is concerned with, we are so that easily distracted by the object of the senses. So it is very difficult to find time to check up yourself, to check your own mind: it is extremely difficult, always the mind is occupied by some other thing, occupied by the work of the temporal life. As in this example, those beings who have such a long life but spend that life in that way, always distracted by the objects of the senses. And also, some gods are cognitionless for the whole lifetime. In these situations it is extremely difficult to remember the necessity of Dharma practice and to find the time to practice Dharma.

So our not being born as those beings is a freedom to practice Dharma.

In the same way, those who read books read books of great yogis like Milarepa. Because these beings spend their life in simple way doesn't mean they are foolish, not knowing how to make the life materially rich. One basic reason that they live in such an ascetic way is to have less distractions, so their minds are not distracted by the objects of the senses. Their ascetic life is spent in Dharma practice, with correct realizations. Many people try to spend their life in that way—by trying to make things materially simple, but not really realizing what really simple is. They try to spend their life in a simple way, like the ancient yogis did, but their minds are empty. So what it brings is only confusion.

6 p.m.

I will read the part about the visualization of Guru Shakyamuni again so you will have a clear visualization.

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This is the benefits of visualizing Guru Shakyamuni and correcting the wrong conception that visualization is distracting, that any visualization is distracting—this is the wrong conception that only harms oneself, cheats one.

“The imagination” is one’s mental projection.

There is much to talk about for each of these benefits. How one becomes closer to him, and how this protects one from evil creations and temporal life dangers, and decreases negativities. By visualizing Guru Shakyamuni in that perfected form, with all those signs of his holy body, just by seeing the holy body, each small part symbolizes having infinite supreme knowledge. Because of the knowledge that each small part of Guru Shakyamuni’s holy body has, this helps for purification.

His holy statues in which each part symbolizes his supreme knowledge helps to decrease the negative mind and helps for purification. That is why even the precious statues of this holy being are called “seeing and releasing” holy body, or statue. This means that just by seeing it, it helps to release us from obscurations. As it purifies the obscurations, it makes us closer to him and to the enlightened stage. Seeing the holy perfected beautiful body gives us the desire to achieve a perfected holy body like that, a holy body that has no defects or sufferings. Also, by seeing his holy body, even just by seeing the symbolic idols of Guru Shakyamuni, the desire and interest to seeking his knowledge that is symbolized by even a small figure or statue arises. Seeing each of the figures that have infinite supreme knowledge causes us to seek the method to achieve it. This makes us follow the path.

Anyway, this is just very brief explanation of the benefits. But actually, the benefits of meditating on Guru Shakyamuni is extensive, there are many benefits. This is just to have some idea of how it is meaningful to visualize Guru Shakyamuni.

“Rainbow light”—a rainbow has colors, but the light of Guru Shakyamuni’s Holy Body in the visualization is golden. There is a purpose for it to be golden.

The “aura”—also visualize the aura of light around him, steaming to all the realms of sentient beings and purifying their negativity and their obscurations. Numberless Guru Shakyamunis come out to work for sentient beings, through the rays that emanate from each atom of his holy body, the tiniest part of his holy body. At the same time also countless numbers of Guru Shakyamunis return to his holy body, absorbing through the rays after finishing working for sentient beings.

Visualizing like this arranges auspicious causes for us to achieve the enlightened stage of Guru Shakyamuni, and, like him, work for sentient beings intuitively, in countless billions of different manifestations.

Like this. For instance, as Guru Shakyamuni gives teachings in one place, in another place he takes a birth such as a prince at the same time. In another place he shows impermanence or suffering nature to sentient beings; in another he takes the form of passing away for other sentient beings; and also he gives different sermons, different Dharma subjects, in different places for different levels of sentient beings at the same time.

So visualizing like this arranges the auspiciousness, when we are enlightened, to be able to work for sentient beings like this, intuitively.

When we ordinary people wear clothes, they always touch us—there is no way to keep the clothes on the body without having them touch us. But for the Enlightened Being it is different.

This “atom” doesn’t mean substantial atom but means the tiniest part of his holy body.

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“Skandha” means the aggregates of the person, the aggregates of the living beings.

Also there are different nectars—the undying, long-life nectar that prevents death; the nectar of preventing sickness; the nectar of transcendental wisdom preventing the delusions; the nectar of purifying the skandhas that stops the suffering of the physical body.

So those who can visualize this, visualize also other beings.

Absorption.

Those who have visualized other holy beings should absorb these into Guru Shakyamuni.

Guru Shakyamuni comes down onto the center of your head and absorbs into you, and your body, speech, and mind become oneness with Guru Shakyamuni’s holy body, speech, and mind. Try to clearly visualize yourself in the form of Guru Shakyamuni, seated on the throne, lotus, moon and sun.

So now yourself being in the form of Guru Shakyamuni, make the breathing meditations.

If there are physical problems during the meditation time that are distracting to the meditation, such as catching cold, pains on the legs and the backside, and feeling hungry, you have to use some means to treat them in order to spend the time in meditation. Otherwise you might spend the whole time thinking of the problems, “I’m hungry,” or thinking of the pains. The mind is like the dial of the problems. So the whole thing depends on the mind—problem or peace—the projector or creator is the mind. So we have to treat it, turn the dial of the mind, turn it—if you leave it at the place, there is no change in the problem. If you think it is a great trouble to you, the more you think and care about it, it gets bigger and bigger. It can happen like this. If you try to think of the trouble, you may feel it getting bigger and bigger, you may find more pains.

Generally, for the practitioners there are so many techniques, different methods for solving the problems. But it is also good to think like this, a simple thing, solving the problem: “What incredible suffering I would experience if I were under the ice mountain, if I were inside the ice mountain. What incredible suffering I would experience if I were now in the ice mountain, what terrible suffering I would experience—it would be impossible to meditate—as those sentient beings suffering like this. If I were in the ice mountain at this moment how terrible, how incredible the suffering would be. So I am lucky, fortunate that I don’t experience that suffering now, and have the chance, having met the method, the ultimate peace, the cessation of suffering; how lucky I am having met the ultimate method bringing the ultimate peace, the cessation of suffering.

“And if I find this little problem unbearable, then if I were in a suffering place such as those suffering beings in the cold ocean, in the ice mountains, this suffering would be extremely unbearable, much greater than this problem. As long as I am in the suffering realm, in samsara, the cycle of death and rebirth, it is definite or sure that I will continually suffer and experience the problem. Besides this little problem, it is definite that I will experience the different numberless samsaric sufferings.”

“So it is not only the present suffering that I have to experience (catching cold or whatever problem it is) not only this suffering that I have to experience. As I have created many causes of many greater sufferings than this to continually experience in the future, so it is worthwhile to sacrifice, to experience the suffering for stopping all these greater future sufferings and attaining the methods which bring the ultimate peace, the cessation of suffering.”

If you think with feeling like this, it will be useful and it affects your mind—before you see the trouble as if it’s important. But with the method, your feeling of the suffering would decrease, become smaller, you would see it as not important anymore. Then as you see the problem as little, no more paying attention to it, you find more time to spend in meditation. Otherwise you may spend more time on the problem and make it bigger. So if you can think with these kinds of methods, it can help the problem to become smaller. Not only with cold, but also with pain and other problems.

There are also many other techniques. We have to treat this by using different techniques, different methods, otherwise every time as long as we are in samsara, these problems will continually arise. So if you are going to wait to practice Dharma and meditation until the samsaric suffering stop, it is impossible. This is the problem we are practicing Dharma to get out of and without practicing Dharma there is no way to get out of samsara, and there are more problems that will have to be experienced until we achieve the Dharma practice. So it is important to know that this is not the only time.

Day 4
Monday November 19th
9 a.m.

The great realized bodhisattva, the ancient yogi and pandit Shantideva said, “Such great, powerful, numberless [negativities] cannot be overcome by other virtues without bodhicitta—being willing to receive enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings.”

As this holy, experienced yogi said, the most powerful method to purify the most powerful negativities we have created in many previous lives is the practice of bodhicitta. So it is wise, as we have the time and the freedom to purify such powerful, numberless negativities that have been created more quickly, the practice of bodhicitta is of the utmost need. Therefore, before listening to the subject, in order to make the time beneficial, try to have the positive impulse, “I am going to listen to the Mahayana Teaching to receive Enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings.”

The listening subject is the graduated path, the meditation about the eight freedoms. (Page 46)

The great Madhyamika philosopher who had great realizations of the absolute true nature, Nagarjuna, said, “The states of a narak, preta, animal realm, barbarian, long life god, heretic, and the

states of the time or place in which there is no order of Buddha (no descent of Buddha) are unfree states. Also imperfect organs.”

As we talked yesterday, for instance, if you are in a big pot of hot burning water it is impossible to think of, to practice, to listen to Dharma, because the suffering never allows it, the suffering is incredible. So not being in such unfree states at the moment, we have the chance to practice Dharma.

If we are born as a preta, for many eons we have to suffer; our life has to finish feeling thirst, hunger, and many sufferings—not for one day, or two days, but for many ages. For instance, in the present, even if we don't have the incredible sufferings they have, we have little problems—even if someone talks Dharma, we can't pay attention, can't meditate. So from this we can figure out what terrible suffering it is.

For instance, the animals—there may be animals who can imitate the word, but they don't know the meaning. You can't explain the meaning to animals—if you try to tell an animal such as a dog, “You will cease taking the rebirth as an animal,” the dog can't understand no matter how much you try to explain. The mind is so limited, terribly limited, deeply ignorant, extremely dumb and foolish, not understanding the meaning, no way to understand the meaning—it's impossible. But we have the mind, the wisdom to make it understandable, so we have such a precious chance.

For the long life gods, take one example—in previous time there was a disciple of Guru Shakyamuni, and arhat called Sharipu. He was one of Buddha's closest disciples. And there was another person called “the king of the medicine.” When this person saw Guru Shakyamuni's disciple, even though he was riding an elephant, even though he had no time to come down slowly, to show respect he jumped down from the elephant, showing so much respect. Then in his next life he was reborn as a sura. Sharipu with his psychic powers went to preach to this person. But when he saw Sharipu, he only pointed his finger and went to play, his mind distracted by the pleasure of the enjoyments. He didn't pay attention to Sharipu because his mind was attached to the pleasure of the enjoyments. So no matter how much Sharipu tried to reach him, he couldn't show him the Dharma, and had a hard time preaching to this king of medicine who was reborn in the sura realm.

Question: Is it possible for these beings living on different levels to influence their karma? For example to become human or to become Buddha?

Answer: It depends on the realm. The realm where it is most possible to make the greatest advantage is the human realm, especially this human realm in which we are now existing. There are many human realms. In such realms as the narak, preta, and animal, it is impossible. Also in the other upper realms it is extremely difficult—just as in that example, the mind is greatly distracted, no longer respects, no longer pays attention. That shows the realm that is an unfree state for practicing Dharma.

The reason that I'm talking about these different things, these freedoms, the whole thing is this—we have the freedom, we have the jewel but we don't recognize the jewel as precious, so we waste the jewel. We are wasting this precious jewel.

Question: Can we help these beings anyhow?

Answer: That is the whole purpose. If you can't help ... I think that is what we are planning. It is definitely possible to help any other being, but first it is necessary to help yourself to be free of confusion, to be free from ignorance. So then, through this you get freedom, control, and complete understanding of the different methods that fit those different living beings. As you have the complete understanding of the different methods that fit their minds, and the complete understanding of the different levels of their minds, there's no confusion, no problems arising—one can help with free mind, and that help never harms any other being, never becomes the cause of problems. But at the moment, before cleaning ourselves, before getting out of the problem ourselves, it is extremely difficult to help all living beings as the enlightened being does. And, for instance, in the world, many people try to help without understanding the methods, without having wisdom, but it becomes the cause of problem and confusion. That is because of not having achieved freedom within one's mind. Without achieving freedom yourself, without cutting off your own confusion, your own problems, your own obscurations, it is difficult for any of your actions that you think are helping to never harm other beings. It is like this—for instance, if you are cleaning the floor with a dirty broom it makes the floor dirty instead of clean. If you clean it with a dirty duster the dirt from the duster will get on the floor. But purifying yourself, making yourself ready and capable to help other sentient beings, that is helping other sentient beings. Because your main aim is to release, to guide other sentient beings from suffering. Since that is your main aim, every action that you do for the purpose of achieving control of your own negativity is for the purpose of helping other sentient beings, it is work for other sentient beings and that is the best way, the most correct way to be able to help other sentient beings. Therefore it is necessary to practice Dharma. So the purpose of practicing bodhicitta is only that, to guide, to help to release other sentient beings from problems.

Every action that you do with bodhicitta especially, no matter how great or small, even breathing out, if you do it with this holy beneficial thought, it helps other sentient beings because you are doing the action to purify your negativity in order to enlighten them. So then that action that you are doing is the cause of enlightenment. Enlightenment can't be received with the aim for oneself alone, but only with the aim of others. Enlightenment cannot be received with self-cherishing mind—it is impossible. So action done with bodhicitta is the best, quickest cause for enlightenment.

It is totally this—the more purification we do with this aim, the closer we get to the freedom to help sentient beings. The actions that we do, breathing with that pure thought, can definitely help all sentient beings. For instance, just one example—if in one country there are thousands of beggars and refugees under miserable conditions—let's say I want to help them by collecting money, for example, I want to give them 1,000,000 rupees. The collection of 1,000,000 rupees depends on the collection of one rupee. Without the one rupee I collect, the 1,000,000 cannot be collected, so I go to each door and collect one rupee. As I do this, it seems impossible that this one rupee will help them. But as I collect them, the amount gets bigger and bigger, and finally I have 1,000,000 rupees and I give it and then it helps. So of course the one rupee I collected each day—or one paise—is useful for them—of course it is useful.

So the merits that we create with virtuous actions, at each time this is like collecting 1 paise or 1 rupee. When we collect the 1,000,000 that they need, or when we complete the collection of merits that is enlightenment, like the 1,000,000 it is sufficient for them.

Collecting merits is not something that has no end. It has end, purification has end, because the obscurations, the mental hindrances, have end. That's why the Dharma practice has end. Whenever

we gain the complete merits, we also gain enlightenment at the same time. That is the final time of the Dharma practice, meditation practice. Therefore, for complete achievement of Dharma practice, we should not have small heart, small mind, thinking that we will achieve it easily without going through physical and mental difficulties of practice, without experiencing physical and mental difficulties. Such expectation and thought only disturbs our practice, makes it unsuccessful, discourages us. Thinking, planning that final goal is the utmost need, we should think, "Working for that is the meaning of my life, no matter how much trouble has to be experienced." We should think, "It doesn't matter, I must achieve the final goal, the most perfected goal, enlightenment, no matter how long it takes to be able to achieve." If we practice with such impulse, then whatever hindrances arise in the meditation, we don't feel discouraged, feel a disturbance, because we have already planned for that, so when it comes we don't get shocked. For example if we plan to help another person, we think, "No matter what trouble comes, I will experience it with gladness in order to make him happy and comfortable." So when the trouble and disturbance comes, you don't get shocked, so when the problem arises you don't get discouraged, you still work with gladness to make him happy. It is the same thing with Dharma practice, working for the supreme goal, enlightenment.

Just one example - if we plan to climb over Mount Everest, the highest peak, during which you have to go through many dangers, you plan from America. Even though there's not a comfortable road, you really want to get to the top—that is your biggest hang-up, that comes into your mind more than anything else. It is your greatest thought—thinking no matter how it is difficult, by bearing the difficulties, climbing, making the trek, feeling cold, and experiencing many other dangers, planning to climb to the top of Mount Everest with such strong desire in spite of all the dangers on the road. As you are on the trek, no matter how much difficulty you find, falling down, getting wounded, getting sick, the strong desire to get to the top makes you to carry on, to experience the difficulties. That pushes you to get to the top. But if you didn't plan from America, if you planned to make the trek easily, if you were not expecting any difficulties on the trek, then you would find many troubles, such as an avalanche in the way. Then the mind would get discouraged, thinking, "Oh, I can't make it," and start to go back. It is the same with Dharma practice; if the mind is not wise, knowledgeable, so you stop your own Dharma practice, your own progression. This happens many times. This just came by the way here, but has to be kept in mind because there is a long way to go.

5. A barbarian is one who has no understanding of the Dharma, no faith in the Dharma, in the truth, no faith in the existence of past and future lives. If we are born as a barbarian we do not have the chance, there is no chance to practice Dharma, to seek the true method. So it is fortunate that we are not barbarian.

6. This is a mistake (as printed in the book). Number six is being dumb (a fool, or deaf), being unable to communicate, mute. The "imperfect organs" is part of the 10 opportunities. If you are dumb it is difficult to discuss Dharma, to develop the wisdom. For people who cannot communicate, it is extremely difficult, no matter how much we try, how much compassion we have, very difficult for him to communicate in Dharma and develop the understanding. Also it is extremely difficult to teach Dharma. For these beings, even worldly life is extremely difficult. So we have the freedom of not being fools, or deaf.

7. Heretical beings have wrong realizations, wrong understanding, thinking, "There's no such thing as karma, no such thing as reality." Instead of realizing existence, they have the wrong realization believing it doesn't exist, which is the complete opposite of what is true. To the heretical mind, past

and future lives do not exist, which is the opposite of factual existence. This is one of the greatest hindrances to ultimate peace, to our final perfection. Why is disturbing to peace and the whole perfection? This mind does not allow us to create merits, to create good karma and practice Dharma, because this mind thinks there is no reason to do this, doesn't believe in the purpose of such actions. Also this mind sees this life as just one, thinks that we are born without purpose. This mind is an extreme hindrance to the creation of any cause of ultimate perfection and happiness, because the cause of ultimate peace and happiness depend on creating merits, creating good karma, and virtuous actions.

Anyway, things such as this heretical mind ruin many other future lives. Like the example we discussed before, when the main source of electricity stops, all the lights in other countries go out, become black. This heretical mind makes many future lives black, no peace, because most of the actions it creates are negative actions. This mind doesn't discover what is the positive and what is the negative action, what is pure and what is negative—it cannot discover. Anyway, if our mind is not heretical it is one freedom, because it allows us to practice Dharma and gives the mind room to collect merits.

8. Here there is no possibility—if there is no teaching, there is no possibility to practice Dharma. For instance, in the ages of the world, in the existence of the world, there are many eons—a certain number of eons. In all those eons there is no existence of Buddhadharma. In certain human ages the Buddhadharma exists, but not in all human ages.

In the existence of the universe there are about twenty eons that are called “middle eons”—about twenty of these middle eons. The very first human life is numberless (“numberless” means the number is too much; so it is called numberless). Then the human age decreases. Only when it comes down to 80,000 human years does the Buddhadharma appear. And that human age decreases down to 100. After 100 there is no existence of Buddhadharma; it is a black age, a dark time, down to human age of ten. There's no light of the Buddhadharma. So it is only between the ages of 80,000 and 100 that there is Buddhadharma.

So the human age we are now in is the last. There are not many humans that are over 100, on average. This is the last, so we are extremely fortunate that we met the Dharma at the very last. Thinking like this can be very effective for the mind. Thinking like this we can discover the precious freedom that we have, to not feel lazy in the practice of the Dharma, to not feel discouraged and laziness.

From the time when the average human age is ten it then increases up to 80,000 again. But then in that time there is no Buddhadharma; only on the way down from 80,000 to ten. Not on the way up, because the mind is much too distracted by the desires; the mind is not ready.

So it is very fortunate to be in the place where the Buddha has descended, where there is Buddhadharma—even just to be there and just to hear, even not to practice is very fortunate—this plants many seeds to be able to work on the Dharma in the future lifetimes.

So this is one freedom.

When you meditate on this subject, you should think like this, “From beginningless previous lifetimes until this present life, even when I wasn't born in the narak stage (When you think of each

name you have to have a mental picture, otherwise it has no effect on the mind. Just using the words has no effect, like the people talking of “God” and the “Holy Mind.” Because the meditation is intended to benefit the mind, to make the mind pure, it is good to make the meditation as effective as possible.) and experiencing suffering that cannot be measured even by the Omniscient Mind, I was born in the suffering preta realm. Even when I wasn’t born in the suffering preta realm, I was born in the suffering animal realm. Even when I wasn’t born in the suffering animal realm, I was born as a long-life god, in the unfree state of a long life god. Even when I was born in the human world, I was born a perfect human rebirth—I was born many, beginningless times as a barbarian, which is an unfree state. Even when I wasn’t born as a barbarian, I was born as a foolish or a deaf human being—unable to speak, dumb, many times. Even when I wasn’t born a fool, many times I was born as a heretic. Even when I wasn’t born as a barbarian, a fool, or a heretic, I was born in a time and place where Buddha did not descend and there was no existence of the teachings.”

So in this way you can discover how much we suffer. Even if many times we were born in the human realm, we are mostly born with a birth in which we have no freedom to practice Dharma. By thinking like this, you can discover the freedom of the present human life; you become more aware, more realized, and discover the precious freedom of the precious human life.

The explanation of the suffering of the narak, pretas, and animals are in the following chapters, but you can read the first meditation on the sufferings so that when you read the first meditation you have an idea. For example, if I saw a picture of America, when people speak of the U.S. I have a mental picture. Like this, so it would be helpful if you read. Also it would be more effective.

The Ten Receptacles (Page 47)

2. That “center” means where there are celibates who observe the thirty-six and the 253 precepts. The thirty-six precepts are taken by both men and women. The 253 precepts are taken by men, and 365 are precepts are taken by women who take the highest ordination. For men, the highest is 253 and for women, 365.

A central country is the place where these celibates exist. Because of this there is the possibility to take ordination—the lineage of the ordination exists. If there is no lineage, even though the person knows the teaching of the lineage, if he hasn’t the ordination, he cannot give it. So it is fortunate to be where there is that lineage of the ordination.

Because one essence of the teachings is the ordination (within the teachings there are sutra and tantra teachings), when there is no existence of these ordinations, the teachings of the Sutra has degenerated, then there is no lineage of these ordinations. So the existence of the Sutra Teachings depends on the existence of the Lineage of the ordination. For instance, if you are in a country, no matter how strongly you desire to take the ordination, to quickly purify yourself, to make powerful practice, if there’s no person giving ordination there is no way to receive ordination.

3. Generally, depending on how the organ is imperfect, the person can still practice Dharma, depending on what kind of imperfect organ. But for taking ordination, it is necessary for the organs to be perfect. There are many reasons.

If the person is missing legs or hands or something, many ugly things, this person cannot be ordained. There are many reasons for this—it may give the wrong feeling or the wrong influence to

other people. Before the abbot gives ordination there is always, as a rule, a particular way of giving it, as was shown by Guru Shakyamuni. First the person taking ordination has to be questioned about all the organs. If this is perfect the ordination can be given without danger to the abbot breaking his precepts and creating negative karma. The purpose is totally for the development of the teachings, for the increase of the teachings—so the purpose is really the ultimate peace of beings.

Question: What criteria are there for perfect organs?

Answer: You know “organ”? You know “perfect?”

Question: What if after the ordination the person falls off a cliff?

Answer: That’s okay. This applies to before the ordination.

Question: But he should be able to see the person’s karma, being spiritually higher.

Answer: Yes, he should see, he should see.

4. The worst negative actions among the negative actions, those that cause one to suffer for many eons in the worst suffering stages. Beings who have created such extreme negative actions in the lifetime cannot be ordained.

Question: Didn’t the Buddha say it is possible to reach enlightenment without becoming a monk?

Answer: You have to go through the disciplines, even if you don’t become a monk. The whole purpose of becoming a monk is involved in following the disciplines. The whole purpose is that, even if you don’t become a monk. You still have to follow the disciplines that purify the obscurations, otherwise there is no way to achieve enlightenment. And becoming a monk is easier for Dharma practice in this way; there are less distractions to your mind because of the ordination that you took from the abbot, the vow that you made, what you promised to do and not to. Your mind has made a decision to do and not do certain things. So because of this there is much less distraction, and it is quicker to achieve the meditations and quiet the mind.

Question: Is it possible without ordination?

Answer: Without becoming a monk? One doesn’t have to become a monk to be enlightened. Women can receive enlightenment.

Question: Why emphasize that the holy beings have to be males, gurus, and so forth?

Answer: That depends on the mind and the karma—why there are more men, less women. That depends on the condition of the mind, karma, the conditions created by mind and karma.

Question: Are you saying then, that if a person has bad karma that person could be born as a woman? Does this come from the philosophy that women originally came from men, as explained in this book (page 25).

Answer: This could be possible; why cannot this be possible? This is talking about a physical thing—first man and then woman. This is happening in the world at the present time. But if you are thinking of mind, you cannot say that woman's mind originally came from man's mind.

Question: Is there anything in the Dharma that says that women are spiritually inferior to men?

Answer: It depends on the individual person, anyway.

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5. If there is no belief in Dharma, in these divisions of the teachings, then the problem is that even if one can expound well, even if one can remember many volumes of these teachings by heart, if there's no belief in it, the person doesn't practice—if there's no faith in the Dharma it's difficult for the person to practice.

Many people can talk about Dharma without faith, without practicing it. Why is there no practice even though the person can talk about many volumes of teachings, why is the person not living in the practice? One thing is not having faith and belief, not fully discovering the suffering nature, karma, and death and rebirth. So the person doesn't seek or practice the method. Just giving lectures, expounding, and talking with speech about many volumes of these teachings—only that does not mean practicing Dharma. People can teach in the universities without practicing, without making their own experience the subject. So anyway, without practicing, only knowing the words cannot solve the problem. The whole point is that, for instance, reading the prescription of the medicine cannot cure the sickness, confusion, or headache. After reading, the person should take the medicine in order to cure the sickness. The sufferings that cannot be cured by external medicine have to be cured by the practice of the Dharma teachings.

So having belief in these teachings is the fifth receptacle.

6. Beings in such period and place where the Buddha has descended.

9. Besides the existence of the living realizations of the path, such as the graduated path, from your side you must follow the path of the Buddha's teachings.

10. For instance, if this is missing it is difficult to continue the Dharma practice, for the Dharma practice depends on many things, conditions, your situation. If the guru doesn't have enough compassion it is difficult to receive teachings.

Also it is fortunate to be in such a place where you don't have to worry much about your temporal, material needs, in a place where you are helped by other people, so that you don't have to spend time on work and can spend more time on Dharma practice.

In Tibet, until it was overtaken by the Chinese, the monks didn't have to worry much about the temporal needs as they always found benefactors, and the people had much faith and looked after them. Whatever food was finishing or whatever else it was, the family offered them. Life was very easy in Tibet for the monks and nuns. Even if they went to beg, they often received—there was no problem of being kicked out; it was very easy. So anyway, also in ancient times, in India it was easy. In that way the practitioners, those who seriously practiced, didn't have much worry in terms of the

temporal needs. In ancient times in India, the bhikshus who were Guru Shakyamuni's followers begged, and then they went back and spent their time in practice, in meditation, and then they came down again to beg. Those were fortunate times. If people didn't have enough compassion they wouldn't give it, they wouldn't look after them.

Also many European people who are practicing write to their parents and friends in the West and ask for help when they have trouble, and they send. If those people didn't have compassion, help wouldn't be received. They get financial help with the temporal needs because of others' compassion. So it is fortunate, and so you find the freedom, the chance, and the time to practice Dharma without working. Having time to practice Dharma is the freedom, it's freedom.

In some countries it's impossible, extremely difficult to go and beg—the person may be kicked out or put in prison by police. It's difficult to have such freedom. In ancient times it happened in Tibet, India, and Ceylon, and also in Thailand.

That's why those people who have these freedoms are fortunate, anyway. Receiving things easily without working is the result of previous good karma. And begging to spend the life in the practice of Dharma with sincere mind, for sincere practice, is not foolish, it is not foolish. Because with sincere mind, with pure practice, the mind is not attached to the happiness of the temporal life, and even though he's begging, the pure practice makes his life meaningful, and he's trying to bring great advantage. But the person who is just begging, being lazy, whose mind is not detached from the happiness of the temporal life, that is not meaningful, that is the opposite, that is causing suffering to himself. Because for that action there is nothing to look at, there is no beneficial result, in the present time and also in the future lifetimes.

So, during meditation time think like this—this is checking meditation. “From beginningless previous lives until the present life, even if I received birth in the human realm many times, I wasn't born in the center of a religious country, or with perfect organs, or I created the extreme negative actions, or didn't believe in the teachings, or I was born in a dark period in a place where the Buddha had not descended, or no shown the teachings of the Buddha, or the experienced teachings did not exist, or I did not follow the path of the Buddha's teachings, or did not receive the kindness and compassion of others. Many times I was born in the human realm but missing these opportunities.

“And, even if I was born in the human realm and in the center of a religious country, I was born with imperfect organs. Even if I was born with perfect organs and in the center of a religious country and in the human realm, I created the extreme negative actions. Even if the extreme negative actions weren't created, many times I didn't have faith in the Dharma, many lives I didn't have faith in the Dharma. Many times I was born in the human realm in the center with belief in the Dharma, but I wasn't born during a non-dark period or in a place where Buddha had descended.

“Even if I received the first part of the opportunities many times I wasn't shown the teachings of the Buddha. But even though many times I was shown the teaching of the Buddha, and received the first part of the opportunities, the experienced teachings, the living realizations of the graduated path that originated from Buddha did not exist. Even if they did exist and I had the previous receptacles, I didn't follow the path of the Buddha, so therefore I didn't receive the perfect human rebirth. Even though I followed or tried to follow the path of the Buddhadharma and had the rest of the opportunities, I didn't receive teachings due to my situation.”

For instance, many people want to practice Dharma, also they want to follow the method of ultimate peace, but they don't get the temporal things taken care of so they miss this. Or if they get these things they miss the Dharma. Many people practicing Dharma cannot complete the Dharma practice because of the interruptions, because of the mind being distracted in taking care of the temporal needs. "Temporal needs" means food and clothing that support the body, that support the life, that cause the life to exist. These things are called "temporal" because they only help the present life and they don't last—so they are temporal. Many times, even though we were trying to follow the path and having the first part of the receptacles but not having the support, so many times there were interruptions—we had to work, do something, so it was difficult to make progression, or it degenerated, even though we met Dharma, we were trying.

Think about this during the meditation time—this is how to meditate, the meditation technique to receive realizations more quickly. What I have just explained is not in the book, but it makes us see clearly the perfect human rebirth that we have received. If we practice, if we do like this, it will be successful and we are experimenting. If we are not practicing, not doing, what I am saying is just words.

So think anyway, as we meditate on these subjects, we can discover what is missing and what we have received, and also think about the eight freedoms. The more opportunities you discover you have, the more you should rejoice, like you count money in the purse, like a person who is not sure how much money he has, then checks in his purse and finds that he has 1,000 dollars, and rejoices. It is not from some other person, it is from himself—he is rejoicing himself, discovering with his own wisdom. These opportunities are more precious than money. There's no way to compare the material possessions to these freedoms and opportunities. Anyway, more explanation will come afterwards.

In the world there are many millionaires but who have many things that they have collected, that they have built up, who do not have all the eight freedoms and ten receptacles, who do not know Dharma, who do not know who they themselves are, or the nature of their mind, their own nature. They spend daily life for great ignorance and hatred, just as an animal like a dog that is outside your house. Also the dog spends his life for greed, ignorance, and hatred, also doesn't know Dharma, also doesn't know that mind is beginningless, also doesn't know his own nature, or karma, doesn't recognize peace, doesn't recognize suffering nature. In regards to that you can see the same thing—however rich the person is, the aim is the same thing—the dog outside his house and the millionaire inside—the aim is the same thing, how to make this short life. The dog also worries about the same thing—how not to catch cold, how to get better food—the dog also tries the best way he knows how. The aim is the same, how to make the present life happy. So you see, if you check up in this way on the dog and the man inside, the only difference you will see is the shape—one has four hands and a tail, the other is like that. This is a subject that can really upset you, it is something that if you really think about it can make you cry. The only thing is, because the dog has different shape from the human body, it is kept outside.

Anyway, so during meditation you have to start, first of all you have to get these numbers, 8 freedoms and 10 receptacles in the mind, you have to remember, starting from the title, "Perfect human rebirth" and "The 8 freedoms and the 10 receptacles". Also the following explanation after the 8 freedoms, the explanation of the 8 freedoms. If you read well the explanation, then when you meditate on just the number then it is easy to meditate.

When we meditate on this subject we should not hurry, we should not rush, we should spend time, we should meditate slowly. Like this—if a person who cooks food in the kitchen rushes the food becomes some cooked, some not cooked, has bad taste, and is not practical. But if he takes time food becomes well cooked, tasty, and so on. It is the same thing with meditation—if you take time you see clear each point, what you have, what is missing, what's the problem of missing one of the opportunities, what is the good of having this, what is the result of missing this, what is the suffering, what is the perfection of having it.

And also, this is the way of having the experience of this meditation. Meditating in this way is called “checking meditation,” checking what you have, what is missing, like the person checking money. Also, when you meditate on this it is useful to remember other beings who have not received the eight freedoms, who don't have all ten receptacles, and who have many problems. By thinking of other beings' sufferings in missing these things, freedoms and opportunities, you see that they are suffering and you check up with yourself— “I don't have that problem, I don't have that freedom or that receptacle missing. If I had that freedom or receptacle missing how I would suffer the same problem.” You do this by checking the example of the problem of the other being.

For instance, like this—one Western person who has such longings to practice Dharma, for whom that is the most important thing in his lifetime, the only thing he needs, more than anything else, but he has no guru, or he is controlled by some other people, or he has to go back to the West for something or he has to go to the Army, and he has such great worry, as he has to go and is controlled by other people. This is just one example, but as I give this example you have to find many others, so you see clearly the freedoms and opportunities that you have. And as you see clearly the other person's problems, that way you make yourself happy and create much energy to practice Dharma. It is very useful to meditate in this way. Or get kicked out of the country!

Question: Can you practice Dharma in the Army?

Answer: Difficult, very difficult. If all of your action in the Army is Dharma, if you make it Dharma, then it is good. If you can't make it Dharma, if you don't have the power to make it Dharma, then it's impossible. But if you have the power then you are creating enlightenment, even if you are in the army.

So, the quickest way of experiencing this meditation depends on your skillful wisdom, on the checking meditation you use. The more sharpening wisdom you use, or checking meditation you use, that much more quickly you receive the realization of the meditation.

Totally this—how great suffering, how great a problem to be born in an unfree state and have opportunities missing. How good, how profitable to have the freedoms and opportunities you have, how good it is not to be born in those unfree states. So by frequently using the checking meditation, by frequently observing, by checking, you discover your human rebirth to be perfect, your perfect human rebirth to be precious, more and more each time as you continue the sharpening checking meditation.

When you have the realization of this meditation, what you feel in the mind is this: like a beggar who has nothing finding a diamond or precious jewel, how much he would be pleased. Like that feeling, that extremely pleased feeling. Maybe he cries when he finds the jewels. But anyway, such a strong,

happy feeling arises within the person with his perfect human rebirth. Until such a time when you have this experience you have to continue the meditation.

So, tonight, you have to meditate on this subject. It would be good, before, to go through it so you can remember it during the meditation.

How is this Perfect Human Rebirth Useful? (Page 47)

1. By making Dharma practice in this life, one can receive enlightenment in these periods of time.
 - (c) In tantric practice (there are 3 divisions, 3 yantras) there are four different aspects of tantric teachings. So through tantric method one can make the life longer.
 - (d) And through the highest and most profound tantra one can reach enlightenment in one life, as did Milarepa and other great Tibetan yogis, who absorbed the rainbow body in the lifetime, through the mahaanuttara yoga tantra.
 - (e) With this perfect human life one can reach enlightenment in three years.
3. An arhat has attained the achievement of the cessation of samsara.
6. Also through the practice one can become a long-life god who has higher enjoyments, power, controlling many other worlds.
7. Also by creating good karma, morality, and charity, one can be born as a rich person in the world in the future lifetime.

These are just a few ideas of what can be achieved by Dharma practice resulting from this perfect human rebirth. This is not all, there are many things, there is too much.

6 p.m.

First cultivate the pure impulse to make the meditation positive and beneficial. Think, "I am going to meditate on Guru Shakyamuni and begin the meditation on the graduated path to enlightenment, to enlighten myself in order to enlighten all other suffering sentient beings."

Visualize Guru Shakyamuni, starting from the throne.

Those who don't know how to visualize Guru Shakyamuni or how to meditate on the graduated path think: how do you see your own "I," how do you perceive your own "I?" Those who received the explanations on the perfect human rebirth and have done the visualization of Guru Shakyamuni before, meditate on that. Then it doesn't waste time.

At the same time, visualize light coming from Guru Shakyamuni's holy body, which in essence is the supreme knowledge and power of his holy body, speech, and mind, and purifying as it comes into your body just as when you switched on the light in a dark room it completely dispels the darkness instantly, purifying all the delusions and wrong conceptions of self-"I" and self-cherishing and dualistic mind, so that these are nowhere existing anywhere in your body. This day, which is when we first start the meditation on the teaching of the graduated path is a most precious time, so also pray from the heart with feelings to Guru Shakyamuni, to his omniscient mind, like this: "Please continually grant blessings to me to be able to fully understand the profound meaning of the

graduated path to enlightenment by receiving all the teachings, and receive the whole realizations starting from the perfect human rebirth up to enlightenment, by completing the whole practice in this lifetime.” Totally, pray to achieve the stage of enlightenment in this lifetime and for blessings that any hindrances to your Dharma practice will never occur, and that your mind will become one with Dharma. Then think that Guru Shakyamuni has accepted to grant the blessings. Also think that he is pleased that you’re facing enlightenment, that you are starting to follow the practice of the graduated path. He is extremely pleased.

Actually, any time that we create virtuous actions it often pleases him, it often pleases any holy being, but there’s a reason we are visualizing like this—in order to help ourselves.

Again recite the mantra ten times with the visualization of the purification, with light coming from his holy body.

First do the breathing meditation, nine times, purifying from the right nostril with the light of knowledge coming from the holy beings. Then vice-versa, then both nostrils, three times each. Then meditate on the perfect human rebirth. If you don’t remember, if you can see, you can look at the book without distracting other people.

(Meditation)

As you repeat the prayer think that you are dedicating the merits as follows. “May I become Guru Shakyamuni quickly in order to bring every and all sentient beings to his enlightened stage due to these merits, the merits of meditating and listening to Dharma with pure impulse.

Day 5

Tuesday November 20th

9 a.m.

The highly realized great bodhisattva, Shantideva (Shanti means peace, deva means god) said in his holy teaching called Following the Bodhisattva’s Actions, “Guru Shakyamuni, who has made much achievement of realizations in many numbers of eons has found the practice of bodhicitta to be most beneficial. By this practice, numberless groups of different beings quickly receive the highest supreme happiness (which means enlightenment).”

There are two things in this quotation—not only has Guru Shakyamuni discovered it, but also numberless of other followers, living beings, have achieved supreme happiness through this practice. What this emphasizes is that if you want to find the quickest way, it is skillful to practice this—this is what he is instructing us. So as we have perfect human rebirths, such free time, it is important to make even a single action a Mahayana action with pure thought, cultivating bodhicitta. So think, if you want, “I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings to enlighten myself for the sake of every and all sentient beings.” (This last sentence is not to write, but to think.)

People may not have understood well yesterday, so to quickly repeat, just to make it clear, the technical way to practice the meditation. Generally, within the Tibetan tradition of giving teachings, because among all the people there are different levels of intellect, as they give the teaching one day it is repeated three times—one long explanation, one short one, and one even shorter, so that those

of different intellects can understand. But here we are all intelligent beings, so there is no need to make all those repetitions, otherwise the intelligent beings would get bored.

There are several techniques of meditation. Usually this is only for those who are sincere, who really want to practice. But since there is not much time, according to how it is going on, I will try. Yesterday we finished the eight freedoms and the ten opportunities.

“From beginningless lifetime until the present life I was born in the suffering narak state, and suffered in numberless times. Even if I wasn’t born there, I was born in the realm of the suffering pretas in numberless times. Even if I wasn’t born in the preta realm, I was born an animal many times (each time we think of this we should think that there was no freedom to practice Dharma, due to the suffering of these states—in the hells as a preta, as an animal dumb and foolish—because of those sufferings, there was no freedom to practice Dharma). Even though I wasn’t born an animal, I was born many times as a long life god, and due to being cognitionless and distracted by higher pleasures, there was no freedom to practice Dharma. Even if I was born in the human realm, I was born as a barbarian, or as a foolish or deaf human being (number six we have to change—this is from the opportunities number three—instead put “foolish or deaf,” not imperfect organs”), or a heretical human being, or a human being born in the place or time where Buddha had not descended, where there was no existence of the teachings. (So the last four are to do with human rebirth). Even if I was born in the upper realm, the higher realm in the human world, numberless times I was born as a barbarian, and because of the suffering of the mind limited in my faith for many things, in the knowledge and understanding of the Dharma, so there was no freedom for Dharma practice. Even though I wasn’t born as a barbarian, I was born foolish or deaf, unspeakable, and could not communicate so there was no freedom to practice Dharma. Even though I wasn’t born as a mute human being, I was born many times as a heretical human being, and so experienced suffering due to wrong realizations, wrong beliefs, and had no freedom to practice Dharma. Even if I wasn’t born heretic, I was born in a time and place... and so forth, and because of this dark place, there was no freedom.”

The reason, the purpose of thinking and checking like this is to clearly prove how the present rebirth is rare, difficult to receive, and rare like a diamond or precious jewel. When we see a precious jewel we see it is difficult to have it, to receive, it is rare to have it, so just like this. Why do people think the jewel is rare? Because of the expense it is so difficult to get, thinking of the expenses, the cost, checking like this—if there is a diamond that costs 10,000,000 dollars, then with ten dollars you can’t get it, with 100 dollars you can’t get it—you can get other things but you can’t get the diamond that costs 10,000,000 dollars. So with 200, 500, 1000, even 1,000,000 dollars you can’t get it—only when you have 10,000,000 dollars can you get it. Of course you can get other things according to the amount of money you have—you can get Coca-Cola if you have the money. Just like this example. Examples are good sometimes, you can see clearly—so just like this. So you see having the body that has received the eight freedoms and ten opportunities is like having the 10,000,000 dollars; it can definitely buy the jewel. So the person who has the perfect human rebirth, who has the eight freedoms and the ten opportunities, he has the chance, the perfect chance to practice Dharma, to work for enlightenment, to achieve enlightenment. Also, checking like this, frequently checking like this, you can discover. As you discover the present perfect human rebirth as it is precious and so rare, also you yourself are happy, joyful, just as the person who could gain the 10,000,000 dollars, because as he discovers he has the 10,000,000 dollars his mind is also happy. Why is his mind happy? Because he sees there is no doubt that he can get the jewel.

Also, same thing, check with the ten opportunities. As I am explaining the way of practicing, it is important to correctly listen and keep it in the mind, instead of complaining after it has finished, “There’s a whole bunch of meditations, how to practice them, how to start?”

“In numberless times I was born in the lower suffering realm (those three—narak, preta, and animal). Even if I was born in the human realm, I wasn’t born in the center of a religious country, not with perfect organs, not avoiding the extreme negative actions, not having faith in the Dharma, (not being in a non-dark period, where Buddha has descended), not being shown the teachings, not being in a place having the existence of experienced teachings, not from my side following the path, not receiving the kindness and compassion of others. Even if I was born in the human realm in the center of a religious country, I was missing all the rest of the opportunities.

Even if I received those first three—being born in a human realm, born in the center of a religious country, and having perfect organs, I did not avoid creating (this means creating the five extreme negative actions or leading others to do so). Even if I didn’t do this, I led other people to do create them. The thing is this, the reason these both come—leading others to do it even though you yourself do not do the direct action of killing and so on is here because if the other person kills due to your order, the original creator is you. For instance on his birthday, if a person gives the order for a chicken on a butcher place for a delicious supper or party, the person may think, “I’m not killing it, I didn’t kill it because I didn’t do any direct action like coming there and killing with my hands.” He thinks he didn’t cause the danger to the life but that the other person did. It’s quite interesting to think that it works this way, but it doesn’t work this way. The person giving the order is killing the animal. If a person orders a million animals to be killed, even if he sits in a cave meditating, he is creating the action if he gives the order; even if his physical body is not involved directly in the action, he can still create it.

Question : Is going to a restaurant and ordering steak killing the animal?

Answer: No. That’s not the same thing because he didn’t kill directly for you, the whole thing doesn’t depend on you.

If all people don’t eat, that wouldn’t happen, but the whole responsibility is not on you. Even if one person stops it helps all people to stop.

For instance, like this—this is more dangerous. Imagine we all agreed to make a beautiful party on a full moon day, having beautiful highs (I’m joking), and we all agreed to kill one very fat pig. If you all agreed, that means we all have to experience the suffering because we all gave the order to kill it, so we all have to experience the karma of the negative action. This is very dangerous and it is something that can easily happen.

If the animal wasn’t killed directly for you, if it was killed before that is a little bit better. If it is killed for us that meat is much more impure. Many people have wrong conceptions about killing in different ways like this—thinking that if the person is eating meat that person is killing an animal—that also is wrong thinking.

As regards checking the action of eating, whether it’s negative or pure: generally anything, not only meat, any object of the senses, that is used with greed, that is negative, that causes us to be born in the suffering lower realms, to be born in such as pretas or depending on the action, also in the other

suffering realms such as the animal and narak realms, is negative. This is the main point that we have to discover as we are creating each action of the body, speech, and mind, and as we are checking with our wisdom. If you can create positive action that is good, and if you can't create positive action, if you don't have the power to make it pure and beneficial, then it is an object to be avoided. But more talk will come afterwards. Generally it depends on the power, trying to make the actions positive. Such enjoyment of the objects of the senses such as eating meat and many other things depends on the power of the mind.

As the person enjoyed the object of the senses with less negative mind, negative impulse, with more power of the positive mind, to that degree the action is more pure and less negative, because the action being pure, impure, virtuous, or non-virtuous does not depend on the action itself, it depends on the creator, mind. If the mind is in confusion, then action done with confusion only causes confused mind. If the mind is not confused, such as with the wrong conception of the self-existing "I," without greed, with self-cherishing mind, without dualistic mind, done with true freedom, real freedom, then any action done, even though it has the form of negative action, looks like negative action, but in fact it is not negative action. Instead of causing suffering and confusion, it only cuts confusion, brings perfect happiness, and becomes a quick cause of enlightenment.

So, that's how actions, whether done in a negative or a positive manner, depend on the power of the person's mind. Without realizing the mind of the person who is the creator, whether it's positive or negative, just by judging the action, we cannot discriminate—it is difficult. But it's very important to discriminate among our own actions, and this is very difficult. We do this by checking our own mind, which projects the action, by checking the mind with our wisdom. Without discriminating what is positive and what is negative action, there's no way to practice. The essential meaning of the practice is trying to avoid the negative actions and trying to create the positive actions—practice means this. Dharma practice means this. That is the Dharma, that is the real Dharma. Whether we are practicing Dharma or not can be discovered by this, by checking our actions—"How much negative action, how much positive action am I creating?" Checking with wisdom. Without wisdom, not knowing what Dharma is, what is virtue and what is non-virtue, it is difficult to discriminate. Even though you think you are practicing Dharma, without knowing what Dharma is, you may be practicing samsara.

Our total purpose of practicing, meditating, and studying these meditations is to discover actions to avoid and the actions to practice.

"Even if I was born with numbers one, two, three, and four, I did not have faith in the Dharma and so forth. Even having all that, and faith in the Dharma, I wasn't born in such a place. Even if I was shown the teachings, having all the first part of the opportunities and having the existence of the path, I did not follow the path or receive the kindness and compassion of others."

"Even if I had the first nine opportunities, I didn't receive the help of others, so I didn't have the freedom to practice Dharma."

So like this you check up. But in the actual practice of the meditation—besides the techniques, this special way of working to realize and discover more quickly—as you are meditating with your wisdom you should try to find the sharpest logic, the best logic as much as possible, the logic that makes you see clearly, that makes your perfect human rebirth clear. You should not rely only on the few technical methods that I mentioned, you should not be satisfied with that. On the basis of that

you should find your own method, logic, and sharp intellectual methods, so that by using your own logic that you discovered and received through your practice of meditation with these techniques, your meditation progresses more quickly.

Totally, what I'm talking about is that your mind has to be wise to receive the realizations more quickly, your mind has to be wise in developing your wisdom, in the practice of the meditation. Just like this—if there is a very complicated machine, people whose minds are smart easily fix it in an hour, but those whose minds are not so smart may take weeks and months to fix it; just like this, it works with meditation.

Then as you meditate, if there is missing, if you discover something that you don't have among the opportunities and freedoms, if there's something missing, then if you still desire ultimate peace, you should try to create the causes to receive the missing freedom and the missing opportunity. This is what you are supposed to do.

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This perfect human rebirth is highly useful. How it is highly useful?

1. One can receive enlightenment in the lifetime, just as those ancient great yogis, through the practice of Dharma, the cooperative practice of sutra and tantra.
2. Even if enlightenment is not achieved in this lifetime, one can become a higher bodhisattva, close to enlightenment.
3. Even if that is not possible one can become an arhat who don't have bodhicitta but is out of samsara.
- 4\5. Even if that is not possible, one can have full realization of the absolute true nature, fully renouncing samsara, and the great beneficial thought, bodhicitta—one can achieve these realizations in this lifetime.

Also, even if all these are not possible in this lifetime, by meditating on the graduated path, by practicing Dharma in this lifetime, with this perfect human rebirth, one can achieve enlightenment, and become great a bodhisattva or arhat, receiving the realizations of the meditations more quickly in the future lifetimes, such as in the second future life, or the fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighteenth. This depends on how much strong practice you do in this life.

Also it's possible, even if this final goal is not achieved in the lifetime, also it is possible to receive it after death, before the next birth, in the intermediate stage, by making the cooperative practices of Sutra and Tantra in this lifetime, by making pure strong practice. Also, by making Dharma practice with this perfect human rebirth, one can, at the time of death, be born freely in the pure realm, in paradise, and from there one can achieve enlightenment in that lifetime, which is another quick way of receiving enlightenment.

So there are many ways to do this, to use our perfect human rebirth. There are so many hundreds of choices—all this peace, this perfection, can be achieved with this perfect human rebirth.

It's like this, one example. We who have perfect human rebirth being at a place where there are all kinds of needs, jewels, and possessions—the most expensive, middle cost, lower cost—all kinds of materials, and our having a choice—like a store, a big store where there are all kinds of materials, and our being at such a place to make a choice what to get, according to the amount of money that we have. Being at such a place, we do not recognize that we have so much choice of what to get and not recognizing the place where there are many things, and we leave that good store without taking anything. The person who does this seems quite foolish, ignorant. So just like this; without creating any good karma, making Dharma practice, with this life. That is just like this example, going back from the store without taking any of those precious things.

Also, with this perfect human rebirth, by creating good karma there is the possibility to be born as human being again in the future life, being a very rich person, having much control, much power.

Also there is the possibility to again receive a perfect human rebirth, to again meet perfect, experienced, and realized gurus, and to meet teachings such as the Madhyamaka teachings, to meet the precious teachings, such as the Mahayana and Vajrayana teachings, and to receive the teachings and the realizations, and making certain that we create the causes to do that in this life.

So the whole thing is this—there are so many choices that of things that we can do, so many things that we can receive in this life and future lives, and without creating the causes of any of those perfections, any of those good results, again we will take birth in the lower realms such as the animal realm. That is not the meaning of human life—again going down is not the purpose of being born as a human being. Spending our life creating causes and actions that cause us to be born in the lower suffering realms is wasting our human life, is making our human life meaningless, when instead it can be made highly meaningful. Those actions, spending the life in that way, in such work that causes us to be born in the lower realms only makes life meaningless. That is like the person who has a diamond in his hand and doesn't recognize it and throws it in the rubbish. The example is not silly, but the person whose life is involved in that is foolish, that is more silly.

The great bodhisattva Shantideva said, “Not creating good karma, not training when receiving such perfect human rebirth, if I am not habituated, not trained with virtue, there's no more ignorance than this, there's no more foolishness than this.”

Also it is useful to remember these holy quotations to make life meaningful.

The purpose of meditating on the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth is for the person who has discovered the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth to use the perfect human rebirth in the highest, most meaningful way, to use the perfect human rebirth for bringing the highest advantage. The whole thing is not to make the highly meaningful perfect human rebirth that is received completely empty, not to waste life and time.

Just as this example, the person who sees the value of the 10,000,000 dollars, the person who sees that he can get a jewel, a diamond, with that much money, the person who sees this that he can get this most expensive jewel, a diamond, will not waste 10,000,000 dollars. Because of this he will not throw it out, he will not lose it, because of knowing what he can get with it he will not lose it, he will keep and protect it, and will never buy ordinary things or possessions with it. He sees that by having that jewel he can make much profit and more money out of it. With the understanding of the value of that much money, he buys the jewel.

The same thing, the person who recognizes and discovers the usefulness, the highest advantage, the highest results that can be achieved through this human rebirth sees the present perfect human rebirth as extremely precious. As he sees this, he never wastes his life, never wants to use the life for ordinary action or meaningless work, he always looks after himself and protects his own life, not using for meaningless or non-beneficial actions. The more he discovers the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, the more the person who has the realization of the second meditation (Page 47) will try to use every single action in daily life for the achievement of enlightenment, starting from getting up.

This person, because of his realization, or his wisdom discovering this, always tries to use each action to control the negative mind, to control the cause of suffering. His daily life is always a situation of fighting the negative mind, of fighting his own negative mind. Also, because of the realization, because of such wisdom, he cares very much not to waste his life. And also, it makes him very conscious, this wisdom and realization that this person has, of the actions that he is doing, that he is creating. Why does it make him conscious? He doesn't want to waste or ruin his life. He is scared to use his life in the wrong way, he is so careful in the actions of body, speech, and mind. With this rule he is making discipline for himself, it keeps him conscious of his actions. Also he disciplines himself, he puts himself in the discipline. This is free discipline, not like country law or something that is forced, not like this.

Also, the person who has realization of this meditation, who fully discovers the usefulness of this perfect human rebirth, even though he had such a negative personality before, such a bad character, very vicious, cruel, and cunning, as he practices the meditation and discovers the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, as he gets the realization, his character gradually changes, he becomes a different person than before. Also, at the same time, harmful actions toward other beings become less because the wisdom discovering such negative actions destroys the perfect human life.

All those realizations, such as enlightenment, the realizations of the great bodhisattvas, the arhats, even an upper rebirth means such as a rebirth in the human realms, or a rebirth in the realm of the samsaric gods such as a long-life god—the whole cause is based on the practice of morality.

Achievement of enlightenment in this lifetime or in the next one depends on correctly following the tantric rules, the tantric disciplines, the tantric conduct, which is based on the rules of bodhisattva conduct. Those precepts have to be observed on the basis of observing the bodhisattva precepts. That is based on observing the general conduct precepts, i.e., the precepts that are also followed by the Hinayanists. For observing the tantric disciplines, the perfect human rebirth of a being born in this specific human world is better. Therefore enlightenment in the lifetime is more definite to be achieved. In other realms, such as sura, asura, and many other human realms (there are many other human worlds—some live like long life gods, having luxurious places, but the mind is very limited, not understanding suffering), so the perfect human rebirth, that which we have received, is better for creating the cause for this lifetime's enlightenment. Also, it is better to follow the bodhisattva precepts, the disciplines. And this perfect human rebirth that is born in this specific human world more easily receives the realizations such as bodhicitta, great compassion, and great love. It is easier for human beings who have perfect human rebirths in this world to discover the nature of suffering, and this perfect human rebirth is best to even create the causes, to follow the general conduct, in order to have better rebirth in the future lifetime.

Why is it possible to achieve enlightenment in one lifetime more easily with this perfect human rebirth? The body that achieves enlightenment in one lifetime is composed of six different things, elements, features, and born from the womb. There are three things from the father—bone, sperm, and marrow—and three things from the mother—skin, flesh, and blood (see Page 50). Anyway, with the highest tantric method, with such profound highest tantric method, this ordinary body and the ordinary happiness such as the pleasure of sex, and the body composed of these six things can be used as the cause for the quickest enlightenment. Therefore, this perfect human rebirth, born in this specific human world is fortunate, and has the chance to receive enlightenment in one lifetime. It is something that beings in other realms do not have, which is not possible in the sura, asura, or even in other human realms.

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Paragraph One

Also it is useful to think of the chances, the different possibilities, apart from those higher results in future lives, to think of the opportunities of this present life that those lower beings do not have. The lower beings always spend life in suffering. For instance, just talking about the animals—however hungry they are, however many problems they have, there is no way to explain it to someone, to the people, in order to get help, no matter how sick they are, there is no way to explain it. For instance, when humans are sick there are hospitals, they can change their diet, change their clothes. If they are poor they can get help if they explain things to other people; they can get refuge and food. There are so many ways to manage, even if there are so many problems. If they have no money they can try to get a job; there are so many possibilities. Anyway, there are so many possibilities to do as they wish that the lower beings such as animals do not have, ways in which they are limited.

So the human beings are like this. We human beings, even though we have everything we need in our surroundings, whatever we need, possessions, people, still we are not happy, the mind is not satisfied, not happy. As we are free to receive the possessions that we need, the lower beings—the wild animals and even the country animals that live near people—are not free to gain the possibly to have things as they want. The possibility for them is extremely limited when compared with human beings—they are suffering much more than we are.

Sometimes the checking meditation on these possibilities is useful not only in terms of this specific meditation, but also in general times, when our minds are struggling with dissatisfaction with life, with possessions, with people, with temporal happiness. It is very useful to think in these times of other beings who are limited in their possessions, those who do not have that much freedom, to think of other beings such as animals, and their limited possibilities and sufferings. If you think of them, your worries—suffering, dissatisfactions with possessions, the pleasures of the temporal life—decrease, and you see them as very little whereas before you saw your problems and suffering as very great. But after thinking of the other beings' sufferings, their unfree states, it causes you to realize how fortunate you are, how lucky to not be in the situation of those lower beings. In this way the problem of suffering that you used to see as big becomes little, because it is a mental creation, just a way of thinking. Sometimes thinking of other beings' suffering is very useful, it causes us to stop such temporal problems, it makes the mind happy.

Paragraph Two:

(1) Wasting this present perfect human rebirth wastes many other lives. How? Because this present perfect human rebirth is the result created by the previous lives. How? By creating good karma, by practicing charity and following morality. Those causes are created mostly in the human realm in many times. Those past human rebirths were the result of the previous good karma created by other past human lives. It is possible to waste many other past human lives in this way because the cause of the present human rebirth was created in the past human lives.

(2) and (3) Also it wastes all the present chances, the present precious, highest chances. They are lost. Also in this way, by wasting the present perfect human rebirth, many other future human rebirths that could be caused and created by this present human life are wasted. Besides that, many other higher precious chances that could be gained in the other future lives are wasted.

That is like this—if present perfect human rebirth doesn't create any good karma to receive future perfect human rebirth, then the highest chances, such as receiving enlightenment, cannot be achieved. So if this life is wasted it is extremely dangerous. If this is used in the best way it is opposite—in place of wasting many other future lives, in place of wasting other future perfect human rebirth, many future happinesses and perfections, by making this present perfect human rebirth meaningful and beneficial, it can be the fundamental creator of the future, of greater numbers of perfect human rebirths, of many other achievements of the path and enlightenment, and all other happiness. This present perfect human rebirth is like the ground, the earth, that can be used to build anything—any kind of different building, different construction. As the ground is that important for the foundation, the present perfect human rebirth is more important than that.

So if you think in so many ways, not only what is written here, but also using your own wisdom, it is very helpful. For instance, how it is worse to waste this very precious human rebirth, how is it many million times much worse than wasting universes full of jewels? Even if one person has great possessions, but without creating good karma, without making the life beneficial by creating morality and charity, even in his next life he cannot be born in the upper realms, cannot receive even an upper rebirth, has the lowest result, the lowest advantage, to receive an upper rebirth. Without creating good karma, even if he has many possessions, making life meaningful and receiving human rebirth again in the next life is extremely difficult for him, without talking of other higher results. So that many great possessions do not help at all to receive even the lowest result, human rebirth, in the next life. So through this we can discover, we can see that human rebirth is more precious than universes full of precious jewels.

Paragraph Three:

This means, that actually if all the possessions, any material that we possessed since beginningless times, had been collected and stored without decaying, it would fill all of infinite space. So actually we had the experience of possessing great amounts of possessions, because our experience of possessing materials has no beginning.

Paragraph Four:

It is also good, as you are doing the checking meditation on these subjects, to visualize all the possessions you possessed in the previous lifetimes as collected all around you, covering infinite space, and then check up. “Is the material possession more precious, or is the present body more

precious?” Also check up what is in the mind, what feeling comes into the mind, when you see all these material possessions around you. Check up what is more precious.

It is important to remember the results, the different levels of result, that can be achieved by this perfect human rebirth. In this way you can discover the preciousness of the perfect human rebirth. You see, take a closer example, of people feeling lonely, not knowing how to use the life due to limited wisdom, not knowing how to make the life happy, despite all possessions feeling lonely, finding nothing else to do. You go around the world many times, as many as you like, thinking maybe life is happy there, maybe there—you know, all the countries. The person who is that rich has limited wisdom, lack of knowledge of the different levels of result that can be achieved, limited in the methods. That is, it also can be caused by not understanding the mind evolution.

First think, “I am going to practice meditation on the graduated path to enlighten myself for the benefit of sentient beings.”

Visualize Guru Shakyamuni and also visualize the white rays which are the essence of Guru Shakyamuni’s infinite, great, supreme knowledge, compassion, and powers. You receive it, and as it absorbs into you it purifies all your obscurations, as light dispels dark in a room. Also think that you are receiving the different levels of the path, starting from the guru yoga practice and the perfect human rebirth, and up to enlightenment.

Meditate first on breathing, then do the checking meditation on the perfect human rebirth, and then if you can, on the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth.

(Meditation)

Rinpoche: Are there any scholars? Not existing? There must be lot...is the ego existing?

Answer: My ego existing? My heart is existing, it’s beating.

Rinpoche: No, I’m asking him.

Answer: Yes, the ego exists.

Rinpoche: What about you?

Answer: It was the last time I checked.

Rinpoche: You discovered? Is that what you mean? What is the meaning of it—how did you discover its existence?

You said you discovered—how?

Answer: The ego still suffers.

Rinpoche: What is ego, whose ego? Somebody’s ego or nobody’s ego?

Answer: Everyone’s suffering.

Rinpoche: Are everyone's ego?

Answer: Yes. Everyone's suffering is ego.

Rinpoche: So all the suffering people are ego?

Answer: Yes.

Rinpoche: I see. But why the non-suffering is not ego?

Answer: Because the non-suffering person has conquered ego, self.

Rinpoche: How does he conquer self?

Answer: My understanding is that we create the ego so strongly that it is very difficult to get out of it.

Rinpoche: So, when you are out of it you don't have ego—your ego is not existent, your self has no existence. Your self is existing or not existing?

Answer: It defines a relationship between the mind and the body.

Rinpoche: So you can never get out of it?

Answer: When your ego is not existing there is no attachment to it, that doesn't mean the self is not existing.

Rinpoche: Attachment is your definition of ego? So you all have a different meaning of ego? Do all people agree—the ego is existing?

Answer: No, it is our own illusory projection.

Rinpoche: Ego is not self?

Answer: No, if I destroy my ego I will find my self.

Rinpoche: What is the meaning of your self?

Answer: As being a sphere where everybody can get to—the self is existing, the ego is projecting.

Rinpoche: So ego is a projection, ego is the creator. How can you transcend something that doesn't exist?

(And so on ...)

Anyway, thank you so much to those people who do have ego, and to these people who don't have ego.

Day 6
Wednesday November 21
9 a.m.

The great bodhisattva pandit Shantideva, who is living in the achievement of the highest realizations said in his teaching called Following the Bodhisattva's Actions, "Those who desire to cure hundreds of samsaric sufferings and destroy the unhappiness of other sentient beings, and those who want to enjoy the hundreds of pleasures should never give up bodhicitta, any time, the whole time."

This means that the best cause to succeed as you wish is the practice of bodhicitta. Since we are the people, the followers, seeking enlightenment, wanting to cure the hundreds of samsaric sufferings, and to destroy other sentient beings' unhappiness, and wanting to enjoy the hundreds of pleasures and happinesses, the essential method for us is the practice of bodhicitta, the development of bodhicitta. So therefore, it is necessary that the action of listening to the teachings be possessed by bodhicitta. So think, "I am going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path in order to receive enlightenment for the sake of the sentient beings."

The listening subject about the graduated path, the beginning path, is how the perfect human rebirth is highly meaningful and beneficial. I will make a short repetition of what was done yesterday.

The whole aim is included in two things—temporal result and ultimate result.

The temporal result is such as receiving a perfect human rebirth or taking birth in the realm of those samsaric gods. The upper rebirths are called temporal because it is not definite that those beings will never be born in the lower realms as lower suffering creatures—they temporarily have that body but it is not permanent, just as our human life and the body that we now have is temporary, for a few months, a few years, so it is called temporal. It is a good result but it is still temporal.

Becoming an enlightened Buddha, achieving the enlightened stage is the ultimate result, the final goal.

So, as we have perfect human rebirth received now, in this short time now there is much choice to make the achievement of any of those results. Even the achievement of the highest goal, the ultimate goal, is not possible. It is always possible to achieve the temporal goal, the temporal result by creating good karma in this lifetime.

So totally talking—with this perfect human rebirth one can purify negativity created in many eons, one can make purify negativity, such bad karma as was created in thousands of eons. All this can be purified within the lifetime, in a minute, in an hour, in a second. This is the precious chance that the perfect human rebirth has, and which the other living beings do not have, and which they take twenty eons, ten eons, a long time, depending on the other living being, to purify the negativity created in many thousands of eons. So other samsaric beings such as long life gods, animals, and pretas, and especially the lower samsaric beings such as the beings who are in the narak stages take much longer; it takes an unbelievable length of time to purify. Even the samsaric gods, those who have higher enjoyments, those who only enjoy nectars, do not have the precious possibility that the precious perfect human rebirth has. The negativities that human beings purify within a second, within a minute, for other samsaric beings, such as the samsaric gods, takes many eons to purify.

There is much to talk about, but it takes much time to go into details. This is just to give an idea of how valuable the perfect human rebirth is to create quickly the cause of enlightenment.

So it is important, such a chance as this, negativities created in thousands of eons can be purified in a second, a minute, with such practice and such power of mind. There is such chance, but it depends on understanding and practice—understanding is not enough without practice. So therefore, understanding the graduated path is the most important thing, the most beneficial thing. There are details to talk about how it is going into quite profound subjects, but we can understand as we open the door of our mind, the door of our wisdom, as we clear the dirty pot of our mind, slowly. Even if I try to explain now, it could be quite difficult—it may not go through the door. If I mention just the name, such as the guru yoga practice, such as the practice of bodhicitta, those are the main methods by which we can purify the infinite numberless negativities, bad karmas, by us. By practicing so, such infinite negativities can be purified in a second, a minute, or a day—by the guru yoga practice or the practice of bodhicitta. So the whole of this thing depends on your skill—there is such a way but there has to be skill in your practice, there has to be wisdom; it is important to have sharpening, acute wisdom, which understands such practical, powerful methods.

For instance, just as the example in the part of the impulse (Page 43), the benefits of the charity of giving one hand bowl of food to an animal with bodhicitta, and the charity of giving universes of jewels to sentient beings who number the grains of sand in the Atlantic. So like the example that we went through, for example, just one example like that—with this perfect human rebirth and the practice of bodhicitta, that much infinite benefit and purification can be made in such a short time. Giving a hand bowl of food to an animal takes a short time, but the benefits of making that action with such a powerful thought, if you check, are infinite—the benefits of such action are not the object of our ordinary people's minds; they are beyond the object of our minds. As it brings infinite benefits, it purifies that much negativity created in infinite past lives; and as it purifies, it brings us that much closer to enlightenment. So at this moment we have the possibility to create such benefit with such simple action—it is a very simple action, but the benefits are incredible. If we have a realized mind such as the Enlightened Being has, which fully sees every evolution of karma, the cause and its result, gross and subtle (even in karma there is gross and subtle), sees the result of giving one handful of food to an animal, sees the great happiness of the result that can be received from this—if we could see this it would be an object that gives us a big surprise, because our mind is limited in the knowledge of karma, so we don't feel anything.

So it is important that while we have the chance, we try not to lessen the chance, that we use the chance in the most meaningful way. It is like this—even if the subject, the person who makes the charity of universe full of jewels to each sentient being, even if he is out of samsara and ignorance, but does not have bodhicitta, his action of charity cannot bring the infinite result that the simple action done with bodhicitta can bring. There is nothing to compare to the action that is created with bodhicitta, the action of charity done with bodhicitta, that great charity. If you think that offering universes of jewels to infinite numbers of sentient beings is incredible charity, even if that is done by a being who is out of samsara but does not have bodhicitta, it cannot compare. The action created by this person is still limited, small, but the object of the bodhisattva who does that charity is one sentient being. So thinking like this is very useful to the mind, and to recognize our jewel, the perfect human rebirth, is helpful.

This subject seems quite simple doesn't it? Seems quite simple. It all sounds like it's talking a very simple thing. If it is simple, then as you find it simple it is necessary to practice, until the realization

is achieved. Then that is the time that you doesn't have to depend on effort, effort in the meditation that is realized—then it becomes very simple, after you have realized, it becomes really simple. However, not having this beginning, these basic fundamental realizations of this first meditation, there is no way to have the achievement of bodhicitta. Without having understanding and achieving the practice and realization of this meditation, there is no way to achieve bodhicitta or to realize the suffering nature. Without depending on these basic practices and the realizations of these meditations, there is no way to fully discover the suffering nature. Without fully discovering the suffering nature there is no way to escape from it, to achieve the methods. Having the realization of this meditation is important. But now, just your understanding of the words by reading the book doesn't mean anything—it doesn't mean that you have finished the work in the meditation, that is not sufficient. Even if one has achieved realization, still it is necessary to remember the progression, the continual progression, and also to support the other higher realizations. So one should check within one's mind if one has achieved or not.

The Eight Temporal Needs (Page 49)

1. Craving for the temporal pleasures.
2. From the temporal unpleasant.
8. Which is opposite of praise.

(1). The first one, for example, the pleasure of being warm—a person who is catching cold, craves the pleasure derived from heat, being warm. This is just one example. Another is the temporal pleasure of eating.

(2). The second one is unpleasant, suffering. That is when there is suffering such as feeling hungry or tired, dislike arises because there is craving for temporal pleasure, and the dislike of the temporal suffering, the unpleasant. The actions done for gaining such temporal pleasure and just to stop the temporal suffering are recognized as negative actions because they are created with greed and hatred. They are not created to cut off the cause of suffering or for ultimate peace. Any action that is created with the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas (this “Dharma” means just the existence) is a negative action, is the cause of the suffering, and those actions are only created for the temporal life.

It's like this—when there is the pleasure or warmth we are pleased, when there is the suffering of cold or heat we are not pleased, we are unhappy; when there is some sweet sound such as music, songs, we are happy, we are pleased, but when there is ugly sound, non-interesting sound we are unhappy. When we are receiving materials we are happy when we are not receiving materials we are unhappy.

For instance, the material receiving that goes on at Christmas time (if I talk Tibetan way it is difficult to understand, so I talk in our own way). So when there are gifts received, we are happy, even if it is nonsense, the mind is lifted up, mind is like flying in the wind, in space, the mind is not relaxed. When there are no gifts received the mind is not related, unhappy. All this is based on greed. Because of greed there are all those problems, suffering. If there is no greed there is no way for it to arise. It is all based on greed, craving.

For instance before, when at other people's party or birthday, you gave them a gift. So next time, at your own party or birthday, if you don't get gifts from those people you are upset due to the expectation from before and the greed. That is a problem, suffering, based on craving. And the

action that you did, giving the gift with such expectation, that also is a negative action because is the action of greed.

And we are happy when we are admired or praised—”You are such good person, having such a good mind.” Anyway when we hear such things from other people we are happy. When there is the opposite, abuse, criticism, putting down, blaming, then we are unhappy. This also is caused by craving. Because there is always craving for praise, personal praise, so as long as there is craving for praise there is always suffering when being abused, when someone is blaming you—there is a problem in the mind, suffering, unhappiness.

So these are some of the things that are our experiences of mind. The reason we are talking about it is to clearly see, to fully recognize. Up to now we haven’t fully seen the suffering result of the actions caused by craving, so we often practice to develop the craving, and we are often involved in the action of craving, greed. Even though we, who talk about, who understand a little bit of Dharma, also who try to meditate, still the mind so easily gets involved in the action of craving and greed and finds it extremely difficult not to be involved to give up the action of greed. That’s because of not having fear of the suffering result of the negative actions—not having enough fear of the result of the thought or the eight temporal needs. So the fear of not having fear is lack of, not having enough faith, of understanding of the evolution of karma, the full understanding of the suffering results of the actions created by the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas.

This fear is not negative fear, this is positive fear, useful fear. Many people think fear is negative, all fear, any fear is a distraction, a distraction to one’s pleasure. For instance, fear is needed even in ordinary life. An ordinary example—if a child had no fear of fire burning his body, no fear and no recognition of the problem, the suffering, that the fire would burn, then there’s danger that the child might get into the fireplace or touch the fire. So in order to not have the problem of fire burning the body, causing life danger, fear of that problem is necessary.

Question: Isn’t that desire to be free from the temporal unpleasantness?

Answer: The usefulness of the eight temporal needs depends on thought, the creator. Here this is talking about and using the eight temporal objects with greed, with craving, that which is attached to the happiness of this life.

Like this, for the child it is necessary to have fear, so he doesn’t have that problem—so the fear has to come through understanding. This fear is useful, as it protects from the problems that the fire gives by touching it, by going in there. This is an ordinary example.

Just as in this example, it is necessary to have that positive fear of the suffering result of the actions created by the negative thought, such as craving and greed. This positive fear has to arise through the understanding of the suffering results, the evolution of karma. When there is fear of the suffering result there is fear of the creating actions. As there is fear of these creating actions, there is also fear of the negative mind, also fear of greed. At the same time, there is that much fear of greed, that much fear of ignorance and hatred because that person’s mind, that person’s wisdom, realizes that those are creator of the problems, of the negative actions and the suffering result. So that positive fear protects the person, keeps the person away from following the negative mind.

Just as in this example, if there is an enemy who would kill you, then you often hide from him because of fear. There's no desire to follow him because of the fear that he would cause problems, that he would kill you. So this fear arises from understanding there is an enemy, the existence of enemy, and what it does to you. Without understanding what the enemy would do to you and what problem the enemy would give you, cause you, and that person is the enemy, without having this understanding, without recognizing this, the person is in danger of being killed by the enemy. If he recognizes the enemy and knows the problem that would be caused, he can run away, escape from that.

The reason we are talking about these things is because by realizing greed, ignorance, and hatred as the negative creator that produces the actions and the suffering result, by discovering this, it brings the desire not to follow them, to create no more actions by those negative minds, and there is desire at the same time not to experience the suffering result that these negative actions bring about. So because of that positive fear, the person always manages to escape from it, to control and destroy those inner enemies. Anyway, totally, the person who does this is making arrangement to approach the ultimate peace; he is guiding himself with his wisdom.

For instance, the great bodhisattva, Tibetan yogi, who is the follower of the great Indian pandit Atisha, who re-established the teaching in Tibet, his closest follower Dromtomba, the emanation of Avalokiteshvara, the Compassionate Buddha, asked his guru the great bodhisattva Atisha, "What result do the actions created by greed, ignorance, and hatred, bring?" The great bodhisattva, pandit Atisha answered, "The actions created with these three negative minds only cause one to be born and suffer in the three lower realms."

In the same way the result created by the actions of the greed in the pleasures, in the sweet sound, in material possessions, in the praise and admiration, as the great Guru Atisha said, is only to be born and suffer in the three lower realms. This is only an introduction. As we continue practicing the meditations and understand the Dharma with more details, we can see clearly how it works.

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Paragraph Two:

"Samsaric higher pleasures" means pleasures of the gods.

"Everlasting happiness" means the Nirvana that is achieved only for the benefit of oneself, and also, "self everlasting" means individual everlasting happiness. That means (in Sanskrit the term is prati (individual) moksha (nirvana), everlasting happiness is achieved by creating the cause of it by oneself, not by any other person. This makes "individual everlasting happiness," which makes big sense—the cause of nirvana has to be created by oneself. Without creating the cause for oneself, liberation is impossible to achieve. So the individual nirvana is received through the individual creating its cause. Just this title proves that one person reaching nirvana and someone else creating the cause is impossible, so just to understand the title gives one sense and understanding of karma.

"Self-everlasting happiness:" this does not cause us to circle round in the samsara, but the reason it is here is because using the perfect human rebirth for this alone is still not skillful, is still not the most meaningful way of using the human rebirth, because even if one has the achievement of that,

still enlightenment has to be achieved, still enlightenment has to be received, still there are mental defects that disturbs the full realization of every single existence.

So using the precious perfect human rebirth for the eight temporal needs and samsaric higher pleasures only causes us to circle in the six samsaric realms also in the future, as it did in numberless previous lives.

When we meditate on these subjects it is good to use not only the word, but to try to imagine your numberless previous lives as you thinks, try to see, imagine them. Then it is effective—what you suffered in such, what you are thinking becomes effective for your mind.

(As written in the book is not literally correct, re: self-everlasting happiness).

3 p.m.

Any questions?

Question: Could you make the differences between three and seven and four and eight a little more clear please? They seem like a little bit like the same thing. (see Page 49)

Answer: Usually, the object that is viewed by the greed does not exist as it is viewed by the greed. For instance, if there's a beautiful flower, the flower exists, but it doesn't exist as it is viewed by the greed.

Number three is craving to hear sweet sounds. This is simple, this is like music, sweet sounds. But the enjoyment of the sweet sound is used for greed, for the happiness of the temporal life. We are not complaining about the object, but we are complaining about the mind, the mind that uses it in a negative way. We are not complaining about the object but about the various mental states, because the problem arises from the different negative mental functions, it is generally created by the different negative mental functions.

For instance, there used to be paintings, many people may have seen them, of the war of the maras, I think, the evil beings, the evil spirits. There's quite a long story about that:. There are twelve events in Buddha's life story, and one of the events is controlling or subduing the evil spirits, the evil beings, I think this is mara in Sanskrit. So anyway, in many different ways, this is just one example in many ways the maras, those evil spirits, try to control Guru Shakyamuni, try to destroy him in many ways, in peaceful ways and in violent ways, any way they can think of, they try to destroy him in many ways because they were so scared that if he received enlightenment he would control the whole universe, and control them. So the king of the maras discovered this, and so he told the groups of which he was the king. Then they all went together and agreed to fight, to destroy. And just before the time that Guru Shakyamuni was ready to be enlightened, all of a sudden they filled the whole sky with fog and lightning, throwing thunderbolts. They changed the whole place, sent floods, and it completely became dark, very fearful-looking. Many thousands of them tried to destroy him with many different methods—some carrying mountains, others with wheels which, as you think of killing the person, the wheel just goes naturally and cuts the neck. They tried to destroy him in so many ways, but everything they threw at him transformed into flowers.

So, at the very last, they couldn't do anything, they couldn't destroy him in a violent way, so as their last means they transformed in the form of ladies, women, dancing in front of him, trying to show all their beauties, whatever they are. This was their very last smart means that they found to betray Guru Shakyamuni, to disturb his concentration. But anyway his concentration was unshakable, indestructible; no matter how they tried to destroy him—in a violent way surrounded by many thousands of demons, maras with weapons. Even as a last means they tried the peaceful way—but they could never disturb his concentration, his holy body never moved, the maras couldn't disturb even one single hair of his holy body. For such holy enlightenment beings, there is no problem, you see, nothing could disturb his concentration. Even though they tried to disturb him by showing peaceful transformation, there's was no problem in Guru Shakyamuni's holy mind, even not arising an atom, just talking size of greed, no problem.

So therefore, the whole point of what I am talking is that is that the whole problem is created by the mind, the negative mental state. The object itself is not the principal creator of the problem. If that is so, then Guru Shakyamuni, when there were many thousands of Maras trying to control and destroy Him, Guru Shakyamuni couldn't have overcome all those Maras without moving his body, without moving from his concentration. Without moving mentally from his concentration, he overcame the peaceful disturbance and the violent Mara. He overcame by what ? By the great progressive thought through Dharma practice, the Great Love. So his Great Love has that much power. So his Great Love controlling, stopping all the fearful wars subduing the evil spirits, the evil thoughts, making everything peaceful, the whole thing is done by his Realization, Great Love, without depending on even the slightest movement of his holy body, and mentally not moving from his mental concentration.

Actually, if we are going to compare the power of our world countries and his holy mind, just one mind, great love, one cannot compare. All that power, the power of the material possessions, weapons, all that, can never compare to his great love. His great love has the power to pacify, or make peaceful, the problem, the war, to stop such problems without harming one single thing, without bringing any harm, even the size of an atom, to other living beings.

But the countries, with the power of weapons, no matter how rich it is, how much it is developed, instead of using that for stopping suffering, for stopping war, they harm other beings. Without harming other beings it is impossible to stop the war. So all the power of the countries' material possessions and weapons, cannot be compared to Guru Shakyamuni's great love—that power is very limited.

Such holy beings as Guru Shakyamuni, whose minds are well subdued, well cleaned by following the path, never have even one single problem such as greed or hatred. For us ordinary people, if the maras did as they did to Guru Shakyamuni, showing us the different transformations, for us it they will always be problems. Showing such forms as that would cause us problems, as our minds are not well-subdued, not well-trained in the disciplines. Those whose minds are not well-subdued, because the mind is not well-subdued, the object can disturb us whether it is ugly or beautiful. Ugly objects cause hatred to arise, and beautiful objects cause greed and attachment to arise. There is always a problem. For us, when we try to concentrate on one object, even if there are no such distractions as Guru Shakyamuni had, even if everything is quiet, the concentration on the object doesn't last a minute, even half a minute. The mind is that untrained, that unsubdued.

For Guru Shakyamuni, when there is a sweet sound, a beautiful song, he has no craving for those objects. But we have craving for those objects. They cannot cause greed to arise in Guru Shakyamuni, but they can cause greed to arise in us.

The next one, number seven, personal praise, is the same thing.

Guru Shakyamuni has numberless beings making prostration, admiration, and offering to him. This is the case not only in this specific small world, but also in the worlds of the gods who have such higher enjoyments and great numbers of possessions., Guru Shakyamuni is the object of even those gods. But Guru Shakyamuni has not a single attachment, even the size of an atom, no greed even the size of atom existing in his mind.

We, however, don't have those infinite beings' admiration, prostrations, and offerings, but we have difficulty with even one person who says we are good, wise. Anyway, there's a problem—just a small little thing with one person, and there's a problem in the mind, attachment arises. Also we think, "He is such a nice person, he tells me I am wise, I am good." This is common, we often think like this.

And if a person mentions some ugly words, saying that you are cruel, made a mistake, a problem arises in the mind and you dislike the person, and you see the person who is telling you that in a different aspect. This is not something the person changed but arises from the mind projecting another aspect, it is only a projection of your mind. So if someone tells you some bad things it is still good that you cannot see the mind—if you could see the mind it would be terrible. It is good that the mind is formless; otherwise, you know, all of a sudden there is like water boiling, just like that it can happen in the mind, boiling (but water has form) then nerves coming out, nerves getting stronger and more powerful.

So even with one person we have so much problem. Even if he says one good thing, there's a problem; even if he says a bad thing, there's a problem. It's funny. No one forces you to have attachment, no one forces attachment to arise. Why does attachment or hatred easily arise, intuitively arise, so difficult to stop, so difficult to press? Even those who are trying to meditate feel this is bad, but they find it is so difficult to keep it down. So difficult to stop it, and so easy to arise, so simple to arise.

Maybe you people have profound wisdom knowing about this, so what causes this? This is our experience, nothing different, it is not something that we don't have. If you don't have the experience then I'm sorry. What makes it?

Answer: The ego?

Rinpoche: Where is the ego—inside or outside the body?

Answer: I think it's a creation of mind.

Rinpoche: How does the mind create it?

Answer: Our own self-concept, the way we think of ourselves.

Rinpoche: What's your opinion of yourself?

Answer: Attachment to yourself.

Rinpoche: Attachment to yourself, is that how you create ego?

Answer: Maybe it's the explanation that the mind gives for our existence here.

Rinpoche: But it exists where?

Answer: Just in the mind.

Rinpoche: It exists in the mind?

Answer: Yes, I think so.

Rinpoche: So all the creation of the mind is in the mind? We are all in your mind. So that object that you see is in your mind?

Answer: My mind creates its perception.

Rinpoche: So perception is ego?

Answer: Yes, I think so.

Rinpoche: I see. So your perception is yourself, is it yourself?

Answer: No, it's a creation of my mind to explain itself.

Rinpoche: It is yourself because it is your ego. So perception is yourself?

Answer: It's part of myself that I create.

Rinpoche: So it's part of yourself. It's part of you?

Answer: Yes.

Rinpoche: So, then part of you is perception? Not all of you, it is part of you. So where is the half of you, the rest?

Answer: Oh! In non-perception.

Rinpoche: Is that mind or body?

Answer: Mind.

Rinpoche: So that is perceiving mind. What is non-perceiving mind?

Answer: (No answer)

Rinpoche: So what do you say ?

Answer: The fact that you have a body is also part of perceiving. The mind cannot perceive if it is not in a body or something. It has to perceive from and it can't be formless.

Rinpoche: What! Something is going on? He said without form the mind cannot perceive objects. How?

Answer: Are we making a reflection of ourselves somewhere, I don't know how?

Rinpoche: But the reflection you are making, is that body or mind? Anyway, it doesn't matter. But who said the ego created the cause that the delusion, the negative mind are so easy to arouse and so difficult to stop. So who obliged the ego to create the cause?

Answer: Isn't the ego the negative mind, the same thing?

Rinpoche: So I am asking who obliges it? ... Who created the ego?

Answer: My mind.

Rinpoche: Isn't your mind created by ego?

Answer: I don't think so.

Rinpoche: Then who created your mind?

Answer: My mind is beginningless.

Rinpoche: Didn't your mind start at the same time as the two blood combinations?

Answer: No.

Rinpoche: Doesn't your body begin from it, those two blood combinations?

Answer: Perhaps my body began with beginningless mind.

Rinpoche: Then mind began from something, yes?

Answer: My physical brain began from a physical union of sperm and egg, but my mind is beginningless.

Rinpoche: Didn't your mind begin from something?

Answer: It couldn't have.

Answer: Perhaps the question isn't very important.

Rinpoche: But this is important to know to practice the meditation and to stop our suffering. What causes the arising of the delusion so easily and why is it so difficult to stop it? No one gave a practical answer.

Answer: Ignorance.

Rinpoche: Yes, but why it's so difficult to stop?

Answer: It's caused by self-cherishing mind, which creates the ego.

Answer: Because of our past karma that has arisen since beginningless time, due to our past lives' attachment.

Rinpoche: A similar example, another question. Why do people find it difficult to stop sexual intercourse?

Answer: Could you repeat the question?

Rinpoche: No question ... Why do people find it difficult to stop smoking or sexual intercourse?

Answer: Because they're not aware of the consequences of the act, they have no fear.

Rinpoche: Yes.

Answer: Because they don't want to stop.

Rinpoche: It becomes something like this—they don't want to stop because they are not afraid of the consequences. It's quite nice, but I'm still not satisfied. Why is it so difficult?

Answer: Ignorance is beginningless—ignorance causes it now, and that comes from previous ignorance.

Rinpoche: Yes. Anyway, good answers. Why is it extremely difficult? Because such action has been created in numberless previous lives, this relates to beginningless ignorance.

We have strong habit as the action was created in beginningless previous lives, so therefore in this lifetime, even one trying to meditate, to practice Dharma finds extremely difficult to diminish it, control it, make it close. That's why people have problems, being unable to cut off the habit all of a sudden. Also ... this is reason why it takes time for the mind to become oneness with Dharma, not to be separated from Dharma, why the mind doesn't become pure, sincere. It is because of the habit of the delusions from beginningless lifetime, and the habit of following the negative mind since beginningless lifetimes. It is difficult to control it and for the mind to be pure and sincere. "Pure and sincere" mind means mind that is devoid of the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. That is pure mind, sincere mind, that is oneness with Dharma. This mind is oneness with Dharma, this mind is called sincere. Sincere practitioner from the Dharma point of view is the person whose mind is devoid of the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. This sincere, pure mind, is the real Dharma,

this is the most important fundamental of enlightenment and the whole path. If we want to follow the different levels of path and enlightenment this is the fundamental pure ground.

For example, if the person wants to build elevator to go to the moon, the person cannot build the elevator without something to depend on. Without ground the person cannot build the elevator to go to moon. So if you want to go to the moon by this elevator it is necessary to build the elevator on a base. This pure mind is like the base, it is extremely important as the base for the elevators. The path is like the elevator. I think I saw many times in hotels, you can go round and you can go straight; also there are stores like this. The elevator that takes you straight up, that is the shortcut, the tantric path. The steps on which you go round is like following the paramita path, without following the tantric Path, going round on the steps, going up slowly so that you can reach the moon—following the Hinayana or Mahayana path without following the tantric path is like the person taking that way, trying to reach the moon by going up the steps. The person who practices tantric path is like going up quickly in an elevator. But the person who goes to the moon by elevator has to be in that room, in that shaft. Without the shaft he cannot go by elevator; it depends on the shaft. Because the elevator is inside, going in an elevator depends on going in the shaft—just as people following the tantric path, the shortcut to enlightenment, depend on the fundamental Mahayana practice that starts from guru yoga practice and the perfect human rebirth.

Now, this is important. The person who takes the elevator and the person who goes to the moon by taking the steps, both have to be the first ground. From there both people go up. But the very first place is on the ground. In the same way, having the pure mind that is devoid of the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is like the ground. All who practice Hinayana, Mahayana, and tantra should have achievement of this pure thought devoid of evil, devoid of the eight worldly Dharmas.

If the subjects, these teachings, causes the negative mind to arise in place of decreasing and destroying it, there is no reason to take the meditation course. If you are experiencing this, if you discover this, then better to leave right away. Also, I have no other Dharma to give to you that wasn't taught by Guru Shakyamuni. If you are experiencing something else then you can go elsewhere.

First cultivate pure impulse, to perform the action in a virtuous way. Think, "I am going to practice the meditation on the graduated path to enlightenment myself for the benefit of sentient beings."

Visualize Guru Shakyamuni, with the rays coming out of his holy body and absorbing you and purifying your obscurations and mental defilements, such as the wrong conceptions of the self-existing "I" and self-cherishing thoughts, and the dualistic mind, dualistic vision. All those mental defilements are instantly purified in your body just as a light dispels darkness in a room. Also, your mental defilements disappear in the form of darkness. Visualize the defilements in the form of darkness and that they completely disappear into the rays, which in essence is Guru Shakyamuni's great knowledge, compassion, and supreme powers.

Then after the mantra, do the breathing meditation, and then meditate on the perfect human rebirth and the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth by remembering the ultimate results and the different temporal results.

Those who can't meditate on this, who didn't receive explanation on this, who have no idea of this, if possible, do the breathing meditation. If you cannot, then rather than waste time, try to check up,

make research on how you perceives your own “I—” what it looks like, how you see it. This is simple, you don’t need books since all animate beings have the conception of the “I.” It is something every being has and thinks of.

But these who received explanation on the graduated path, better to meditate on that at the moment.

Day 7

November 22

9am

The thought to benefit through bodhicitta covers all living sentient beings. Even parents, even Brahma, the gods called Laxmi or Vishnu do not have such knowledge, such power. Even these samsaric gods who have much power, many enjoyments, do not have this beneficial knowledge or power that benefits, or covers, all living beings. So the benefits of any action that is created with such pure motive, bodhicitta always cover every number of sentient beings, as your impulse imagined and planned. The action done with that motive is for every and all sentient beings. Just as that person who creates such action with this pure motive benefits the numbers of sentient beings, so the benefit is infinite.

For instance, if you really deeply think and aim to create the action of listening to teachings, one hour of work, for sentient beings, and you think like this strongly and purely, not only just words—for instance, that includes all of us, so even if one person in one hour creates benefits from each of those, for example if there are 190 something, then the person creates benefits from each person, from each object, each living being here. When we think of “here” we think a lot, think great numbers because we see the number, but when we say “sentient beings” it doesn’t make any sense, like this. Anyway, even by projecting, creating the action for each sentient being that includes all of us, that includes all American people, that includes the whole country, the whole society, nothing is missing, no government is missing, no society is missing, it is done with impartial mind, no enemy is missing—it includes all beings, including all those here. So when we think of the benefits from each person we think a lot, but it’s really nothing. So since bodhicitta has that great benefit try to cultivate pure motive, thinking; “I am going to listen to teachings on the graduated path to enlighten all other sentient beings.”

We have to train from now on, as we have the time, as we exist now. Little by little, from this the progression can be made. This is not something that your mind received, all of a sudden, not something you received in your mind suddenly.

So the listening subject is on the graduated path, on the subject of “How the Perfect Human Rebirth is Useful (Page 49).”

This is very important in order for us to know clearly about the eight worldly Dharmas. If you don’t fully know, discover, recognize, there is no way to make pure Dharma practice; if you don’t recognize the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas that we create in our mind, there is no way to become a pure Dharma practitioner—this is the root of the Dharma. The avoidance of the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is the root of the Dharma, the essential Dharmas; this is essential Dharma.

The knowledge of avoiding the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is infinite, if you talk about knowledge. It is very important to know this, not only the words but to recognize it in your mind—what is written on the paper are not your feelings. Feeling is within the mind, not on paper. So this is the introduction of what we have in our mind. It is not because we don't have, but because we don't recognize. So it is an introduction to ourselves—it sounds funny.

The practice of avoiding the eight worldly Dharmas is really the root, the main power that brings the ultimate peace, the cessation of suffering and enlightenment. This is the principal power, and this has the power to solve not only the present life's problems but it has the power to solve the problems of many future lives.

For instance, if I tell briefly how it works—a person avoids the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas (avoiding the eight worldly Dharmas means avoiding the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas), such as evil thoughts toward worldly objects. But such feelings as hating the cause of suffering, wanting to renounce the cause of suffering—those are okay, those are not a mistake, those are necessary to have. Without having the feeling of hate for the cause of suffering, there is no dislike of the cause of suffering. Then there is no fear of the cause of suffering. Then the person doesn't take the cause of suffering as a negative thing, as the enemy. Then the person doesn't try to destroy it.

Same thing, just like this—if there are two friends, this friend, the other person, as long as this person sees him, takes him in the place of friend, he never gives harm, and always tries to help him. But when the situation is changed, when he becomes enemy, then he wants to destroy him, because he discovers him to be the cause of problems, sufferings, and recognizes him, because he desires peace, to be away from suffering. So this person seeks method with which to destroy him. This person's destroying the enemy is based on hate. So this makes the person destroy him, and there is no more creator of the harmful actions which he receives, therefore he no longer receives harmful actions.

This is an ordinary example, something that we have been doing since beginningless lifetimes. But we being human beings we are not supposed to do this. We have to discover the cause of suffering and see it as the principal enemy, and as it is recognized, we have aversion to the cause of suffering. Then the person seeks the method to destroy the cause of suffering, the principal enemy. But this is not something that is in the other person's mind—it is something that exists in my mind and it is worthwhile to have aversion toward it. Actually, you are trying to achieve ultimate peace by destroying the enemy that is in your mind, without harming other sentient beings, even an atom. This is the wisest way, the most beneficial way to gain ultimate peace.

With the ordinary example, trying to make oneself happy by harming other beings, the path of receiving ultimate peace is blocked, it is impossible. It is like this example—for instance a person, a businessman, wants to get jewels from a specific place underneath the ocean, for instance, in part of the East. So instead of shipping to the East, he is shipping to the West, in the wrong direction, where he cannot find any jewels, which only causes him to get exhausted. No matter how many eons he spends shipping around he can never get jewels. Besides not finding jewels, it can only cause him to get tired and exhausted, unsuccessful, and only cause problems.

Just like this example, in this ordinary way, by harming others there is no way to gain ultimate peace. And achieving ultimate peace in your mind without harming other beings even a tiny atom is the

holy path, this is the path of the holy beings. There are many degrees, levels, and meanings of “holy” according to Buddhadharma. Anyway, the holy, ultimate peace has to be achieved by your own holy mind, and that holy mind has to be achieved through the practice of the holy teaching.

So you see, what I mean is this—people may think, “He says aversion is good, hatred is good,” without understanding the different points. One may get the wrong understanding, but it is not like this. I am not saying all aversion and hatred is good. There is need for hatred for the cause of suffering, for ignorance. That aversion, that hatred always helps oneself, because that aversion brings fear, and that aversion or fear is the cause of suffering, and this always causes one to try to escape away from it.

But what is missing with us? We often have aversion or hatred for the temporal sufferings that we recognize with our limited mind. But we don’t have aversion for all sufferings, for the cause of suffering; this is missing. Because there is no such energy—aversion for the cause of suffering—that is missing, so therefore we, our minds, still have not approached such a low level of mind, the renouncing mind, the mind renouncing samsara. Since Guru Shakyamuni, countless beings reached enlightenment by following the path, but we, not achieving the aversion for the cause of suffering, have not even approached the low level of renunciation of samsara. The mind is completely empty, not having any achievement; besides being empty, it is dirty. Perhaps not yours, but mine is.

So now you understand how it is. Not having aversion gives us this problem—not having aversion for the cause of suffering, but only for the gross suffering that is perceived by the limited mind. So this aversion is the cause of suffering—why? The proof is this—we have had aversion for the temporal problems and sufferings for countless lifetimes, but we are still not out of samsara, out of the circle of death and rebirth, so this proves that only aversion doesn’t help. By discovering this in this lifetime, we have to change our old mind, our old thoughts. You see, the person who has aversion for the cause of suffering, even if there are temporal problems, he does not find much problem with it, it is not a big shock to him. The person who has deep understanding of the evolution of samsara, of suffering, strong aversion to suffering, doesn’t find the temporal suffering a big shock.

Question: Would you repeat that please?

Answer: I will never repeat!

As I told you before, this person knows he is in samsara, he is not free from that, he knows because of the cause of suffering that he has created, and of course it is definite that he will experience the result. And he knows it is not new for that person, any temporal problem that arises is not new for his mind, and knows that as long as he is in the circle of samsara, he will have to experience as he experienced countless times before, that it is something that is only created by him. And in place of worrying over it, disturbing his mind, causing conflict in his mind, the temporal problems help him, become useful to his practice. Because as he has temporal problems, he thinks deeply of the cause of suffering and it causes stronger aversion to arise, to cut off the cause of suffering. It becomes beneficial to him, and because of his understanding he takes the situation in a useful way, he makes the situation useful with his understanding of the suffering nature of samsara. So he doesn’t get a big shock, great worry, as we ordinary worldly people do.

There is a big difference between the feeling of this person who has deep understanding of the suffering nature living in the practice, and the person who has no understanding of the Dharma, even if the situation is the same. For instance, imagine that both these persons lost their possessions, that they were stolen by other people. The affliction for the practitioner is so small, but for the person who has no understanding of the evolution of the suffering, of the nature of samsara, in this person's mind the problem is much bigger. For him it is a big shock. One thing is that it has happened unexpectedly, secondly, he has lack of practice, sincere practice, and the deep understanding of suffering nature. Especially for this person, his thinking of the problem makes his mind more sick, but for the other it only helps his practice, especially for the person who is living in the practice of avoiding the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. For this practitioner, whose mind is not involved in the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, for this person however the situation changes, either good or bad, it doesn't cause his mind to change. For ordinary people, as the situation changes the mind changes; as the situation is good, the mind is happy, as the situation is bad, the mind gets sick. The person who is living in avoidance of the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, however the situation changes, doesn't change his mind—it never causes his mind to go up and down because of his practice and his understanding. So his mind is always at the same level.

Before there is one proverb, called *Dawa Tragpa*. There was a person who worked as a servant for a family for a long time. Every month he got a small quantity of grain as his salary. So he worked for the family, and after one year of collecting small amounts of grain, he had a sack. He came back home thinking he had enough and hung the sack of grain from the ceiling. It was nighttime and he thought, "Now I am so rich." This was because he had a big sack of grain that he had collected as his salary from the family. He thought, "What can I do?" and made plans for his life. "I will marry, then I will have a child. What name should be given to the child?" He couldn't think of a name for a long time. Then later, moonlight shone through his window, and he thought, "So the child should be called *Dawa Tragpa* (Moon-Famous). He was extremely pleased to have found a name, so he stood up and danced, waving a stick around, and the stick got caught up in the sack, which then fell on him and killed him. So no marriage, his life ended before that. In place of enjoying what he worked for that whole year... So it happened that way.

What I am talking is this—this is just one example, but something similar to that has happened to us many times. Totally, the problem is caused by craving pleasure. This is also a problem: we think, for instance, he was extremely pleased at finding such a beautiful name, his mind was uplifted so much, and besides the mind even the body couldn't relax. Actually this is also a problem because that is craving for pleasure, pleasure to have such a life, and to have name for the child.

So we should be careful; sometimes things like that can happen. You see, because, as I said before, in the ordinary example, how the situation changes his mind. Before the example it may have sounded like talking in space, but with the example—his mind found a good situation, marriage, a fantastic name for his child, so the situation changed his mind—because of the craving, the greed for temporal pleasure. If there was no greed, no greed for temporal pleasure, the situation could not change his mind. Before, he was lying down, thinking, relaxed; then, because he thought of such a good situation, due to craving, greed for temporal pleasure, the situation changed his mind and that's what happened. There are many other examples.

So anyway, both are problems for us ordinary people—when there is no pleasure or when we meet temporal pleasure. When we hear sweet sound, words, receive materials, receive praise or admiration, we are happy in these things, because of these situations. The happiness that arises from

these situations is suffering, because this happiness arose because of the craving for those situations, for temporal pleasures, sweet sounds, receiving things, personal admiration. That is also a problem. That happiness that occurred from greed is attachment to those four objects. That is a problem, that is suffering, mental suffering. The suffering that we do not recognize is this, and we think it is happiness—real peace.

Question: What about playing musical instruments?

Answer: But you still hear? Maybe you play without hearing?

If we want to practice Dharma, what we should discover is this—the happiness that arises all of a sudden, when the situation changes, is from greed for temporal pleasures. That is a problem, that is a mental conflict. That is one problem. Another problem is easier to recognize, but that one is difficult to recognize. People who sincerely practice Buddhadharmā have to recognize it. They take this happiness that is derived from greed as a problem, as suffering, not as real peace—that which the worldly people not living in Dharma practice think is real peace. They think they are really happy. For example, if they see a friend to whom they are attached, they think, “I am so happy, I received peace.” The person thinks it is real happiness, real peace, but it is not, that mind is in confusion. This happiness does not arise by diminishing greed, this happiness is not derived by fighting or by destroying negative mind, this happiness arises by working for greed, following greed, by being friends with greed. So anyway, the person who meets his friend has temporal happiness, temporal pleasure; this is not true happiness.

So, the easy thing, the easy problem that we can recognize is the mental problem, unhappiness, when we meet suffering, dislike, when we meet ugly displeasing words, the dislike when we do not receive things, unhappiness because of criticism or abusing, other people putting you down. Those four dislikes and unhappinesses are easy for us to recognize as the problem, but the other four we do not recognize as a mental problem.

It is totally like this—craving for the temporal pleasures always cheats oneself, deceives oneself, never helps to achieve the ultimate peace. But the craving for ultimate peace always helps. There is big difference between craving for ultimate peace, everlasting happiness, and the craving for temporal happiness—just as the aversion for suffering is much less useful than aversion for the cause of suffering; this builds energy for the practice. As a rocket needs fuel, such aversion for the cause of suffering creates energy, which is like fuel, to make the high effort to receive enlightenment. So like this, craving for temporal pleasures, caused by greed for temporal objects, doesn't help, only cheats oneself, only creates suffering. And as long as one follows it, it causes the being only to produce negative actions, because as the person creates negative actions, he is causing suffering, so he cheats himself, he is putting himself in the suffering prison, in the suffering cycle of death and rebirth which is the real prison.

As we talked about yesterday, it is necessary to avoid habit, actions, and behavior that are produced by negative mind, which animate beings find extremely difficult to avoid, to stop even if we think they are negative. These are disturbance to our ultimate peace, but we find it very difficult to stop the action. That is because we don't fight enough against the craving for temporal pleasure, the craving for those objects. We doesn't fight enough, we are not strong against that. So even though we think it is necessary to stop, even if we want to stop but finds it difficult, that is because of the craving that we have been habituated to for beginningless lifetimes. This strong craving controls the

person and obliges the person to continue producing the negative actions, negative actions that only bring suffering result. So therefore, this is how craving for temporal pleasure only causes the problem.

It is important to understand that the craving for temporal pleasure causes suffering, and that the desire for liberation never cheats you. What we want is ultimate peace—everlasting, unchanging, imperishable happiness—and not to experience suffering. So therefore, it is necessary to follow the path. To follow the path it is necessary to have the wish, the desire, which builds energy to follow the path. We think all desire, all wish, is bad, negative. We think we should cut all desire, that all desire is negative. But the point is that what we want is ultimate happiness—not receiving ultimate peace is not what we want. So therefore to have the wish, the positive desire, for that result and the path is necessary. Thinking all desire is negative only blocks us from seeking the path and ultimate peace.

The great realized pandit, the Madhyamaka philosopher called Nagarjuna restored the sutra and tantra teachings of the Mahayana to prevail extensively in India when they had degenerated. This great pandit lived 400 years. Anyway, he said, “It is better not to have the itching than to have the pleasure of scratching.”

If there is no itching there's no need to scratch and so no need to make a wound. This is the example, and the meaning is this—it is better not to have the desire for worldly objects than to have the objects of worldly desire. The thing is this, you don't find your problem from the object if you don't have desire in your mind, such as the problem of attachment that arises from meeting and contacting the object. This conflict arises because there is desire existing in your mind, the creator, so if there is no desire in your mind there is no way for the problem to arise from meeting the object, and there is no problem. So therefore, giving up the eight worldly Dharmas does not mean making these eight objects non-existent. Avoiding the eight worldly Dharmas means avoiding the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. If the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is avoided, no problem. If this evil thought is avoided, given up, and renounced, then there is no problem with the pleasure, and when the pleasure decreases, no problem.

When there is interesting sound, there is no craving, no problem. Even if he hears sweet sounds, there is no craving. Even if he is surrounded by all the possessions that exist in the world, even he has all these possessions, for his mind there is no trouble, no problem of craving, no conflict. For the person who is living in the avoidance of the eight worldly Dharmas, there is no way for attachment to arise. For the great yogi, Milarepa, even if he had all the possessions that exist in the world offered to him, there would be no problem in his mind such as the ordinary person would experience. He would have no problem, not any problem—the situation would never change his mind. Beings such as this great yogi always have their minds in a happy state, in peace, which cannot be destroyed by external conditions. But for us, when we are happy—an hour, a day—it always changes, it never lasts, because that happiness arises from the situation, not from the mental control, so it doesn't last. For instance, one person—first of all he respects you, admires you, and praises you. As he praises you, your mind is lifted up, is happy. Then later on as he blames you, your mind is in suffering. This is not because of the mental control, but it is derived from the situation—our mind power is limited that much, happiness doesn't last.

The happiness of those pure practitioners, like Milarepa, is not like that. Their happiness arises from mental control, the very first, the very root practice, the fundamental practice—avoiding and

controlling the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. This is the very root, like the first fundamental.

Their happiness always arises from mental control, so instead of changing into suffering their mental peace develops greater and greater, higher and higher. The very first Dharma that those great yogis practiced makes them pure practitioners—that is avoiding the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. The very first practice caused them to become pure Dharma practitioners, pure Dharma people by the practice of avoiding the eight worldly Dharmas. So now, the whole point is this—as they did this, for us, as long as life is following or involved in the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, our life is not a pure Dharma life, that person is not a Dharma person. So the definition is made by the practice.

Everywhere in the country, in the world, in the West, many people meditate but still do not understand what the real Dharma is. So even though one does meditation the life is wasted—the life is wasted. Why it is not Dharma even though they spend most of the time in meditation? Because of not having understanding, real understanding, of the suffering nature; not having understanding of the cause of the suffering and of suffering, and of the difference between positive and negative actions. The mind is not aware of these subjects, which are really the most important things to be discovered for the ultimate peace. They think only that the meditation, sitting in some position, is a good action, is a cause that brings peace, but in fact it is the opposite. So that person, those people who meditate but don't have the wisdom of understanding these important subjects, how do they waste time and life? Because most of their daily life, even the meditation they do for a few minutes or some time, becomes a servant to the eight worldly Dharmas, which they think is the cause of ultimate peace.

Like these flies, when they see the light they think it is some good place that will not burn their bodies, they have no fear. If they had fear they wouldn't jump on purpose. No matter how much we try to stop them, they try much harder to get inside. This tells the mind-nature, animal-mind nature. Anyway, these insects, these creatures, have only the expectation of peace, happiness. They have no desire to suffer, they didn't plan this for suffering. Why do they go there? That is because of the lack of fear. Lack of fear is due to the lack of understanding that if they go there it will cause problems to them, lack of understanding of this. It is completely different from the way these creatures think—the fact is that he dies, gets burnt; he forces himself. It is very important to try to discover what makes the animal to do this—this is the real science, the best way of studying science.

So why does animal go there on purpose? The animal, from his side, tries his best to get there quickly there—this is caused by ignorance, by the living being himself, his own ignorance, the mental obscuration of ignorance that stops him from discovering the situation. It is hot and it will burn, and the obscuration, the ignorance makes the animal think in different ways, to perceive things in different ways from the fact. So that's how, because of this deeply ignorant mind, the body goes there and gets burnt, but some people may think that the animal is enjoying there—can be possible—that he is happy, no suffering there. I am sure there are many people. It is true, because after he goes into the fire, into the lamp, there is no way to escape, in one second he gets burnt. But if we think in this way, that the animal is enjoying there—if he discovered that it is hot before he got burnt, before his legs got burnt, he would run away.

Question: But sometimes they get a bit burnt, and then fall out and go back in?

Answer: You mean they enjoy it there?

Question: Do they forget quickly?

Answer: It's possible. We also do the same. There are many examples.

The reason I am bringing this example of the lower creature ignorantly bringing suffering to himself is because we people also do many actions like that, that only create suffering. There are many people, also in the West, who think that they are creating the cause of ultimate peace, meditating, sitting in a certain posture; but actually they are creating the cause of suffering, just like these lower creatures.

There's no way to fully discover, to correct the actions without discovering negative and positive actions—which is the cause of suffering, which is the cause of ultimate peace. That depends on discovering the karmic concatenation. That depends on discovering the existence of the past and future lives. That depends on beginningless mind.

Many people think they know suffering, “Why there is need to talk of so much suffering?” They think they are aware of suffering but they continually work creating cause of suffering. That's due to not discovering the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is the cause of suffering, is the creator of suffering. What I mean is, many people think they know the suffering so clearly that there is no need to tell, to talk much about suffering; but the mind is in problem, in the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas—when the mind meets an object confusion arises.

I think some people don't understand in regards the different desires—that which should be avoided and that which is needed, what one should have and what one shouldn't have. I think we talked a little in the morning, but some people didn't understand about this.

So the negative desire, that which should be avoided, is the desire for temporal pleasures, the pleasures of this life, only the pleasures of this life, because this desire is the creator of suffering, and just as the desire itself is so, so too is any action that is done for temporal happiness.

The desire, the wish, for enlightenment, ultimate peace, the path, is necessary to have, because that wish makes the person follow the path and achieve the ultimate goal, ultimate peace and enlightenment, peace and enlightenment. For this it is necessary to have the desire, the wish to eradicate the cause of suffering. If there is no willingness, wish, or desire to eradicate the cause of suffering, there's no energy or wish or desire to follow the path and achieve the ultimate goal. So also, the great usefulness of talking much about suffering, and deeply understanding to clearly see, fully discover the nature of suffering, is this: the clearer and more deeply we see the nature of suffering, the greater the aversion that arises is; and the greater the aversion that arises, that much stronger the desire to reach the ultimate goal to seek the path will arise as well.

Just as in the example, as there is stronger aversion, dislike, for living in the West, as there is that much stronger aversion, not that much interest, feeling disgust, so as there is that much aversion, dislike, there is that much stronger desire to be in the East. So there is that much stronger desire to follow the path to reach the East. So as there is that much stronger aversion, there is the stronger desire to reach the East more quickly. So in that way we take the short cut, the short path, by airplane or something, and we comes to the East more quickly. Totally, what makes us get to the

East is our desire. This is just an example. There is a choice to relax or to do things as we wish. So just as that desire is useful for us, having desire for the ultimate goal, for the path, is always useful, always helps, never cause harm to oneself or any other beings, so that's why it is positive.

So anyway, I want to end this conversation.

In Tibet, in ancient times, one ascetic yogi saw a man who wanted to practice Dharma but didn't know how to do it. This yogi advised him to practice Dharma. At first that man thought it meant going around the stupa. Then one day he met the yogi who still said, "Practice Dharma." So the thought that going around the stupa was not practicing Dharma and he started to read books. Again one day he saw the yogi who told him, "Practice Dharma," so then he started to meditate. And again one day he saw that yogi who still said, "Practice Dharma." So finally he asked the yogi, "What do you mean 'Practice Dharma?'" The yogi answered. "Renounce this life." That was his only answer. So that what is missing in his actions, in his mind.

What this great yogi means is this—this is important to know. It does not mean you escape from this world, leave everything, this entire earth and go somewhere. "Give up this life" does not mean that. One can give up this life even if he possesses all the possessions that exist in the world. So leaving this world is not giving up this life. Your body just being out of your country does not mean giving up this life. Just your body being out of your home does not mean giving up this life. Even if one has no possessions, only the body, living in the cave, it does not mean giving up this life. Then it would be like this—if it depended on the body, on the body separating from something, if it depended on exterior separation, then every time we die we are giving up, because the mind goes away from that body, and that would be giving up this life. At that time there is nothing to give up because the life is finished. There are many other formless beings who haven't given up their present life. So it doesn't depend on physical things. It is only mental change. Some young people, when they were coming from the West, they read Milarepa's book, but because they didn't have the understanding of giving up this life, how to practice Dharma. So they read this book, but giving up this life includes too much knowledge—it is the foundation of all tantric practice. They see so many powers that one can receive, that one does not have to depend on things. So they thought just giving up possessions was giving up this life, so they just throw them away. After, because of the lack of wisdom, not understanding the real giving up of this life, the person gets into problems. This means that the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is still there, it is kept in the best way. So that is taken in the best care. So the person always misses things, the mind gets into more and more problems thinking how to get them back again, worrying. So it doesn't work that way, this way of giving up this life. This is some student's story, but it is useful for us to understand. See, so the problem continues because there is continually this evil thought.

So what is the actual meaning of giving up this life? That is giving up the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, the eight temporal needs. That is the mental meaning of giving up this life, renouncing this life. No matter even if a person doesn't look like a monk, no matter how he looks—freaky looking or straight looking—it doesn't matter. If his mind is living in the avoidance of the eight temporal needs, he is a pure Dharma person, he has pure Dharma mind.

So, the first Dharma practice—if you want to be practitioner, the first is this—practice the avoidance of the eight worldly Dharmas. To the person whose mind is in the practice of the avoidance of the eight worldly Dharma, this mind often produces pure actions, always action is

created against the negative mind. And those actions created with pure mind continually make the life meaningful, no matter how his outer form looks.

One person tries to become king, with a mind not living in avoidance of the eight worldly Dharmas, and another person spends his life in the most meaningful way, which helps for many future lives. The person who wants to become king, whose mind is in the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, even if he becomes king, it is not the most useful way of spending his life. His becoming king and having many possessions is the result of the previous good karma—what this person is doing is only using the result of his previous good karma, he is not making any arrangements for the future life, not making his present life meaningful, trying to bring bigger advantage, he is only using it to finish the result, the enjoyments which come from previous karma, instead of working for meaningful ways to make him better, to escape from suffering.

So this problem is something that we have now within our mind, and they often arise, often come in daily life. They are always within our mind, they often arise in our daily life. So it is necessary, it is important to be conscious of our own emotion and feelings, and as this thing arises we should treat it as we discover this problem arising; with our skill we should try to stop it arising. In this way we guide, we help ourselves, protect ourselves without relying on another person's help. In this way, we become the savior to ourselves, saving ourselves from problems. And also, we should know that as we are receiving different objects, as they are coming, we should be aware of what effect it has on the mind, what affects it.

Actually it is very fortunate to know this border, the border between what is Dharma and what is non-Dharma, what is Dharma action and what is non-Dharma action, what is Dharma mind and what is non-Dharma mind. Through these subjects we can understand these borders. So how much we suffer during this course, feeling cold, hungry, tired, pains, depends on the person, but we have spent this much life, finished this much life, and since we were born until now we haven't discovered this, the border. Many times we had the desire to do some good things, but didn't have the understanding. Many times we made mistakes, trying to meditate, many things. So I think it is very fortunate to know this border between what is Dharma action and what is non-Dharma action. With only understanding of this, even if the person doesn't understand the other subjects, it is worthwhile to spend the time at the course and experience the suffering. It is like opening a big eye.

6 p.m.

Check your own thoughts—check if the mind is attached, if the present thought is attached to the happiness of the temporal life, if it is one of the evil thoughts for one of the objects from the eight worldly Dharmas. Also check up, “For what reason am I going to meditate?”, what your thoughts think. If the thought is more concerned with the happiness of the temporal life, it is negative. If the thought is more concerned with escaping from the evil thoughts or avoiding the evil thoughts of the eight worldly Dharmas, and receiving enlightenment, ultimate peace, this thought is positive.

Now think, “I am going to meditate on the graduated path to enlightenment only for the benefit of sentient beings,” thinking more of sentient beings, thinking more of other living beings than yourself, taking other beings as more important than yourself.

Then do the visualization of Guru Shakyamuni, with white rays coming out of his holy body purifying your mental defilements, and do this purification with light coming from his holy body during the recitation of the mantra.

Then meditate on the breathing.

Then meditate on perfect human rebirth, checking what you have and what you have missing. As much as you have, try to rejoice as much as possible. If you have some missing, then you have to think you will create the causes to receive a perfect human rebirth again.

After that, then meditate on how the perfect human rebirth is highly meaningful by remembering the different results that can be achieved through Dharma practice in this perfect human rebirth, what higher actions can be created with this perfect human rebirth that other samsaric beings cannot create.

Then those persons who didn't receive explanation on this, either meditate on breathing or concentrate on your own "I," the self—how you perceive it, how you see it.

Those who received the explanations on the graduated path meditate on those.

Dedication of merits (Page 156):

Ge. Wa. Di. Yi. Nyur. Du. Dag
La. Ma. Thub. Wang. Dub. Gyur. Ne
Do. Wa. Chig. Kyang. Ma. Lu. Pa
Kyo. Kyi Sa. La. Go. Par. Shog

Second Prayer:

Chang Chub Sem Chog Rinpoche
Ma Gye Pa Nam Kye Gyar Chig
Khog No Khong Du Pe War Shog

The meaning of the last prayer is the request to receive this bodhicitta that has not been received. The complete meaning is, "May the bodhicitta received progress without degeneration, and may the bodhicitta that has not been received be received."

Day 8

Friday, November 23

9am

The highly realized great bodhisattva, Shantideva said in his teaching called *Following the Bodhisattva's Actions*, "If the bodhicitta is received, in one second the poor suffering being, who is in the bound of the samsaric prison, is called the Son of the Buddha."

It means this—when the poor suffering being who is in bondage, who is bound in samsaric prison, has the achievement of bodhicitta, in that second it receives the great name, and is called "the Son of the Buddha," and becomes a holy object right away in one second that all other human beings and

even those higher samsaric gods prostrate to, respect, and admire. Right away, when such a suffering living being receives bodhicitta, it becomes a holy object of human beings and the higher samsaric gods, a holy object of their prostrations, of their devotion, an object of their respect. No matter how that suffering being looks in outer form, even though he looks like a beggar, terribly poor, because of the power of the bodhicitta received, in one second it causes him to become holy. He becomes a holy object for other living being including those gods who have higher powers, many possessions, and control over many worlds. Even though this poor being who has achievement of bodhicitta doesn't have as many possessions and enjoyments as the higher samsaric gods, because he has bodhicitta he becomes such a holy object for them. All this is the power of bodhicitta.

Why is he called "Son of the Buddha?" One reason is because he becomes a bodhisattva, because he received bodhicitta from causal refuge. That bodhisattva is born from causal refuge. Causal refuge is the savior from whom he received the methods, the teachings that caused him to become holy, to become a bodhisattva. So the causal refuge that causes him to become holy is his guru. Who is that savior? That savior is his guru, who is oneness with every other enlightened being. So that's why he is called "Son of the Buddha." That is one way but this is a profound subject to understand—it takes another month, another meditation course.

So anyway, since it is possible for such a powerful, beneficial, holy mind to be received by living beings without depending on how it looks, without depending on how many possession it has, without depending on exterior things, as we have the time it is important to spend the life in the practice. It is important to cultivate the impulse listening to the teachings. So think, "I am going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment myself for the sake of sentient beings, to release them from suffering."

So the listening subject is the graduated path.

There are different great lamas and yogis who wrote teachings on the graduated path, such as Guru Tsong Khapa, such as Gampopa (*Thag.po.Lharije*). Not only did Guru Tsong Khapa write teachings on the graduated path, but other great gurus from other sects also wrote teachings on the graduated path. Actually the graduated path is not only something written by Guru Tsong Khapa—the actual graduated path is what was shown by Guru Shakyamuni. Ancient great pandits, such as Nagarjuna, wrote commentaries on his teachings with great detail. But even that is difficult to understand for ignorant beings, so many Tibetan great gurus wrote commentaries on it in order to make it clearer, and also condensed. Clear and condensed, so that the ignorant people whose minds are not capable of studying that whole extensive discourse of philosophical teachings written by the Indian pandits can study and practice these commentaries. These commentaries were written in condensed and clear form, containing all the subjects explained by Guru Shakyamuni and the Indian pandits and all that. But they were made clear and short for the lesser intelligent beings, so that they would find it easy to develop their wisdom by studying these teachings written by guru Tsong Khapa and many other lamas. Also, by studying these short and condensed teachings on the graduated path, by studying and practicing these, it opens the eyes of the followers' wisdom to be able to understand extensively the other wide extensive teachings written by Indian pandits, and the teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni. Anyway, by understanding these condensed short teachings written by great gurus, and by studying and practicing these, it makes other teachings easy to digest without conflict in the mind.

For instance, this great Guru Tsong Khapa, what caused him to write teachings on the graduated path? These meditations, the base, the root is from the commentary on the graduated path written by Guru Tsong Khapa. So I will tell a few words about what caused Guru Tsong Khapa to write commentaries on the graduated path.

At one time he was in a cave called “Lion Rock” or something and he was writing prayers, admiring prayers to the gurus, the lineage of the teachings. Guru Tsong Khapa saw clearly all the disciples succession of the teachings, the indirect lineage of the teachings who passed the teachings from one to another. He saw all these gurus clearly, and also he saw the great yogi who brought the teachings to Tibet, Atisha—this was after Atisha passed away. For one month great Guru Tsong Khapa saw the yogi, the Indian pandit Atisha, and two of his Tibetan disciples, two ascetic yogis, Potawa and Sherawa. Guru Tsong Khapa saw those three for one month; they had contact. It was the time after Atisha and his disciples had passed away, but for Guru Tsong Khapa, due to his great, unshakable devotion, as he was writing admiring prayers he saw great yogi Atisha and two other Tibetan ascetic yogis for one month. And later on, Potawa and Sherawa absorbed into the great yogi Atisha, and the great yogi Atisha put his palm on Guru Tsong Khapa’s head, saying, “You should work for the development of the teaching, and I will help you.”

So indirectly that caused Guru Tsong Khapa to write commentaries on the graduated path down to samadhi meditation.

But Guru Tsong Khapa didn’t write the explanation on shunyata, on penetrative insight. Later on, he was instructed by Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom, to write commentary on shunyata, penetrative insight, the absolute true nature, instructed that it would be beneficial—not so great, not so bad, but middle.

That’s all, thank you.

Yesterday we were talking about how the practice of avoiding the eight worldly Dharmas, besides helping, benefiting, bringing all happiness in future lives, also brings peace even in this life. How it brings happiness instead of bringing problems in this life, at the same time as it is practiced, is something that can be experienced by the practitioner himself. And that experience, the happiness derived from this practice in this life, is an unimaginable object, unimaginable subject for even us Westerners, who spent much life, much time, studying in the universities, or in science.

Such experience of the present happiness that is derived from this practice is not the object of the eye that can be seen like this—like the bell, the flower. It is the experience of the mind, the knowledge of the mind, a function of the mind, so that’s why, when people hear these four words, “Giving up this life,” they get a big shock. When a person who doesn’t have understanding of giving up this life or of these practices he hears “giving up this life,” it is only destroying himself, causing himself problem. Even if a person living in this practice doesn’t find a problem, the other, by just hearing the words, has a problem, feels frightened.

There is too much to talk about in terms of the benefits of this practice, even in this life, but to give just one example of how the ancient Indian yogis did, how it brings benefits even in this life—this person is the follower of one Tibetan ascetic lama, I think his name is Thagpa Gyaltsen, something, anyway he had an epidemic disease, leprosy, for a long time. He had leprosy for a long time, so because of this he was always out of the group of people. Before he was out because of the disease,

only because of that, so he made the decision to make it worthwhile. He made an offering of all the possessions he had. He thought he would beg, spend his life in begging, live life on the road and beg, and only recite mantras, the Compassionate Buddha's mantra, we call them *manis*, which has six words *Om mani padme hum*. So he made the decision to sit on the road and beg and recite mantras; he made the complete decision. Near the road there was a big cliff, so while he was in that cave, when he fell asleep the first night he had a dream. In the dream he was picked out of a river by a white man, saved from the river, and much water came out of his body. Then the next day he woke up and all the pus went out of his body, without treating anything with medicine, and he was cured. He got better by the decision, by such a pure decision made with a pure mind that avoided the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, the pure thought that avoided the evil thought that is attached to temporal pleasures, to these eight objects, which means he didn't care when he made this decision—whatever of the eight different objects he met, he didn't care, not being attached.

This is just one example, just to have an idea. So such dangerous sickness, without depending on medical treatment, is cured by his practice. But there are so many stories of ancient yogis, so many things. The best way to experience is through practice. If you want to experience, the best way is through individual practice.

This is also useful, the quote that guru Shakyamuni said, to think of frequently in our daily life, it is also helpful to remember, "If one desires all happiness, then avoid all evil desires. If one avoids all evil desires, one will receive the highest, most supreme happiness. As long as one follows evil desires one will never be satisfied, one becomes never satisfied." The dissatisfied person, by following wisdom, achieves satisfaction in the opposite. One who is satisfied by wisdom is happier than one who is not satisfied by having evil desire. The one who is satisfied by wisdom is never controlled by craving, never becomes controlled by craving. So the happiness that is received, that is received by enjoying the Dharma practice, the happiness that is derived from Dharma practice, done with wisdom, can never compare to the happiness that is derived from enjoyment with desire that is attached to temporal needs, such as food, drinking, music, and enjoying women. There's nothing to compare.

For instance, like this—samsaric ordinary happiness that is received with evil desire for these objects doesn't often arise, permanently arise, it only arises if the object is nearby. But the happiness of the Dharma can be permanently increased, it can be increased at all times without depending on external objects. This ordinary happiness that is derived from external objects doesn't cover the whole body; but the happiness that is achieved by enjoying the Dharma with wisdom, that covers the whole body, and such pure happiness, the happiness that is derived from Dharma practice, that causes one to receive the transcendental realizations of the noble beings, which are called the possession of the noble beings, in the future of this life (i.e. before death).

And the enjoyment of enjoying the happiness that is received through Dharma practice can never be finished, can never be ended. The pure happiness that is derived from Dharma practice—how can that never be finished by enjoying it? As one approaches the higher path gradually, it increases; and when one achieves enlightenment, the work for Dharma practice, the work for the enlightenment is finished, is ended. But the enjoyment that is received from Dharma practice is never finished; it is continual. When there is the achievement of the ultimate goal, enlightenment, it is not like this, as some people think—becoming nothingness, like space, the being becoming non-existent. It is not like this, not like this, not like this—if so, then there would be no way to help other beings.

So anyway, the highest pleasure, the highest happiness, is that of enlightenment, so when that is achieved the work for enlightenment is finished, the work is ended. And the stage of enlightenment, the stage that is in the nature of supreme happiness, is unchangeable, can never fall down. For there is not one single reason for that to change, to come back—no cause, no reason. That enlightened living being continually exists, exists forever in the stage. Because there's no atom of delusion, there's no atom of illusive mind, so there's no reason to change the stage, to come down. There is no creator that makes it come down, and there's no higher stage than that, so that the mind would go beyond the stage of enlightenment. Therefore, as the enlightened stage never changes, so the happiness received from Dharma practice never finishes, it never finishes forever. So there's no way to compare that happiness received from Dharma practice with the impure happiness that is received by enjoying the objects of evil desire.

Contrary to this, samsaric happiness never lasts, it often ends. For instance, we can discover in our own daily life, whatever we do—in the happiness that we receive from objects of evil desire, people, living beings, non-living things such as places, food, many things; people, friends, many things. This we know, this we can see—the pleasure received from the object of evil desire doesn't last.

So, that's why we keep trying to work for it, that's why there are so many problems in the West. Not only in the West, but also in the East. As samsaric happiness, ordinary happiness doesn't last as does the happiness received from Dharma practice, so the work, the action, the samsaric work, the work of the evil desire, the work that is created by evil desire, which is samsaric work, never finishes. It didn't finish yet—as it has no beginning it still didn't end—the work, the action of evil desire. As it has no beginning it still hasn't ended, didn't stop. So just as in the past example, it is the same thing in the future—as long as we don't stop following evil desire it always continues like this. For instance, like this—after we were born, from the first day, we enjoy food, wear clothes, enjoy the temporal needs for only one day in order to cover the whole rest life. Such a thing is impossible—to enjoy food and clothes for one day to cover the happiness of the rest of the life without working for it; spending the rest of the life working for food and clothing and for many things, other pleasures—this is impossible, there's no such thing.

So why do we keep on working? Because the happiness keeps on finishing. So continually we have kept on working, we are only circling round. It's like we are running only on a circular road, always, which is not new. The circular road is not new, and the person goes round and round and round. So the samsaric evil desires that the person works with are not new, nothing new.

In terms of Dharma knowledge, happiness always increases and lasts, and the work finishes, but ordinary samsaric happiness always finishes although the work is never ceased; it is completely opposite. The Dharma possessions can be carried, taken to the future life, in the future life; but none of the possessions of the desire that is attached can be carried to the future life. Dharma possessions are happiness such as merits created by Dharma practice. The evil desire, the work of the evil desires only brings the suffering of many future lives, besides the present.

The ordinary pleasures that are received from samsaric action, samsaric work with evil desire, from the enjoyment of the evil desire are merely called, just given the name, "happiness" and "pleasure." In fact, they are not pleasure. The happiness that is received from the enjoyment of the five senses with evil desire, with the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is just given the name "pleasure," but in fact it is not pleasure. Just as scratching the leprosy, or itching the leprosy, that disease, scratching the itching where there's leprosy, is just given the name "pleasure," but it is not real

pleasure. If you scratch once, or three, four, five, six, or seven times, instead of increasing the pleasure you scratch with the belief that it is real pleasure the first time. But as you scratch the second, third, and fourth time and so on, then you experience suffering, then double suffering. Just like this—all happiness, all the ordinary happiness that is derived from the enjoyment of the object with evil desire is just like this. As you try to work harder, in place of increasing happiness, it always turns into suffering, just like this scratching. It is the same thing with food, for the person who feels extremely hungry—at first he finds some comfort and so he thinks it's real pleasure, so as he thinks this he keeps on eating and eating, and then becomes uncomfortable. There are thousands of examples, thousands and thousands.

So the whole point is this, what one should understand is this, as Guru Shakyamuni said, “If one desires real happiness one should avoid evil desire.” Because what keeps us busy, working every day

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Question: Could you please repeat that.

As Guru Shakyamuni said in his teaching, “If one desires all happiness (this means the happiness of enlightenment, the happiness of the path), then one should avoid all the evil desires.”

What is the reason he said this, why it is necessary to avoid the evil desires? Because the evil desires of the eight worldly Dharmas are the greatest disturbance to receive enlightenment, and to the happiness that is received from Dharma practice. Dharma practice comes when the person fights with the desires of the eight worldly Dharmas, not when one is following the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas; when the person tries to destroy the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, then there is Dharma practice. Therefore Guru Shakyamuni said avoid all evil desires for the achievement of supreme happiness, the ultimate happiness that is received from Dharma practice.

And also, what causes us to often suffer in worldly problems—problems with societies, with oneself, between two people, a couple, problem with the country, and all these problems that often arise in daily life, problems that cause us not to relax, that keep us always busy in the actions of the daily life, always circling round in daily life. For instance, what keeps us busy working for the temporal pleasures? The creator of all these problems is the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas; this evil thought is the cause of everything. So avoiding this evil thought, living in this practice, causes us to cease, to gradually cease these problems we have experienced without beginning, the problems of daily life. So as Guru Shakyamuni instructed, as we want to practice Dharma it is necessary to experiment, to practice this.

There was one yogi in Tibet who, before in his earlier life was always stealing and harming other people. He had forty fields, and he was always stealing, carrying three or four knives, harming other beings, stealing things. He had many enemies in that country when he has doing that, and he was given the nickname *Dik*, forty evils. He had forty fields, and *Dik* means doing all kinds of evil actions, so he had so many enemies in that country. After that he changed his life completely by living in pure Dharma practice. He gave his possessions to the monastery, to the monks, and he lived a beggar's life, as an ascetic beggar. He looked exactly as a beggar, wearing torn old clothes, which was the opposite of his earlier life. In that country there was much fighting and danger of confiscating possessions from families, so all the people were frightened and buried their possessions in the mountains. So this person wearing just an old yellow robe and walking around that country and bearing only one possession, a vessel for water, a pot, said that this was his

possession that had to be buried. At that time no one was an enemy to him. In the same place that he had so many enemies before, later he had no problem. This is because of the power of his sincere Dharma practice—the mind that has no defect of the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas.

The great Guru Sambhava, who brought the teachings to Tibet, who subdued and destroyed the evil beings who disturbed the establishment of the teachings of Buddhism in Tibet, this great yogi said, with his experience, “The meditator not realizing his mind is a liar, and goes on wrong path at the time of death.”

If one is really a meditator, there is no danger at the death time, no danger of going on the wrong path. A meditator not realizing his mind is telling a lie, and at the death time goes on the wrong path, when he dies he goes on the wrong path.

As this great yogi said with his experience, understanding mind, the mental subject, mind is what should be discovered. And what is not discovered and leads him on the wrong path at death time? Not discovering the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas as the creator, as the evil thought, the distracting mind; not discovering that the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is the destroyer of the present peace and the peace of the future lives. If we want to take the right path, get on the right path, if we want to be free at time of death, if we want to be free in our choices at time of death to take the path, the practice of avoiding the evil thoughts of the eight worldly Dharmas is necessary, is the most important thing. The evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is the greatest disturbance at death time. What makes us to go in the wrong way, not be free in our choice of which way to go? That is the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas.

Therefore, as this great yogi said, many meditators, because of not discovering the actual practice, the essential Dharma practice, not understanding and not making the actual Dharma practice are supposed to be free at death time to take the path he desires, but actually go on the wrong path. That is because the practices that they made in their lifetime were created and done with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, even though the subject they practice is a tantric higher subject, yoga practice, controlling nadis, opening chakras, trying to achieve magical powers such as transforming things, magical powers to fly, there are many things.

Anyway, like this—if I say clearly, it is like this. You have delicious food made in front of you, but you put poison in all the delicious food. So what does it do to you, how does it affect you? Only harm. Just like this example—practicing any of those higher subjects, such as the meditation on flame burning, I think something that is called *tummo*, many people know, even if the subject is a higher subject, because you practice it with a poisonous mind, so your practice is not clean, is impure because the practice is done with impure mind, with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, and it becomes poison to you, just as the delicious food becomes poison to you. It is the person's fault, it is no one else's fault. So instead, this practice, this poisonous practice, in place of gaining profit, making arrangement, and creating the cause for enlightenment in future lifetimes, it is only creating the cause of suffering. I mean the practice such as those subjects of a person whose mind is not living in the practice of avoiding the evil thoughts of the eight worldly Dharmas. In other words, a person who practices such higher things, such as tantric subject, such as methods to achieve magical powers, to open chakras, control nadis—there are many other things anyway. Practicing these higher techniques, but with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. However high that subject is that the person practices, no matter, it all becomes a poisonous subject, just life. Just as the person who receives delicious food and then puts poison in it and eats the food is

harmed, so the practice of the higher practices with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas becomes harmful. If you don't practice with a wise mind, if you think, "What is the highest technique, the most fantastic practice?"—something that makes you fly or do something without understanding the fundamental practice or teaching, there is the danger that you will waste your whole life. Not only will you waste your whole life—actually, wasting the life is okay. If one doesn't do, it is a little better than spending the life creating negative actions—so the person makes the whole life black, only creating the cause for suffering.

But the practice of bodhicitta has no danger at all, it is something with which to work in your mind, it is not something to show to other people. It does not depend on some kind of preparation of your body. The ancient yogis, such as Guru Tsong Khapa, many other great Indian and Tibetan yogis, such as Milarepa, all practiced those higher subjects on the basis of bodhicitta and the mind renouncing samsara, on the basis of renunciation of samsara, and the realization of the absolute true nature. Then, on the basis of this, any higher tantric subject that is practiced brings no danger, everything becomes so powerful, becomes a powerful cause to receive enlightenment quickly. This is the way that many of those great yogis received enlightenment in this lifetime.

It's like this—like a baby. As the baby wants to eat meat, without having strong teeth, without even having teeth, as he wants to eat those strong foods that it cannot bite or digest, then in place of helping it may harm the baby, cause danger to the life. So until the baby gets strong enough to eat those heavy foods, it is better to have milk or other foods that he can digest and that do not give harm. It is just like this with the practice. We should not be astonished, excited by the subject; we should be excited by the benefits of our individual practice, by clearly knowing. If our practice is pure, the cause for ultimate peace for the future lives, then it is a subject by which you can be pleased or be excited. But many people never care for the benefits of the actions, they never check up whether it helps or whether it destroys, because such subjects are the object of the mind, not the object of eye, so people have no interest in the benefits, they don't care, they just continue the subject, excited by how it is done. Such excitement about the subject, about practicing without understanding the essential practice, without understanding the effect of the actions, only creating the cause to destroy the peace of the present life and the future life. If those higher practices, tantric subjects, are practiced on the basis of the fundamental practice, fundamental realization, then even a little action, even if we don't spend such time doing those higher tantric practices, even if we do short practices, they naturally become a quick cause for the achievement of enlightenment.

It is like this—for instance, a person going to the West, to the States. If he hasn't got enough money, he can't go by airplane, he has to go some other way. If he has enough money, which is the first thing he should have, then he can get there quickly. So the fundamental realizations are like the money—bodhicitta, fully renounced mind, and realization of the absolute nature are like the money. Taking an airplane is like taking the tantric path, so the whole thing depends on money. But that example we see clearly. It is important we see this subject clearly since we want to achieve enlightenment, the holy beings' state of enlightenment. But these three—bodhicitta, fully renounced mind, and realization of the absolute true nature—the realization of these depends on the practice of avoiding the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. So, in those examples of the ancient yogis that I talked about this morning, the one who had leprosy, for them even the temporal sufferings and temporal problems were cured without depending on external treatments, were cured by this practice. But there are many examples, it is true. Why could those ancient yogis lead an ascetic life in happiness without the mind being in confusion? Why could they make a free choice, not forced by their parents or something? Why could they can make a free choice about how to spend their life?

Because of the mind living in the practice of avoiding the evil thoughts of the eight worldly Dharmas. This gives you the energy to spend an ascetic life, and by leading that life to achieve the realizations through retreat. There are many stories of ancient Indian yogis, how they lived ascetic lives, how they achieved realizations, many interesting, helpful stories.

So that's how this practice, giving up this life, giving up the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, brings happiness, brings peace in this life—this is important to know. Many people make mistake, thinking that giving up this life means one only has to spend whole present life in suffering. Some people get a feeling like this—in fact, a person who practices is not like this, it is completely opposite to what they think. From the practitioner's side, the person who says such things, with such limited mind, is only an object of laughter, an object of ridicule. A practitioner sees it as funny, because his experience is not like that, so he sees what the other says as funny. It's important not to follow this evil thought, to be conscious in our daily life and to try to stop following the evil thought as much as possible. If we don't try to stop it, just following the evil thought just like a dog following a man—the man can cause danger to dog, kill the dog for food, but the dog follows because he expects to receive some food, something for his happiness, but is not sure that the person will do that. So if you follow the evil thought without checking it as it arises, then you can make mistake, just as that person dancing and waving the stick did. So you must be careful.

Like this, if you talk about our situation. First, when we meet a person, we are extremely happy, attached, almost like becoming oneness, very happy. But after a few days we are not even talking, we see the person as the greatest monster, as an enemy. First time like that, second time like that. That is, it becomes ... the whole situation is created by the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. If you check up, it's true, very true. I'm not telling any stories, now I am talking about our own story. This is because the mind is not being careful, following the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. The second one is confusion; the first one is also confusion, but we don't think it's confusion. The whole thing is caused by the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas—you may get bored by this but I am interested in knowing this. It doesn't matter if you don't realize it now, but as you continue your practice and meditate you may realize it afterwards.

So some things—I think I am a little bit selfish, spending more time talking about the subject in which I am interested. Actually, if you really understand the subject, we can see our life as a movie—funny, interesting, awful, disgusting—it's just a matter of seeing somewhere, without electricity, and without screen or film; but we use our remembrance of the life as film.

For instance, it would be useful to use some techniques like this when there is a problem, but the treatment should be used according to the power of your mind. When there is a mental and physical problem such as a headache, stomach pain, feeling empty, whenever there is such a problem, suffering, use this technique. What happens is that even though you are suffering you are making it worthwhile, your experiencing suffering becomes Dharma practice, you are making the situation useful to you and also to other beings. Think, "The wrong conception (if you write this it is useful) of the self-existent "I" and self-cherishing mind. The dualistic mind has been causing me to experience all the different types of samsaric suffering that exist (actually the number of sufferings is infinite). So those three negative minds have been causing me, obliging me to experience, have been giving me all these infinite, different types of sufferings that exist, and letting me suffer from beginningless lifetimes until now, and it has been preventing me from receiving happiness (this happiness is ordinary happiness, samsaric happiness) and enlightenment, ultimate peace, the cessation of samsara, and achievement, realization of the path, such as bodhicitta, fully renounced

mind, and realization of the absolute true nature. And these negative minds will continually do the same thing (this means these negative minds will oblige me, will continually give me the whole infinite, different types of sufferings that oblige me to experience, oblige me to suffer) in the future. Besides, these three negative minds also prevent me from receiving ordinary happiness and the higher result, enlightenment, ultimate peace, cessation of samsara and realizations of the path such as bodhicitta, fully renounced mind, and realization of absolute true nature. Besides, these negative minds give me suffering and preventing ordinary happiness and those higher results (which I mentioned twice).” Then, as you are thinking of this, you should feel it. Just using the words, but not really feeling doesn’t make it effective. As you are saying you should clearly see it, try to feel it; as you say the words you should feel as if those three negative minds really gave you suffering and prevented those results and will in the future. These are only few words, but if you really understand how those three negative minds cause all problems, if you understand more deeply, even if you say a few words it will be very effective due to your understanding—the deeper the understanding, the greater the effect to your mind, the more clearly you see those negative minds as the real enemy.

As you see the next person who does something bad to you, the more you think of how he disturbs you, the more that anger and hatred for that person gets stronger and stronger, so you really want to kill him, you don’t want him to exist any more. As soon as you see him, such strong anger and hatred arises. So just as you use yourselves in a negative way, which only harms you and other beings, if just like this you use the real enemy, the inner enemy, experiencing the suffering result of negative actions and negative mind, it only protects you from negative mind and the suffering result. To make such useful practice, this is really a very powerful practice, something that can only be worked by the mind, not depending on hands, legs, or many other things. More hate, more aversion, so the more deeply we think of the reasons, the different kinds of problems it gives in infinite times, that much aversion is stronger, and keeps you away from creating the karma and the suffering result. You guide yourself.

Then think like this—after you think that those negative minds gave suffering, prevented happiness in the past and future and even now, so think seeing the negative mind as the real enemy, “So this suffering that I am experiencing now, they obliged me to experience this suffering, they gave it.” Then think as in the example, you being really angry, hitting, breaking other person, like this, try to think in this way, “Those negative minds, they should really suffer, I am giving the suffering to them, my suffering to them, they should suffer because they caused suffering in all past lives, I should retaliate, I must take revenge.” As you are so angry and strong, emotional, to beat this person, so you should be to the real enemy, the delusions. How effective this practice is to your mind in fighting the delusions depends on how strong your understanding. This thought is never involved in the eight worldly Dharmas, so this thought is pure thought and this practice of fighting the delusions is pure Dharma practice. Besides, to experience sufferings becomes the cause of meditation, worthwhile, beneficial to you, to stop the negative mind.

Also, this gives you the chance to meditate, the chance to practice Dharma. First of all the suffering doesn’t disturb Dharma practice because you put the suffering in the Dharma practice. And also, this practice can also cut off the problem—that depends on how well you understand the shortcomings, how strongly you see the delusions as terribly bad, how in beginningless previous lives it gave those infinite sufferings. For instance, like when a person is meditating he may feel thirsty or hungry, something which disturbs the meditation and the Dharma practice. The problem, pain, or whatever it is, is used with this practice, with strong feeling. By using this technique, as you give the suffering back to the delusions, those three negative mind, there is a feeling that it is not

yours, you wouldn't feel as strong as you were feeling before, and it would decrease and soon it would stop, and afterwards you wouldn't know how it disappeared.

Anyway, if you use such techniques as this, instead of disturbing the Dharma practice these things become useful, and it cuts off the problems, too. Then there is no need to drink water, sitting in one place—the mind found the problem, but cured itself. Such a nice way.

But myself experiencing and you being cured is not possible. The three negative minds, if I repeat once more, the wrong conception of the self-existent "I", self-cherishing thought, dualistic conception, (dualistic mind)—each one has much explanation. These three, (for instance, this, in Hinayana practice, doing this practice of the lower being and the middle being, as the teaching of the graduated path is divided into the three levels according to the level of the intelligence, for those levels, the main thing to be cut off is the wrong conception of the self-existent "I". Then in the bodhisattva practice, what has to be cut off is the self-cherishing mind. Then in tantric practice what has to be cut off is the dualistic mind).

Even if we are not practicing tantra, this technique of seeing those three negative minds as enemy and giving the suffering back to them is very useful, and helps a great deal for the practice of bodhicitta and tantra. This is something that helps for all those different levels of practice.

6 p.m.

Check up your own thought, what it's thinking now—if it is the evil thought that is attached to temporal pleasure, then think that this is the cause of suffering, also check for what reason you are meditating. Think, try to cultivate the pure thought, "Being attached to temporal happiness and to higher samsaric pleasures is the cause of all samsaric sufferings. Therefore, it is necessary to cut off the attachment, this negative desire attached to samsaric higher pleasures, in order to release from samsara. Oneself being out of samsara is not enough because many other beings are in samsaric suffering and they need to be helped, guided from suffering. As I received all past, present, and future happiness, perfection, and realizations by the kindness of all sentient beings, I am responsible to guide them from suffering as they are in suffering and unable to guide themselves. Therefore, I must receive enlightenment to release them from all the sufferings. To receive enlightenment for the sake of all the sentient beings, I must complete the practice of the graduated path, the realizations of the graduated path. Therefore I will meditate on the graduated path with preparation, reciting mantra, visualizing Guru Shakyamuni, meditating on breathing." Then visualize Guru Shakyamuni and purify with the light coming from his holy body, that which in essence is all his knowledge, supreme power, and great compassion, while the recitation of mantra is made.

Day 9

Saturday, November 24th

9 a.m.

"If one possesses bodhicitta, it is easy not having a beautiful shape and ugly shape, and it is easy not receiving things and not having respect. It is easy even if there are no other virtues." I can repeat again—"it is easy" means it is okay—if one possesses bodhicitta it is alright not having a beautiful shape or ugly shape, it is okay not receiving things and not having respect, it is okay not having other virtues.

This means not having other virtuous actions created without bodhicitta. So it is said by the great bodhisattva, who is the tutor of His Holiness The Dalai Lama, his name is Nagi Lama, his Tibetan name is Tenzin Gyatso. He usually lives in Bodhgaya. He, this bodhisattva, is very hidden practitioner, how much great knowledge he has achieved. Before, for many years, he studied in Tibet under many great gurus, and he lived life as a saddhu in India for a very long time, living an ascetic life, but with great knowledge achieved. Before, he came to the Tibetan monastery at Bodhgaya as a saddhu but the monks didn't recognize him. He asked for a place to stay and they let him stay there and then he left. Then His Holiness took teachings from him on bodhicitta and many things, so then he became famous and many people wanted to take teachings from him. But before, no one recognized what he was. I also took teachings from him on bodhicitta. Once I was alone taking teachings from him, and a postman came to give a letter. So he knocked on the door, which was locked. No one opened the door quickly, so the postman knocked more and more strongly on the door while I was taking teachings from him, so finally we opened the door. He also told me it would be good to translate the teachings on bodhicitta, *Following the Bodhisattva's Actions*. He instructed that teaching bodhicitta would never cause any confusion to people's minds. Unlike any other subject, it is a subject that people who have no interest in Dharma have to agree on when they hear the training in bodhicitta.

So if the person possesses bodhicitta, that is the best beautiful shape, the best beautiful color. If the person possesses bodhicitta the person has received the best possession. The outer beautiful shape can cause many problems, but the real beautiful shape, bodhicitta, cannot cause problems. Receiving external things can cause problems, but having bodhicitta can never cause problems. Same thing, receiving respect from outside can cause many problems—greed, pride, negative mind—but bodhicitta can never cause such a problem.

If there is bodhicitta possession, even if the person doesn't create other virtuous actions, just having bodhicitta, it is okay. Because as long as the person has bodhicitta, all actions are okay, there is no way to involve the action in self, so the person intuitively, all the time, creates virtuous action, whatever it is—eating, sleeping, walking, none of these are involved in self. So even if he doesn't create other virtuous actions, he continually creates merits.

And one thing, secondly, like this—the achievement of the bodhicitta can cause one to receive a rebirth that has a beautiful shape, good-looking, without purposely aiming for that. Due to bodhicitta such a rebirth can be received. By the way, through the achievement of bodhicitta, without purposely desiring, aiming, these things can be naturally received. In the same way, with bodhicitta, without seeking or expecting anything, admiration from other people can be naturally received. Therefore, it is important for us to receive such beneficial thoughts. Therefore, it is wise to make preparation, arrangement, even from now. If you don't make preparation from now, how long we live it is not sure, so it is skillful, wise to make arrangements, plant seeds from now on. So think, “It is not enough for my present life to be happy, and also to receive a higher samsaric rebirth in the future lifetime; that is not enough, for myself to be out of samsara, I must receive enlightenment for the benefit of the sentient beings. Therefore, I must achieve the whole graduated path. To achieve all this I must fully know this, I must fully know the full explanation, the whole meaning. Therefore, I am going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path.”

The great saint, called Lingrepa, said, “In the samsaric superstitious city, the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas-zombie (I think six years ago I knew this word) is running; there is the fearful cemetery. If the lama makes the points equally, it should be done there,” (that means in that city).

Making the points equal, that is, the subject to make equal is the eight worldly Dharmas. If the lama makes the object equal then should be done there. What should be made equal? The eight worldly Dharmas. Where? In the samsaric superstitious city. It is also interesting and it has great meaning, gives much instruction on how to practice Dharma. So this is the most frightful cemetery; as this great yogi said, “There is the most fearful cemetery.” Usually ordinary people see the external cemetery where there are corpses burnt or buried, whatever; usually people have fear of things such as the external zombie. But we never have fear, we ordinary people never get frightened the actual cemetery; the actual zombie—the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas that causes much confusion and problems. If a person who sees, a person who sincerely practices, one who fully understands Dharma, they, instead of being frightened of the external cemetery and those things, they are frightened of the inner cemetery, the inner zombie. By being frightened, by recognizing the inner zombie or the inner cemetery, and being frightened of this, it only causes them to achieve the realizations quicker, to achieve the practice quickly. If there were no internal cemetery, no internal zombie, there also wouldn't be the external cemetery.

So what we are supposed to do is to make equal the eight worldly Dharmas, which is recognized as such an important, powerful practice in many other teachings written by many other great gurus and yogis. This, making equal the eight worldly Dharmas, is the fundamental practice done by great yogi Milarepa, such as Thagpo Lharje, who is called is Gampopa, such as Guru Tsong Khapa, and many other yogis—Naropa, Tilopa. This is their fundamental practice. Depending on the practitioner, their way of using—when there's pleasure, when there's suffering, temporal pleasure, meeting sweet or ugly sound, receiving materials, not receiving materials, personal praise, abuse—depending on practitioner, he can use, he can make equal, his mind can make these things equal within his mind. There are many different ways to use them, depending on the practitioner. A person who practices tantra can use the tantra way, such as putting the whole daily life into tantric practice. A person who doesn't practice tantra but practices, who follows only the bodhisattva action, practicing bodhicitta, when he meets these objects, besides making equal in his mind, he can use them in a Mahayana way, in Mahayana practice, in bodhisattva actions. And those who only try to receive the cessation of samsara, do not follow bodhisattva action, also have to make these objects equal within their minds by fighting the evil thoughts. So those beings, as they meet the objects, they use them for the practice of Dharma which is the cause of receiving liberation. There is a way to use these things depending on the practitioner—like this.

So as the person meets the different objects, the eight worldly Dharmas, he can use it in a beneficial way by using the techniques that we discussed yesterday. There are techniques that I discovered while meditating, and I found that many times they were really helpful, beneficial, and there are many other techniques that are written in this book and not written. But of course, any realization, any positive experience is not something self-known, is not something intuitive without depending on the guru, without depending on the guru's actions. There are different actions of the guru's holy body, speech, and mind and so on. So when there are temporal sufferings like that, try to use those techniques.

For instance, we have to experience, to bear some troubles, some difficulty—physical difficulty, mental difficulty—to receive enlightenment. It is worthwhile suffering, experiencing or bearing the difficulty for the achievement of that. You see, experiencing temporal difficulty can be ended. As one approaches the higher path, enlightenment, the whole problem becomes less and less, decreased. What you are bearing, experiencing, only helps—you are suffering now but it helps—it

helps you to completely cease the suffering that has no beginning. So, you are using the temporal sufferings in such a beneficial way instead of creating confusion, upset, and worries. This is the way that most ordinary worldly people do—instead of making the situation better, they create more problem for themselves in their minds, more confusion. It is impossible to achieve enlightenment without going through any difficulties. Especially, it is impossible to achieve the ultimate goal, ultimate peace, by following the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, without bearing the difficulties of avoiding the eight worldly Dharmas.

It is like this, with a two-pointed needle we can't sew the cloth (i.e. a needle without an eye). So the same thing, it is impossible to achieve ultimate peace, enlightenment, by following the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. The evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas and the Dharma practice of avoiding the evil thought of eight worldly Dharmas is opposite, is always opposite. So the person, whatever he does, meditates, and whatever he does, as long as the mind is in the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, he is a worldly person, this is what a worldly person is. As long as his mind is involved in the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, he is a worldly person; No matter what he does, his action—meditating, preaching—is evil action. He is a worldly person, not a Dharma practitioner. So therefore, the great ancient Indian pandits and the great Tibetan yogis always instructed their followers what is necessary to have first to practice Dharma, the first step. That is the avoidance of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas.

Like this, if I tell one story of one of the ancient yogis who practiced this. This is the same person who I was talking yesterday, whose early life was very evil—day time thieving, night time robbing. One person had many fields that gave him some amount of wheat, crops—forty tons of wheat from the fields. So at night he always stole from the families of the village, and always had four or five knives. He also had a field that gave him that much quantity of wheat, but he still life difficult, not finding enough to eat; he also has many enemies. Although he carried many weapons, had many difficulties, later he changed his life by meeting holy gurus living in the practice, by practicing the graduated path himself. Anyway, the story is this: in his later life he had his bhikshu robes and no other things, and he spent his life in a cave doing pure practices. One day, there was some kind of invitation to one monastery, offering curd. All the people were lined up, and he was somewhere down the last line. The people offering the curd came, and he saw much curd going into the cups of the people who were first in line, and he was maybe too much attached in the curd and was afraid he wouldn't get any. He checked up his motivation, and then turned his bowl upside down and refused the curd. This was to punish his negative mind, to fight to the negative mind, because the negative mind says, "Missing curd, pouring too much to others," all these worries, "The negative mind was trying to destroy you, destroy your peace," so instead of following the negative mind he fought the negative mind. This mind is not involved in the eight worldly Dharmas, in those evil thoughts.

And another example—one day he was in a family's house, thieving. Something unconsciously happened, because he had done so many times before in his early life. So his hand was in the sack, and all of a sudden he discovered he was thieving, so he made noise, called the family, "There's a thief!" And while his hand was in the sack he showed that there was the thief. It sounds silly, but actually he was practicing purely, trying to fight the negative mind, the evil thoughts, trying to fight the mind that is attached to the happiness of the temporal life.

It is easy to understand also, for instance, when you read the great yogi Milarepa's biography you understand how much he took trouble, how hard he practiced under his great guru Marpa, completely dedicating his whole life to his hands. By practicing so hard like that, all the negativity

and sinfulness was completely purified in one lifetime. By building the nine-storied tower—many times he built it, and then again his great guru told him to ruin it and leave the stones in the original places; so he ruined it completely, and then again built it—this was done three or four times. Not only the great yogi Milarepa, but also Naropa and many others did such a hard practice, they went through the experience of the hardships of the practice of Dharma and living the ascetic life. So just this gives a good example. It is good to take, as we read those biographies, why he had to experience, why he had to go through the hard practice—this is important to know, why he had to go through such hardships for the achievement of enlightenment in one lifetime, it helps you to understand how to practice. For a long time, I think many people know, even though he met the guru, he didn't receive any oral teachings from his guru but only the physical work, for a long time.

If you wait to practice Dharma until you find comfort, no problems, until there is no confusion in the mind, you may not find any time. Of course you will find mental and physical problems in meditation. According to the power of your mind, your mind practicing Dharma, it is good not to follow the evil thoughts and to treat them by your own technique, by your own mind which is the psychologist. As you find trouble, if you treat it only by working with your own mind, you are your own psychologist, the best psychologist. But I am not judging or complaining that one need not depend on external treatments, that this is negative, I am not saying this. You can control the suffering by the power of your mind—then it is good to do like this for the practitioner. When it cannot be controlled by the power of your mind, then take the external treatment. But what is negative is taking the external treatment with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, so that treatment should be done with the pure thought of avoiding the eight worldly Dharmas, that treatment should be done for the life to exist in order to practice Dharma. So this motive, to receive enlightenment for accomplishing that Dharma practice, is necessary; for that, to have longer life is necessary. If you do the treatment with this motive, which has the achievement of enlightenment as its final aim, then it becomes a beneficial action, a positive action, because you are having the treatment to have longer time to practice Dharma, so such action is not negative.

Then when you hear personal praise, admiration, which makes you burn, your heart breaking, when you meet these objects, try to be conscious of what is happening within your mind. As some people are admiring, praising, saying beautiful things, try to check up within your mind. Try to keep your wounds—for instance, if you have wound on your hand, when there is something going on, people moving, it may get touched, bigger, when there is a crowd you have to take care of it and keep it from danger. So like this, the mind is very dangerous, like a wound—when you are with people, and also when you are alone, you have to take care of the mind, otherwise there is the danger that it will get bigger. But if you don't take care of your mind, then there's the danger of all kinds of things happening with mind, then speech, then body.

So when you meet this object, speech, admiration, try to think, try to visualize it as a thunderbolt that destroys things, or as a red-hot sting, like a needle, long, red-hot; or sometimes like a thunderbolt that breaks things, destroys. You don't have to say anything, you can still listen, but still work within your mind, because the problem is in your mind. If you visualize like this, these interesting words that cause your pride to get bigger and also cause greed to arise, many other things, so at the same time as you visualize in that form, the situation in your mind would be quite different. Before your mind would be lifting up, like a piece of paper lifted by the wind. The mind is like a piece of paper. The paper has no power, has to go wherever the wind pushes it, takes it. So just by changing the object, visualizing that, all of a sudden it changes your mind, it comes down, relaxed, peaceful.

After you visualize that, then think like this—this object, this has been causing me, obliging me to suffer, to experience the infinite sufferings in samsara for beginningless lifetimes, preventing all happiness, enlightenment, and realizations. Same thing, this will give suffering, oblige me to experience the infinite sufferings of samsara in the future, and prevent enlightenment and happiness. (The object is the praise, not the thunderbolt). So by checking how it destroys, then it makes no interest in the beautiful words that he says, no attachment.

Then think, “This hot red sting or thunderbolt, compared to this, this is nothing, because even if it is put in the body it can only harm this present life’s body, not the future life’s bodies. But the praise and admiration obliges me to experience the infinite sufferings of samsara in countless times, preventing happiness, realization, and enlightenment, and would do the same in the future, and also it is giving harm now, in the present. So, this red hot sting, this is nothing compared with that.” If you think strongly, not only the words, then it will be very useful. No matter how much you listen to that, no problem in your mind, no confusion—it is peaceful, relaxed.

Same thing when you receive gifts, things which break your heart, again things that make your mind lift up, something that can’t be pressed down. Also when we receive objects, material things, there is confusion—if you are attached; if you are not attached then there is no problem. Concrete, material things you can visualize as red-hot burning coal, and think similarly as before—“This red hot coal would give harm only to this present life, but the material would prevent all achievements, perfection, happiness, and oblige me to experience sufferings.” This way, actually if you really check up with your experience, this is a really powerful method that instantly helps right away, cures the problem right away, that always keeps your mind in peace, relaxed, away from the attachment arising. And this practice is pure sincere practice, never involved in the eight worldly Dharmas; this is a serious practice, creating the cause for enlightenment.

Even if one recites mantra—of course, mantra is very beneficial, and contains much teaching—but, while you are with such dangerous objects, reciting mantra in order to stop attachment won’t instantly stop the problem. Of course, it definitely helps to decrease negative mind.

Even if you try to read Dharma books, if you are with dangerous objects, it won’t cut the problem right away. This, you can check up now, we don’t have to bring the problem, we have the problem in the mind.

For instance, just this example—take a man who has everything, all possessions, but when there is such confusion in his mind none of his possession, even tiny as a grain of rice, nothing helps to cut the confusion. He can only follow the evil thought, no matter how much value the possessions have, they cannot cut the problem right away, they cannot cure the problem. But the simple hippie who has no possessions like the other person—I mean mind simple, not having possessions—who tries to practice this, has the most valuable possession, the most valuable method to cut off such problems right away. This value can’t be compared to all the possessions that person has. Even trillions of dollars doesn’t have this knowledge, doesn’t have this value. This is the way, if you really want to make the life happy. Doing this practice really makes the life happy, peaceful, and also other future lives.

For instance, like this—again a story of that yogi. In his later life, he spent his time an ascetic life in a cave, in solitude, without any possessions. In early life he had many possessions, and he robbed, and

still he had many problems. When he was living in the practice with no possessions, the opposite of his early life, he had no problems living his temporal life, although he had no arrangements to eat tomorrow, the next day—and so on. After he lived in this practice, lived an ascetic life, he received food, he didn't have to try, without effort from his side. So he was surprised and said, "Before my mouth doesn't find food, but now food doesn't find my mouth," because he had too much food to eat from so many benefactors, so he couldn't eat it all.

Also, one great Tibetan yogi who led an ascetic life, Geshe Karag, said: "Meditators dying of starvation, of feeling cold have never been heard of before and will never happen in the future. But meditators on the evil thoughts of the eight worldly Dharmas always get into problems—for such mediators, this always happens."

The first meditator means the one avoiding the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. This is the experience of those great numbers of ascetic yogis—instead of suffering it always gives them peace.

So now I think I will end this conversation.

Also, for people who sometimes have too much attachment to food, in order to stop the problem, the confusion in mind, which is the creator of your own samsara, it would be good to think similarly like this, similar to other ones. But the food (if I tell you now I don't have to tell you afterwards)—anyway since we wish to be free, desiring peace, the reason for eating food is also for peace, not for suffering. So we should find a better method, besides relying on the same food, we should find a better method that becomes the cause of real peace. This is the way it becomes worthwhile, it becomes knowledge, a human being eating food different from the dog eating food. The dog, as he sees foods, just eats, expecting the peace; we human beings should be different from them. If we visualize some kind of horrible thing, to change your mind by changing the situation, so it would be good to visualize food in the form of kaka. Then visualizing this, the attachment that arises, the strong attachment that is complicated, not peace, will all of a sudden go down. Then think just as the other example that I gave. "This object, the kaka, may cause some harm or trouble to this present life. But it cannot harm me as much as the food—food has been causing me to experience suffering since beginningless previous lives, preventing me from experiencing happiness and enlightenment, and in the future will continue to do so to me, and in the present is doing it." So the person practicing this tries to keep himself from the mental danger, the person who uses this technique keeps himself from the attachment that causes him to be reborn in the three lower realms. For instance, attachment to food can cause one to be reborn in the preta realm, so one is protecting oneself from danger, making profit.

So for other objects, such as displeasing words, abusing, criticizing, use them for your negative mind—instead of using them for yourself, which causes worry and confusion. Use them against your negative mind, as if you are in a group fighting the negative mind.

Even if a person doesn't meditate or say mantra, it doesn't matter what he looks like, even he doesn't have the altar up, even if all of his daily life is eating, sleeping, making kaka and pee-pee—it can be Dharma practice fighting the negative mind, depending on the skill and mental power. This is better than sitting in a cave without possessions, meditating, but with evil thoughts.

3 p.m.

As the physical wound should be taken care of, so the mind should be taken care of from the dangers and distractions. When one is only with oneself or when one is with people, as this yogi Atisha instructed, “When one is alone, the mind should be taken care of; when one is with other people, the speech should be taken care of.”

Because when one is alone there’s not another to talk to, but a person talks a lot within his mind, with himself. So it is important to take care of the mind, to keep it away from danger and negativity. When one is with other people, other living beings, one should take care of the body and speech, because there is the danger that one may create negative karma, negative action. The total thing is to emphasize that one has to be always conscious, and being conscious one should take care of the three doors, the body, speech and mind. So, by being conscious, taking care of the three doors, the body, speech and mind, he does not harm himself or other living beings.

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Seems like the one month meditation course has finished!

Paragraph Two

First sentence: Here the sentence doesn’t look right. It should be like this, “Using this precious human rebirth for achievement of the individual everlasting happiness is not sufficient, is not enough, is not the highest advantage.”

The last sentence (paragraph two) is very useful to fully think about, because it contains just this point, it contains the way we mostly spend our daily life, with what aim we mostly spend in daily life, and how spending the present daily life with that aim, in that way, will effect in the future. By thinking this, it causes us to be conscious that we’ll have to have the suffering daily life in the future, because we are using the life for the samsaric aim, the limited aim, to receive the eight temporal needs and samsaric higher pleasures. So in this way, meditating on this, checking this way, it causes us to be careful, to stop continuing the negative daily life. Checking like this gives us the desire that I must receive peace, I must be free in future lifetimes—so as this desire arises we cut off continually creating negative actions, continually leading negative daily life. So this is useful.

Paragraph Four

It is like this—this is our daily life experience, nothing different, it is profound. In the morning time, we get up with the experience of the temporal happiness of this life. Then we have breakfast with the expectation of the temporal happiness of this life. Also most of the talks, most of the work, writing—mostly it is done with the expectation of one’s individual happiness, the temporal happiness of this life. Then lunch is enjoyed, is eaten, with also the same thought—the expectation of the temporal happiness of this life. Then maybe tea afterwards, that is also enjoyed with same expectation, same thought—only for the temporal happiness of this life. Then supper comes; that is also enjoyed with the same motive—to receive peace, the temporal happiness of this life. Then sleeping comes, bedtime is also done with the expectation to receive the temporal happiness of this life. So the whole daily life. Besides that talking, writing, working—all that is done with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas that only expects to receive temporal happiness, that only expects the happiness of this life.

None of these actions is done desiring suffering—the whole action is done to stop the temporal suffering, the temporal suffering, the momentary suffering, the present suffering—it is all done to stop the present, temporal suffering. Is done to stop the suffering, to not experience suffering and to receive happiness, but only happiness of this life. Is done to stop suffering but only the present, the temporal suffering. Such daily life mostly is not done to stop all future suffering, it is all done to stop the present suffering.

So, like this, now it's easy to understand—all these actions are done, actions of daily life, are done with greed, done with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. Totally, the evil thought, the greed that is attached to the temporal happiness of this life. So the whole daily life is negative action, is formed by negative action, so the whole daily life is negative, negative daily life. So the factual evolution, what it does, what result this daily life will bring, what one has to experience—the result of this daily life—what one has to experience is suffering, is suffering, is suffering.

The result of most of the daily actions is to be born in the three lower realms, the narak, the preta, and the animal realms. Even if the person is born in the upper realm such as those of the humans, suras, asuras, the samsaric gods, even if one is born such as in human world again—again he will meet much suffering, many problems, not having peace. Again he will receive a life that has problems, miserable situations, not being free. Like this, the results are like this—only suffering.

But we are deeply ignorant of the recognition, of discovering the results, those suffering results that are brought by the present daily life's actions, and also we are deeply ignorant of discovering, realizing fully, recognizing the daily life's work, what is negative and what is positive. We do not fully discover it. So, because being ignorant of fully discovering the suffering results that are caused by the present daily life, so we are not scared to continually live such daily life.

So Dharma and meditation is supposed to correct the daily life. The Dharma and meditation that you practice is supposed to correct your daily life, to make your daily life pure. It prepares you for better lives, for more freedom. So you see, from our ordinary being, from our side we think we are leading this life to have peace, for enjoyment, to be happy, to be wise, to be learned, to gain self-support, to not get involved in miserable situations. From our side we think like this, this is our aim.

But actually, in factual evolution, how does it work? If it is checked, when a holy being, a sincere Dharma practitioner, looks at it like a movie, they see it as funny, as opposite—we are doing it the opposite of what we expect, so we don't get things the way we expect, no matter how we work. So how do those holy beings see our life? We are always creating causes for future suffering; in each day we are creating causes for future suffering—in each of our daily lives we are making arrangements to suffer more and more, continually, in the future. This is our total daily life. If I make it short no matter how long the person lives, 100, 400 years, but if I make it short—this is how we live.

So, in this way we can see how the avoidance of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is important, how it makes the life pure, how it is necessary. By understanding the evolution of our daily life, our actions, the relationship between this and future lives we can discover how this practice is important for a free life, for a real happy life. We think our daily life, this daily life experience is new, the first time. It is not like this, factual evolution is not like this, it is not like this. Because of our past, the previous daily lives have been continually used for creating the cause of

suffering. Therefore, even now, we are still living in suffering, in ignorance, still living in the prison of ignorance.

Shantideva's Quotation

So as this great pandit, Shantideva said, this is what we are exactly doing in daily life. Even if there is much opportunity, we are leading ourselves again to the lower suffering realms, ignoring ourselves.

Paragraph Seven

The example looks great, for us the example looks great, but others don't feel as much for the example. The example we feel is wasted, and we don't feel much for the meaning—that is the nature of our mind. The example is nothing to compare with the wasting of the perfect human rebirth, using it for the temporal needs, for the enjoyment of samsara. The example compared to the meaning is nothing—trading the universe, the universe, the universe full of jewels for kaka, that is nothing. Because even if one possesses many universes full of jewels, if one's life, perfect human rebirth, is used for those ordinary aims, the samsaric enjoyments, the universes full of jewels cannot cause us to receive perfect human rebirth again, only that cannot help us to be born in the human realm again. So there's nothing to compare. When we think of the possessions they look great, very valuable, but there is nothing to compare to the value of the perfect human rebirth.

Paragraph Seven

Sentence Two: This means working for attachment is always the cause of suffering. What you receive by working for it is only a suffering result, which kaka doesn't do in that way. Kaka is extremely useful, in many ways.

Paragraph Eight

So it is same reason. If we have to care for the present temporary sufferings, why we don't care for all the future lives' sufferings, why we don't try not to experience the greater future sufferings? The suffering we experience in this life is small—if we have to care for these, why not care for the greater sufferings which will have to be experienced?

Checking suffering like this—take person who is scared of future suffering, for example, a person whose leg is bitten by a snake. This can cause danger to the life, death. If it is not treated, if it is not cured with medicine, with treatment, it can cause danger to the life, so the person is scared. Usually, a person doesn't want to suffer even a tiny thorn going inside, this is our experience, the person doesn't want to suffer anything. So when his leg is bitten by a snake, because he is scared of the future suffering, death, he thinks of the treatment, taking out wound by surgery, the wound has to be taken out. Usually he cares for the pain of the surgery, usually he cares for a little thorn going inside, the pain; but at such a time, because of the greater future suffering, he doesn't care for the pain of the surgery, of cutting off the wound, he can bear it. In order to stop the greater future suffering, he bears the pain, and he doesn't see this pain as so great, he sees it as small, because his mind is scared of the greater future suffering, life danger. So he wants to go through the pain at the time of surgery, he doesn't care for it, his only project is to stop the greater future suffering, and the person thinks, as he sees this suffering is small, the future is great, so he makes a choice, volunteers to take the small suffering now, in order to stop the greater future suffering.

So it is the same thing in life, in our life. As we think it is important to cure temporary suffering, also it is important to work and cure future suffering. And it is more important to work to cure the future suffering than to work for curing the present suffering, just as the example of the person bitten by the snake. Because the future life has greater suffering than we experience in the present life, so it is more important to work to stop the greater future suffering. That is done through living in Dharma practice. Therefore, it is more worthwhile to bear the present trouble, the present temporal little troubles for the Dharma practice to stop the whole greater future sufferings. And that person is always skillful and wise, and this person is working, who is living in the pure Dharma practice, to stop the continual, future greater sufferings by bearing the present temporal sufferings. This person is making work than can be finished, completed.

For instance, if the person, if he cared, if he didn't think of the greater future suffering of his life and he is not scared of it, not knowing the future greater sufferings, such a person who only cares for the present temporal suffering, the pain of the surgery, the pain of the treatment, that person has no will, no energy, no courage to have the treatment, to bear the temporary pain of that treatment. So what would that do? He would have a short life. Soon he would have to experience greater suffering. So, as well as the temporary suffering of the wound, so he experiences two sufferings, that of the present and that of the future.

In that way we have been spending our present life, like the man who experiences the present temporal suffering and doesn't have treatment, so we experience the present life's suffering and the future life's suffering. As we have been using daily life like this from beginningless previous lives, if we continually do this we will only experience the future greater sufferings without end. That's all.

It is necessary to have a long aim in the mind, a far aim in the mind. Having the far aim in the mind always helps to accomplish Dharma practice and be successful, and to make the practice continual. For instance, you might practice when you are happy, but when you have problems you come down, forget the meditation—without continual practice. Then like this, it is extremely difficult to make quick progression within your mind. The person who is sometimes up, sometime down; sometimes up, sometimes looks like ... yes. I think that's not important.

When you meditate on the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth you have to remember the different levels of results that are achieved in the temporal and ultimate goals, all the precious chances. And also, if you can remember both these subjects, both subjects would be good, helpful. What is written in the book is just a seed, but on the basis of this, as you are using this subject for meditation, you have to elaborate, you have to make it more extensive, more sharpening, wider as much as possible by yourself using your wisdom. By that method, in order to realize how the perfect human rebirth is useful, your wisdom should be made sharp, acute, and practical as much as possible, by trying to remember many other precious chances which you find, desire, within, your mind. So in this way you can see the subject more and more clearly, and the perfect human rebirth as more and more useful, if you discover the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth more and more clearly through the practice of such meditation.

But generally it is like this. A person whose mind is ready to receive realizations doesn't have to depend on many words to receive realizations, with just a few words he can receive realization. But a person whose mind is far from this subject has to train a great deal in meditation. So a person whose mind is ready can receive realizations just by reading the words written here, but the person whose

mind is far away has to use much logic, wisdom, amplifying many reasons why the perfect human rebirth is useful.

When you achieves other realizations, then spend more time in the second part until the realization is achieved. When you have the achievement of this realization, the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, at that time your mind will be in a state like this—you will be a person who cannot waste the human life even for a minute, whose mind is always scared of not making the life meaningful, a person who can never waste the human life even for a minute, who feels greatly upset wasting the human life even for a minute. That person has realization of that meditation, the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, at that time the person has the experience of the realization of the great usefulness of perfect human rebirth.

It means this—a person who never wants to use the life, spend the life, even for a minute or second, creating negative actions. We can discover if we have this realization or not if we check up our own mind.

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Paragraph One

“The conditions” here means—cause, the cause of the present life mainly based on morality and charity.

It is impossible in the three lower suffering realms to follow precepts, ordinations, such as keeping morality. It is also extremely difficult in the higher realms of the gods. So the best chance is in the human realm, this specific human world, even among the other human worlds.

Paragraph Two

These things are the disturbances, these things do not allow one to create cause for the perfect human rebirth.

Check up your own thought—if it is a pure thought or an evil thought that is attached, that clings to the happiness of this life, and for what you are intending to make the meditation. If it is the thought wanting to meditate for the achievement of ultimate peace, or if it is just the thought that is just curious about the work, about the meditations. If there is the evil thought, think that it is only the cause of the suffering, which you should get rid of.

Think, “Only having this present life happy and even receiving upper rebirth again in the future life is not sufficient. Still in samsara, still in the bondage of suffering. Just releasing myself from the bondage of suffering is still not enough, because all sentient beings are objects from whom I received all my past perfection and happiness, and also in the future, and they are also objects of my receiving present perfection and happiness. So leaving them in suffering, not repaying them, not helping them, not guiding them, satisfied with myself being free is not right, this is selfish and guilty. So I must repay them and help them for the kindness of the object, being the object of all my perfection and happiness, and I must guide them from all their sufferings. In order to do that I must have complete achievement of great infinite power, knowledge, and great compassion. To achieve this I must become an enlightened being who has these three supreme infinite powers, knowledge

and compassion. Who has it? Only the enlightened beings! So I must become Buddha. To achieve this I must complete the practice of the graduated path, from the meditation practice of the perfect human rebirth up to enlightenment. Therefore, I am going to meditate on the graduated path, do the preparation of purification with the visualization of Guru Shakyamuni, and concentrate on the breathing.”

If you can't meditate because of trouble, temporal physical troubles, then meditate on those troubles by using those techniques which fight the creator of suffering. This is also a practical method and is better than wasting time, just sitting being tortured and distracted.

Meditation

As we have tried to visualize Guru Shakyamuni, the throne absorbs to the lotus, sun, and moon, and those absorb into Guru Shakyamuni, and he comes onto the center of your head, and you became oneness, and as it absorbs into you, the ordinary body that you see completely disappears, nowhere existing, and your mind becomes one with Guru Shakyamuni's holy mind in emptiness, in the nature of infinite happiness, just as encompassing space.

Now visualize the throne at your place, a large throne, and lotus, sun, and moon, and yourself in the form of Guru Shakyamuni, in the form of a bhikshu, seated on the throne. Think that all of your body, speech, and mind became one with Guru Shakyamuni's holy body, speech, and mind. You are no longer yourself, such ordinary body, speech, and mind exist nowhere.

Many people may get colds and coughs because of inner seeds, delusions, and also due to external conditions, such as the outside smoke of the rubbish burning. But since we have to experience the sufferings, try to use it for Dharma practice, as the ornament that makes the body beautiful.

Day 10

November 11

The great bodhisattva, Nagi Lama, whose introduction was given yesterday, said, “A living being who has the ornament of bodhicitta, how can it be possible that such being has ill-will, (the will giving harm to other beings). To avoid the ill-will to other living beings, the holy being intuitively follows, without need of persuasion, (without asking or telling the person not to give harm to others).”

This means that a living being who is adorned or decorated with the ornament of bodhicitta, because of the power of this holy mind that lives intuitively in the action of not giving harm to other living beings, only in the actions of helping other beings, the person actually does it because of the power of bodhicitta, without being asked, without being told to do it.

The quotation is this—since the creator of the hindrance is subdued within one's mind, there's no way to receive the hindrance form outside. So just achievement of bodhicitta brings that peace, great freedom. Therefore, it is skillful and wise to spend the present short life in the practice of bodhicitta. It is necessary to start the training of bodhicitta even from this moment since we have such a precious chance. For the action of listening to Mahayana teachings on the graduated path, it is necessary to be possessed by the impulse of the bodhicitta, therefore think, “It is not sufficient, it is not enough to have this present life happy, and even if one can receive many happy future lives in

the upper realms of the samsara, because it is still in the bondage of suffering, so it is necessary to be out of the bondage of suffering. But oneself being out of the bondage of suffering is not enough. There are numberless sentient beings in the bondage of suffering who need to be guided, need to be saved, who have no freedom, who haven't opened the eye of wisdom in the Dharma, not having a leader and not receiving the perfect human rebirth, great numbers of sentient beings who have received suffering by not receiving the perfect human rebirth. Therefore, we, it is necessary that we ourselves, in order to release them from the suffering, to guide them, first to be enlightened. To become enlightened we must complete the realizations of the graduated path. Therefore, it is necessary to completely and correctly understand the meaning of the path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path.”

However profound, helpful, or precious the subject is, for many people maybe it can be like this—if you put dirt in the drum of his ear, he shakes. Even he doesn't find it as gold, if it is kept, the time will appear. It is also not like this—I am giving a lecture and you are sort of a journalist; it is not like this, in this way we can't practice Dharma, we can't make the Dharma effective, the subject we are listening to now cannot become effective.

Actually, within the subject of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, one can explain the benefits of the knowledge of that for months and months. It is not kind of subject that can be quickly ended, quickly finished. Because it is like this—this is the first door, this is the first thing of the Dharma practice, this is like the main gate, it is like the main gate of the palace, this practice. So anyway, as this is the first thing of Dharma practice, so the whole realization of the path, enlightenment, the whole thing is rooted, based on this. So the knowledge of avoiding the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas and the practice of this is not simple—we think as it is a simple thing but it is not like this. The knowledge of this can be explained in many lifetimes. Therefore, we should not think it is simple—if it is simple we should practice it. The reason we can't practice this is because it is not simple, even though we try to climb over higher subjects.

Often we make mistakes in our actions of body, speech, and mind; often we meditators think it is the lack of teaching, lack of special technique that is not written in the book, and not our own fault. It is never like this. Basically, it is the lack of the person not making even the first thing of the Dharma practice. That is why he makes any mistakes in actions, finds problems with other living beings and with himself, even while he is alone. People think, “I am so negative, I need more teachings.” If one is not living in the first practice, going through the first thing of the Dharma, even if one hears the 84,000 teachings that were shown by Guru Shakyamuni, still he couldn't change his mind, change his life, still his mind would be negative, and he would think still it's the lack of teachings. Anyway, something like that.

Also, this is the part where I have most of my interest, which I enjoy very much. Because through this practice you can really discover the knowledge of the Dharma, you can really see it like you mix different colors, and then you paint and see what color comes there. You can prove it by yourself; even if you are alone you can lead a happy life, you don't need to depend on companions, friendship, being a couple or something. Actually, you and this practice can be the best couple—only bringing enlightenment, not disturbing yourself or others even in one atom—the best parents, best children, best enjoyment. Because with this practice, no matter where the person is, his enjoyments are limited, he has no companions, no parents, the conditions are limited, and his mind can always be happy, peaceful, and relaxed, not in confusion.

Paragraph 4:

Totally talking like this—it is extremely difficult to find the perfect human rebirth. Why it is extremely difficult? Because the cause of it is extremely difficult to create; just as the example, to receive a diamond that has the value of 10,000,000 dollars, it is difficult to get because it is difficult to have 10,000,000 dollars, just giving a simple example. To get, gain such a great amount of money is difficult. From this people thinking of receiving such diamond is difficult. Why? Because they think to get that much money is difficult. So similarly with our perfect human rebirth. The cause of the perfect human rebirth, what brings the perfect human rebirth, which is like money, is mainly morality and charity. So now we should think how it is difficult to create the causes for morality and charity.

Generally speaking, morality is more difficult than charity because it is involved in the discipline of the body, speech, and mind, so it is more difficult than charity. The essence of morality, the basic thing is disciplining your body, speech, and mind away from the negative actions of body, speech, and mind. Therefore, for instance, in countries such as Tibet or India and such places, there are celibates existing. In some countries there are very few. That is because, in those places, there are few people who know these karmic evolutions, what brings the human rebirth, and what has to be done to bring it in the future. So in the country where these inner evolutions are known there are more celibates. In the country where these are not known there are few who discipline their body, speech, and mind.

So first we talk about charity—even a person makes charity. First of all, the chance to create charity and morality is almost impossible in the three lower suffering realms, and also it is difficult in the upper realms such as those of the samsaric gods. Now, in the human realm—even in the human realm it is difficult to make charity. There are many other, many other disturbances to the practice of charity, such as the disturbance of not understanding karma, not understanding that the cause of charity results in receiving enjoyments, not understanding karma, not understanding Dharma; also miserliness. Lazy people who have possessions can also make charity but don't know how to—that is also disturbance to charity. Charity doesn't only mean material charity. Also, even if the person wants to make material charity, he may have no control, no choice, may not be free. There are many other disturbances, such as the disturbance of not believing in the karmic concatenation, the cause, of charity and its result. Besides not understanding, not believing is also a disturbance to practicing charity. And from one's side, oneself being a fool, not having a mind that is capable of understanding things. Also, being born in such a country or such an environment or family without belief, or not having the understanding of the necessity of making charity is also a disturbance to the person, to create good karma, charity. There are many things like this—so this disturbance, even if we are born in the human realm, there is much disturbance.

So now we talk about morality, how it is difficult. There are different levels of ordination, which has different numbers of precepts, such as five precepts, eight precepts, thirty-six precepts. Higher than that, for men 253, for women 300 and something like that. So now, the beings who keep the 253 precepts are very few, so few; those who purely keep them are so rare, extremely rare. Even those who try to keep them very easily break them. Just as that example, with the thirty-six precepts, there are very few who purely keep them, even if they are trying to do that, they easily get broken. It is the same thing with those who keep the eight precepts—very few purely keep them. The same thing

happens to those who keep the five precepts. Even with the five precepts the same thing happens, even one takes ordination with the five precepts from the abbot or from a guru, same thing—there are very few who purely keep them—most of them easily get broken. So, there are very few people who confess and purify what is broken, and greater numbers who live their whole life like that until death, not confessing, no discipline. Even to keep one precept purely is extremely difficult, even to live in one precept.

For instance, we have to think like this—in the United States, there is no need to talk about other ordination, just five precepts are much rarer than a diamond. A diamond is nothingness compared to the person living in the five precepts; he is extremely rare. Even living in one precept, two precepts. Even we talk just about Nepal, just in this valley. There are more families not creating morality; those who follow morality are extremely rare. Even one family, if you check, even one who believes in karma; and there are fewer numbers following the disciplines of morality.

If we think with detail then we clearly understand, if we don't think with detail it is difficult to understand. Then we don't see how difficult it is to create the cause for the perfect human rebirth, and how it is difficult to achieve. We are even lazy to meditate; most of the time is spent in laziness or doing something else, other actions that are not the cause of the perfect human rebirth, actions that do not bring that result, most of the time it is spent like that.

So totally, even people keeping those precepts have too many dangers, many distractions. There are hundreds and hundreds more distractions to the practice of morality than to charity. Distractions from your side are the different types of negative mind, deluded mind, the inner disturbance that come from your side, that disturb your practice of morality.

And there are disturbances that come from outside, from other living beings. Even people who want to keep precepts but the family doesn't allow them to, doesn't want them to, so they are not free. Sometimes the king doesn't allow them to, so they are not free, there is no choice. There are many things. Also from one's side, from one persons' side, he, according to his mind, desires to follow the precepts of morality, but he's afraid of some other person, that it may hurt some other person because of this fear, and then this becomes a disturbance to keep the precept, to follow morality.

So totally talking, especially in modern worlds, it is a big shock; keeping precepts is a bit shocking. If you unconsciously go through the door, people find a big shock. So this way we understand how rare it is, how difficult it is because of these hindrances from your side. If not from your side, then from other's side; sometimes from both. Condition, environment, country ... so difficult.

Totally talking, morality is the discipline of body, speech, and mind, trying to keep away from negative, evil actions of body, speech, and mind. But the person externally making himself to look like a celibate, taking that uniform, only that does not mean keeping morality. Because the factual thing is, as the person has that symbolic robes, the person is supposed to be living in the precepts—the thirty-six precepts, the 253 precepts, whatever the view he makes. Just changing the external look does not mean following morality. If the monkey has robes on, the only difference is the tail—it does not mean he is following morality.

Anyway, the one who has the symbolic things, the uniform, has a great responsibility, a big job—he has a big job. The fees that he receives in return, the salary that he receives by doing this job, by taking this responsibility, besides all the perfections, are receiving the ultimate goal of enlightenment,

cessation of samsara, happiness in many other future lives. Even in the present life there is greater freedom and happiness, quick progression of internal knowledge, Dharma practice, continual creation of merits. These precepts that I have just named are generally precepts that are followed by Hinayanists; then on top of these there are bodhisattva precepts, and there are tantric precepts. But following the five precepts, the thirty-six precepts, the general precepts, by taking these precepts, by making a vow in the presence of a guru to keep them until the time of death, as he made the vow and as long as he keeps it, there is always the continual creation of merits, he is always making profit, he is always creating good karma. As long as he is in that condition, keeping it, he is always in the continual creation of merits that creates a cause for a perfect human rebirth in future lifetimes, all happiness and perfection, ultimate peace and enlightenment, the ultimate goal. Those precepts are still recognized as easier, the five precepts, the eight precepts, the thirty-six precepts, the 253 precepts, but the bodhisattva precepts are more difficult than those, more strict.

People can take these on different levels, but it is necessary to follow these in order to take the bodhisattva and tantric precepts. One who breaks the tantric precepts can still follow the bodhisattva precepts. Even he breaks those, he follows the general precepts, so he still creates merits on the basis of those, his life is not empty. Even if he doesn't follow those higher precepts, he still makes profit, as he eats and sleeps so he always creates profit while he is in those; so life is not empty, life is not completely empty—always he is making something for the future, for ultimate peace. Then, if there is a stronger will, one takes the bodhisattva ordination, makes the vow, following the precept. Then whose mind is ready, stronger, then follows with the tantric precepts. But breaking the tantric precepts is much more dangerous than breaking the bodhisattva vow, which is much more dangerous than breaking the general precepts; and breaking these is much more dangerous than the actions that are done for the temporal life.

For example like this—the reason I'm talking this way is because people are concerned about this, want to understand a little about this. So, like this—for instance, a person who fell and lost his job may not get whatever number of the money, the salary that he receives. Even if the person dies of starvation, not having money or food, that is only danger of the present life. But breaking the general precepts, depending on the precept broken, causes one to be reborn in the narak stages, suffering for many eons, many hundreds of lifetimes of suffering in the worst narak stages. Generally, breaking precepts causes one to be reborn in the three lower suffering realms, the animal realms for many lifetimes. This is very dangerous, much more dangerous than losing one's job or a person falling down from the job—that cannot cause as much suffering as the other one. So it's important, when we meditate on how difficult it is to receive the perfect human rebirth and the difficulties of receiving the perfect human rebirth, to go through the details like this. The more details you can go through, the more effective your meditation can be to quickly realize the difficulty of achieving the perfect human rebirth.

So monks, nuns, and so forth who understand what their responsibility is recognize that they have a big job, which is also dangerous and also profitable, extremely beneficial. Living in this responsibility, having such an occupation, is the knowledge of the person, because it is done with the power of his mind, with the power of his will. So for such a person living in the number of precepts, this is his job, this is his knowledge. Even for the person who has no deep profound understanding of the Dharma, this is his knowledge—his keeping precepts is his knowledge. And the profit of that will be received in many other future lifetimes, which can be enjoyed in all times, even after enlightenment is received, the profit is even something that can be enjoyed even in that lifetime.

For instance, take the example of a person who spends many years studying many things—science, psychology, psychiatry, medicine, many other things—one who has spent much time, so many years, and who is highly qualified in all these, but not living in discipline of body, speech, and mind. To gain the knowledge he received, he paid many expenses, he or his parents, and spent that much time, everything. Yet the responsibility, his responsibility is limited, smaller than the person following precepts. His knowledge is only aimed for the purpose of making the present life happy, for his present life to be happy. So what that would do—I'm not complaining, but just talking of the evolution of what's happening—so in the future life, there is nothing to look at, no profit is made for the future life with that knowledge by the person. So there is nothing for that person to receive in the future lifetime. It never becomes the cause of receiving the ultimate goal of enlightenment, or ultimate peace, because the person is not used to that.

So now—he profits in this life based on that knowledge, after he is qualified. Is he happy until death? No. Is he satisfied? No, continually problems arise. Even from that knowledge, no matter how much money he gets, there are other problems that arise—such as becoming crazy, no matter how many possessions or needs there are. So the profits of that knowledge are limited.

So the poor beggar, the monk living in this knowledge looks poor, but since his life is living in that discipline he is really rich. Also in this life, and also in future life he is always making profit, he is continually creating merits, cause for the ultimate peace. That peace. That is the real way of working for the ultimate peace.

3 p.m.

As the great yogi, Guru Tsongkhapa said, “When one realizes how the perfect human rebirth is difficult to receive, one cannot stay without doing anything.”

This means that the person who has discovered the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth cannot live without doing anything; it means that without creating good karma, without doing some virtuous actions, the person cannot live. When one realizes the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth one cannot live without doing anything.

“When one realizes that the perfect human rebirth is meaningful, one avoids creating meaningless actions.”

So, besides avoiding creating meaningless actions, by discovering the difficulty of the perfect human rebirth, there's no way for the person to live the life—the realization obliges the person to do something, to create good karma, the cause of the perfect human rebirth that will be received in the future lifetimes.

So why is it difficult? Because achievement of the cause is difficult. For instance, if you check each of our own places, where we came from; for instance, the place in the West where you came from—if you check up in your life, since you were born until now, you saw very few people living in celibacy, following morality, following the precepts—the number that you see is much fewer than seeing the number of people not living in the discipline, following the precepts. For some people in the West, maybe they never saw other people living in the disciplines, observing morality. So by thinking in this way, the person who is creating these two causes, is collecting the best possessions,

he is the actual rich person because, besides benefiting his present life, he is working, he is making some beneficial action also for the future lives.

As we discussed this morning, there are that many difficulties, hindrances, and distractions even if we try to practice charity and follow morality. Even if we try to create charity, it becomes an evil action because of not knowing the essential practice, not knowing how to practice charity, the actual meaning of the charity. Even trying to practice charity, thinking it is a good action, from the action's side it becomes an evil action, poisonous charity (means charity done with poisonous mind)—giving materials or possessions, expecting something to receive in return, with the expectation to receive something in return in this life, or afterwards. Or, giving charity to other people so that one gains reputation, expecting that other people, beggars or other people, will say that he is so compassionate, such a good person, or expecting to receive pleasing words of admiration due to attachment to reputation. He expects that either the beggar will think he's good or compassionate, or if it other people see him giving things away that they will admire him, think of him as good, and he expects to get something in return. The whole idea is that charity is done to gain the temporal happiness of this life, so it is an evil action, not a virtuous action.

It is the same thing with making offerings, as we were talking about before, to the holy objects (there are many different objects). Just as this action of charity is made with the evil thought, it becomes an evil actions—most of the time worshiping and offering actions done with such motive becomes impure. Wrong actions of worship such as sacrificing, thinking, aiming for peace, hoping to gain peace and perfection and to please the god by sacrificing other beings, by causing suffering to other beings, thinking that the god will be pleased by this and thinking that if this is not done the god would not be pleased. Such wrong actions are the opposite of those of a perfected being, or god, or enlightened one—the opposite of his wishes, the actions created in opposition to his wishes. Even if one tries to create virtuous actions of worship, due to his level of understanding of the karma, due to his wrong realization and wrong belief, such wrong action comes. This action works in the opposite way of what the person expects from that action, as his expectation of what this action will bring is the complete opposite of actual evolution of the karma. The factual evolution of the karma is this—one receives happiness by not harming other beings, by following morality. One gains happiness by abstaining from causing harm to other beings. This causes one to have longer lives, longer future lives. How does not harming other living beings make the future life happy and the life longer? This way—from such a cause, one will experience less harm from other beings in the present and future lives. So in that way one can live longer, free and happy, receiving less harm from other beings.

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Guru Shakyamuni's quote—so both are as important as these two legs; without having both the legs, it is difficult to walk. So just as these two legs are necessary to walk, creating both causes are necessary to receive perfect human rebirth again.

Chandrakirti's quote—one never receives new enjoyments except the enjoyments that are the results of past karma, charity. For instance, those who create charity but do not follow morality and break the precepts but do not confess, mostly take birth in the animal realm, take birth as a naga—this type of animal. (There are animals that our ordinary mind sees and those that we do not see). So when one is born as this animal, as a naga, one has much enjoyment, many stores of jewels, many rich possessions—that is the result of the karma that was created when one was a human being,

such as through the practice of charity. But while one is a naga, an animal, one only enjoys the result, the enjoyments that are the result of the karma, one only finishes up the result, the enjoyments. One is not conscious of the karma, the cause of that result, and never creates good karma in that life, so there is no way to receive new enjoyments. That's because of ignorance, deep ignorance. There are certain animals who have lives like this, having rich possessions, but our ordinary mind, uncontrolled, unrealized mind, do not see it. Usually those beings are situated mainly in oceans, such as the Atlantic.

In ancient times, when the great bodhisattvas went to get jewels, they got help from these beings to bring jewels out of the ocean, the Atlantic. There are many other stories. Also ordinary people who have no control of the mind can be disturbed and hindered by them, for example, those who ride on ships.

Many times (just a story) in Tibet, where there is water dried, such as streams where the water has dried, there are many methods and pujas to be done. There are all kinds of different methods that were shown by Guru Shakyamuni in order to increase the water, to get the water out of that place. Most of the methods are to do with nagas, giving presents to them, soothing their minds. People invite lamas, monks, and they purify the place through puja, with meditation and prayers, and also with blessed things, such as nectars. They make pujas for the nagas. There are many stories that happened—the water came, the water increased, or when there is much rain disturbing the crops, there are pujas to be done for the nagas to stop the rain. Also for hail. Also when the weather is dry and disturbs crops, there are pujas to bring the rain.

This is common in India, the monks do puja. In the camp where I lived for eight or nine years there were more than 1000 monks. That place was used for the army—our buildings had holes for guns. It was a very strict place for European people. So the Indian villagers used to ask. That was the place where Prime Minister Nehru and Gandhi were imprisoned. But the actual building where they were poisoned was used as the prayer hall by the college—it is used by one subsidiary. There are three famous colleges in Tibet—Sera, Ganden, and Drepung—in each of these are two subsidiaries. There were other buildings used as a prison for Gandhi—those were used by the nuns. So the Indian villagers had much trouble with the water not coming, and the monks went to the river and burnt incense, and made prayers to the nagas. Many times the rains came so the Indians really believed it; sometimes we came to the house and just as we arrived there the rain came. So actually we cannot say that just because we didn't see them in our lives, traveling round, that there's no such beings existing.

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There are three ways to meditate on realizing the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth. The first is checking through the cause—creating the cause is difficult.

Second is the number. The largest number of rebirths is in the narak realms, so there are more living beings, the most the living beings, in the narak stage.

Then preta, the number of the living beings in the preta realms. When there is snowfall in the country it is extremely difficult to count each snowflake; so that is just like this, to give an idea of how many.

And the number of living beings who are animals are like the mountain—the sand, the dust. If you are going to count each tiny piece of the dust from a huge mountain, it is unbelievable, unimaginable. So just like this the number of living beings who are animals—so many.

The number of the upper realm beings is very few, so little compared with the number of the lower realms, the number of living beings in the lower realm. The upper realms are those of the human, sura, and asura. Even in the human realm, the general human being is like grass growing in the country, but the people who have a perfect human rebirth are so little, so very few; like the grass growing on the food, so little, so few compared with the grass growing in the country, on the ground.

It is extremely difficult to receive the perfect human rebirth even with the examples.

The third way of meditating on the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth is with the example, with these examples:

So just like this example, the tortoise only comes up from the depth of the ocean after each 100 years. It's extremely difficult for the tortoise, as he comes up, to get the wooden ring around his neck, extremely difficult to get his head inside the golden ring (now golden). So this is like receiving a perfect human rebirth. As this tortoise comes up after each 100 years, most of the time the golden ring is here but he comes up on the other side. But another time, after 100 years, the golden ring is in the center, but he comes up somewhere else, or where it was before. Even if he gets near, the golden ring doesn't get on his neck. Then as he comes up he pushes it away. So the ring is just the teaching, but the golden ring, the pure golden ring, is meeting the perfect, pure teaching, which is never corrupted, which is never mixed with wrong understanding, wrong realization, wrong conception, which is never corrupted, which is perfect, pure. This is something that is almost impossible to happen—for the tortoise to put his head through the ring. Receiving perfect human rebirth is more difficult than this.

So the third way to do the checking meditation is to think of the example carefully, clearly—think of the golden ring as the teaching, and the tortoise as yourself. As the tortoise didn't put his head through the golden ring many times before, so we in beginningless lives didn't meet the teachings. So in the future will it happen many times, that as the tortoise comes up here, the ring is there. So, as long as I am in samsara, in the bondage of suffering, as numberless times I didn't have this chance, also in the future there will be the same difficulty, same problem.

First check up with the cause, with details. As your wisdom can see the situation, understand this situation.

Secondly with numbers.

Third with examples.

This time we are going to do the meditation gradually. That is just to have the understanding, the general idea of the meditation. We practice or meditate on all these subjects in order to have the whole idea, the general understanding. But in actual training, to finish each realization, you have to spend most of your time in the first part, the perfect human rebirth, until you get the realization;

then the next part, the usefulness; then the next is easy to receive. But first it is necessary to have the understanding of the whole meditation.

Paragraph 4:

If you throw a grain on a glass wall, it cannot stick there. If you put a needle in the ground, it is extremely difficult to throw grain that sticks on the point of the needle.

As in the example, receiving the perfect human rebirth is difficult.

How Should I Make This Perfect Human Rebirth Highly Meaningful? (Page 51)

Paragraph 5:

At least I should make myself confident of avoiding a lower rebirth. This means, at the moment, that besides not having the achievement of enlightenment and the noble realizations of the arhats, at the moment we don't even have the full confidence that we will not be reborn in the lower suffering realms; we do not have that firm belief; it is not sure, not certain. When we think of life after this there is complete darkness in our minds, like a completely dark room. So even this plan we didn't achieve yet.

To make it certain that we will not be reborn in the lower realms, this is the lowest action, the lowest aim, this is the least thing that we should try. At least we should achieve the certainty that we will not be reborn in the suffering lower realms before death. Otherwise it is like this—we climb over Mount Everest on the top, then fall down again—like this. So the plan should be made with Dharma practice. There are all kinds of Dharma practice, but we should do Dharma practice based on these meditations.

Paragraph 7:

This is not criticizing, this is like this—generally the work you do, if I say it in a simple way, so Dharma practice is something that is rooted in the positive and negative creator, it doesn't need a specific form of action. If you have the positive creator—the pure thought devoid of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas—whatever work you do, the action is beneficial—such as an action in conjunction with the wisdom realizing the great benefits of the action—the pure thought and wisdom, realizing the great benefits of the action for other living beings, then any other action such as being a soldier, being president, going on an expedition, being a scientist, many things, all become Dharma work, beneficial to oneself and to other living beings—done with this pure thought, devoid of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, and with the wisdom realizing the great benefits of the action for other sentient beings, which helps gradually to release other sentient beings from suffering.

Paragraph 8:

Which “sees all the problems”—this should be like this—“ceases all problems.”

When meditating on the section of the difficulties of receiving a perfect human rebirth on the basis of the understanding of the subject written in the book, it is best to remember as much as possible. But using these methods, checking with your wisdom, it is good to check as many details as possible.

Check up what you think—if it is an evil thought or pure thought—an evil thought that is attached in the temporal happiness of this life.

If you discover the evil thought that is clinging only to the happiness of this life, then think, “It is the real enemy, the creator of the whole suffering, it is the source of the whole problem that we do not desire.”

“Since we do not desire the results that are created by this evil thought, also we should not desire the evil thought. As we hate the suffering results, so should we hate the cause, the evil thought, the attachment to the temporal happiness of this life and rebirth, the higher samsaric rebirth. It is only cause of samsara that should be cut off.”

“Even oneself achieving the cessation of samsara is not sufficient. There are numberless sentient beings who are in the suffering of the samsara, who didn’t find the path, who have no wisdom to clearly understand what is positive and what is negative action. They do not have a guru showing the teachings, or a leader leading them to liberation. They always cause themselves to suffer. Also, sentient beings are the objects from whom I received my past, present, and future happiness, perfection and ultimate peace, enlightenment. Therefore, as I have such a precious time, chance, and such a perfect body, I must repay them for their kindness, I am responsible to help and guide them from suffering, while they are in suffering.”

“It is necessary for me to achieve enlightenment first, for the sake of sentient beings and I must achieve the whole graduated path. Therefore I am going to meditate, practice with the preparation, purify with Guru Shakyamuni and concentrate on the breath.”

(Meditation)

As you have visualized Guru Shakyamuni, make the absorption from the throne to Guru Shakyamuni coming down on your head and becomes oneness. As it is absorbed into you, think about the complete emptiness of your usual body, and the impure conception becoming one with Guru Shakyamuni in the nature of emptiness, space, but in the nature of infinite happiness.

Now visualize the throne and lotus at your place, just out of the space. From that state visualize a throne, lotus, moon, sun, and yourself as Guru Shakyamuni, your body, speech, and mind being oneness with his holy body, speech and mind.

Day 11

Monday November 26th

9 a.m.

From the teachings of the great bodhisattva, Tenzin Gyatso, who is also called Nagi Lama, “As the Pundarika is the best flower in among all the flowers, the bodhicitta is the best in among all the virtuous minds, thoughts. Therefore, it is worthwhile to always make effort for this; besides for only the present life, also for all the lives (besides this present life, even in all the lives).”

Like this, just as the example of the flower—for instance, among the possession, the best, the most expensive is the diamond. So just like this, the most precious, the most valuable, the most virtuous, the best karma, is the action that is created with bodhicitta. Same thing, the bodhicitta is the most valuable, precious, beneficial thought among all the thoughts. So it is greatly worthwhile to always attempt for this practice, not only in this present life but also in many future lives.

To be able to make continual practice on such beneficial, holy thoughts as bodhicitta in future lifetime, it is necessary that the present thought becomes familiar, that we are habituated with this thought in this present life, that the mind to be habituated to the holy thought of bodhicitta. As we practice, train in this life, this makes the arrangement to be born with a perfect human rebirth and have continual teachings on bodhicitta in future lifetimes.

Living in such practice in the future lives depends on arrangements made in the present life. Therefore, it is necessary to start even from now, because we are not sure how long we can live with this body. We should start now as we have chance, as we have human mind.

So listening to the teachings, for one day or a few hours of action try to make these actions become possessed by the impulse of bodhicitta; as we are free in this moment, think like this. Practicing or meditating this minute or this hour, while we are free, is wise and skillful.

Think, “Now I am attached, my mind is attached to the temporal happiness of this life and the pleasures of samsara. But in fact, this is the source of all the billions and billions of different samsaric sufferings, except I am not fully seeing that this. Such thought and not seeing the result causes those different terrible samsaric sufferings. In whatever realm, whatever samsaric body—human body or rebirth, suras, asuras, those higher gods—whatever body we receive and the pleasures derived from enjoyments that we experience, totally all these rebirth and enjoyments are in the nature of suffering, in the uncontrolled bondage of suffering, in the circle of death and rebirth. It’s always like this, as long as we are in samsara, like living on a red-hot burning iron ground. So I must be released from this.

“Releasing myself alone from this is not enough because all sentient beings are also in the suffering of samsara. Most of the sentient beings have not received a perfect human rebirth as I have received, and do not have a leader leading them to enlightenment, and do not have the wisdom to understand the Dharma, and instead cause suffering to themselves. They are objects from whom I received all past, present, and future happiness, perfection, and enlightenment. So I am responsible to repay them by leading them to enlightenment. But first I must become enlightened myself, by accomplishing the graduated path. So I am going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path.”

The listening subject is the graduated path.

Perfect human rebirth, the explanation of the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth and the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth, is finished.

Also, it is useful when we meditate on the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth, it is also good to check up, to try to remember, yourself as animal or naga or preta—yourself in that form. Check up if you can do all the possible things that a human beings can do, and if you can do what the perfect human rebirth can do—not creating negative actions, but creating merits, creating good

Dharma. The lower beings can also create negative actions, but what I mean is to think about the possibility of creating those most precious and valuable good actions and merits, such as the discipline of your body, speech, and mind, studying Dharma, receiving teachings, many things. It would be fun, but also it would be interesting. Also, not visualizing yourself as an animal just think of the lower creatures as we see them and check up. For instance, it is easy for us to check if we are born as birds or insects, which are in our surroundings, which we can see. Think if in their life if they had possibility to recite one mantra, even once in their life—they have no choice, no freedom. So just like this and in many other ways, these lower creatures are very limited and deeply ignorant of creating other virtuous actions, and all the time they create only negative actions, only following greed, ignorance, and hatred in their whole lifetime. There is no chance to recognize what is positive and what is negative mind, what is negative action and what is positive action. There is no way to teach them—even if you beat them, they cannot understand; even if you give them such delicious food, they do not understand. Sometimes it is useful to think in this way, yourself visualizing like this. Meditating in this way is not only helpful to receive the realization of receiving the perfect human rebirth, but also it helps a great deal for the achievement of higher realizations, bodhicitta, great compassion, great love; it helps a great deal as a basis.

So yesterday, we talked about how to make the life meaningful, useful (Page 51).

There are thousands and thousands of different types of actions. There are good actions, such as helping other people, many types of good actions, many different ways of creating merits, practicing. Helping like this, helping one person or two people, working for one or two beings, living beings, is good, benefiting them is good. But it is better to help 100 living beings or to help, work for, and benefit one country which may have several thousand people. Of course, it is more beneficial to help or benefit thousands than just 100 living beings. Working for, helping, and benefiting the whole country's people is better and more beneficial than working for, helping, or benefiting just several thousand people. And helping or working for or benefiting all human beings, those who are in samsaric suffering, is a much more powerful action than only working for human beings who are only in one world.

So besides working for and helping all human beings in samsara, it is more powerful to also work for all pretas, and also all the beings in the narak realms and all the beings in the animal realms. Besides that, working for, helping, and benefiting all the upper realm beings—the suras, asuras, those higher gods is much more powerful. And working for all the sentient beings who are not enlightened is the greatest action, working for each and every sentient beings who is not enlightened. This is the most powerful action—not one single being is missing. In this way you are working for each sentient being. Comparing this, working for one country is nothing, offering service to one country is nothing.

So, what I want to tell you is this, this is the purpose—to release the infinite number of sentient beings from suffering. There are many thousands of different actions that one can do. Common virtuous actions such as reciting mantra, making prostration, and are many other things makes the human life meaningful, but still it is not the best, the most efficient. Even making 1,000,000 prostrations, reciting mantras; even doing other meditations, such as samadhi meditation without understanding and without practicing the graduated path, or trying to achieve psychic power—that is also not the best method of making the human life meaningful, such as black magic.

Because, like this—there are many other living beings who had the power to remember the past, who had psychic power to perceive future things, or who could see things, people or whatever it is, many miles away. There are even animals who can do this, there are even animals who can make footprints on stone by eating special grass. This is not surprising, this is not the best way to make the human life meaningful. Even the power of prophecy is not the best way of making the human life meaningful, because such things can be achieved through ordinary practice, ordinary meditation, but still the person can be in samsara because he is involved in samsara, and he circles round in samsara and is born in the lower suffering realms because the root of samsara has not ceased.

The most practical, useful, and meaningful way of making the human life meaningful is to spend the life in the practice of the meditation on the graduated path. This is the most practical, useful Dharma way to make this human life meaningful.

It is like this—for instance, in ancient times, there was one meditator who did not practice the graduated path, also didn't practice bodhicitta, who didn't practice bodhicitta and renunciation of samsara, but only practiced and meditated on the method of the deity to achieve power. He achieved such incredible power through the deity—just by looking with his eyes he could kill hundreds or thousands of people; just by peering with the eyes, this person had such power to be able to kill right away. But because he didn't make practice on the graduated path, bodhicitta, and renunciation of samsara, after death the achievement of that power didn't protect him, didn't guide him. He was born in the lower suffering realm, instead of being born again in the human realm. So such power is not the best method to make the human life meaningful. The best, most practical way to make the human life meaningful is through practicing or meditating on the graduated path.

The graduated path is the main road—if you want to go to Kathmandu, it's like taking the road, the graduated path is like the actual road by which the people can reach Kathmandu. By receiving realizations and practicing this, you are achieving the holy path, that's like this. The most practical way for you to reach Kathmandu is by the road, no matter how you go—by bicycle, car, or bus. Taking this path, we work ourselves, taking this path is the most practical way to make life meaningful, to receive enlightenment quickly and without dangers. Of course, there are many other things that are necessary. If you are going to go for a trek on the mountains, only putting yourself on the path is not enough; without carrying the foodstuffs and other things you can't make the whole trip. So also, there are many other needs to make the whole trip on the graduated path; such as prostrations, reciting mantra—there are many other things for purification. All those are life, those necessary things that you have to have to make the whole trip. But you see, one thing is this—even with all the arrangements, equipment, and food, without yourself taking the road you cannot make the trip. The most important thing is for you to take the trail. Of course, it is important to do many of those different methods of purification. But if you spend your the whole life doing those purifying methods but never practice or meditate on the main road, the graduated path, although of course it is not wasting time or life, it makes the human life meaningful because it purifies, still it is not the most practical or the quickest way. Therefore, doing both is necessary to put yourself on this path, the main road. It is necessary to practice, to experience through practice of these meditations of the graduated path, and also to do the purifying methods at the same time. Just as the trekker with all foodstuffs makes the trek, so he can make this trek with less problem, he can make the tour more quickly and with less problem, he can make it successful.

How Long is the Lifespan? (Page 52)

Paragraph 2:

This is according to our modern thought.

Paragraph 3:

This is just an example; it doesn't mean only New York people have wrong conceptions; also in many other worlds. But for example we pick out only one.

Paragraph 4:

1. Such as the body, the decay of the body, such as the gross change from small to big, such as possessions, the shape changes, the color changes, things get broken; gross impermanence.
2. Subtle impermanence—when one snaps the finger; if it is divided into sixty-five shortest instants. So each of the changes in the shortest instant is subtle change.

Paragraph 5:

That means the unrealized mind, the mind unrealized of impermanence.

Paragraph 6:

Quotation: The reason that we believe and think that the object is permanent, that this person is permanent, that my life is permanent—even if the person doesn't say we can develop wrong belief in our thoughts. In the depth of our thoughts there is a wrong belief, wrong conception. There are people like this, who really believe or really say because of theory, that it is permanent. Even if people say it's impermanent, they have wrong belief that the object is permanent, that is latent in the thought in the mind. All the belief that the person has does not depend on the person's words, does not depend on what he says. It always cannot be the same thing—what he says and what belief is latent there.

So, we see the existence of other people and oneself as always existing like the river. There's a latent belief that it's permanent, which is opposite to the factual happening, the factual way the object exists. This is simple. As the river flows each time—each day, each hour, each minute—the river that we see, the flow changes, even though it is always the river, even though it is always the same river. As it comes and goes like this, all other non-living things, causative things, and causative living things are also changing like that.

Also, in regards to impermanence, the scientist explains well. Maybe not insofar as discovering which existences are impermanent and which are not impermanent—it is a matter of discovering this—but they explain the changes in many thousands of split seconds. The whole problem is the principal, the basic problem is the original creation, the original evolution; one basic problem is this. Therefore, they don't discover fully the divisions of existence—which are permanent and which are impermanent—even though they talk about impermanence, even though they accept the belief that some causative phenomena, some causative physical things, such matter are impermanent.

According to what I heard from one psychiatrist, scientists believe that atoms are permanent—because we discussed life evolution, the ball that explodes and all the planets, such and so on start, and how this is caused by gravity. He said that this depended on atoms—some scientists said atoms came into existence from nothingness; some said they are permanent, according to different experiments. But there is not one answer that is agreeable to all, but still in progress. Each year they make progress through observation.

Also, I checked up about beginningless mind, because I have been waiting for a long time to find further answers from scientists—so he gave a little more information. He said psychologists only talk about mind evolution, but physical matter is examined by scientists. The mind depends on the physical nerves, the physical situation, what the child looks like depends on the parents. We discussed this for some time and he said, in the case of one person who has children, whatever the physical situation is depends on the parents and the nerves. What about the child who can predict the future but parents do not have such power? That has no answer, he said. Also I asked, the person has different fingerprints? He said there is one physical cause, nerves; as does one person desire to sleep and another does not.

What about people in the city, one finds it noisy, the other does not? He said this is habit, because one lived there a long time, and the other did not. But the person who spent his early life in a cave, who comes to the city and finds quiet, peace in his mind? And he said, “Do you know any?” And I said, “Yes, many.”

So they talk about the impermanence of some causative things, which is also very helpful for them, for us.

3 p.m.

(Page 52)

Paragraph 7:

This is just an example of how we waste the preciousness of the human life.

(Page 53)

Paragraph 1:

Remembering impermanence is very important. Remembering the shortness of life, the impermanence of life always helps to continue one's practice; remembering this always pushes one to continually practice, to create good karma. It is the same thing with remembrance of death. Because there is such a thing, the end of the life such as death, death will happen. Therefore, we are practicing Dharma, meditating, purifying the negative mind—if there were no death then that would not be necessary. If there were no death then life would not have an end. Then whatever the life is—happy life, suffering life, it wouldn't have any end—and that would mean that no method could be used to not have a suffering life.

Also, the time for the person making pure Dharma practice, whether the person can make pure Dharma practice, can become a pure practitioner also depends on how strong an experience the

person has of impermanence, of the shortness of life, how strong a realization of impermanence the person has. The stronger the experience or the realization of impermanence the person has, that much more purely, when he practices Dharma, practice can be made. It comes to the person.

Because when there's no such strong, effortless experience of impermanence, when he has such strong, effortless experience of impermanence, the person is not that much attached to temporal life, because of that effortless experience of impermanence, the realization of the impermanence. For instance, like this—for a person who has a strong experience, which means a strong understanding or realization of impermanence—of life shortage and death, that death is definite to happen—this person, besides not being much concerned for and attached to the happiness of this life, this person is always concerned with creating good karma to have better future lives. His mind is always concerned to have a better path, and makes arrangement to find a better path at death time.

Like if there is a person who is going to leave for New York tomorrow; his mind is only thinking of packing up things, it is no longer concerned about how to stay here, how to fix this, how to make this place more comfortable. His mind is busy buying things, packing up, thinking how to do things on the way; his mind is only concerned with leaving, packing things, getting ready. It is the same like this—the person who has the realization of impermanence, and who clearly sees the life shortage and strongly understands that death is definite, and also understands that the actual time of death is indefinite, has the fear of the death—by understanding clearly, seeing, realizing that the actual time of the death is indefinite, and not being sure when it will happen. This person who has done the experiment and has the realization of impermanence is like the person in the example.

In early times in Tibet, there was one ascetic Lama, Geshe Karagpa. When he was in retreat there was a thorn growing nearby the door of the cave that touched his robes as he went out and in tore them. Each time he went out it touched them, and he thought, "I should cut it, but maybe I won't come back again." So as he goes in, again it touches and again he thinks that he should cut it, but that he might not come out again. He spent a long time like this, due to his realization of impermanence—and his life finished there in pure Dharma practice, without cutting the thorn.

The realization of the impermanence of life and death always helps the person not to be attached to the objects of the senses, not to be attached to the pleasures derived from enjoying the objects of the senses. And this realization, the experience or the practice on the impermanent life and remembering death, always helps not to keep the person busy, only working for the temporal life, but keeps the person busy working for enlightenment, working for the future life. Therefore, in this example, this great Tibetan yogi, even though the thorn was disturbing, touching his robes, the understanding of his practice, or the realization of the impermanent life, remembering death, didn't allow him to spend the time to cut the thorn that was growing outside.

If one does not continually meditate on this and think of death, then even a person who thinks to practice Dharma, even if he starts to practice Dharma, will not become successful and continue any longer. This person cannot make his practice continually in his lifetime, making progression. Even if he practices one, two, or three years, due to some situation he stops. Then as he gets into problems, falls into confusion, he misses Dharma. So he again starts to practice. But due to not practicing these meditations, not having the realization of impermanence, not clearly realizing that the actual time of death is indefinite, even if he tries to practice, his mind is not equal, always up and down—sometimes practicing Dharma, sometimes not practicing Dharma. As he meets different

environments, different people, his practice easily gets disturbed—that is due to lack of continual practice, meditation on impermanence, the life shortage and remembering death.

For instance many Westerners take ordination, take precepts, but break them soon—say after one month or after one year. That's basically due to the lack of experience, lack of continual strong practice of these meditations, of impermanence, and lack of the strong understanding realizing death, that the actual time of death is indefinite, and lack of the effortless experience of impermanence, of the impermanent life.

So because of the lack of all these experiences and meditations, the person does not fear breaking the precepts, creating negative karma; the person has no fear of creating negative actions, the person has no fear. Basically, the person does not have that much fear of attachment. Therefore, the person easily follows the attachment that is attached to the pleasure of this temporal life. So, that is how the person easily creates the negative action.

A person who makes continual practice, and who strongly remembers from the heart that life is short and the impermanence of the life and death, this person always has fear of the death and has no interest working for the temporal life, has no interest in making arrangements for the temporal life.

In ancient times, when Guru Shakyamuni was born in the princely life, in that period in India there were five different kings. In that time when his parents were giving birth to him, the other four kings were also giving birth to their own children—all those five king's children were born at the same time. So at that time the whole world was full of light, when he was coming out. The white light covered the whole earth, so the other four kings thought it was because of their own sons. There was one king called the clear king (*sang gyal*), he thought that the reason that there was white light covering whole earth was because of his son. From the west there was a Brahmin who had power to foretell, the power to predict, and other psychic powers, he also got surprised by the light and he checked up what caused it. So he came to this family of Guru Shakyamuni. As he came to their home, the parents showed the child to this person who had power to foretell and other psychic powers and when he checked up Guru Shakyamuni's Body he saw all these holy signs—the thirty-two and eighty signs of his holy body, the figures on the outside of his holy body. And as he was checking up the man became very much upset and began crying. So the parents of Guru Shakyamuni thought maybe he had discovered the physical signs something bad. Then the parents got upset and asked why was he crying, is the sign of my child bad? He said no, no, no and he predicted that this child will renounce the princely life, would become a renounced being, and at such and such an age he would receive enlightenment. And this man discovered that at that time he himself wouldn't exist anymore, he would be dead. So, because he remembered his own death, he became upset and started crying. He had that much power.

If one is free of the karma, if one has control over the death and rebirth, if one is free of that, then no need to worry about death, there's no need of having fear of death. If one has control over this cycle, if one is free, then there is no need to fear during death time. So having fear of death is good, having fear in the life shortage is good. But it is not good to have at the time of death—that is a distraction—at death time being scared, making all kinds of noises, asking all the relatives to come and see—that is a distraction, that is useless. But before death, before that danger happens, it is necessary, before that danger comes, to frequently remember death and to meditate on the impermanent life, and build the fear stronger and stronger, and lessen the attachment. Doing

continual Dharma practice or creating merit is wise, this is skillful. The practice of this meditation on impermanence and remembering death is also great helpful to avoid the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, because thinking of this causes fear to arise. So as the life shortage and death are examples of the suffering results of the evil thoughts of the eight worldly Dharmas, so the person who has fear by remembering the life shortage and death also has fear of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. In this way the person does not follow the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. The person, whenever he creates good karma, creates pure action, without being involved in the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. So this meditation is very important, so important.

Such as Guru Shakyamuni, what encouraged him to give up such princely life, even he had that much possessions, number of populations, place, so many things, also many thousand wives—but even that much possessions, no problem from outside, what encouraged him to lead the ascetic life. His giving up the princely life and making the 6 years retreat, austerities, and showing the holy deeds; and receiving enlightenment at the holy place, Bodhgaya, and subduing the evil demons, the Maras, and giving sermon in three different places, the cycle of the Dharma, for different beings who had different level of intelligence. All these things, his receiving enlightenment, giving the Dharma cycle to the great number of disciples—all that started from, all those things started from remembering death and life shortage, remembering impermanence and death, the suffering of life.

His palace has four gates. So one day, from each gate, he saw different examples of suffering life: he saw old age, a very thin old man whose body has no weight or strength walking with a stick, the body bent. Outside of another gate he saw a sick person. Outside of another gate he saw a dead body being carried, and outside of another gate he saw a very well-subdued looking bhikshu (monk) walking.

So anyway, from those examples he received renunciation of the samsara, he discovered the nature of life, the suffering life nature, the nature of the samsaric suffering. He discovered that being attached to the happiness of this life, it is trivial, useless, that all the pleasures of temporal life are trivial, meaningless actually, that all those pleasures are in the nature of suffering. All this he realized by seeing those examples. By seeing the monk, who was an emanation, he wanted to become a renounced being, he avoided the worldly life and the worldly works, the worldly interest, and he led life as a bhikshu. From this event, by seeing this outside example, he received the realization of impermanence, remembering death, that started everything, changed his whole life—he did six years of retreat, practiced austerities, received the realizations of the path, and found the truth, which means receiving the realization of the absolute nature.

His seeking the truth and we, many people coming from the West, seeking truth is basically different. The way we seek the truth is this—seeking the truth by tying our neck with the rope of attachment to this life. His seeking the truth was on the basis of avoiding attachment to the pleasures of this life. So, anyway, his receiving enlightenment was also caused by that, this basic realization, seeing those examples. And his showing the circle of the Dharma, enlightening great numbers of sentient beings, great numbers of holy beings happened, pandits, yogis in ancient times—that is also due to his kindness, which started from his basic realization of impermanence. Also, in Tibet great numbers of yogis and holy beings, also received enlightenment—that is also due to Guru Shakyamuni's kindness, it also happened due to his first realization of impermanence, discovering the suffering nature. Besides that, even in modern times, many numbers of European people having the chance to meet Dharma, to study Dharma, to practice awakening from ignorance—all these are due to his kindness, our finding the meaning of life from the Dharma

shown by him. So all these perfection, all these good results started from his first realization of impermanence seeing those outside examples, and discovering the suffering nature and renouncing samsaric life. So anyway, therefore, it is important to continually remember impermanence and life shortage and death, even for us.

We may live maybe ten years, maybe six years, maybe fifteen years. It is definite, it is for sure we won't live for 200 years; that is definite, that is for sure. Not even more than 100, that is also for sure; to live to 100 is almost an impossible thing. So maybe 60 or 70. However, there is some length of life for each person. I have, each of you have, a certain length of life and that has a certain number of years, and that has a certain number of months, a certain number of days, a certain number of hours. Just as there are a certain number of hours, there are a certain number of minutes and seconds. It is something that can be counted, it is not something numberless, even the seconds to death can be counted. So there are a certain number of breaths in and out. Our death is just a matter of stopping the breath—it is not something that one has to make a long trek to do, just stopping the breath, nothing difficult, so easy, so simple. Even the person in one day, generally, I think, I'm not sure, takes 21,000 breaths—there is a certain number of breaths in one day.

Nothing is long, only we don't feel it is short; we have no fear of death, we think we live—each day we think we will live for a long time. In each year we think we will exist in the next year, we think and plan like this. Also in each day we think like this, that we will exist tomorrow. Only we don't feel scared of the life shortage; that is because we do not fully realize the change in life. So it's like this—just as the clock makes noise, as the clock ticks, there is a certain number of ticks in our life. So as the clock in front of us is passing each tick like this, exactly the life is finishing that fast. Life finishes in that time, our precious life. If you know how to meditate on impermanence, clocks are also useful for the meditation on impermanence.

As this great yogi, Milarepa said, “All the phenomena appearing as the teachings.”

For instance the clock. It is a clock, a material thing, but it can be just as a book, just as a teaching that explains about impermanence, exactly the same thing. If you have wisdom, you have eyes that see all phenomena appearing as a teaching. Then just as the great yogi Milarepa said, such as the clock can always show impermanence, just the same as a Dharma book. Also a clock can appear as a guru, always instructing one in the impermanence of this life.

6pm

Try to be conscious of what you are thinking, what motive you have for meditating, try to discover.

Think, “The attachment that is attached to the happiness of this life, to the sole happiness of this life and the higher pleasures of the samsaric realms, is the cause of the samsaric sufferings, problems. The attachments are the real enemy that have been keeping me in the prison of samsara, in the bondage of suffering. Having this present life and many future lives happy and pleasant is not enough because it is still in the nature of suffering—it's like being on a ground of thorns. So I must be released from this bondage of suffering. It is still not enough, releasing myself from the bondage of suffering and receiving ultimate peace, because infinite sentient beings are in incredible suffering, not having the wisdom eye to understand Dharma, and not having a leader leading them to nirvana, and most sentient beings have not received a perfect human rebirth. They always create and experience suffering. It is the same thing to them, they desire happiness and do not desire suffering.

So it's more important to release other sentient beings from suffering, then only try to release myself from suffering. The sentient beings are the object from whom I received all my past, present, and future happiness and perfection—as they are extremely kind, I must repay them; as they are in such unbearable suffering, I must help them, guide them from suffering. At the moment I don't have the capability or power to guide them from suffering. Who has such power, knowledge, and great compassion? The Enlightened One. So I must achieve enlightenment. In order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings, I must complete the realizations of the graduated path. In order to complete the realizations of the graduated path, I am going to meditate on the graduated path, with the preparation of purifying with Guru Shakyamuni and the breathing meditation.”

When you meditate on the perfect human rebirth try to recognize the freedoms that you have and what you don't have, and the receptacles that you have received. As many freedoms or receptacles as you have received try to rejoice yourself. It is worthwhile to rejoice because it is something that is useful in the work for enlightenment. If you have not received, if there is something missing, then you have to create the cause. Then you should think like this, “I am missing this such and such thing, so I must create the causes.”

In “The Great Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” try to remember the precious possibilities that can be achieved, that can be done with the perfect human rebirth, and the different results that are included in the temporal and the ultimate results.

In the meditation on “The Extreme Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” do the checking meditation with cause, with numbers, and with examples.

And then also, according to time, do the checking meditation on “How the Human Life is Fragile and Impermanent.”

(Meditation)

Visualize the throne, lotus, moon, and sun absorbed into Guru Shakyamuni, and that Guru Shakyamuni comes down and is seated on the center of your head and absorbs into you. At the same time as Guru Shakyamuni absorbs into you, the dualistic conception and the impure view of yourself becomes void in the form of emptiness, but in the nature of infinite happiness, your mind being one with Guru Shakyamuni's holy mind.

Now visualize the throne, lotus, moon, sun and yourself in the form of Guru Shakyamuni, having a very light holy Body, shining, and think that your body, speech, and mind become oneness with Guru Shakyamuni's holy body, speech, and mind.

Day 12

Tuesday November 27th

9 a.m.

From the teaching of the great bodhisattva, Tenzin Gyatso, “Even the fully omniscient mind, the fully enlightened, omniscient mind arises from bodhicitta. Therefore, those who desire the complete release (which means nirvana) from the whole suffering will find it greatly worthwhile to practice bodhicitta.”

“Even the fully enlightened, omniscient mind arises from bodhicitta.” “Even” (or “also”) means, besides all temporal happiness and perfection, and the happiness, the ultimate happiness, the peace that is beyond samsara, besides the fact that those arise from bodhicitta, also the ultimate goal, the fully enlightened omniscient mind also arises from bodhicitta, this is also received from bodhicitta.

Like this—for instance, for the number of the people we are here, our practice, our bodhicitta that we have received becomes the fundamental of each of our enlightenment. It’s like the root of the tree—so each of us, the future buddha, or the fully enlightened, omniscient mind—each of us has a future goal, has a future fully enlightened mind or buddha that each of us will become—so that’s like the fruit of the tree. Just as the fruit of the tree is received, it arises from the root by depending on the root of the tree. Just as this, our future fully enlightened, mind, or buddha, that is received through the present practice of bodhicitta. So each of our bodhicitta gives birth to enlightenment, to each of our future’s enlightenment. That’s how the buddha or fully enlightened mind is born from bodhicitta. By relating to each of us, for instance, my future buddha is born from bodhicitta, from my bodhicitta, bodhicitta that is received through practice. Just like this example, so it works with each sentient being each living being.

The great Indian philosopher, pandit, well far-famed, highly realized Chandrakirti said in the beginning of the Madhyamaka teachings that he admired great compassion, because great compassion is the cause, the main fundamental thing, because buddha, the fully enlightened mind arises from bodhicitta, and bodhicitta arises from great compassion. So great compassion is very important, the fundamental of bodhicitta. That’s why the great Chandrakirti, before the explanation on shunyata, the absolute true nature, paid homage to and admired great compassion, which gives birth to bodhicitta and enlightenment.

Totally, it means all the temporal good results, even the whole ultimate good results, arise from bodhicitta. Therefore, for us who desire complete release, it is greatly worthwhile, it is important to precisely practice bodhicitta. So just as this great bodhisattva said with his great experience, we have freedom for such a short time, such a short life. So we have received the freedom to practice Dharma, especially the Mahayana teachings, and therefore it is greatly worthwhile to train the mind in bodhicitta, even from now, this moment, as we have the time, as we are free. So before listening to the subject, in order for it not to become a worldly action, in order to transcend our listening action to be higher than that of any ordinary beings worldly actions, in order for it to be different than the everyday old actions, we should think and cultivate the pure impulse.

“The attachment that is attached to the happiness of this temporal life and the higher samsaric enjoyments, no matter how much the present life is happy, no matter how pleasant the future life in samsara may be, it is still in the nature of suffering, it is still in the bondage of suffering—it is still not certain that we will not be reborn in the lower suffering realms, we are still not free. Therefore, it is important that we release ourselves from the bondage of suffering.

“Oneself being happy in the goal, everlasting peace, is not sufficient. Just as oneself, there are many sentient beings in suffering, desiring happiness and not desiring suffering, but not having freedom, not having a guru as I have, not having the wisdom to know positive and negative actions. Also, they are the objects from whom I received all my past, present, and future happiness and perfection. As they are in great suffering, I am greatly responsible for releasing them and repaying them for their kindness.”

“The best way to release them and repay them is to lead them to enlightenment. To do this, I must complete the graduated path. To fully understand and realize the whole meaning of the graduated path, like Guru Tsong Khapa, who is like the second Buddha, who has the same level of knowledge as Guru Shakyamuni has, to achieve this, I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path.”

The listening subject is the graduated path—we finished perfect human rebirth, the great usefulness of perfect human rebirth, and the difficulty of receiving perfect the human rebirth. We also finished the explanations on the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, but I am still not satisfied—perhaps it will be possible to continue in the future life.

Anyway, then, “How to Make the Human Life Meaningful?” (Page 51). This is just generally to understand and for us to make a decision—even if I can’t do that, I must at least have the achievement of this; if not that, at least I must have the achievement of this ... something must be done with my life. But this is not the part in which you have to train the mind precisely—this is just to have an idea, to finish something in this life. But this section does not come in the meditation outlines. (So the vertical marking line should be deleted from this sub-section). When you meditate, it is good to think frequently, again and again, because according to the subject as it is written here, it is very helpful to the mind to cross the hardship of Dharma practice. But it is not necessary to think about this outline topic, “How Should I Make This Perfect Human Rebirth Highly Meaningful?” until the realization is received, and after the topic, “Is It Easy to Receive the Perfect Human Rebirth?” you meditate on “How Long is lifespan?”

I think I didn’t completely explain the realization, the definition of when there is achievement of the topic of the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth. For instance, when a person puts a sack of gold in the water, and wastes it, you see how you feel when a person wasted such a thing—you see it as such a great loss, something unbelievable, a great loss. If your sack full of gold is put in the water or thrown somewhere, you experience such a great feeling of its preciousness, and a great, strong feeling of great loss. As when the sack full of gold is wasted, when one has the realization of how extremely difficult it is to find the perfect human rebirth, through the practice and realization of this meditation such a strong feeling arises within the person’s mind, that, such a strong feeling arises within the person’s mind even when the person spends a minute or a second in distraction, without creating merit. Besides the feeling of great loss, if this previous human rebirth is used for creating negative actions for a second or a minute, or even if it is not used for creating negative actions but just in distraction for a second or a minute, one feels that great loss—then one has the realization of the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth.

As you continually practice this meditation, the feeling of this gets stronger and stronger. Before, the person may create some good karma, merits, or virtuous action for maybe half an hour. Before, nothing—the person has no idea about creating good karma, not understanding the reason. Before his mind wasn’t even scared of creating negative karma because of ignorance, and he used his life for that. As the person practices and understands the teachings more and more, the fear of creating negative actions grows and the person creates more and more positive actions. But he is still lazy, still creates negative actions. This happens even if the person says and thinks it is bad, because there is not that much fear of it, and not much strong realization or clear understanding of the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth. Then, as he continually practices this meditation, as he sees more and more clearly, checking many ways, then also, at the same time, he sees the preciousness of

the perfect human rebirth more clearly, and he has a greater feeling of it. So, he has that much stronger fear of creating negative actions, of wasting the perfect human rebirth that is received once, and very difficult to receive again; that much fear of wasting the perfect human rebirth that is so difficult to receive again. So that much more he creates positive actions, his mind is that much more hung up on creating the causes for enlightenment, no matter how much other people try to disturb him.

For those of us who try to practice Dharma, even if we want to meditate, even if we have the desire to meditate, we fall asleep and our minds are easily distracted by things, by interesting objects. This is the lack of the achievement of these fundamental realizations, and the lack of not strongly feeling the preciousness of the perfect human rebirth. This is the best psychological method to not get lazy and keep away sleep.

As Guru Shakyamuni said in the sutra teachings called *Gya.che Rol.ba*, “The three stages of life are impermanent, like a cloud in autumn. If one looks at dancers, if one look at the actors, costumes, it will look same thing to the living beings death and rebirth.”

The meaning is this—“their life” means the sentient beings who are under the earth, on the earth, and above the earth. Life of all those living beings life is impermanent, fragile, like a cloud in autumn. The cloud doesn’t stay in one place, permanent—in each minute, in each second, it changes. If you look at one cloud precisely, check up—slowly, slowly the shape changes. This is still the gross change that we see. When we think the cloud we saw, in one part it is not there, it is somewhere, it is very indefinite. There is nothing to believe in, there is no way to have full confidence in its shape. Why? Because the cloud as we saw it before is no longer in that shape, or it is not there at all. It instantly, spontaneously changes. So it is the same thing as the cloud; even if it was foggy in the morning, it is not the same in the afternoon, or in the nighttime. Even if the whole space is cloudy, foggy, this doesn’t last for a long time. So, just like this, like those indefinite clouds in which we cannot have belief or full confidence in the shape or the existence in that place, just like that cloud, the living beings lives are not sure. Like us—for a short moment we are here with a human body, having some kind of life, doing something, but this doesn’t last very long from our side, though it seems long. But other beings, such as those in the realm of the gods, see our lives as so short; even a human who can live for fifty years they see as existing for one morning. Even if we live to 400 or 500, they see our existence as such a short time.

But, at the moment we are here, with such a body. Then soon, death arises, and after death, according to each of our own karma, we’ll be somewhere in a different place, with a different body, having a different life. Somewhere—either in the preta realm, in the narak realm, in the animal realm, as a sura or asura, as a samsaric god, or perhaps as a human being. We do that for some time, and then again after death we take another body in a different place. Always life never lasts, it is indefinite; it is something that as we think, as we believe, as we project, is indefinite. It is something in which we cannot have full belief or confidence. For instance, the actor changes his costume. He has the costume for a few minutes, until that dance has finished, and then he puts on another costume, and then another. Just like this example, the sentient beings’, the living beings’ rebirth and death is like the actor’s costume—it is only for a short moment, then changes. There is no such costume that is certain, definite; it always keeps on changing. So, also, life is very short, and as the actors keep changing costumes, so our mind keeps taking different bodies.

Our life is very fragile and impermanent, like lightning. Lightning is for a few seconds. Just like this, life is very short. Also, lightening lasts for many seconds, and then finishes in that time. Our life is just like this—generally so short, finishing spontaneously and rapidly, in split seconds. As time finishes that quickly so our life, like the lightning, finishes spontaneously, rapidly,

Another example of the way our life is finishing is if you throw a stone up, as it comes down it doesn't stay, it never stops in space—not even a second, a minute, it doesn't stay without coming down. Especially as in this example, life rapidly finishes; as in this example, life finishes that quickly, and goes to death.

It is good to think in this way. First think like this: even if I live 100 years, if I have a life that lasts for 100 years, in the total number, by gathering the 100 years, and that much number of months, days, minutes, seconds ...

Question: Now that we know it is so short, what can we do to make it worthwhile?

Answer: Practice this meditation. If you know clearly why we follow the negative mind, why we the keep negative mind, why we store the negative mind. Just like the example of the two-pointed needle with no holes that cannot sew cloth—like this, this example is good. We cannot do both, Dharma and non-Dharma, we can't practice them together; it doesn't work.

Anyway, so thinking in this way would be effective to fully realize impermanence—the 100 years is the total of the years, months, weeks, days, minutes, and seconds. Just like a mountain is dependent on the big form by which it exists, gathering all those heavy, gross parts; and then on the small parts; then down to the molecules and atoms; it is a group of atoms. The 100 years is the total group of great numbers of split seconds; 100 years is a group that exists by gathering a great number of seconds, just like the mountain. Just like a big pile of rice—the big pile is made of each of the grains, so if you take each of these grains from the pile, it can finish. Taking one by one, the big pile of rice can be finished. So all those split seconds, which are like all those rice grains make up the aggregate of the 100 years—it finishes, it passes away. It finishes so quickly, even in one second.

Try to visualize and think clearly. So, as the group made by great numbers of split seconds which is called 100 years, it finishes so quickly. As a split second finishes, each second finishes. As each second finishes, each minute. As each minute finishes, the hour finishes. As each hour finishes, the day finishes. As each day finishes, the week finishes. As each week finishes, the year finishes. So the 100 years depends on the finishing of each split second. We always see and believe that it is not finishing, but it is finishing with each split second. As each of the aggregates finishes, so the 100 years finishes that much quickly. Starting from the time that our mind entered the mother's womb, as much time as that human life has to live, it finishes with each split second that makes the aggregate of the 100 years.

So if you think in this way, the 100 years is nothing. It finishes so quickly because that is nothing in there that is not traveling, not passing through, there's no time. As it changes that quickly, starting from the mind that took its place in the mother's womb, life gets older. As all these months, years, 100 years finishes, the person gets older. As the person gets older in each measure of time—second, minute, hour, day, month—he gets closer to death. The person gets closer to death, and still we are planning as we have 100 years to live. But as the person gets that much older time passes, the person getting that much closer to death.

So what does it look like now, our life? Is it facing, running with each split second without stopping—it spontaneously, rapidly runs to death. Without stopping for one day or minute, with each split second, it gets closer and closer. When we think about this we get a shock, we get frightened, we see how fast we are coming to death. In this way we realize it. Checking in this way is useful, better than just saying the words, “I will die.” Anyone can say that. It is not enough only to think that I will die after some time, this is not enough. Many people can have such thoughts—those who don’t meditate, who don’t understand the meaning of impermanence—that anyone can have.

Still we plan 100 years to live. But according to our life, it is not like that. According to individual karma, all kinds—we may live ten, fifteen, five years, or sixty or seventy—maybe something like that. This short life finishes so quickly. Actually what we have is not 100. It is much shorter than that, even the little we have, the short time we can exist, even that finishes so quickly, like this.

One great Tibetan yogi said, “Just from the split second of taking birth, the person is running to the lord of death (this means the person is running to death). Even if he is called “living,” or “alive,” he is in danger of death, and is going in the danger of death.”

Just as the example of people taking a goat to the butcher. From the place where the goat makes his first walk to the butcher, to where it’s going to be killed, it’s alive but it’s going into the danger of death. Just like this, our life is like the goat going from home, on the way, who has started the first walk to the butcher’s place. Our life is just like this, but it is called “alive.” The goat that is taken by people with ropes to the butcher looks sad. In the same way we can feel upset.

Then, sometimes think like this, “It is definite that (it is useful to sometimes think like this) that the whole planet, the sun, moon, the whole thing, the universe, will become empty, nothing existing—even the planets, sun, moon, the mountains—everything will become empty. So for sure it is definite that I will not permanently exist. If all this ends, why not me? So at that time, where will I be, where I will go? It is definite that as this whole thing began at one time, after a certain number of eons it will be finished, empty. (I think even scientists say the same thing.) So at that time, it is certain I will not exist.

“For instance, even those fully enlightened ones, the arhats, many other holy beings, yogis, enlightened beings such as Guru Shakyamuni—even those who came to different places and gave much Dharma, even those who had great realizations, now there are only empty places. They all passed away—those yogis, holy beings—and only empty places are left, only their holy names. Like those ancient scientists, they all passed away, however much they did in their lifetimes, and what is left is only their names. So why not me?” Think like this yourself.

Also think like this. Our physical generations, past generations, like our forefathers, foremothers, and ancestors—if you go back, if you think in this way it is very effective—the ancestors and all the past fathers and mothers, not existing. I have one grandmother, before I had one grandmother; but that grandmother doesn’t exist as she was before, being a human being. Also for my father, the same thing, he doesn’t exist. I didn’t see my grandfather, or my father either—I have no idea about my father. Thinking like this is helpful. I remember only his clothes left in the house; when I was a child I slept in his chuba, which was made of animal skins, but I never saw my father. So thinking like this is very effective. It must be the same thing for many of you. I think my grandmother died while I was in Tibet. She had very white hair.

3 p.m.

So just like that example that we were talking about this morning of checking through families—it is very useful to see the impermanence of your own life, to check the forefathers and the ancestors like this. Even the generation of parents has been continuing for a long time, for many periods, but now we don't see those many past ancestors, those ancient fathers. Besides talking about those past ancestors—the past mothers and the forefathers who are beings that we didn't see in our life—also there are the relatives and parents that we saw in our life, and also there are the dead relatives that we saw before—parents, either mother or father or both.

So whatever the number of family members that exist now, we are not sure whose turn it will be next among the family. Most of us don't have the feeling that among the family, I shall die first. We think that he is going to die first (and we often make sure that he is going to die first) and also we make plans—I think this is happening. These conceptions are not useful—it is better to think that I will die first in place of thinking that the parents or the relatives will die first.

Also we may think that whoever he or she is, he or she is going to die soon, so I will get his or her property, the money. Then, like the example I mentioned before of the man who killed himself dancing, we make plans of what to do with the money—do this and that, and by believing that one will not die before that there is an intuitive strong belief, no one teaches this, that this is true.

It is not sure anyway, that it will happen this as we think, because it is not sure that death cannot happen. We reason that I won't die soon because I am not old or not sick. These are wrong conceptions. By reasoning in such a way—"I am well, and I have all the properties, I have everything, I am not sick, I am well, therefore I will exist; I won't die soon, I won't die this year, or this month." But such reasons cannot be logic to prove that death cannot happen, because we know that it is common that even a baby conceived in a mother's womb can die before it comes out, without depending on abortion. It can die inside the mother's womb, or just after coming out—it doesn't have to be definitely old. Even it is possible that to a person who has everything—all the possessions, everything, all the temporal needs of life—death can happen. For instance, a president, or a king who has much country, power, and a great population working under him, much government, great materialistic power or machines, great numbers of doctors. No matter how many psychologists there are, or how many things there, death happens, even to the president, the king. This is also common. However people try their best, it doesn't work. Even if besides one's own country's doctors, one depends on another country's help or support, there are no means to stop death. This is common, we have been hearing this information. This is also helpful to remember the impermanence of our own life. How famous he is, how his name is well far-famed.

Rinpoche: So, at death time, what causes the living beings to have death and rebirth?

Answer: Karma.

Rinpoche: It's agreeable—my father says it's karma. The reason that there is death and rebirth for living beings is karma—agreeable or disagreeable? You don't have to say beautiful things, just say what you think.

Answer: Ignorance.

Rinpoche: How does ignorance cause it?

Answer: It perpetuates life and death.

Rinpoche: How?

Answer: You can't tell because it's lost in ignorance.

Rinpoche: That is something that one can laugh about for eons. Is that caused by ignorance?

Answer: I'm not sure.

Rinpoche: But what is the basic idea, in the west, what causes death?

Answer: There's no escape from time and change, growth and decay.

Rinpoche: I see, so the reason in the west that all living beings have death, that human beings, creatures, have to go through death, that life has to be ended by death, is time?

Answer: Yes.

Rinpoche: Why does it have to happen?

Answer: Because it's impermanent, it's in the nature of the body.

Rinpoche: Who created the nature of the body?

Answer: For Christians, God ordained it to live that way. The Christians say that when man was in union with God he lived for a very long, a very long time, but as he turned away he lived shorter and shorter.

Any samsaric sentient beings who are in the circle of death and rebirth, who are not free of that circle, as long as those uncontrolled living beings, samsaric beings don't break the circle, as they uncontrollably take rebirth, they also have to die, also have to go through this evolution of life. So anyway, at death time, when the person is nearing death, even if he is a rich person or a poor person, a beggar, whatever he is, there is suffering, great worry and suffering. Those ordinary beings, no matter whether they are a king or a beggar, who didn't spend their lives creating merits, doing pure actions, who didn't create much good karma, at death time both have much suffering. At death time, both have problems—the beggar who dies in the street and is homeless, or the king who dies on a jeweled, golden throne in a beautiful palace full of servants, helpers, friends, many important things, and many possessions. At death time both of them have problems, both of their minds are in fear and in worry. Even the king looks usually very powerful, magnificent-looking, even when he goes he is very pompous looking (if it is a mistake, I'm sorry). Also when we look at him we see him as if he is permanent—but at death time he is very fearful looking. With the palace, the jeweled throne, the servants, so many things around—at that time his body is different from his usual life's body, and he is very fearful looking.

Also then, he is near to death, and experiencing much upset, much worry about the negative actions he did in his life, the actions that harmed other beings—he is greatly upset. Also, if it is a non-virtuous person there is much trouble, not only at death but also as it approaches he has to go through much suffering, much sickness, and also great worry, great suffering, releasing himself from all these things—power, populations, possessions. And he sees life when he is near to death, and whatever he enjoyed, whatever power he had, the family he had, how many children, wives he had—everything he sees as a dream, everything finishes, just like lightning, the whole life. There's a feeling that the whole life is quickly finished, like the lightning, in such a short time, with such an upset mind, "Oh, now I have finished my whole life." Thinking like this, there is a feeling or vision of life finishing as lightning, in such a short time.

So, it is the same thing, similar to the example—when we die, similar things can happen, similar fears, worry. That time there is no choice, everything has to be left—relatives, possessions, whatever it is, even one's body that has been taken care of more than other living being's body, that we have spent the most time looking after. Besides leaving the family, property, possessions, and everything, we even have to leave this body. We have no control, no choice to take even an atom with us. So at we also find ourselves in great suffering, with much worry, and our faces change, we become awful looking, fearful looking, our color and eyes change.

Also, this causes the relatives to worry, crying—mother, father, husband, wife—no matter how many there are, nothing helps, their mind is worried, your mind is worried. They sit on the bed, surrounding you—and nothing helps, you are only dying with worries. Even if they all hold your body, if they all ask you not to die, and some hold the hands, legs, and some hold the head—no matter how much they request you, no matter how many thousands request you—even if you desire to stay, there is no choice. You make great noise at death time, moving your legs and hands because of fear, and from the other people's side nothing can help you.

After you die, the body becomes a corpse. The body that was used, that was taken great care of, that enjoyed many beautiful things, wore beautiful and expensive clothes, lived in a beautiful apartment, slept on a soft bed, ate only that which it was used to receiving, only delicious food, the body that was used, that enjoyed other people, that was taken the best care of it many ways with many things—that body no becomes a corpse. Your dead body is covered by a cloth and becomes fearful looking, so that no one can look, even if it was most attractive in its lifetime. Even the room has a vibration, something.

And the possessions, I think it's better to put on us our situation. After each of our bodies becomes a corpse, the possessions that we had are used by other people, and they say this belonged to such and such a dead person, using only the name. After the corpse is taken out there is such an empty feeling even in the house. The property, the possessions that you tried to get it by working very hard, that you received, that he bought with the money you worked for very hard—all those things are left without choice, no matter how much you spent your life and energy and worked very hard, with greed, ignorance, hatred, working extremely hard, in spite of physical and mental difficulties.

Like this—first of all you studied very much when you were young. After you were qualified, educated, then you found a job. The possessions and money that you received by that job, whatever you collected, decorated the house. So after death, everything is left, and there is no choice to enjoy anything, even all the possessions that you gained through hardship. Therefore, even the possessions, life, and the body all are trivial.

Therefore, we shouldn't deceive ourselves with meaningless works, and we should not be deceived by meaningless objects. It is important that we try to use our actions in life, whatever we do, our daily life actions, in a virtuous way as much as possible. There's a way to use even the meaningless objects in a meaningful way; there's the possibility to use the meaningless body in a meaningful way, and the meaningless life in a meaningful way. There's a possibility, there's a way to take the essence from the essenceless body, life, or objects. If you use the daily life, before death—the body, life, or objects we enjoy—in a virtuous way as much as possible, this is like taking the essence from an essenceless object, an essenceless thing. Then life does not become completely empty. There is something, profit is made that can be used, that can help in future lifetimes.

So therefore, because life is impermanent, the actual time of death is indefinite. It is also good to continually think like this, remembering yourself—the body that is going to become a corpse. When you sleep, also remember the impermanence of your life, the body that will definitely become a corpse. The blanket or whatever it is is like the cloth that is going to be used to cover and wrap the dead body.

Remembering this also helps to detach yourself from your own body and possessions. Also frequently think, "These possessions that I have now at this moment after death will soon be possessed by other people; maybe tomorrow, the next day, or in a month, a year." So at the moment, the things we have are like loaned things that we borrowed from other people, temporal things. If you frequently think like this, that possessions are temporal things borrowed from other people and will soon be taken by others, this lessens the attachment, even though you are keeping and protecting the possessions at present. You are protecting them for other people, but you are just using them at the moment. It is the same thing with clothes, you can think like this—this helps us to be detached in our enjoyments.

Being detached from your body, objects, and your enjoyments is not suffering, which is what some people think. Being detached is suffering, being attached is pleasure—some people think like this, but this is wrong.

Even the house, place—not thinking like this. Usually we have the feeling that, "This is my possession," that, "I will permanently possess it, it will be permanently mine." There is a kind of feeling—check up with your possessions, with your body too. Also with your place, it is good to think that it is someone else's place, that it is temporal. This is very helpful.

Even those ancient yogis, those great ancient mediators carry skulls, thigh bones to blow, many things—the whole purpose of this is to remember life shortage, impermanence, and death. So, by remembering this, their life and mind is not caught in the pleasure of attachment to the happiness of this life. Remembering impermanence and death always helps one to be detached from the happiness of this life, from the enjoyments of this life. So for that reason those ancient yogis keep those things. Even the symbolic, religious things—why do they have to be bone? Totally for those reasons, to remember impermanence and death. So, they think like this, the skull they have definitely belonged to some other person, one person, who experienced pain if something was pressed here—if this was pushed in, he experienced pain, he made noise. Now, only his skull is left—very soon, the same thing will happen to me. Just as this person left, the same thing will happen to me.

It is like this—not remembering impermanence and death is like the animal that is not conscious, like a rat that is not conscious. If it goes in the trap where there is meat he will be killed getting inside the trap. So the person who doesn't think of impermanence and death, who doesn't practice, easily gets into the trap of attachment to the temporal happiness of this life, easily gets in that trap. If the person gets in that trap, there is no peace, he is only creating suffering—creating suffering and experiencing suffering in the future, for long time. So meditating on impermanence and remembering death always makes the person conscious and aware of this trap, the trap of the attachment that is attached to the happiness of this life. So by being conscious the person doesn't easily get trapped, by remembering impermanence and death. Just like the animal rat, if he knows he will be trapped by being greedy for that meat, causing himself more suffering, and death—if the rat remembers that he keeps himself away from the danger. Remembering impermanence and death works in the same way. This causes us to be aware and not to be attached to the pleasure of this life. Without thinking the impermanence and death, we easily get attached, get cheated by the objects of the senses, get attached to the temporal pleasures. So we get trapped by ourselves, get trapped in worldly life, like this.

Is the Time of My Death Definite? (Page 53)

Anyway, why, as we get closer to death, should be afraid of death? Our life gets closer to death with each split second, but why is fear of death necessary to have now? That is because if there was no mind before rebirth, there is no reason for the rebirth, the existence of life, to happen. So because there was our mind before our human rebirth, so the same thing, when death comes, the mind does not cease as the body ceases, the mind has to continue after death. So after death, now we don't know how we will die or where we will die—each person, most of us have no idea, completely black. The mind has to go somewhere. It is almost sure that we will be born in one of the three lower realms—it is almost sure, because in this lifetime, if we check up how many positive and negative actions we created from the time we were born until now, there are more negative than positive actions. Therefore, it is definite, almost definite that we will be born in one of the three lower suffering realms and suffer there.

At the moment we are human beings like this, some with robes and some with trousers, or some have long hair, some have short hair. But now we are not sure—after one year, maybe we will be born as a creature with 1000 hands, just crawling in the forest, on the road, in the house—now we are thinking like this, but after one year we may have 1000 hands, be crawling, awful looking, and no one will like us—like a snake or a scorpion, not sure. When we look at this animal it looks awful, ugly, we don't want to see it in the house; something like that was taken out, but we still have fear that it may come in. So now we are here, but after one year it is not certain who in the room will take this birth—after one or two years he may be reborn as a being who scares everybody.

Or we may be reborn suffering from heat—on a red-hot iron ground ablaze, which is creation of our own karma. We may suffer there, becoming one with fire. What happens is not sure—it is the same thing for me, same thing for you—not sure. At the moment we see ourselves as having such a long time, but actually it is not a long time, it is such a short time. In such a short time we are doing something like this—I am talking, you are listening, some are reading books, but in a short time something will happen, life always changes. Now there are one hundred and something people together here—but soon we will separate, soon all these people will die, soon great change will happen.

Everybody check up your own thought, your motive—why are you going to do this meditation—just for curiosity, or for release from suffering, release from ignorance and achievement of the ultimate goal?

If there is a motivation that is just curious about the things that arise in the mind, not having any particular thought, any particular Dharma thought, or if there is an impure motive that is attached in the happiness or the comforts of this life, then think that, “This is the cause of all the problems and sufferings. Besides the attachment to the happiness of this life, the attachment to the higher samsaric pleasures is also the cause of suffering. As long as oneself is in the bondage of the suffering of samsara, actually it is like living on hot, red, burning iron ground—wherever the person goes, walks, there is only suffering. Actually the situation is like this example; it’s just a matter of not recognizing it, not clearly seeing it, due to ignorance of karma and the absolute nature of existence.

“Oneself being released from samsaric suffering and having the achievement of ultimate peace is not enough, not sufficient. There are infinite sentient beings also who desire happiness and do not desire suffering, and are in incredible suffering, and most of them do not have a leader on the path to enlightenment. They do not have the wisdom eye to fully see all the different existences and karma, and which are positive actions and which are negative actions.

“And also they are the objects from whom I received my past, present, and future happiness and perfection, even enlightenment. Therefore, I must repay them for their kindness. I am responsible as they are suffering and I have the chance, having met Dharma, the Mahayana teachings, having had the chance to develop the wisdom eye, fully realizing the existence, the path and goal, and the foundation. I must do this, as I am responsible to guide them from suffering. So, the best way, the most efficient way of repaying them and guiding them from suffering is to lead them to enlightenment. For this it is necessary for me to be enlightened first. So in order to receive enlightenment for the benefit of sentient beings it is necessary to achieve the entire graduated path.” Think, “Therefore I am going to meditate on the graduated path with the preparation, the purifying meditation with Guru Shakyamuni.”

Tonight, you don’t have to do the breathing meditation. After the purifying meditation with Guru Shakyamuni, with the recitation of mantra, start the meditation on the graduated path, the perfect human rebirth.

In “The Perfect Human Rebirth,” check up the number of freedoms, the number of opportunities that you received and what is missing with your wisdom. Try to feel that the freedoms and opportunities that you have received are much precious, are that much useful, and try to rejoice yourself.

And in the meditation on “The Difficulties of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” try to remember the different levels of good results that are included in the temporal and the ultimate.

In “The Difficulties of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” you have to do the checking meditation with cause, number, and example.

Checking the result is with “The Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth.” There you check up the results that can be gained with the perfect human rebirth. Then, also think how to make the human

life meaningful. And how the human life is fragile and impermanent. Do the checking meditation on that, remembering also the time, the way the time changes, similar reason to life.

And then death—“Death is Definite and the Actual Time of Death is Indefinite,” and try to check up whether you can see when you will die. Like this—“Will I exist next year? Will I exist after six months? Will I definitely exist until next week? Will I exist until the course ends?” Ask these questions to yourself within the mind. And also try to visualize the form of death, how your body becomes, how things happen, what changes happen.

(Meditation)

Do the absorption of the throne, lotus, moon, and sun into Guru Shakyamuni.

Guru Shakyamuni comes down and sits on the center of your head. As he absorbs into you, think that the impure conception that produces this impure view that causes you to see this body, and also the ordinary body, the whole thing becomes devoid. Your mind becomes one with Guru Shakyamuni’s holy mind in the form of all-encompassing space, but in the nature of infinite happiness.

From the emptiness, which in nature is infinite happiness, the throne comes into existence, then the lotus, the moon and sun, and yourself as Guru Shakyamuni. Think that your body, speech, and mind become oneness with Guru Shakyamuni’s holy body, speech, and mind. Very shining holy body in golden color, the holy body in the nature of light—like dew, like a water bubble, very transparent.

Day 13

Wednesday November 28th

9 a.m.

From the teaching of the great bodhisattva, Tenzin Gyatso, “When one checks up the best method in order to fulfill one’s own and others’ success, and when one discovers the jewel, bodhicitta is the best, then it can be born.”

To repeat one time, “If one checks up the best method to fulfill one’s own and others’ success, and when one discovers the jewel, bodhicitta is the best, then it can be born.”

This means that the best method to gain self support is bodhicitta—to gain self-support, even in a worldly way, to gain the ultimate self-support, oneself receiving the cessation of suffering, the whole suffering, the ultimate self-support. (The other is the worldly self-supporting, the self-support that worldly people recognize. From the Dharma point of view, the actual self-support is not the self-support that worldly people define. The actual, ultimate self-support from the Dharma point of view is at least to have the cessation of suffering. So when we achieve the cessation of suffering, we gain the actual self-support. Until we are out of samsara we never gain the actual self-support). Even to achieve the ultimate self-support, the best method is bodhicitta. And the best method to achieve the state that is the complete purity of all impure, dualistic mind, of all impure conceptions, which is enlightenment, the best method to achieve this is also bodhicitta.

And the best method to fulfill others, to succeed, to work for others, is bodhicitta. So this emphasizes that it is important to realize this, that bodhicitta is the best method for all this success,

to bring all this success. Whenever one fully discovers that bodhicitta is the best method to bring all this success, bodhicitta can be born, can be received through the person's practice, practice done with understanding. That it is the best method.

At the moment it is difficult for us to bring others' success, in order to bring all other sentient beings success without confusion, without problems, because we have not achieved success ourselves, we have not yet gained the ultimate self-support, the ultimate peace. In this way, therefore, our power is limited. For us, the method or power to work for every other sentient being, to fulfill every other sentient being's success, is limited at the moment.

As bodhicitta is the best method to gain one's own and others' success, it is important that even the actions that we create today, even in one day, in a few hours, be possessed by the pure motive, bodhicitta; it is important to start from now on as we have the freedom, chance. Think, "Such attachment to the temporal happiness of this life and to the higher samsaric pleasures is merely the cause of suffering. However the present life is happy, even if we receive a future life that has the higher pleasures of samsara, it is all in the nature of suffering, even if from the ignorant mind's side it is pleasure, actually it is suffering. Therefore, it is nothing to be attached to. As long as we are attached to these samsaric pleasures, they keep us in the bondage of suffering. Continually they only oblige us to experience the same problems, the same old problems. Therefore, I must be released from the bondage of suffering.

"Myself being released from the bondage of suffering and receiving ultimate peace is not sufficient. There are infinite sentient beings that are objects from whom I received my past, present, and future happiness and perfection, and even my future ultimate goal, enlightenment. Therefore, I must repay them for their kindness. The best way to repay them is by leading them on the path to enlightenment and releasing them from suffering. It is greatly needed because they are in extremely unbearable suffering. So, as they have not received a perfect human rebirth, and missed many other chances, and as I have the present chance, I am greatly responsible to guide them from suffering, besides guiding myself from suffering. Therefore, it is necessary to receive enlightenment oneself. Without receiving enlightenment there is no power, no complete knowledge, no complete power to guide them from suffering. So, in order to receive enlightenment I must achieve the whole graduated path. Therefore, I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings about the graduated path."

The listening subject is the graduated path. We finished "Perfect Human Rebirth" and "The Great Usefulness of the Perfect Rebirth." Yesterday we did "How Life is Fragile, Impermanent," "Death is Definite," and "The Actual Time of Death is Indefinite."

So, generally it is important often for us to think about life shortage. Thinking about life shortage always helps us not to get into problems or confusion, and to be detached from the objects which cause problems—people, objects, non-living things, and living beings. This is important for us to frequently remember when we eat food, when we travel—whatever we are doing—in the meditation time, anytime, morning and night.

Especially when the person has a problem—especially when the person has a problem with other people—thinking of life shortage is like medicine for the mind, which makes the budding mind cool. Like if there is water boiling in the pot and you put in cold water, it gets relaxed, no more noise. It is the same thing with the bubbling mind, making noise from the mouth, the body—then the cool water of remembering impermanence can relax the mind. That is the best medicine. It is billions of

times better than chemical medicines, which are given when the person has something happening—injections to make the person sleep, or go unconscious. This does not affect the mind the same way your own mental medicine affects the mind. Remembering life shortage and death never makes the mind unconscious, always makes you more conscious, helps you to discover yourself better. When we are attached to family, children, relatives, and friends and attached just as a couple, husband and wife, we are also attached to non-living things. When there are things happening, this mental method, your own mental medicine, is very helpful to cool those mental problems. Thinking like is very effective. As this Tibetan great yogi said, “The family couple is impermanent, like meeting guests; therefore don’t fight and give harm.”

This instruction was given before the death of this great yogi in the place of *Thing.Ri*, where he was. The villagers asked for instructions and this is part of what he gave. So as this great yogi said, it is helpful to think of the families, couples, children, as very temporal, not to think as if these are people with whom I will always be together. These people who are in my surroundings are like temporal guests who came to meet me. The temporal guest is the guest—they come and you meet—and it is very temporal. So just as in this example, it is exactly same thing with families. They are only together until death time—their deaths or your death—the relationship of being together is not permanent, is not something that is carried on for a long time. It’s like being together for a few hours, a few minutes. At the moment we don’t think this way, but at death time, when there is life danger, it can happen—one sees the whole life as a flash, so short; in the mind there’s a vision like a flash, the whole life finished like a flash. So therefore, great upset and worry arises in the person’s mind. People who are very temporal, the family, whatever, friends who are temporal, won’t always be with you. They are people who are there just for a short time, so there is no reason to fight with a negative mind, or no reason also to be attached to them. There is no reason to harm them or to fight with a negative mind, no reason for hatred, jealousy, or many other negative minds to arise and harm them—no reason.

Even when you are together, it does not mean that you should be away from them, separated—it doesn’t mean precisely this. It means that this is how to treat your mind that causes these problems, because problems arise mainly from the mind. This is how to stop problems when you are together, so you can live in peace. So it is good to think, “I won’t always be together with them, they won’t always be together with me. Just like temporal guests. I am not sure what will happen in a few months, a few years.”

So with material possessions, in order to stop attachment and miserliness from arising, it is good to think that this is a very temporal material that is borrowed, which is generally possessed by other people. So that’s why this great Tibetan yogi, Padampa Sangye, gave these instructions to his villagers before he passed away, “Material possessions, which are like borrowed things, loaned things, you villagers do not tie, do not make knots of miserliness.”

His instructions are also very helpful for us to think like this. Material things will very soon be taken and used by some other people, even though momentarily, for a short time, we have them.

Also, think like this in order not to be attached to your body. Thinking like this, frequently try to be conscious, especially when there is attachment as it is sack of dirty things, it’s like a sack full of kaka, maybe, full of dirty things. Actually, that is the way it looks inside, except that it is covered by skin, having some different colors outside. This is not only the way to think of your own body, but also other people’s bodies. Totally it is made of, formed of these three—blood, flesh, bones—what is

there is all these three. These dirty things are received by eating food, the whole thing is something like this, we can see it exactly as a sack full of dirty things. Thinking like this is helpful to become detached from your own body and also from other people's bodies. Also, this great yogi said the same thing, like this, "The body, to the body ... anyway, we should not be very concerned, we should not work very much for the body, spending much time—the body which is like a sack of dirty things, sack of impurities."

Also think the same thing about other people's bodies—it is helpful.

Thinking about life shortage as the basis with the understanding or belief in beginningless mind, in the existence of previous lives, is useful and is effective. Understanding or belief in these evolutions, the existence of past and future lives, then thinking of life shortage is useful. It is useful because this only helps us to have fear of creating negative actions, because of the future dangers that the present actions causes. This understanding or belief in these evolutions, in past and future lives, in the mental continuity, and the fear of death before death, will always help the person to be careful in the present action, the present life, because of thinking of the future.

But a person who doesn't have this understanding, neither understanding nor belief in these evolutions, such as mental continuity or the existence past and future lives, even if he thinks of life shortage, "I am very old now, very close to death, I may die soon," even if there is fear of death, it doesn't become as useful to stop the future danger as the other fear that arises on the basis of the understanding of the evolution of past and future lives. Because the person who has no understanding or belief in these subjects, even if he thinks of life shortage, he will then think, "If death and no future life is coming, it will be great loss if I don't enjoy all things of this life." He will think the complete opposite of the way it works, going round the whole world enjoying possessions and people. This person always thinks that this is important, as he is attached to the possession, to living and non-living things, he sees it as important to use it, he sees it as a great loss as there won't be any life after this, he sees it as a great profit to do everything as he is attached. Because the person himself does not understand or see the future existence, he is not worried, there is no way to understand the results of his actions, the evolution of karma. Therefore, the person doesn't discover what is negative or positive. Therefore, he has no worry about creating any actions. So that person has absolutely no reason to create any good karma, to follow disciplines, in order to decrease, fight the negative mind, the attachment. So from this person's side he sees the people who are living in the discipline, who live in a place of solitude, who live in disciplines, who work to destroy and fight negative mind as people in suffering, people causing problems for themselves, because of his limited understanding. It becomes the opposite, like hot and cold, completely opposite. But as this person thinks and believes, it never works in that way, and it is never correct.

Such life, such actions, such wrong conception is like the example of a person who jumps in the fire, who purposely puts himself in the fire, such as the rat (the example I gave before) who is not conscious of the danger, who is not conscious that he will be trapped and killed, but is only conscious of the meat that he thinks he can enjoy. Or the fly that doesn't see that the fire will burn him, but sees it as some pleasant place where he can enjoy and receive peace. This wrong conception drives him there, and causes him to suffer—the same thing as the rat. They believe in such ways, but it doesn't work the way they believe. So just as they believe, we people do the same thing, in the same way.

So anyway, as there is the fear of death, it is important to use the fear to find means, to find a method to stop the suffering of death, to make the fear useful to seek the method that ceases the suffering of death, to become undying, to attain undying, to achieve the undying stage, the power. Also, as there is fear, it is important to make it beneficial or useful to seek the methods to be happy and not to worry at death time, and to find a better path, to have a better rebirth after death.

Why Should I Be Afraid of Death? (Page 53)

Karmapa quotation—this is one of the past lives of a Tibetan lama who is the head of one of the Tibetan sects. What he means is, whatever the person has, however it is happy and comfortable, when death comes, when this greatest danger of life occurs, it is extremely difficult for his mind to continually be happy.

Guru Shakyamuni quotation—when you read a book, you should check in your mind—think, read, think, read; it should not be like reading a newspaper or stories.

Anyway, the whole subject of this meditation is like this—the meditation in the course is for the purpose of discovering ourselves, our life, our mind, to discover everything in ourselves, and correct it. First of all discover, and then as one discovers negativity, this is negative, this is right—as one discovers wrong conception, wrong life, wrong actions, then with method (this meditation also contains method) we should make it correct, make the life right, make right actions. This way we can escape from suffering. This is the way Guru Shakyamuni gave teachings to his disciples, and in this way the disciples practiced by discovering the nature of their mind. As they found the method, they used the method to make life right, correct, and pure; and in that way they escaped from suffering, they became enlightened. This is the whole total thing.

So therefore, for instance, if you ask this question to yourself now, whether we fully see it, which will come first? Question yourself, if it is sure, how you are definite—how you are sure that the next life won't come tomorrow and that you will exist tomorrow? Like this you question yourself. Like this, even if we are not sure, even if we are doubtful whether there is another life that will continue after this one, even if we are not sure it is still worthwhile to make arrangements for the future life, it is necessary even for the mind to be doubtful.

There are many other examples even in the worldly works. If there is a flood, the person's mind is not certain if there will be flood in the summer, but it is very dangerous. But the person thinks it is very important and wise and skillful to build the dam before the danger of the flood happens. In the same way, it is more worthwhile to make the dam in this life before the danger of death occurs, in order not to be reborn in a suffering lower rebirth.

For instance, another clear example that we experience in our usual life—even we people who don't believe in the existence of another life after this, in only this life, don't fully perceive when death will happen—one day, one week, one month, one year—if you question it is not sure. But a person makes plans for five years—he makes many plans about where to go, where to live, deciding in his mind that he is going to live that long, planning like that. But does he clearly see it? No, he doesn't clearly see it, yet he makes arrangements. Anyway, so if that is worthwhile, why is it not worthwhile to build a dam in this life, making arrangements for the future? It is greatly worthwhile even if the mind is skeptical about the future life—to do some meaningful things before the danger comes—the suffering lower rebirth, the great suffering at death time—before that comes. It is greatly

worthwhile to make some preparation even from now, as we make preparations, projects, and plans to do something after a certain number of months, after a certain number of years, even we are not sure if we are going to live that long. If we are skeptical about the existence of the future lives, if it is not necessary to make preparations in this life for that, then it is also not necessary to do this because the mind is skeptical of a few months, a few years—so it is not necessary to make plans for doing this in the West, going here, enjoying things—this should also not be done. As ordinary people think that it is so important to make preparations for the future months and years, so it is much more important to make preparations for the future life—this is more definite than making preparations to do something after a few months or years as it is not sure, it is not definite that the person will do these things.

Let's say I'm planning to go back to Tibet next year, and I make arrangements, preparations for that. But what is more important, making arrangement for the future life or for going back to Tibet after one year? It is more important, much more important to make preparations for the future life. Why is it more important? Because the suffering that will come after death and at death are greater than the sufferings of the present life, they are much greater than the present life's sufferings. Therefore, it is much more important to make preparations for the future lives. And also, making preparations for the future lives is ended, but making preparations for going to Tibet is not, because this is not definite, because going back to Tibet after one year is not so sure as the next life coming. It is not definite, because the next life may come before going back to Tibet—it is definite that the next life will come either before or after going back to Tibet.

So when meditate on life shortage, on life as impermanent, this part is useful to remember. The other paragraphs which are not marked are not necessary in the meditation. And also next, as it follows.

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Shantideva's quotation means that one shouldn't let oneself be cheated by the pleasures of the senses, thinking, "I'm not going to die today." The thing that makes us people—who don't know Dharma, even trying to practice Dharma—easily get attached to the objects of the senses is thinking "I'm not going to die today." For instance, one who clearly sees, one who fully realizes that the actual time of death is indefinite, that one is not sure when one will die, that one's mind does not easily get cheated by the objects of the senses or the pleasures of temporal life.

For instance, take this example; a person is going to be taken to prisoner's court today to be punished or killed. Before that, however comfortable he was, whatever luxury or beautiful place he had, and however most delicious food was arranged on the table in front, however beautiful and expensive the clothes that he wore, that person's mind finds no interest. He doesn't care about these pleasures because of the fear that he is going to be killed or punished. Because of this fear, this worry, he is not concerned anymore with the pleasures of using these objects; he is only concerned and worried about the future suffering, that he is going to be punished or killed. So there is not that much strong attachment for the objects, he doesn't care about the temporal arrangements, he doesn't care about them, they are not important to him. That person thinks that relieving that punishment is more important.

This person who is going to suffer like that doesn't care about those objects, beautiful clothes, food, place or whatever it is—although it was important before, at such a time it is not that important to

him, he has no interest. So just like that, a person who has the fear of death, who realizes that the time of death is indefinite, who fully realizes the impermanence of life, even if this person is surrounded by beautiful food and possessions, he sees it as non-important, it doesn't become important to him, even though those objects seem important to the person who doesn't see the impermanence of life.

So as the person doesn't see it as important, he is not that greatly concerned about temporal things; he doesn't care much whether it is good or bad, he is mainly concerned with the future dangers. That person does not have great mental problems in regards to the possessions. For instance, when the person is so scared or worried about something—punishment or something—and some relative comes and gives him delicious food, he doesn't find the taste, he has no interest. Something comes into the mouth but there is no taste, and he cannot eat as much as he used to before. (I think the fear of death and impermanence are very useful because it makes it less expensive for the person, it's not only useful for the Dharma person but also for ...)

Just like in this example, the same thing can happen. But the kind of worry in this example is not helpful—this is just an example to give you an idea, but it is not helpful like the help of the fear arising from the practice of the meditation on impermanent life and the indefinite time of death. If there is a strong thought of understanding or fearing death, you will enjoy the objects of the senses but not with that much attachment—it helps to create less negative actions.

How Do My Attachments and Possessions Cause Suffering at Death? (Page 54)

Paragraph 1

Sentence 1. The ancient practitioners, the yogis, the ascetic lamas, prefer to die in a solitary place, in a cave where there are no relatives, where none of these can be seen. Also, even if they come, for the patient, it can be possible that they cause greater worries and stronger attachment.

Sentence 3. At death time the worry of separation is far greater than the worry of usual separation. In the usual separation, even if it is possible to meet again, still we feel upset. But at that time much greater worry arises.

Sentence 4: So, as much attachment as there is, as greater attachment arises to your body, relatives, and possessions, as you feel you are separating, leaving, that much fear arises.

So totally, how does it cause greater problems at death time? At death time we are that much more attached to our relatives, objects, and body. So it becomes a cause to be born in suffering and to be born in the suffering lower realms where there are greater unbelievable sufferings.

Padmasambhava quotation, "The vision of this life is like last night's dream." I think there are two ways to understand this quotation.

1. The dream is so short. Even though in the dream you think that you spent so many years, did so many things, you feel this in the dream, but actually it is so short, maybe half an hour or one hour, even though you felt that you spent that much time. This life is so very short, like last night's dream. So why should we be attached to the objects—our body, living and non-living things, our relatives? And also, there is no reason to fight, to cause trouble for them, no reason to be jealous or to have

pride, because this life is so short. In such a short time doing something like this is nonsense. That's one thing.

2. Another thing is this: whatever you enjoy in the dream, even if you had a golden palace, many golden elephants, however many great possessions you had, after you wake up there's nothing, it's all meaningless, nothing. There's nothing to bring out of the realm that you can have, nothing—however great the enjoyment, however beautiful the apartment, however beautiful the people that you enjoyed, however beautiful the clothes that you put on, nothing is of any use after you wake up. So just like this, exactly same thing—whatever we have, whatever we enjoy in this life—nothing can be carried of these possessions, enjoyments and pleasures. They don't last like the enjoyments in a dream, and there's nothing that we can carry to the next life. After death there's nothing to carry, even an atom of your body cannot be carried with you to the next life, nor can enjoyments. Exactly like this—we can discover if we think back over our life, from when we were born until now, it is just like last night's dream—it has finished so fast, whether it was suffering or happy—it has finished.

“All the meaningless actions are like ripples on a lake.”

Ripple is like this—I'm sure you understand—one goes, one comes, one goes, one comes. In the water, it always continues like this—meaningless. All the actions are like that, all the worldly actions that are done with negative mind, with attachment, taking care of the possessions, and also our relatives—all of these are like ripples on a lake, because none of this is new, because none of these actions, taking care of the physical body with attachment, are new; and any action, taking care of the physical body and relatives with attachment, has no beginning. Any kind of action such as taking care of the body, relatives, or possessions with attachment has no beginning, is beginningless. So the way we are taking care of our body is nothing new. So it's meaningless. As long as we follow that attachment it always obliges us to keep on creating this action, to be involved in meaningless work that is like a ripple on a lake. But if you take care of the possessions, body, other living beings, and relatives in the Dharma way, it is worthwhile, it is harmless.

Paragraph 7:

Sentence 3: In regards to death these things can't be taken and can't help at death time—no difference.

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It is good also to meditate in this way—by thinking of the shortcomings of not remembering death.

So if you don't remember death, then you don't remember Dharma, to practice Dharma. Then what happens is that you are only concerned with not remembering Dharma, only concerned with the present life and doing so many things, making so many plans, only for this life. So the whole life, the whole time finishes just working for this life, without creating any merits.

So secondly (i) if one doesn't think of death, even if one remembers that, one cannot practice sincerely, cannot continually practice. Maybe you start practicing Dharma—for a few days, a week, a month, a year—but then you don't continue. This is not remembering death, not having the continual remembrance of death. This conception that I'm not going to die today always continues

until death. As this great yogi, Guru Tsong Khapa, who is like the second Buddha of Wisdom, said, “Thinking ‘I’m not going to die today’ doesn’t mean that the person will not die today because this conception continues from childhood to death.”

“I may die after some years, of course, but I’m not going to die today—” this conception continues until the last day of death, until the very last time of life. At that time it is finished, and whatever the person remembers to do, a good thing doesn’t help at that time; there is no chance, no freedom. This is one of the great disturbances to Dharma practice.

And also, besides this, (ii) as the person, thinks like that, also at the same time the person becomes distracted. The person being always under the control of distractions means that every day he thinks, “I need this, I need that,” and so he follows this to get it. Every day the person works to gain possessions, to gain the thing that he desires. “I need this, I need that,” and so the time of life finishes in that—thinking this and working for it.

(i) Even if one tries to practice Dharma, cannot truly practice, cannot purely practice Dharma.

(ii) That means this—this is easy to understand, because we talked about it a long time before.

(i)—(ii) Because the person does not discover the attachment to the happiness of this life as being the cause of suffering, and does not discover this evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas as being the cause of suffering. Not discovering the main root, the main thing, the border—what is Dharma, what is non-Dharma; the worldly work and the Dharma work—not discovering the border between these. So even if the person tries to practice Dharma, it does not become pure because the person is under the control of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. So the Dharma that the person practices with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is not renounced. That practice is made without renunciation for the temporal happiness of this life. In place of becoming a remedy, it becomes a service to the mind.

So, even if one tries to practice purely, starts to practice purely, if one doesn’t continually remember death, again the Dharma practice does not continue. There is the danger of being unable to continue. Even if one starts to practice Dharma purely, one will not be precise and continual. That is because not having the continual remembrance of death.

So, like this. Even in the person’s meditation or whatever Dharma practice is done—even though the first action is done with a pure motive as opposed to the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, as he meets problems, some different situation, as he gets tired, he cannot continually practice, and doesn’t continue the practice because of such little problems—he stops the practice. For instance, when you bear some troubles, when you are a little unhappy, you don’t want to meditate—you are caring for the little problems so you stop the practice, even though the practice is done with pure motive. That is because of not having continual remembrance of death.

Also, if there’s no remembrance of death there is the danger that one may become evil or create evil actions, create negative actions. That happens like this. First of all you are attached to the happiness of this life. So to gain the happiness of this life, your mind is attached to the relatives. In your mind greed arises, attached to the relatives and the objects. Hatred arises in your mind with the enemies. Ignorance arises in your mind with the strangers. Then to gain the happiness of this life you work

for the relatives with attachment and try to harm the enemies that you dislike with hatred and anger, and also pride, jealousy, and many other negative minds. In relation to the strangers ignorance arises.

So it is totally like this—the person's life becomes negative by creating negative action. This is due to not having the continual remembrance of death.

The fundamental practice of the ancient yogis and practitioners, the way they live their lives is like this—the way they think of the situation of life, the ascetic life, is like this—by renouncing this life, the aim of their mind is Dharma. For instance, for worldly people, the aim of the mind is to make the present life happy, to be rich, to be comfortable, to gain temporal needs. Their main concern is to gain temporal needs. But the aim of the minds of those practitioners, those yogis, being the opposite of the ordinary person, is the Dharma.

So if the aim of the mind is Dharma, if the mind only thinks of the Dharma, only works on the Dharma, then maybe things will be difficult. If one is not concerned or doesn't work for temporal things will there be the difficulty of not receiving temporal needs? Then thinking like this, as this question comes—"If temporal things are received or not, I don't care."

This is the aim of the Dharma, relying on the beggar (he beggar who doesn't have any collections of possessions, any collections of temporal needs. He goes, begs, and eats, and doesn't collect anything). Then there's a question—taking the example of the beggar—if one doesn't work to receive temporal needs, won't there be the danger of death? Then the aim of the beggar is relying on death.

It means this. First of all the person doesn't care whether or not he receives the temporal needs. Second, the person doesn't care about death because of practicing Dharma, or about experiencing difficulty because of practicing Dharma, because experiencing difficulties in order to create good karma and practice Dharma is more worthwhile than experiencing difficulties in creating samsaric actions. So the person thinks, "Even if death occurs it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter if I experience difficulties, if I live in austerities in order to attain pure Dharma practice." He thinks it is more profitable to die in that way than to die while doing samsaric works.

Then comes the aim of the beggar, relying on death. For instance, like this—I think I said before something on this subject, a quotation that a yogi said before, "There's no such thing as a pure meditator dying of starvation and cold ..." So the kind Guru Shakyamuni prayed for his followers who make pure Dharma practice to not find difficulties, to not experience such troubles. He prayed like this, "Even if worldly people have to cultivate a field as small as a nail, may my followers, the pure Dharma practitioners, not find trouble living." He made a promise and he said that this will not come true, may I not receive enlightenment. He dedicated the fortunes of 60,000 universal kings, who had much control and power, to his pure practitioners and followers, so that they would never experience such problems as death by starvation. So as he dedicated, as he promised, nothing like this has been heard of, even in Tibet where there are great numbers of meditators there is no such thing like this for those who are living in avoidance of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, those pure practitioners.

This is just a brief example about how they live life, those yogis, how their minds think.

So it is also useful to think in this way, about the four or five shortcomings of not remembering death—if you don't remember death what danger arises.

It is fortunate to know how those yogis or ascetic lamas practiced Dharma, how they lived life.

6 p.m.

Also, as there are five shortcomings of not remembering death, it is also useful to think of the benefits of remembering death.

Remembering death has great purpose. The great purpose is this—it encourages the person to make pure Dharma practice and to practice the graduated path purely. Also, it obliges the person to create good karma, charity, and morality.

Also, remembering death brings great purpose and great power. Great power of strength, because however much negative karma has been created by the person in the previous lifetimes or in this life—for instance, even if one has killed 1000 human beings in this life—by remembering death, by the great strength of remembering death, it encourages the person to undertake hardships in practice, to surmount the difficult practice of the Dharma, to purify all the negative karmas.

There are many other stories that happened in ancient times, such as the story of Milarepa. Everybody knows his autobiography, so it is easy to show. Milarepa destroyed his aunt while a marriage was going on through black magic. Also many people were destroyed above, and animals below—two stories of the house—those below and people upstairs enjoying, dancing, intoxicated (I'm joking), the whole thing collapsed. His mother was extremely pleased—she was waiting that day for the aunt's and uncle's house to collapse. His mother took some trousers and put them on top of the house as a kind of banner and said, "May my son conquer," or something like that, standing on the roof. And this great yogi, Milarepa, received enlightenment in one lifetime even though he created so much negative karma. How could he do that? That was based on the remembrance of death. Even though there was that much negative karma created, so many people and animals killed, the remembrance of death and the shortage of life encouraged him to lead an ascetic life and practice purely, and he received enlightenment in one lifetime.

This shows the great strength and power that can arise from the remembrance of death. Such a heavy collection of negative karma can be purified in this life.

There are so many examples. In ancient times in India, one person who killed 999 people among 1000. (I think the other one is much more clear.) However, through the continual remembrance of death and impermanent life, he received the fully renounced mind of samsara, and his mind was well-subdued by practicing the teaching shown by Guru Shakyamuni. He becomes celibate, a bhikshu, a monk, and he received nirvana. I think the very last one, the one he didn't kill, was his mother. Anyway, this has quite a long story, but the essence of what I am talking about is realizing the purpose—the remembrance of death is very important at the beginning of the Dharma practice, it is important even at the beginning—it obliges the person to practice Dharma, to put the life in the Dharma.

Also, the remembrance of death causes one not have a suffering death but a pleasant death at the actual death time. This means at the actual death time not having any worry, any upsetness, dying

with great happiness, dying being extremely pleased. Such a thing, even though it is not our experience, it is the experience of many other practitioners and meditators. It is the same thing—if we practice the method by continually remembering death and life shortage, by doing pure Dharma practice, also definitely we can make this pleasant, easy trip as those ancient meditators did—it is matter of arranging things ahead of time.

Therefore, remembrance of death and impermanence is necessary. This makes two things—remembrance of death and of life shortage builds the fear in death, and the fear arising causes you to cease the fear of death. So it's very interesting, the way it works is very interesting. First, you remember death. Then this builds fear, and this fear causes the person to create the cause to completely stop the fear, which ceases the circle of death and rebirth. So the fear arising helps us to stop the fear of death by controlling the dangers. But we ordinary people who have no understanding or belief in a lifetime after death but have the fear of death that only causes us to exhaust ourselves, become unhappy—this works in a completely different way than the fear that is build up through the meditation remembering impermanence and death.

This is also the experience of the great yogi, Milarepa. For instance, he said this, “At first, I escape to the mountain by being afraid of death. In the middle, I have fully realized the absolute nature of the mind. At last, I have no worry or upset, even if death comes.” So thinking like this, as he practiced, is very helpful for our life, is a good example for our life. So this is the way that he made the successful experiment through successful practice.

The remembrance of death and impermanence is very helpful because, besides being helpful at the beginning and middle of Dharma practice, it is helpful at the end. The last part, the complete achievement of the Dharma practice, enlightenment, is also rooted in the remembrance of death and impermanence. So when you meditate on this subject (Page 52), in the death part think about the remembrance of the shortcomings, the dangers that arise by not remembering death, and the benefits of remembering death, which I have just explained.

Then, after this, meditate on, “Death is Definite.” (Page 53)

So if I total all these meditations—reason like this, about the complete decay of the whole universe, the definite death of yourself. And also think, “There's no such human being existing in this human world, or any samsaric being who is in the circle of death and rebirth, and as he was born, he never dies, he is permanently existing—there is no such being in the human world, on earth. So it is sure that my death will happen, it is definite.” Also think of the ancestors, the forefathers, those who no longer live, those who are non-existent—so also by this, think, “My death is definite.” And one thing is this, “Nothing, no material possessions can stop death, can make death non-existent. No matter whatever the place, wherever I go, even if I go on the moon, death is definitely going to happen.” Reason like this.

Besides, “My body and these possessions and relatives, instead of helping at death time, become the enemy. As I am strongly attached to them, that much strong fear arises. That much strong attachment to my body and relatives and possessions causes that much strong fear to arise at death time as I am separating from them. That attachment arises from those objects—those objects cause one to be born in the three suffering lower realms. Therefore they are the enemy, these possessions and relatives become the enemy at death time. As one single hair on the body cannot help, cannot be beneficial at death, at that time also a universe full of jewels can't help or benefit. Nothing can be

carried on to the next life, so all those relatives, possessions, the body, so many jewels, and one hair growing on the body are equal as regards taking to the next life. Therefore, why should I be attached to these objects if they become the enemy at death time?

“Mostly it is definite—why I should care about death? Because after death the mind doesn’t cease, and it is more likely for me to be born in the lower suffering realms because of karma—more negative karma than good karma created in the present life, and also in the past lives.” This is effective, this gives us reason to be afraid of death—if there are no dangers after death then there is no reason to be afraid of death.

Also, many great meditators, those who know their own way before death—where they will be born, what life they will have, who has made arrangements in this life, the realm where they will take birth—those who see this have no trouble, no suffering at death time because they see that there is no suffering life after that.

Then—“The actual time of death is indefinite.” (Page 53)

“So I am more sure to be born in the lower suffering realm, and the actual time of death is indefinite.” Think also of these different hindrances to life, especially at such periods. There are many more hindrances to life in such atomic periods, many more dangers to life.

And remember these quotations, these words said by Guru Shakyamuni are very effective and also true. This is something that we can prove even now, what Guru Shakyamuni said, by checking within our mind, “So, as it is not sure tomorrow, in the same way it is not sure tonight, in the same way it is not sure in this minute—what will come next, the next life or the next minute, so it is more sure that death will happen. Therefore, it is more sure that I have to leave this body, these relatives and all possessions; it is more sure than not leaving. Therefore, why should I be attached to them right now, even in this second? There is no reason why I should be attached, because it is definite that I will be separate from all these things and objects.”

Also, do the same thing trying to feel it, not just saying the words. Try to feel as if you are leaving these objects. Then it becomes effective to the mind. And also, when you are attached to these things, this meditation can loosen the attachment like a water-bubble popping. It can help a great deal to solve the attachment problem.

Also, when a problem arises inside or outside with objects and people, use these techniques. This is only to protect yourself, guide yourself from danger. So this way you can see, you can discover, that what you were doing before was nonsense, being attached to that part of work you can see as nonsense by using this technique. Mostly we have many problems with people, so it is effective if you keep this technique in mind and use it—it can be proved through experience.

Totally, like this—meditating in this way in order to realize, in order to build stronger fear and build energy, the encouragement for the continual practice of Dharma by surmounting the difficulties. So meditate in this way as I have just explained.

Secondly, besides meditating in this way, put yourself in the situation of death. Try to visualize the evolution of our future death as it is happening now—visualize yourself on your own bed, and try to feel, try to see, check what you feel. Feel yourself in the actual process of this evolution, and check

how you feel in relation to your possessions, your relatives, your body. And also think about your body becoming a corpse, being taken out, this whole situation as you saw happen many times at other people's deaths. The corpse was taken, burned, all these things. Then all the relatives and people cry and become upset, with upset faces, all this upset environment and feelings. Try to think—it is useful.

Actually, like this—what will happen in the future is an essenceless thing, but by trying to visualize the essenceless thing, we are trying to gain the essence, which is very meaningful.

First, this meditation.

Second, think like this—put yourself in the future evolution of your death. The most important thing is whether your mind can leave your body and your relatives completely alone, just as if on our head there are thousands of hairs, and we take just one hair without any companion—the mind is just leaving like this, alone. This is most important to think about.

Then at least, if this doesn't change the mind, if still you are lazy, if still you can't bear the difficulties for Dharma practice—the lowest method is to go to cemeteries where there are bodies of others beings burned. So at least, the very last if one finds it very difficult to treat the mind with the first or even the second meditation on death, then at last go to such a place and check up like this. This is very helpful, because it is something you can see by the eye.

Still can be possible that some people, whose minds are like huge, rocky mountains, are unfortunate, that their minds are still not changed by seeing all those things. It's just a matter of time, it is definite at the moment. We are afraid of other beings' corpses, but as you see these fearful dead bodies—it is the same thing. This body that we are taking the most care of will soon become just like that. Even if it is now most attractive, even if it was taken care of in the most precious way, at death no one will want to look or touch, and it will be smelly, very fearful looking.

Even not seeing the body, hearing that such and such a person is dead we get a big shock. Same thing, also other people will have a shock when they hear our name. Even not seeing the dead body, just hearing the sound, gives a big shock and causes fear.

So I will read one or two pages, as much as possible—there's not much time to go with details.

(Page 55)

Paragraph 2

Like I explained with the animals, they only enjoy the result of good karma that was created as human beings. At that time they do not create good karma. Because of the high pleasure and ignorance they experienced, it was extremely difficult to practice Dharma in those times, therefore they only enjoyed the resultant high enjoyments, the cause of which was created before they came onto this earth.

Paragraph 4

More explanation of this is in the explanation of the mandala.

Paragraph 5

The negative mind (and the general mind) did not start at the same time. This deluded mind existed before they took their bodies, before they took birth on earth. What caused the whole thing? The previous karma created by the previous mind.

The Evolution of the Death Process (Page 56)

Those who saw many dead people—not dead by accident but by sickness—can prove this from experience, all these external signs.

I think I will stop here.

Tonight we will meditate on death—the future death evolution which will happen. Try to put yourself into that evolution and to imagine the process, the whole situations.

First think of the impermanent life, life shortage.

(Meditation)

Dedication.

First prayer : Page 156

Second prayer : Page 93, these notes.

Third prayer : Kye Wa Kun Tu Yang Dag Lama Dang
Trel Me Cho Kyi Pal La Long Cho Ching
Sa Dang Lam Gyi Yon Ten Rag Tsog Ne
Dorje Chang Gi Go Phang Nyur Thob Shog

The meaning of the last prayer is, “May I quickly attain the enlightenment of Dorje Chang (Vajradhara, the owner of all the enlightened beings) and not be separated from perfected gurus in all future lives, and enjoy the teachings and complete the whole knowledge of path and the different levels.”

This prayer is important because even if we are born in the human world where Dharma exists and we meet the wrong guru, there is the danger being led in the wrong way. Meeting perfected gurus is extremely difficult. To receive enlightenment and realizations in future lifetimes depends on receiving teachings, and this depends on the guru. So if you pray now, little by little you can create the causes. Also, we create the causes gradually by our dedication.

Day 14

Thursday November 29th

9 a.m.

From the holy teachings of the great bodhisattva, Tenzin Gyatso, “The result of bodhicitta is not just one time or two times. The result of bodhicitta increases without finishing and does not decrease; it increases until the omniscient mind is received. Even after the omniscient mind is received, it increases sentient beings’ virtues.”

This is quite difficult to understand, this last part, but it is important to know anyway. The last part holds a great meaning about the relationship between us and Buddha, God, Enlightened Being, whatever it is called—anyway, the saviors, the highest saviors who have the achievement of fully-knowing mind, and who have great power and compassion for us and all sentient beings. Once we receive omniscient mind, the holy works of our future enlightened self cannot and do not stop until all sentient beings, every and all sentient beings, are released from suffering gradually. This is the result of bodhicitta in which we are training now. It's incredible, thinking like this, it has incredible results, such great benefits. So the result of bodhicitta still continues. So this bodhicitta has that much great knowledge; the more you use—with material things the more you use, the more you finish—but with bodhicitta the more you use, the more it increases, becomes stronger, develops, progresses. There is a big difference—and it brings us closer to enlightenment. Besides bodhicitta bringing us to enlightenment, to achieve our future enlightenment, this bodhicitta also obliges us to work for each and every sentient being.

If I repeat the quotation once more, “The result of bodhicitta is not once or twice. It increases until omniscient mind is received. After receiving omniscient mind, the rain of the teachings falling increases the sentient beings’ virtues like a crop. It increases the crops of the sentient beings’ virtues.”

Therefore, it is greatly worthwhile to practice the holy thought of bodhicitta when we have the chance. Bodhicitta, which has such incredible, extensive results, is necessary. It is foolish not to listen or practice while we have chance—we have met the teachings, obtained the perfect human rebirth, heard the Mahayana teachings, received the technique of bodhicitta—not listening, not practicing is very foolish. And it is important to train even from now. Since the actual time of death is indefinite, it is clever to start right from now.

So, try to think, try to cultivate the holy thought of bodhicitta before listening the Mahayana teachings. “The attachment that I have now, within my mind, which is attached to the happiness of this life and to higher samsaric pleasures, is only the cause of suffering. However happy a life I have now or receive in the future, since it is samsara it is in the nature of suffering; we are, in the circle of death and rebirth. However much we think from our side we are pleasant, happy, have that many material things, however much we think it is good, actually we are suffering, in the fireplace, in such a large fireplace. So therefore, we should not distract ourselves with our wrong view that is projected by our wrong conceptions. Therefore, we should not allow ourselves to be distracted by our wrong view, which is creation of the wrong conception, that causes us to see that, ‘I am having a happy life. I am not suffering,’ although we are going through the circle of death and rebirth, and old age and sickness.

“Oneself receiving ultimate peace, oneself being released from samsara is not enough. There are infinite sentient beings who are the objects from whom I received past, present, and future perfection, even enlightenment. They are extremely kind but most of them have not received the perfect human rebirth as I have; have not met the guru, the leader, who is leading us on the path to enlightenment, have not met Mahayana teachings, do not have the wisdom eye to see what is positive action and what is negative action, to understand Dharma. So they often cause suffering to themselves. Therefore, I must repay them for their kindness. The best way to repay them is to lead them to enlightenment. Also, I am responsible, as they are greatly kind and in such unbearable suffering, I am greatly responsible to release them, to guide them and to lead them from suffering.

But at present I have no power. So to achieve this I must receive enlightenment. To reach enlightenment I must have the achievement of the whole graduated path. To do this, I must have the full understanding of the graduated path. Therefore, I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings.”

So the listening subject is the graduated path. If the practice is divided it becomes three teachings—the path of the lower, middle, and higher beings—so now we are on the path of the lower being.

According to the brief outline, “Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Great Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” and “How life is Fragile, Impermanent,” “Death is Definite,” “The Actual Time of Death is Indefinite.” At the death time no material possessions, not even this body that we cared for more than any other sentient being, than the Enlightened Being, can help us. What helps us to not have suffering at death or even after death—what can help? No physical things or matter help at the death because the principal cause of death is not among matter, not among relatives, not among matter. Even though the external situation can be cooperative, the principal cause, the main cause of death is within our minds. The principal cause of death is within each living being’s mind, existing in each of their minds. So without cutting off ...

Why is it that so far the scientists, who study things only on the physical level, couldn’t discover the method to stop death? Because they have not discovered the principal cause of death. Why? Because they didn’t observe the mind, only the physical level. If it was in physical matter they could have done it, even in ancient times—because stopping death is the most important thing, even for them, if not for others. One thing is not observing the mind. We are talking about the mind because the mind is the evolution of it. They say that it is because time changes—they only go round, saying some words, but they haven’t yet found any means to stop it.

So therefore, none of this matter helps at death time. What can help at this most dangerous time of life—what can help? Only the Dharma can help—Dharma is the only method. Since nothing external can help, the method has to be an inner method. In an inner method there are two things: one inner method is what we have been practicing from beginningless time until now; the other is the method we have not accomplished yet.

In regards to inner method there are two things. One is the kind that we have been practicing from beginningless previous lives up until now. That is the inner method that obliges us uncontrollably to experience and suffer the circle of death and rebirth, karma and ignorance, the principal cause, ignorance, and its action, karma. This inner method doesn’t help; developing it continually makes us continue the circle. This is what we have to discover, the principal cause of death.

The second inner method is what we should accomplish. What is missing in our action is the achievement of the second inner method, which cuts off ignorance and karma. Through this the result of death and rebirth ceases. So what is the inner method? That is only the Dharma. So like this—the practice of Dharma is generally necessary, is indefinite ... it is necessary to start now, to practice now.

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The purpose of why we are talking about these things—the death process, death evolution—the purpose of explaining this is as follows. The meditators and yogis, by understanding the ordinary

evolution of death, the ordinary evolution of the intermediate stage, and the ordinary evolution of rebirth, use tantric techniques according to the individual deity that they practice, the different manifestations of the deity. There are hundreds and hundreds of different manifestations of the deities but actually—Guru Shakyamuni ... anyway, like this. Before death, by fully understanding the ordinary evolution of these three, they practice, they use the ordinary evolution with the tantric techniques of the individual deity, they used the ordinary evolution of these three in meditation, combining them with the special tantric techniques of the individual deity. They train well in this before the danger of death, so when the actual danger, the actual evolution arises, they use the methods at the actual time. So in these evolutions—going through the intermediate stage, birth, and death—they are in meditation instead of being scared, they are enjoying their own trips.

Like this. At the moment, when we concentrate for five minutes, we cannot control the distractions. The mind is that much full of distractions, and powerless. So checking, looking at the limited power of the mind that we have now, it seems impossible that we can control the mind at those dangerous, critical times, because at these times there are much stronger distractions, much more fearful distractions. That's why those yogis, practitioners, and meditators train in this in their lifetimes, before the actual evolution starts.

Also, having the capability to use these tantric methods at these times depends on powers, having control, and doing much purification. Because at death time, during the actual evolution, there are thousands of times more stronger distractions, so it is extremely difficult to find the chance to use these methods. Therefore, there is the need to control the mind at those times. This control has to be arranged in the lifetime through Dharma practice, special techniques, and purification. Because the distractions are due to negative mind, so less negative mind, less negative karma, and that much less distraction.

This process, making this trip using this meditation is like consciously making the trip. For that reason, there is the need to understand this ordinary evolution of death.

(Page 58)
No.5

I'm not that definite about *prana*, the Sanskrit term, but the Tibetan term is *lung*.

(a) *nanwa* (vision) *galampa* (white).

The shape of the letters—this is to think about during the practice, to visualize in that way. During the practice, visualize this.

(c) This is when the red and white meets together, and all of a sudden there is a vision of complete darkness.

(Page 59)
Paragraph 2

namshay—the consciousness. Because of fear, because of distraction, ordinary people don't recognize it. This is just before the consciousness leaves, during the clear light vision.

The main place that they meditate is at the point of the clear light vision. They use the clear light vision, this basic vision, they make it practical, they use this with special tantric techniques. They use this vision with the understanding of this time, with the realization of the absolute true nature, their understanding of shunyata. They use the wisdom of understanding shunyata at this time, with this vision, one with it. They also use other techniques. They make this vision rich, beneficial. They concentrate on this mind without distraction. It is possible to reach enlightenment at this time, and also during the intermediate stage.

Paragraph 4

Also, whenever the person goes to sleep and wakes from sleep, these visions occur, but they are very short, so quick. It goes instantly, it passes—they are much shorter than the actual death time. So the yogis train in their sleep—when they are sure with dreams, when they train with the sleeping time, then they are sure that they are capable of using the techniques at the death time.

Paragraph 5

Due to karma, even just after the consciousness leaves the body, is separated from the body, it does not recognize the body, that it belonged to him. If the consciousness recognized this, there would be no reason to separate, it could go back. Also, it becomes very fearful looking to the consciousness that left.

Paragraph 6

There is also much suffering during the intermediate stage, such as being chased, as being pressed by huge, great mountains, being underneath and pressed down by huge great mountains. There are all kinds of fearful situations and visions that the being suffers from.

As it does not have a gross body like we have, it has no resistance. And also, karmically, it is so quick to be at the place as it thinks, no matter how many miles, how far it is.

Paragraph 7

That *prana* that is the cooperative cause, the subtle body, which comes with the subtle mind—I'm not that sure—I think it means the motion, which is the body.

Paragraph 9

This means that sometimes this intermediate state being finds its place of birth right away, and sometimes, due to karma, it takes much time to take the birthplace. After each seven days the being passes from there, and again takes birth in the same state. But the being cannot keep taking birth in the same place for more than forty-nine days; after forty-nine days it definitely finds place of birth.

Paragraph 10

For instance if you are going to be born as a formless realm being after this life, that rebirth does not depend on making the trip intermediate stage because the future rebirth doesn't have a form or a body. The shape of the body in the intermediate stage is always similar to the shape of the future

life's body. If the future rebirth is a dog, then the body in the intermediate stage will have the shape of dog; if the future rebirth is a human, then the intermediate stage body has similar shape.

Paragraph 11

First of all it leaves from the heart, by opening the seed. Then according to the person's rebirth it goes in different ways, sometimes up, sometimes down. In different ways, the consciousness leaves.

If the person is definitely going to take rebirth in hell, the consciousness leaves from the anus.

Gods of the senses—samsaric gods.

There are spirits who live on smells. Also, the Tibetan monks and yogis do puja for these beings. There are also pujas in which things are burned, and prayers are said, and charity made—there are many methods like this.

There are many stories, there is much to talk of these things.

Question: For an enlightened being, from where does the consciousness leave?

Answer: All over

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This entire part of the meditation is to practice in the first schedule. The way it's set up is to use when one makes retreat, and also it is set up for the course schedule. And also it is good to say these prayers at the end of the meditations.

This "Guru Puja" is not a special tantric text. It originated from the great philosophers, great yogis, and great pandits, such as Nagarjuna. It is originally from Guru Shakyamuni, and then it was handed down to those pandits, and then to their followers, the Tibetan pandits. Still the practice of the teachings and the realizations of this have been continued, has been preserved, has been whole. So these prayers are very powerful prayers to say. Also, they have much taste, according to the level of understanding that you have, and contain much meaning, and also are very powerful. It is also important to receive blessings by saying this prayer, and these prayers are set up by highly realized, experienced Tibetan lamas.

Paragraph 1

You can visualize in this way, but if this is uncomfortable or difficult, you can visualize only Guru Shakyamuni and think that he is the total leader of all and every Buddhas. He is the guru—as we say like this—*La.ma* (Guru) *Ton.ba* (founder) (See page 19) ... "*La.ma*" is his name; "*Ton.ba*" is his name; "*Chom.den.de*" is also his name; "*De.shin Sheg.pa*" is also his name; "*Da.chom.pa*" is also his name; "*Yang.tak.par Dzog.pe.Sang.gye*" is also his name; "*Shakya Tub.pa.la*" is also his name.

So to make the visualization easy, do it this way. There is the Lord Buddha Guru Shakyamuni, and he is every and all buddhas. He is also the bodhisattvas, arhats, protectors, all the tantric deities, and the Guru, and he is also the total leader of the indirect guru, the lineage of the gurus. "Indirect guru"

means a guru from whom you didn't receive the teachings directly—the different tantric deities, some who look peaceful, some who look wrathful. “Protector” is not like the police (I'm joking)—the protector actually is Guru Shakyamuni, the Guru who is Shakyamuni. He is also the protector.

So now I say it another way. The Guru who is Shakyamuni appears and manifests in the form of the indirect gurus; and they manifest in the form of the wrathful and peaceful deities; and they manifest in the form of the Buddha; and he manifests in the form of the bodhisattvas, the arhats, and the protectors. So, like this, the whole creation is included into one, and one is manifested into many. It is all him, the creator, not like the king and police—separate. It is Guru Shakyamuni showing himself in different forms to look after practitioners and to protect them from the inner and outer distractions and hindrances. According to the different sentient beings' needs these beings appear in different manifestations. Those who find complicated to visualize many things, just visualize Guru Shakyamuni; he is all this—all the individual gurus, all the tantric deities, buddhas, bodhisattvas, arhats, and protectors.

As you are saying the prayer, you should visualize the light absorbing, thinking about these meanings.

3 p.m.

It is definitely possible that we can make an enjoyable trip at death time, without getting late, if we practice this meditation, practice these fundamental meditations and create merits, make purification as much as possible. The most powerful and best purification is disciplining one's body, speech, and mind with bodhicitta. This is the most powerful way of creating merits and purifying. This discipline, which also means keeping precepts—that is another way of saying it—is the most powerful method to lessen the danger at death time and even after death.

Putting yourself in the disciplines and following precepts is not only for the purpose of having less danger, having less suffering, or not having fear at death time or having a better rebirth after death, but also it helps keep the great number of future lives from suffering. It protects many future lives—this is still talking the lowest result of following precepts, keeping disciplines, the lowest result that it will bring.

Also, the most important thing that can help a great deal at death time is the practice of these meditations, especially the meditation on impermanence, the remembrance of death, and the practice of avoiding the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. That is one of the most powerful methods—because these meditations on impermanence, the remembrance of death, avoiding the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, the checking meditation on the hundreds and hundreds of shortcomings (dangers) of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas helps us not to be attached to objects—to one's own body and to relatives, and to non-living objects. The most danger, the greatest hindrance at death time is greed and attachment—that is what makes you continue in samsara, what keeps you from being born in samsara, from uncontrollably taking a samsaric body.

Even for a person who has created much bad karma in his lifetime, it depends on his skill—even if he has created much bad karma in his lifetime, it is possible that he can have a better rebirth, such as being born in a pure land, or a paradise. Generally the pure lands come into existence for living beings. That specific buddha prayed to relieve sentient beings more quickly from suffering. But

when we are born in the paradise, the paradise that we see in our view is our creation, and the objects of enjoyment that we see are a creation of our mind. That exists due to the person's prayer and devotion and purification, mainly purification, collection of merits. Being born here is one of the quickest ways to receive enlightenment. Anyway, there's too much to explain about the existence there. Anyway, by being born there, one receives realizations more quickly, and also there is the chance to receive teachings from the buddha in his manifestation according to the different paradise. Also, these holy beings who are born there also take earthly rebirth as humans, but they are free, with a choice to work for and benefit other living beings, as living being perceives them that way. Also, they can receive enlightenment in their lifetime, take human rebirth and become free in their lifetime—they are also like this. If one can't receive enlightenment in this lifetime, the quickest way is to try to be reborn in a pure land. Why is it called pure? Because the delusions are not strong as they are in the beings who are in the other realms, like us. To make such a trip, to take birth in such a pure land, is also possible at death time—even before the death it is possible. But it is necessary to make arrangements. There are many methods.

The last way is to have a better human rebirth—not to be reborn in those lower suffering realms. Actually, to the different deities or the buddhas of the paradise, there are different methods to practice to be born there, specific techniques, based on the practices of these meditations. The practice of these basic meditations makes the technique practical, just like a lamp depending on fuel—even though there's a wick and everything else, if there's no fuel, it cannot light. So these basic meditations are like fuel.

One example—in Tibet there was an old monk, the disciple of one lama. It was about time to die. He practiced, he received the special meditation, the technique to be born in the pure land. He practiced in his lifetime, but at death he had a difficult time leaving the body. The hindrance that made it difficult for him to leave his body was that his mind was attached to the butter used for Tibetan tea—so at that time his mind couldn't renounce the tea, the butter that was in his wooden bowl. Because his mind was attached to that, he couldn't leave the body easily—because of this hindrance, the attachment to the butter tea in the wooden bowl, despite having practiced the technique in his lifetime. The object doesn't have to be huge, large to hinder you. He was finding it very hard, very difficult to transfer his consciousness—this was something that he had to do freely through the special technique—even though he trained in these techniques as shown by his guru, he could not easily transfer his consciousness, and he got stuck because of the attachment. His guru, who was not near, but far away, with his power to foretell realized that the monk was having trouble—so he sent a message that there was better butter tea in Tushita, the pure land of Maitreya, the future Buddha. As soon as the monk received the message from his guru he was suddenly able to transfer his consciousness there. The main thing is to emphasize that the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, the attachment causes so much hindrance. All of a sudden his mind was attached to the butter tea in the pure land, so he could renounce. The reason he had hard time before was that even though he knew the technique well, without the realization of the basic meditations, his thought was involved in the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, attached to the enjoyments of Tibetan tea. That's what I mean—the basic meditations are like fuel, like kerosene for the lamp.

Even if the person doesn't receive the special techniques and spends his life only in the practice of these basic meditations, always fighting attachment, realizing the suffering nature, meditating on impermanence, and has renounced the mind of attachment, even though there's no special technique, this can help him greatly to go on a better path, to have less suffering. But it is not

enough to train in these methods once or twice. You have to be trained well, so that it works when the critical time comes.

Anyway, there are many other stories about how Tibetan meditators left and made the trip at death time, and about how they prepared. These are not ancient, there are also many recent meditators and practitioners who took rebirth in a pure land, in recent times. And they don't have to be a monk or nun—even laypeople. There was one lady in recent times in Tibet who usually created much good karma, meditated very much, created much merit and had much devotion to the guru from whom she received teachings. She was just a laywoman, not a nun. Just before death she did puja, she made a big preparation of offerings to the deity that practiced, in oneness with the guru. She did puja in her room. Then, she cleaned and fixed everything very well. She asked the servants not to come in at that time. After some time, when they finally came in, she had passed away—she was in meditation, in concentration at the point we were talking about, the clear light vision—she was in meditation. This is very recent. Also there are many other stories. The thing is this—she was preparing to be reborn, to be born in the pure land of that specific deity.

So also, one or two years ago, during last year, while I was on the mountain—just below our center there is a Tibetan monastery. There was a nun there who was living in the disciplines, creating much merit, making much purification, and who had received many teachings in Tibet. She didn't have any sickness or dangers at death time—she died with happiness. Just before death she lay down in Guru Shakyamuni's position; she properly prepared the whole thing. She lay down in Guru Shakyamuni position—when Guru Shakyamuni was passing away he lay down in a certain way called “sleeping in the form of lion”—the lion is the white snow lion. Anyway—the form is this—putting the right hand under your temple with the fourth finger stopping the right nostril. This is to stop the motion of greed, of attachment, to signify this. Then the left hand is on the thigh, and the two legs are straight. Anyway, there are many benefits to taking that position. If one sleeps in this way, even if one sleeps in this position the sleep doesn't become very deep, the sleep is very light, not very deep. Also it protects one from bad dreams, from dangers, from fear, from hindrances. Just as this example, the way the lion sleeps—the lion does not sleep like other animals, it is light sleep, so if anything happens it hears. Also, it looks pompous, glorious. This nun took this position, as Guru Shakyamuni took, and then she passed away without any troubles or worries.

Also, there is one lama who was the head of that monastery. I met this great lama twice. He was a very old lama, a real ascetic lama, with no attachment to anything. Also, he wore very old clothes—anything he received he gave to his followers, the monks; so the monks lived on that. He heard the news that I was going to build a monastery there. So he told us before one year, I will die, I have only one year to live, and he told us that the place where I was going to build the monastery would be very beneficial to the beings, and he suggested that I shouldn't have a little mind, that I should build it as big as possible. At that time I didn't have any idea that I could build such a thing. Then he passed away after one year exactly. Before that he used to get sick, pots of blood coming out. When he heard good Dharma news he got better. Then, as people believe he is getting better, again he got sick, and so on, always either sick or getting better. But when he died there was no problem, he was not sick. Also, before he died he gave instructions to his followers about what to do with the monastery and possessions. They have a little collection of money from the villagers that they used for pujas, so he instructed that they use it right away or there would be problems. He talked all night, then at dawn he had the servants fill his bowl with tea, then he sent the servants out, and then he passed away. He was in meditation about a week, seven days—I can't remember exactly the number of days.

Anyway, the whole thing is just a matter of a decision to be made by us. The whole thing depends on a decision made by us. The future good results depend on the present decision.

The Three Lower Realms of Suffering: (1) The Hells (Page 63)

The difference is—the fearful states that come in a dream, such as burning in the fire, in the dream there is nothing that really burns the body. It is not something that can be experienced this way. This is like a dream, but can really be experienced—as regards experience, is different from a dream.

These are only a few examples. The explanation that is written here was explained by Guru Shakyamuni and is just to give an idea—it does not mean that this is all the narak suffering. This is for the ignorant people to have some idea of what the suffering looks like. By meditating on this, by understanding this, by experiencing this in meditation, the person does not become lazy in the practice—even if there's a problem that arises, he doesn't care. His Dharma practice always continues, without caring about any problem that arises. Even if there's no other problem, even for the people who practice Dharma, it is very easy for the mind to be under the control of distractions, and under the control of greed, ignorance, and hatred, to be always busy following the objects of the senses.

Having the strong experience meditation on the narak sufferings, and also on the sufferings of pretas and animals—as the person receives a stronger experience, the person builds stronger fear, and that much more the person gets stronger energy, which causes the person not to follow the negative minds, the attachments, and to destroy the cause of suffering that causes the person to suffer in such states, these realms. By meditating on this, one discovers that there are such greater sufferings to be experienced. We think, “Even if I die here, on this place, Earth, there's no suffering like this; there's no greater suffering or problem than this.” So the person doesn't have the strong fear of creating bad karma, and not that much fear of following the negative mind. Then the person finds very hard, and cannot easily renounce the negative mind. The person doesn't try to renounce the negative mind in that way because he doesn't see it is that important to renounce the negative mind. The reason he doesn't see it as that important is because he doesn't discover the greater suffering that is in these realms. So through this, besides not receiving ultimate peace, the cessation of suffering, the cessation of samsara, he always follows his negative mind, keeps himself in the circle of birth in the six realms, and keeps suffering in these three realms. Even though he is born in the upper realms, he creates bad karma by following the negative mind, and again he falls into the three lower realms and suffers for eons. Even when that result finishes and he is born in the upper realms, again he creates bad karma. And so on like this, he goes round and round.

For instance we have been experiencing sufferings such as this since beginningless times, but because of death and rebirth—this intervention, this interruption—and ignorance, we do not remember our past experiences. As much as we suffered, we don't remember. Besides not perceiving, not realizing the future life experiences, we forget what we experienced in past lives. Even the time when we were in the mother's womb, how the mind came to take place in the mother's womb, what sufferings we had in the mother's womb, how we came out—we forget all these things. Just because of our not remembering, we cannot say, “There's no existence of past and future lives, there's no existence of these states.” The mere reasoning, “I don't remember,” is illogical, because we don't remember the experiences we had inside the mother's womb—when she walked, sat down. But nobody can say that the baby, our early life, didn't exist in mother's womb,

because this was the mother's experience and the experience of others. Before we came out it was our parents' experience, so how can we negate and contradict, just reasoning, "I don't remember, I didn't see." No one can say they weren't born from their mother's womb, even though they don't remember.

Death is the same thing. We don't even remember this lifetime's evolution, so how could we remember our past lives? If you reason by saying that, "I don't know that," that these things cannot exist because you don't know, they cannot be said, because we don't know ourselves, we don't know our own nature. We don't even clearly understand our own minds that we use to see objects and make plans. We still do not fully discover this, so we cannot say that our mind does not exist. Same thing to this.

Paragraph 5

It is not only at death time, but also in our lifetimes the imprints, the seeds are collected gradually. There are different desires that come at the time of death that correspond to where we will be reborn. These occur at the death time just before the mind leaves. If you are going to be reborn in the hot narak stages, no matter how many blankets you have you will feel cold, and you will experience the craving for heat

Paragraph 8

For instance, if you compare the suffering that is caused by 360 spears going inside the flesh, inside the body, sticking to the body—this is for one day—if you compare this suffering that is experienced in the human realm to a tiny suffering from the narak stage of a being that is killed again and again, they cannot be compared. This tiny suffering is far greater than the suffering of putting 360 spears in the body. Also, when you meditate, sometimes there is difficulty in getting the idea of the great suffering feeling of that stage; so try to remember this experience and to feel it—as if someone is shooting that many spears into your body in one day, how great the suffering is. Remembering the experience of this, try to check up how great sufferings there are. Compare this to the tiniest suffering of that stage when you are killed again and again with different weapons. Try to check up the different sufferings by visualizing this.

INTRODUCTION TO MAHAYANA ORDINATION

In last years' courses we tried to take the Mahayana ordination, which has only eight precepts, in the last part of the fifteen days. In the first course, which was only for fifteen days, we took the Mahayana ordination only on the last day. But in the other courses we took it in the last part. So also thinking, trying to experience the Mahayana ordination, which has eight precepts in this time, also in this course, for the rest of the fifteen days, thinking that it will be fortunate and be the cause of enlightenment, to create some cause of enlightenment in this life. To take the precious Mahayana ordination, the most precious, powerful ordination, to keep the precepts, one has to know the number of the precepts, and also, the benefits with a little detail. Of course, we already knew the benefits of taking ordination, and we may have already understood the purpose of taking precepts, of disciplining—not to create the cause of samsara, but to attain enlightenment, to attain the ultimate peace.

This Mahayana ordination is something that was followed by many people in ancient times. Also, before Guru Shakyamuni there was a founder of Buddhadharma, another Buddha, and even in that time there was ordination taken by other people.

From this ordination, by keeping these precepts, many of those ancient beings who followed them were born after their deaths into the human realms, or in the realms of the gods; and so many of them were released from samsara and achieved the ultimate peace; and so many of them achieved enlightenment by following the path.

So I will, together with this little details of the benefits, and the number of the precepts together.

The Eight Mahayana Precepts

The First Precept is avoiding taking other's lives. This means taking life with willingness and with the thought of killing, especially with the thought of killing.

The benefits of practicing this is that it causes you to have a longer life in many other future lifetimes, and also not to have sickness and to have a happy life. These are small details.

The second precept is avoiding stealing. In each precept there is also much detail. Killing, I think we discussed before—direct and indirect killing. Stealing, robbing, doesn't have to be only an action like thieving, taking without other's knowing, but also includes a robbery that the other person sees, taking something by force. This is also stealing.

I think robbing is also stealing. Things taken away without the permission of the other person, things not possessed by you that belong to another person, and taken by force—it doesn't have to be an unknown action by another person.

The benefits of practicing this is that it causes you to receive perfect material enjoyments and possessions, and never to be disturbed by other people—this means other people stealing your possessions—in many future lives.

I didn't finish one thing, there are some examples, but first I will finish these other two precepts.

The third precept is avoiding sexual intercourse. Because these are Mahayana precepts they are much concerned with other beings. Besides not killing other living beings, harming other beings has to be taken care of and avoided. Besides killing other beings, this also has to be avoided as much as possible. So avoiding sexual intercourse—this does not mean only within couples. Generally, one also has to observe, has to avoid sexual happiness, the general sexual happiness. So totally one has to observe the sexual actions.

The benefits of keeping this precept is that causes you in many other future lives to have a beautiful body, with a good shape, and beautiful color and having perfect organs.

The fourth precept is avoiding telling lies. There are all kinds of different telling lies; this doesn't have to be only lies through speech. There are physical actions of telling lies—if someone asks and you just move your head or hands—that is also a lie. If someone asks you if you are out of samsara

and the person smiles, not saying that, “I am out of samsara.” but pretending as he is out of samsara, even though there’s no action of speech, that is also telling lies.

The benefits of keeping this precept are that you will not be betrayed by other people in many other future lives, and you will not be cheated. Also, in many other future lifetimes, whatever you say will be respected by other people and other people will believe it.

If I tell you one example—in ancient times one of the families in one village lost a cow. The king of that country pointed out an innocent person and punished him. After the death of the king, in his next life, the king was born as a monk. One day he was dyeing clothes, robes, in a pot. It happened that one of the families of that village had lost a cow. So people came to look around for the cow, and one of the people who came pointed out the monk as the one who had stolen and killed the cow. He said, “No, no, this is cloth.” They said, “This is the meat of the cow,” but he said, “No this is cloth.” But they saw meat, they really saw that he was cooking meat in the pot. From the side of the monk he told the truth as best he could, but the others didn’t believe him. This is the result of the karma of the king who pointed out the wrong thief. This often happens in our life—we tell the truth as best we can, but other people find it very difficult to believe. Also, some people, no matter how much they tell lies, people always believe them. Those are results of karma.

The fifth precept is avoiding intoxicants which makes the mind unconscious, undisciplined, that cause change from the usual behavior. Within intoxicants there are many things. This is important not only for the meditator but even for the ordinary people, because the intoxicated mind causes a lot of danger, so it is something that has to be observed, not only by meditators but by ordinary people who don’t want complications.

It is simple to understand, we saw many times how other people do and we also did it many times ourselves. When people are intoxicated they do many uncontrolled things—break things, fight other people, say all kinds of words, words that they usually hide in their minds—everything comes out, exposed—they have no discipline in the body, no discipline in the speech, and of course, no discipline in the mind. The mind becomes like dirty water. It causes a lot of problems like this—also it makes the person sick, with a headache. These are simple, but there are many other results that we don’t see.

Before taking intoxicants: wine, alcohol, whatever it is, this person looks as if he has discipline, as if he is clever, as if he has dignity. First of all he looks like this, but after taking that, his mind becomes intoxicated and everything changes, He is completely different from the person he was before.

Also, if they are taken much they cause danger to life. According to the element, the intoxicant, there are many ways of not remembering things easily. It interrupts perfect wisdom. The wisdom becomes perfect.

The benefits of avoiding this are that in many other future lives one will be conscious and have firm remembrance. Also having clear senses and perfect wisdom.

The sixth precept is avoiding sitting on very expensive, large, and high beds (like me) and on expensive thrones, thrones which have jewel decorations. If the person sits on an expensive large bed, it causes attachment to it to arise. It is the same thing sitting on a high, rich throne. Also there’s

the danger of pride arising. So keeping the precept is to keep these negative minds from arising, to stop these negative minds.

The benefits of keeping the precept are that in many other future lives you will be respected and admired by other people, and in future lives you will receive better enjoyments, even richer beds.

The seventh precept is fasting. This fasting is having one meal in a day, that is before 12.00, but not twice, taking one at 6.00 and at 10.00 o'clock another meal, not like this. The meal can be taken at any time before 12.00. The whole purpose is this—we are not out of attachment, we all have attachment, the problem is attachment, so this is to fight, not to follow attachment. This stops the attachment from arising or it stops working for attachment.

But the question comes, “Why does the person takes one meal—if that is so, why shouldn't the person shouldn't avoid meal?” One meal is necessary; that is necessary because you can't receive enlightenment in one second like this—you take LSD and get out of samsara and again come back—not like this. Anyway you see, there's the necessity, there's so much negative karma, negative mind, such a great collection—if it was in form it would be something incredible—not only created in this life, but in so many previous lifetimes. The reason we are not scared is because it is not in form, in matter, not in any shape. It is formless, and therefore difficult to recognize. So it is necessary to purify. Therefore, it is necessary to practice Dharma in this life, that has so much opportunity to bring advantage. For that aim, that reason, you need a long life; so that has to depend on temporal needs; so for that reason, one meal is necessary—it is like medicine, like temporal medicine. It's like this—medicine is taken until you recover from the sickness, and then you don't need it. Food is like this, food is taken like a medicine, to get out of samsara, to achieve enlightenment, and in that way it is used for Dharma, used in a Dharma way. The action of eating food, thinking like that, is a Dharma action, because you are not eating it with the thought of the worldly Dharmas. And this one meal makes the person exist.

The benefits of that, the temporal benefits of fasting are that in many other future lifetimes you spontaneously receive food enjoyments, without working for it yourself, without being too concerned about it yourself. And also in many other future lives you will receive good crops.

The eighth precept is avoiding putting smells such as perfumes on the body, and other things such as ornaments, with greed. And avoiding songs and dances.

Just as with the food—for example, food can be taken in a Dharma way, being opposed to the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas—there are exceptions. For the practice of Dharma without evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, it is exceptional to dance and sing, for a Dharma reason, for the practice of Dharma, without the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. Basically, the reason that it's forbidden—the reason that many of these are forbidden, such as enjoying the large, high, and expensive throne, smells, ornaments, all these things, these actions are forbidden when they are done with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. Precepts are not just to forbid the action, but mainly to stop the negative mind from arising, to finish all the negative mind. Because the negative mind is the creator of the problems, the sufferings, so the precepts are to fight its action. The forbidden actions are the actions done with this evil thought. For the Dharma, with pure thought, that which is opposite to the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, such as music, such as sitting on the throne, such as putting on smells, singing, dancing—they can be done, these are exceptions.

(i) The benefits of avoiding putting on smells and ornaments, such as rosaries, with attachment, and also other ornaments are that it causes many other future lives to have a beautiful body with many good physical signs such as Guru Shakyamuni has, many holy, perfect signs, such as having chakras and wheels under the feet. There are many other things, so many other knowledges. Those are also caused by keeping these precepts.

Also, it causes you to have intuitive good smells, very sweet smells that come from the body that are not prepared purposely by you. In Tibet, there are many lamas like this. It is not a smell that is purposely put on, but they have intuitive good smells that come from their body. That is the result of previous good karma, keeping these precepts. The Tibetan term for that is “the smell of morality.” It is not expensive.

(ii) The benefits of keeping the precept of not singing and dancing with attachment is that it causes you to have a well subdued mind in many other future. Also, the actions of the body are well subdued, like a bodhisattva. Because his mind is well-subdued, so also his body’s actions are well subdued, very peaceful—or such as the monks who are strictly living in the rules, in the precepts.

The first four are the root, and there are four roots and four branches, making one of these last two—avoiding ornaments and putting on scents, singing and dance, that is one, and second, fasting—then avoiding sitting on high or large thrones or beds; and fourth, avoiding intoxicants.

These are just temporal benefits. There are many other benefits, each of these precepts being a cause and the result being the knowledge of the Buddha’s holy body, the perfection of Buddha’s holy body. Relating to the holy signs of Buddha’s holy body, relating to the knowledge of Buddha’s holy body, speech, and mind, there is also very much to explain. These are just temporal results that can be achieved by keeping these precepts. But also, by keeping these precepts it causes you to receive the perfect knowledge of Buddha’s holy body, speech, and mind.

Anyway, even keeping these precepts for one day has much benefit because these Mahayana precepts are not observed only for oneself, but for the sake of other sentient beings. So keeping the precepts, if I say totally, keeping the precepts is the most practical, quickest method to escape from samsara and achieve enlightenment, and helps a great deal to receive the realization of the meditations. Keeping these precepts stops the hindrance of the meditations, outside hindrance, inside hindrance—the inside hindrance of the negative mind or following, working for the negative mind—keeping precepts stops these things. So the person’s negative mind does not arise and instead it diminishes and the negative karma becomes less. Keeping precepts does not allow the person to create extra negative karma, so besides not creating and increasing the negative karma and negative mind, it diminishes the negative karma that was created in many previous lives. So it’s very practical, very useful.

Following the precepts helps you at the same time as you take the precepts. It protects you, it guides you, it doesn’t allow you to create extra negative karma and build negative mind. In that way, your keeping precepts protects you. Also, it is of great use, and beneficial for purifying the negative karma that was created in many previous lives. So keeping precepts is very powerful and practical, and helps your mind right away. At the same time you made the vow, it helps a great deal to bring peace to your mind, if you can discover.

So a person who actually keep the precepts is doing a practical action, like the soldiers who are in the war really fighting in the war, the practical soldiers. The ordinary example of the soldier who gives harm to other beings, even though he is practical and he has energy and courage, he is used to destroy others' perfection. He is that strong, practical, and has that much courage—for the worldly beings it is like this. So he, that soldier, is the practical person who tries to get control over the enemy by going into action, trying to get control over the enemy. So like that example, the person keeping the precepts goes into action, trying to destroy the enemy of the negative mind in order to get control over the negative mind. But in the ordinary example of the soldier, however much strength, will, and courage he has—it is all to destroy other beings. In the same way he is destroying other beings, he is destroying himself, his own peace. How much he destroys his own peace. Peace has to be received by disciplining one's body, speech, and mind, and by not giving harm to other being. Mental peace, inner peace, has to be received in this way. This is one of the reasons why in Dharma practice we are much concerned about not harming other sentient beings, especially in the Mahayana teachings. Why are we so concerned about other beings and not harming them? That is because every ordinary happiness, perfection, enjoyment, even the ultimate goal, enlightenment, everything has to be received by depending on sentient beings, from sentient beings.

So from the Dharma point of view, from the Mahayana point of view, harming other beings is like destroying the field from which you will receive your peace, destroying the holy object from whom you receive all your happiness and your ultimate peace. So this man, however much power, strength, and will he has, he has used it in a meaningless way, used it only for achievement of the suffering result, only to create the cause of suffering. So the will, the strength that is used for keeping the precepts, fighting to negative mind, is much more worthwhile, it is priceless. Anyway, it is inexpressible, the benefits, the knowledge that can be achieved by doing this practical action of keeping precepts.

Tomorrow morning the ordination has to be taken just before the sunrise, otherwise it doesn't count as taking the precepts for the full day. Usually it is taken at dawn time when you don't see the figure of the hands clearly, as you see in the day.

Tomorrow morning we start 5 a.m. Before that, if it is possible, clean your mouth and face. Actually like this—the body that is taking the precepts is a new body, a precious body, so it's worthwhile to take the ordination with a clean body. This is more important, this new body. So anyway, taking this ordination tomorrow morning is like having a birthday from the cause of the enlightenment.

Also, when you get up tomorrow morning, try to remember impermanence and death. It is horrible for the people who are in the West to remember such a thing so early in the morning, before doing anything, but for people who seek inner peace it is useful, practical, and it is needed. Getting up early is difficult, like having a heavy job, heavy luggage on your back; for keeping these precepts, there would be this feeling, as if one is punished, tortured. If you really think it is torture, punishing, then there's no need to take them.

Anyway, think like this as you wake up, "Since I was born until now my whole life has finished so quickly, like last night's dream. I am sure that the time that I have to exist is shorter than the time I have lived. My mind does not perceive when death will occur. I am not sure whether death will happen tonight or tomorrow. As there was mind, as the previous mind created the present rebirth, in the same way the mind will continue even after death. So it is more definite that I will be reborn in the lower suffering realms, as I created more negative than positive karma in this life and in

numberless previous lives. Therefore today, right now, I must do something to stop the future suffering, and release sentient beings from suffering by being enlightened. Therefore, I am going to take the precepts and meditate today.” By thinking this there will be pleasure in your mind, so you are going to take the precepts with pleasure, not with worry. So you are doing the action being free, with “free mind,” I mean not as being punished by some other people.

Day 15

Mahayana ordination

Friday November 30th

6 a.m.

Morning Prayers (Page 10)

Visualize the person granting the ordination as Guru Shakyamuni and make three prostrations, thinking, “I am purifying the negativity of body, speech, and mind.

Then kneel with the right knee on the floor and the left knee up. If it is painful, it doesn’t matter. Fold the hands at the heart.

To take the Mahayana ordination it is not enough just to the motive that is concerned for future lives or to release oneself from samsara—it is not enough because taking Mahayana ordination depends on the individual motivation, not on the person granting ordination, but on the person taking it. Therefore, it is necessary for it to be a Mahayana motive. So, if you cultivate the brief Mahayana motive, think like this, “Myself and all other sentient beings have been circling round in samsara, in the bondage of suffering, and experiencing all the sufferings—those in the upper realms, and moreover, the unbearable sufferings of the three lower realms—from beginningless lifetimes.”

If we clearly check up the length of time that we have been experiencing suffering it can be a really big shock, something which is unimaginable, a very upsetting subject that makes us see ourselves as so ignorant, so foolish, as terrible living beings. Also, just as we have been circling round in the bondage of the suffering of samsara without beginning, the same thing, it is definite that we will have to go through this again, in the bondage of suffering of samsara also in the future, without end. Since by being under the control of delusions and karma as long as we continue believing in impermanent things as permanent, impure things as pure, non-self-existing things as self-existing, if we deeply check up, if all the future sufferings that are going to be brought on by the previous karma were a subject that could be perceived, it is unbelievable, a subject that could make us neurotic, very nervous, something that could make us not feel sleepy. Understanding that we could never sleep, we couldn’t eat, it would be something that makes us even unable to eat food. Our whole night and whole day would be only concerned with how to escape from that. In fact, we are in such a time as that—it’s just a matter of our wisdom not perceiving it, those objects, the future sufferings that will be experienced by us. In terms of the sufferings, we usually think, “I am okay, I didn’t create much bad karma;” we usually don’t think there is much suffering result that we will experience because we didn’t create much bad karma in this life. We even think, “I am a meditator,” usually not having such thoughts that I am okay now, but that there are many future sufferings, the cause of which were created in many previous lifetimes. So anyway, it is definite that we will have to experience much greater, terrible sufferings in the future by taking different rebirths. Also, besides talking about future lives, even in this life we are not sure what will happen, what sufferings we will have before death; but not perceiving it doesn’t mean it won’t happen. So if we don’t create good

karma, if we don't discover the samsaric nature, as long as we create the cause of samsara it is definite that we will have to experience all those future sufferings. The cause was created in all the previous lifetimes. Therefore, it is necessary to build the dam, to make some arrangements, before the danger ...

Guru Shakyamuni, Buddha, is not something eternal, with no beginning. He is not like this. If he is God ... is he God? He is God, he has achieved the perfect meaning of God, he is one who has completely achieved his own purpose and others' purpose, who has completely finished his own work and others' work. Achieving enlightenment is completing one's own purpose, one's own work, and others' work. Besides being out of the bondage of suffering, the circle of death and rebirth, he does not have one single tiny impure mind, dualistic mind, wrong conception, delusion, no such knowledge, no such existence even the size of a particle atom. There is nothing even the size of a tiny atom that is not fully seen by his holy mind. Also, the way he sees is not in different time—the whole existence—one minute, one second, even the shortest second. As he fully sees one object, at the same time he sees every single object and every thought, every desire of sentient beings—he clearly sees without having one tiny mistake. This is not only for the present, but also he sees all the past evolution, and at the same time he sees all the future. Anyway, he has that much great knowledge and understanding, and infinite supreme powers and great compassion. Guru Shakyamuni also has achieved that enlightened knowledge by meeting the guru and by following these precepts by disciplining body, speech, and mind. In that way, he received enlightenment and he enlightened so many sentient beings. He led them to ultimate peace from suffering. So just as he made the progression from ordinary being, ordinary person, just as he gradually made progress, just as he did in the beginning, middle, and end, we can do the same thing. As he was also an ordinary living being as we are, so we can do the same thing. So think, “Besides releasing myself from samsaric suffering, there are infinite sentient beings who are the objects from whom I received my present, past, and future happiness and perfection, and now most of them are in incredible suffering, not having met a guru, not having the wisdom eye knowing about Dharma, only creating the causes of suffering and experiencing suffering. As much as they do not desire suffering they always run as quick as possible to create the cause of suffering. When they are in the suffering result, the cause of which they created, continually they desire happiness and peace. Even though they continually desire happiness and peace, due to lack of wisdom and realizing the perfect method for peace they run more to create suffering. So they suffer and again they create the cause, hoping to create happiness, always circling around and around like this. And besides this, they find the quickest way to create suffering. And they are always worried. This is the nature of ignorant-minded beings.

So I must repay them for the happiness. Also I am really responsible to guide and rescue them from suffering. But at the moment I have no capability to even guide myself from suffering, not having achieved perfect knowledge. Who has it? The Buddha has perfect knowledge and power. So I must achieve enlightenment. Therefore, it is necessary to purify my negative karma and also it is necessary to abstain from negative actions. Therefore, I am going to take the Mahayana ordination until tomorrow.”

Now follows the ordination ceremony, which was performed each morning until the end of the meditation course. The form of each ceremony was the same so has been printed only once in this book—see Appendix One)

9 a.m.

We talked before about the five different knowledges (Page 6), so—the best of the knowledges is the inner knowledge (“inner knowledge” means the knowledge of Dharma); the best of the possessions is the jewel; among the quickest vehicle the best is the clever-knowing horse (this is a special horse). Among the quickest vehicles, the clever-knowing horse is the best, the quickest; the best among the thoughts is bodhicitta. (There are hundreds and hundreds of different thoughts, so the best among the thoughts is bodhicitta).

This horse—there’s quite a long story, but—it is used by the samsaric gods. It is a horse that can fly, but is also capable of understanding whatever the person thinks. Whatever the rider thinks, the horse can intuitively understand it. There is no need to talk to it, as soon as the rider thinks—so quick, such a very clever horse.

Since from among the hundreds and hundreds of thoughts, as bodhicitta is the best, and as our minds have possibility to achieve these best thoughts, it is greatly worthwhile to attempt this practice. That is important to start even from now, since the actual time of death is indefinite. The action of listening to the teachings should be possessed by the pure thought of bodhicitta. In this way, the action of listening to the subject becomes a Mahayana action. However long you listen to the subject—a few minutes, one hour, a whole day—the action becomes a Mahayana action, a pure action, it becomes a special, powerful, practical method, whether or not it is called “Mahayana.” So think— (since I said it this morning, there no need to repeat again, but just to emphasize), “It’s not sufficient that I, after my death, will not be born in the lower realms and will be born in the upper realm; and even releasing myself from this bondage of samsara is not enough, not sufficient. Since infinite sentient beings are the objects of my happiness and enlightenment, and as they are in the terrible suffering, I must achieve enlightenment to repay them and lead them in the path, release them from suffering. So to be able to achieve enlightenment, I must complete the practice of the whole graduated path. To complete the whole graduated path, I must fully understand the teachings of the graduated path. Therefore, I am going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path.”

Among the outlines that we have to meditate through, we have finished “The Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Great Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” and “How It is Fragile, Impermanent, and Easy to Decay,” “Death is Definite,” “The Actual Time of Death is Indefinite,” and “The Suffering Of The Three Lower Suffering Realms—The Narak Realms.”

I will tell you some points, the way to practice it, some points to work with the death part. When you do retreat, or as you gradually experiment, in the experiment, in this meditation on the death part, it will be good if you spend most of the time thinking of the shortcomings of not remembering death for a few days or a week. Do checking meditation on that to fully discover the shortcomings and the dangers of not remembering death. In other words—if one does not remember death, the different kinds of problem that arise, and the hindrances to Dharma practice—there are six total shortcomings of not remembering death. In the second time, also think the benefits of remembering death according to your own mind, the change of your own mind, You have to spend some time on this, the benefits of remembering death.

Then after this, do the checking meditation on how there is no other method to stop death. Also think that as no other method can stop death, death is definite; there’s no other way to add extra life, additional life. And always, without any breaks, without even a second’s break, life is degenerating.

What life there is is always degenerating, on the way, without even a second's break. Therefore death is definite.

But those are just ideas—you have to think in many ways with your logic, as you find with your wisdom. Even if one practices Dharma, without completing the Dharma practice, one has to die. There is not so much time for the Dharma practice. It can be understood by thinking in this way—if we are going to live for fifty years, half the time goes while sleeping, half of life. Then the day is left. In the daytime, we do not practice all day—only at occasional times, only at certain times. And even the person trying to practice Dharma for a time, an hour, has so many hindrances from outside and from inside. From outside, the hindrances do not let the person practice Dharma. Even if there's no outside hindrance, from inside the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas makes the person's practice black, non-Dharma. So like this. If you make fifty years half, it's only twenty-five years. Even that is not the whole time. For instance, when we meditate even if we try to spend two hours, one hour, half an hour—most of the time is spent in distraction. So from this we can figure out that death will happen before we finish our Dharma practice.

So as you frequently go through the evolution of death, the death that will definitely happen in the future, you are trying to feel it, putting yourself through these evolutions. See it, discover the experience yourself—how sad, how terrible the situation is. By doing the practice of the meditation on death frequently, you will see more and more clearly, and afterwards you will feel as if it really happened to you, as if such a time, such a situation of death really happened. There will be a feeling like this in your mind, you will be so frightened, as if it really came, really happened, so frightened. Your heart will be beating, and you will be very frightened like a person when there's some danger, a big shock. Until something like that happens you must train in concentration on this meditation on death, meditating on the form of your future death in the present time. When this happens, you have received the realization that death is definite.

So, then meditate on “The Actual Time of Death is Indefinite.” This is more difficult to realize than “Death Is Definite,” more difficult that to realize and experience. Then the checking meditation should be done in many ways to discover that the actual time of death is indefinite. Many examples should be checked, you should remember all the common examples, what's happening. Like when there's a meeting—the people go for a meeting in, but they do not have time to come out, it's finished. People go to some other country but do not come back. Therefore, the actual time of death is indefinite. A person starts to eat food but can't finish. A person goes to sleep but doesn't get up in the morning. There are so many other examples. A person starts to make preparations for a wedding but no has time to complete them.

It's happening now, on this earth, even in this minute. There are so many great numbers of human beings going through death, who are just after death, or in the death process. This is just only talking about human beings, not other beings on this earth. Those who are close to death, who are definitely going to go through death tonight—there are so many great numbers of human beings. Also in the meditation time, thinking like this is very useful. Think like this: so many living beings are going through death right now, so if that happens to me right now how would I do it? Check with many examples like this, to experience that the actual time of death is indefinite. Some people were enjoying so well, so happy, no problems in the morning, but they are unexpectedly finished in the afternoon. In the morning, the people were so happy, enjoying well, dancing and singing, but in the afternoon they are experiencing much worry and upset, crying. Just also as this example—people leave for trekking on mountain, but have no time to come back, no time to go back to the West.

Our first European student, whom I introduced at the very beginning of the course was planning to come down from the mountain and go to India to receive teachings. She was planning this. We were in Dharamsala, so we received a letter that she was planning to come to Dharamsala to receive teachings. But anyway, she didn't have time, her life finished on the mountain. But she didn't have a completely empty life; just before her death she was doing retreat, it was about the time she just finished retreat or was about to finish. So anyway, she couldn't do it, she didn't have time to do as she thought. Therefore, the actual time of death is indefinite. There are even people who go for pee-pee but have no time to come back. Therefore, the death time is indefinite.

The definition of receiving the experience that the actual time of death is indefinite is when the person feels always doubtful. Whenever the person does something, goes somewhere, he is always doubtful of the existence of life, the continuation of the present life. This is like the example that I mentioned, the Tibetan ascetic yogi who spent his life in retreat, Geshe Kharag, who spent the rest of his life in complete pure practice, meditating in a solitary place, without need to cut the thorns at the door. Every time he went outside his mind was doubtful that he would come back, and when he went inside the cave he was doubtful that he would come out. So in this way he never wasted his time. So totally like this. This change of mind, when one has the realization that the actual time of death is indefinite, this experience of the mind being doubtful always helps one a great deal to do strict Dharma, pure Dharma practice. It means not allowing even a minute to follow or create samsaric action, worldly action, to follow the evil thought of the worldly Dharma practice, not allowing oneself to create worldly action with the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. Also that person doesn't have much problem with attachment.

For all these different levels of changes of the mind, the experience is only made, created, and found by mind, by a method which is mind.

So the part about death evolution—the different kinds of visions, the absorptions of the elements—this usually does not come in this part of the meditation, in these sorts of meditations. Usually, in the Tibetan texts it doesn't come in this set of meditations. But since we don't have any idea about the changes of the elements and things at death time, since it is not fully explained in the science books and is not in the usual books in the West, so it is put together with the death part.

But sometimes this can be practiced during the sleeping time. Just before going to sleep you go through this as if you are in the evolution of death. Go through the process and trying to see the different visions by motions going to the heart—from the head to the heart, and from the navel to the heart. The time of the clear light vision can be done like this—just as we meditate on Guru Shakyamuni's absorption, with Guru Shakyamuni absorbing into you, seated in the center of your head and absorbing into you, and as it absorbed into you all of a sudden this impure conception, the wrong conception of the self-existing "I" and the impure body becomes void, emptiness, somewhere existing. Your mind becomes one with Guru Shakyamuni's holy mind, but in the nature of infinite happiness, ecstasy; something like this. This makes a big preparation. If you train from now, it can help when you meditate on shunyata, the absolute true nature. It can also help a great deal when we practice the tantric teachings, the special techniques and methods of the different deities. You will find it easier at that time, especially at death time. Before you fall asleep, try to fall to sleep just in that concentration, in that vision, the space, the clear light vision in the form of space, the vision what happens just as it is explained there, the clear light vision like at dawn-time in autumn, which is not a white vision, a red vision, or black vision, no need to tell much detail about

this—just something like this, you try. The most important thing is that your mind, besides being completely devoid of an independent “I,” the “I” completely becomes oneness with Guru Shakyamuni. Think that you are losing the old idea that thinks separately from Guru Shakyamuni, in the form of the clear light vision. If you meditate like this it also helps greatly, and also becomes a protection on your night trip.

There are many other tantric techniques. This explanation is usually in the tantric texts, but the tantric techniques cannot be revealed, cannot be mentioned. But the ordinary, basic explanations are okay; the ordinary evolution of death, the evolution of ordinary death, intermediate stage, and rebirth—there is no danger to explain.

Question: Can the form of the rebirth be intuitively perceived in the clear light vision before the actual time?

Answer: Definitely; definitely possible.

Question: Is there any danger visualizing the prana coming to the heart?

Answer: Depending on the person, usually there is no danger. Sometimes the person, when they follow attachment, such as losing sperm, even if there is no contact, anything, just fantasy, just thinking, the person loses sperm. For such a person it can be possible that just visualizing this can bring some dangers.

Question: Is it possible that during this meditation the mind doesn't re-enter the body, that it goes some place else, loses control?

Answer: You can try, but I think it would be difficult. There are only two ways, only two doors; no other door, both are difficult. One has to be done freely, the other has to be done without freedom. So there are only two doors.

There are also a lot of people in the West who commit suicide, but it's not because they are free.

So, I didn't have time this morning to explain about breaking the precepts. Since we have made a vow visualizing like this—two things:

(i) One thing is visualizing many other Buddhas, bodhisattvas, many other holy beings, and visualizing Guru Shakyamuni. This is not the same as visualizing this tree or Mount Everest and making a vow—there is a big difference—between here and Everest there is no connection. And also, the vow that you made in front of Mount Everest, even if you break it, there's no danger. But this is different. Visualizing Guru Shakyamuni and many other holy beings and making a vow is a big difference. Generally, with keeping precepts and making vows there are more benefits if one makes vows in front of, visualizing, the holy object, makes the vows in the presence of a guru, an abbot, or something. It is more beneficial and much different to observe precepts when you have made a vow. Also, if precepts are broken, taking a vow is much more dangerous than observing a precept without taking the vow and then breaking it. Why more dangerous? It becomes like telling a lie—because you made a vow that you would follow it until tomorrow, so it becomes a lie cheating the holy objects.

(ii) And also, precepts taken in front of holy objects and taken for the sentient beings, if broken become like telling lie to sentient beings. Sentient beings are not 100, 1,000,000, 1,000,000,000—not that—it becomes telling a lie. So there is a great danger.

Then it is like this—taking ordination in order to create extra negative karma, for extra donation. At the moment we don't fully realize this, the concatenation, the way it works. But gradually, as we practice meditation and develop our own wisdom, we can understand.

The whole thing is this—why we are not free since beginningless previous lives until now? Because we make ourselves not free, our individual mind makes ourselves not free. As the uncontrolled mind makes us not free, in the same way the controlled mind can make us free. This does not depend mainly on physical activities. What makes uncontrolled, unfree, is the negative mind, the negative karma. So as we created that much before countless times, what we have to do is create less rather than creating more. Therefore it is important to try to be conscious and to be careful, to try to remember frequently the number of the precepts.

And think, always think, frequently think, that you are having a great job, doing a great job, making great work, doing service for the great number of human beings in the human world, to the naraks, pretas, animals, sura, asuras, and to all the infinite numbers of sentient beings who are not enlightened. Think, “For their achievement of enlightenment and to release them from suffering, I am keeping this.” And as you see people, animals, and other sentient beings, think that you are working for them, making great work, have great responsibility, keeping precepts for the achievement of their ultimate peace and to release them from suffering by receiving enlightenment yourself. This is so important, to keep the mind conscious of the precepts and also to keep the mind happy, not to pass a meaningless life. Also, in this way you see other sentient beings' suffering, problems, and confusion around you, and compassion arises, and also courage, and you think, “I must really observe the precepts in order to achieve enlightenment and lead them to ultimate peace, totally, to achieve their peace.” So it helps in so many ways. Whenever you take the precepts frequently think like this—it is helpful.

Also, there is a Mahayana thought training according to each action of our daily life. So this afternoon, I will read it. (Page 138) In the break times, if there is nothing in the discussion times, try to read and learn it. Learn by heart what relates to each action so you can use it as you do each action.

If you really understand, if you really get bored of suffering, and if you really get bored of the problems of all your life, and if there's a method, then not practicing it is silly, and it is nonsense. Not practicing these things, not doing the method that is shown, and expecting something else is only a total hindrance to your wisdom, to your Dharma practice.

So you have lunch—after finishing lunch, you cannot have biscuits, fruits, and so on which have the potential to make kaka. Anything that has the potential to make kaka cannot be taken—even fruit juice which has things inside, not just water, and also, such things as strong milk cannot be taken.

As regards food, generally talking, there are black foods and white foods, things like this. Such things as garlic, onions, meat, radish (which makes gas in the stomach) are black. White foods are honey, curd, milk ...

Paragraph 9

Also, sometimes visualize splitting the body from the head down to the feet.

Paragraph 11

This is also not only once, but happens again and again for such a long period. There are unbearable sufferings, being squashed and chopped, pressed between the cracks, mountains that looks like animal's faces, very huge ones, being squashed between two with much blood coming like a river—visualize like this. That happens not once but again and again. The being is killed, but comes alive, again there, again killed, comes alive many times, suffering there.

This kind of rebirth is caused by telling lies, being cunning, by leading other people, other living beings to different works that cause much sufferings, by hatred and dislike, by anger at the parents, the Triple Gem, the Buddha, Dharma, or Sangha. Sometimes there are even people who try to follow traditional things without understanding Dharma. They do outside things, such as worshiping, the common exterior things which most of the laypeople do, but without having the deep understanding of the Dharma, not having any idea how the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha helps. Then, when problems come, heresy rises, "I have been relying on the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, I have been worshipping, I have been this and that, if they really existed they would guide me from suffering;" and so believing they are non-existent. And sometimes not even thinking that way, but allowing anger to arise, "If they really existed why don't they help me?" and breaking statues or destroying holy places. Anyway, like this. This can cause one to be born in these suffering stages. If one has no understanding of how the Buddha guides, the Dharma guides, and how the Sangha helps, it is possible that such mental problems as heresy may arise when one gets into a big problem. Then there's danger that such negative mind can arise.

So anyway, the way the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha help, the way they guide sentient beings from suffering is not like this—like cleaning the suffering with water, destroying the sufferings by their hand, by Buddha's hand—not like this. If that were so, if such thing were possible, there is no reason for infinite sentient beings to still be suffering—no reason. It must be, it should be the same thing, it must be because of this—if God or Buddha could destroy sentient beings' sufferings by hand or clean it with water, if that were possible, no suffering would be left now. There wouldn't be any sentient beings left. Also in other religions, also in Christianity, there is belief in God—but why? If there is a God, why are there still infinite sentient beings in suffering? It must be the same thing, this point—that God cannot destroy sentient beings' suffering by hands, or by cleaning with water. If so, there wouldn't be any suffering sentient being. So the way the God, the Buddha guides us, must be, since it is not in this way—besides, as it is said in the Buddhadharma that beings such as Guru Shakyamuni and others do not clear sinfulness by water and that sentient beings' suffering is not destroyed by hand, is not wiped off by hand, the way they guide is also not by transplanting their realizations. So there are three things. The way they guide the sentient beings from suffering is not through cleaning with water, not through wiping them with hands, and also not through transplanting realizations. The way they help is not any of these, so there is some other way. It must be the same thing also in other religions, they must come to the same conclusion.

It is important to understand how they help, how they guide us. It is so important, not only for those who practice Buddhadharma but also for those who practice any religion and have belief in God. How do they cause sentient beings to be released from suffering? What's the way? By showing them the absolute true nature, sentient beings are released from suffering. They all must come to the same conclusion. The absolute true nature is not only possessed by Buddhists ... it is not something like this—the absolute true nature as something that is possessed by one sect, one religion—not like this. If that were so, the earth should belong to one sect; the earth, for the same reason, the same thing, should belong to a religion or sect. But there's no such thing. It is the same thing with the absolute true nature. This is what we should understand, this is the main thing whether we have religion or not, whether we have a sect or not—this is what we should discover. Because what we need is to be released from suffering, so we should seek such method, seek such truth. We should fully understand this method, and follow correctly the method as it was shown by the fully Enlightened One. And try to fully discover it as it exists, try to see fully the earth as it exists, as the evolution the earth has. So anyway, by fully receiving the absolute true nature then one can be released from samsara, from illusive, dualistic mind. But in order to be able to do that, to eliminate all that thought, the full realization of absolute true nature depends on many other methods, on the achievement of many other realizations such as bodhicitta, which are based on the fundamental realizations of these basic meditations.

So what I mean is this—one point that I am talking about is that there cannot be a different, principal cause of suffering, even though there are many different kinds of religion. There cannot be a different principal cause of suffering. There cannot be a principal cause of suffering belonging to Christianity, belonging to Muslims, belonging to Buddhists. In the evolution there cannot be such a thing. Maybe it's difficult for you to figure out, but perhaps it will come later.

Many people do things without understanding, without understanding the meanings beyond. That way cannot help. But if you do it with the understanding of the meanings beyond, then it becomes practical, then it works for that. It's just like this, if I tell another example—anyway, totally like this, it must be the same thing, totally there is something else to do with it. Maybe this is clear, not only that, not only putting water: with the realization of that, then if it is done it works—that is not because of the water, the way it helps is not because of the water, not because of the water—if the people have no realization of that, what is beyond that, the additional thing, that which is mental not physical, without this, only the physical action, only relying on the water, cannot help in that way. It is the same thing with prostrations—one can make prostrations to the house, to the tree, one can make them to many things—only that is a physical action. That understanding does not help—it needs something else to make it beneficial, helpful to your mind. Why doesn't it work in that way? There is something missing.

The main point that I want to finish—there cannot be different causes of suffering in different sects or religions. It has to be one. If it is not one, if it is different for each different sect, each different religion, then it becomes just theory, the cause of suffering becomes a theory. Then that becomes the cause of suffering. Then that becomes a different name of a religion, or a different custom of a religion, a different exterior traditional thing. So like that cannot be possible. Then animals wouldn't have any cause of suffering. So now, the whole point is this—the principal cause of suffering must be one, whether we different people recognize it or not; whether we think in different ways, according to the level of intelligence; even though we have different ways of thinking, different ideas of the principal cause of suffering.

So also the path has to be that, the path also cannot be differently separate from that. That which doesn't depend on the realization of the absolute true nature, something else that does not depend on realization of absolute true nature, there cannot be such a thing. The path that cuts off the cause of suffering has to be one thing, has to be one thing. That path is the path that causes us to realize the absolute true nature, the path realizing absolute true nature. No matter if we, who have different levels of intelligence, think or have different idea of the path, created by different ideas according to intelligence, because there are different levels of intelligence, the idea is different—but since the principal cause of suffering has to be one, the path has to be one, the path that is capable of cutting the cause of suffering.

Like this, another example like this, just to have an idea: if there's a big rock there in the nighttime, ten different people see the rock as something different, like a tiger and so on. They see it as different but actually it is a rock, not a tiger, leopard, elephant, or monkey as the different people see it. Actually it's a rock. Because of the time, conditions, and their different levels of mind, they see different things, but actually it's a rock. So to explode, in order to destroy the rock, in order to completely destroy it, the quickest way to destroy that rock is to put dynamite on it. For instance—this is just to give you an idea—such a huge rock cannot be broken, exploded, by throwing stones on it, so the direct way to destroy it is by putting dynamite on it. So just like this, the realization of the path realizing the absolute true nature is like the dynamite to destroy the cause of suffering. So, the actual thing is the rocky mountain, and the only quick way to break the huge rocky mountain is to put dynamite on it. So the cause of suffering is only one thing, and the path to destroy it has to be one thing. So in this way one can escape from suffering, whether it is called a sect or not, by recognizing the cause of suffering and following the one path.

Sorry, that conversation just happened.

(Page 64)

Paragraph 1

The suffering living being all of a sudden takes birth place in a large, dark, iron house that has no doors, and the whole thing suddenly bursts into flames, becoming red-hot, giving much suffering, extreme suffering.

Paragraph 2

The living beings suffer for long periods, for long periods.

If I tell you briefly, the fifty years of human life—so we can have an idea of how long these living beings suffer—the fifty years of human life in the first category of gods of the senses—for them it's one day. There are six categories for the gods of the senses. So their time is very long compared with us. So by making a month of those days, and making a year by those months, so 500 of their years is one day for the first stage of these naraks, who are killed again and again by different weapons. Then make a month by those days, and make a year by those months, and that 500 years is one day for those beings in the narak stage, where they are putting lines and slashing and splitting the beings with swords on the hot red burning iron ground. Then as in these two examples, so it gets longer and longer in the other stages. Anyway, it goes down like this. The sufferings that they are

experiencing are much greater. So it's really unbelievable, but it's good to know, it's worthwhile to know.

So according to here there are eight different stages. As it is written, there are eight examples. So, the eighth, the longest one, is the suffering stage where it takes the longest period of time. And also, as suffering beings take the longest period by going here, also the sufferings, the eighth stage, has the greatest suffering. So with this understanding, when you meditate try to visualize, make the experience. This becomes helpful, effective.

So, after long periods, when they finish the result of the karma, experiencing that first, red-hot, burning iron house, they see the door. Because the karma that they have experienced in that doorless burning iron house finishes, he finds the door. So he thinks he has found a way to escape but because of his karma, again he gets stuck in the second burning iron house. So again, for long periods, he suffers there.

According to the karma, those things spontaneously happen. I don't mean without depending on karma, it is not something that someone makes without depending on karma—not like this. Just as in the many examples—you see, when we visualize some holy object, first of all our mind is completely dark, like a dark room that has no light. But gradually, making much purification, continuing this practice, it gets better and better, clearer and clearer; so clear in the mind as you look at a beautiful drawing, a beautiful *tangka* that has many details—like that, it can progress in our minds. So this is not something that is created by some other things, without depending on your own karma. This also depends on karma—why first was there something there, very dark? Because of obscurations, very thick, much heavy negative karma, obscurations. This also depends on karma. So afterwards, by purifying, as you continue the practice, getting better, also getting clearer, seeing details so clear—such things can be possible. That is also because of purification, it is the change made by purification. Because the purifying method purifies the heavy negative karma that hinders us even to have the holy object in the mind, finding it very difficult to visualize the holy object, to have it clear. But when you remember the enemy, the person that you hate, or mind—that is also due to karma, due to heavy negative karma. It is easy to picture something like this, but difficult to picture holy objects.

The Mahayana Method of Making the Daily Life Meaningful (Page 138)

The purpose of doing this practice is totally to lose the attachment to the temporal happiness of one's present life. And not only that, but also that the daily life actions should be involved in self, should done without self cherishing thought, which is the opposite if *bodhicitta*, the main hindrance of *bodhicitta*. Totally there are two total purposes like this.

Generally, by doing this practice, each action helps us a great deal to cultivate, to generate *bodhicitta* mind. Our untamed, unsubdued mind should be habituated, tamed, habituated with *bodhicitta*. The purpose of this whole daily life's actions, doing, relating with these ideas, being related with these ideas, with these meditations, is to quickly achieve *bodhicitta*, besides cultivating this pure thought once or twice a day before the meditation. If one does this practice there is great profit—there is much to say about the benefits of this, so if I say totally—totally, it helps a great deal to not create bad karma; there are many ways it can help, many ways, many ways, there are many ways.

People may think, “This is only thinking, how can this help other beings, only by thinking without any action?” That is because of the lack of understanding the important points of the Mahayana techniques, the practice of the Mahayana techniques.

The great pandit, Shantideva, said in his teaching, “Even just thinking that I will cure sentient beings who have the disease of the brain, (but yourself not in the physical action, but just thinking this: not even including all the sentient beings, just those who have disease of brain) the benefits of this is infinite.”

Also, there are many examples, there are so many things.

Because of all these reasons it would be greatly worthwhile, practical, and beneficial, even if this practice is done for only one day. Even thinking about it once has such benefits, so if we use the daily life related with these actions, with the pure motive of bodhicitta, of course it would bring greater benefit, because it's not once or twice, but related to all the daily life actions. So, for the remaining fourteen days, it would be good to do this practice with each action, as much as you can. That is the real practical meditation course. During this time, even if you cannot do this for your whole life, try to not create negative actions for these few days, to fight the negative mind. This is a method for that. There may be something that you do not understand in this part. Since people are always missing methods, it's practical to practice such method. Doing this practice in your daily life is greatly worthwhile.

I will read once, then maybe you can understand.

6 p.m.

(Page 138)

Paragraph 2

Like this—the practice of this related to sentient beings would be more meaningful and make more sense by gradually reading the meditation, because of the understanding of the meditation that comes before this that is set up before this practice—you find more taste, more meanings, find more purpose for making this Mahayana practice. But even if we didn't finish the meditations down to this point, to try and practice this would not be wasting time, making loss—it would only make profit. This is so even though we haven't gone through all the actions with this Mahayana technique.

As space is infinite, so the number of sentient beings is unimaginable, beyond the object of our mind, is infinite. Think at this point, like this. There's a feeling of happiness arising in oneself; as you are attached to happiness, the happiness arises, as you are attached in happiness, think as in paragraph two. By thinking this, try to visualize that instead of the sentient beings experiencing and following the negative mind of greed, think that all their greed is arising, attached to happiness. The attachment that one has to happiness should be thought of as all sentient beings' attachment, the greed that which is attached to happiness. So, instead of the sentient beings experiencing greed, instead of that, as there is attachment, you are experiencing this for sentient beings. Think of this attachment, by seeing this feeling of happiness arising and having attachment to that pleasure, so think with great compassion. This is all the sentient beings' attachment that is attached to happiness and I am experiencing it instead of them, and I shall cut the continuity of suffering of sentient being, for they will ... etc. (Paragraph 2).

If you understand the meaning you can make it short. The main thing is this—for instance me—when there is attachment arising to happiness, then think, another way of saying it, making it simple—“Numberless sentient beings, as they have been continually suffering in samsara due to the attachment to happiness, in the same way they will continue to suffer in samsara due to the attachment that is attached to happiness.” This way compassion arises. To cut the suffering think, “I shall experience all their attachment myself,” thinking that all their attachment is your own. The whole thing is this—the problem that you are experiencing at the moment, you experience that problem for all sentient beings, so make it non-existent for the sentient beings.

Paragraph 3

When I am unhappy, somebody says some negative thing and I am unhappy, having a sad, upset face, when my mind is unhappy (looks like cutting a rock), think, “Sentient beings have been continually suffering in samsara due to the hatred of unhappiness. Same thing, they will continually suffer in samsara, they will endlessly experience greater sufferings due to the hatred of feeling unhappiness. In order to cease their problems, hatred, for infinite sentient beings, I myself experience the problem of hatred.” Think that this hatred is the hatred of all sentient beings, as if you have taken all the sentient beings’ hatred, voluntarily.

Paragraph 4

When there’s an indifferent feeling, try to think similar to this, “Infinite sentient beings have been experiencing suffering in samsara caused by ignorance and indifferent feelings from beginningless lifetimes. Still they will endlessly experience the sufferings of samsara due to ignorance and indifferent feelings. So instead of all sentient beings suffering that, I myself suffer the whole problem of the ignorance which arises from indifferent feelings.” Think of that as if you have taken all the sentient beings’ ignorance due to indifferent feeling, as if you have taken it on your ignorance, voluntarily.

Paragraph 5

Sentence 1: Before, as we talked about the other three. First of all you have a problem—you are experiencing it in a beneficial way, instead of building confusion in your mind: even if it is negative making it beneficial, never involved in self. This action is completely opposite to the self because one’s self is always involved in happiness, not desiring suffering. So these practices are completely opposite to the self-cherishing thought. Before we talked of ways of fighting the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, so this is the way to fight the self-cherishing thought. So, before you had problems—so problems become the cause of volunteering and taking over the other sentient beings’ suffering—it causes to us to do this beneficial practice. Someone may think that you may receive double negative karma, double negative mind, but this is a wrong understanding; think that you are making yourself more negative, putting yourself more in samsara, causing yourself not to receive enlightenment. By doing this practice, also it reminds you that your attachment is the cause of suffering. This practice only purifies your negative mind and attachment. It only causes you to lose it, only purifies, and it is a powerful Mahayana technique to quickly lose the self-cherishing thought.

This practice would be ... anyway, this is such a profound, powerful practice that an ordinary person's mind can't figure it out, grasp it—but trying it never causes danger. Sometimes the physical problem is much more clear.

Paragraph 5

Sentence 4: Anyway, as we gradually come down we will understand the importance of this practice—there are many things here that are difficult to understand but as we do the other meditations, gradually we will understand. Actually, like this—usually, like this—the usual desire is for oneself to be happy, the suffering is experienced by the other being, the happiness is experienced by me—this is the usual choice of our old mind. The comfort should be received by me. Actually, both people are important—same thing. Both need comfort; both don't desire discomfort, unhappiness. There is no reason that I am more important than him, no reason that I should receive happiness, that she should receive unhappiness, that she should experience suffering. I am also a living being, she is also a living being. In this way, in place of making ... so enjoying the happiness with self-cherishing thought, selfish mind, only hinders the achievement of bodhicitta, the achievement of enlightenment, and also causes attachment to arise. So the reverse—she experiences the happiness, I experience the suffering—this way, there is no danger of attachment arising, no danger of self-cherishing thought arising. This practice, taking on the suffering voluntarily, willingly, only causes us to lose the attachment, to lose the self-cherishing thought; also, she has happiness.

So this is such fantastic way of working. In this way, even if I am experiencing suffering, I am only making profit, benefit; it makes me come quicker to the enlightenment stage in this way, and purifies. So this is just with one person. It is that much worthwhile, that much benefit, that I experience the suffering on behalf of her, instead of she experiencing the suffering. If there is so much benefit experiencing the suffering voluntarily, willingly, instead of the other sentient being, as there are that many numbers of sentient beings—for instance, figuring out if from one person that action has that much benefit, infinite numbers of sentient beings makes the action that much more powerful, experiencing the sufferings for infinite numbers of sentient beings is extremely purifying and such a quick cause to receive enlightenment—of course, one person experiencing suffering for all sentient beings is worthwhile. It is logical that oneself taking over others' suffering willingly, voluntarily, that such action has such incredible benefits. The logic of that can be figured out with one sentient being.

Another way of talking—like this: as there are that many fewer sentient beings suffering, there is that much good. For instance, in this tent—having fifty people suffering and most of the people not suffering—if only two people are suffering that is much better than fifty; and if one person is suffering it is that much better than the two. So thinking like this—I am also a living being, other sentient beings are also living beings. So instead of all sentient beings suffering it is better for me, one person, to suffer. This idea helps a great deal. Me, one person—but now, of course, you can experience some difficulty in understanding this—and then, me, one person, so it is worthwhile to take over the suffering, to experience the suffering, for the sake of them, by myself. Then also think of the benefits of experiencing, trying to experience the suffering by taking others' suffering upon you. Also try to remember the benefits that I mentioned before, which the great Pandit Shantideva said, the action of just thinking, besides the practice.

This short explanation is to have some idea.

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Paragraph 1:

This is the same as what I said before.

Paragraph 2:

If you understand the first three things (Page 138), to work with ignorance, hatred, and greed, totally the way of practicing is in that way.

Paragraph 4:

This part may be ... those who finds easy to do it can do it. But the main thing to remember is the thought training.

(Page 139) The Thought Training

1. This doesn't have to be a specific room or temple—it can be a tent. So when you come in, think, “May all sentient beings be led into the city of nirvana. Also you can visualize that you are bringing in numberless sentient beings after you. Because this way, the mind using it this way, there is no place for self-cherishing thought. This is the technique for the mind not to be involved in that negative mind.

2. Also, you can visualize that you are leading them out of samsara, as you go out.

3. So, like this you can think—as you open the door, think that you are leading the sentient beings who are in the lower realms, such as the naraks, you are leading them out and opening the door of the upper rebirth, which means causing them to be born in the upper realm.

Also, this way of thinking—the door of transcendental wisdom and you are leading the sentient beings from the lower suffering realm, out of the lower suffering realm.

4. So when you close the door, think that you are closing the door of the lower rebirth, so that sentient beings will not be reborn in the lower realms. You are closing the door of the lower realms, stopping the sentient beings rebirth there.

5. When you wash, think, “May all sentient beings’ smells of delusions be cleaned off, as I am washing.” Also, during this time washing think that, “I am cleaning sentient beings’ smells of delusions.” (Page 140)

6. Same as (5)—just repeating.

7. If one is doing such an action, sweeping, then it is beneficial to think this way, and during the time of sweeping think as if you are cleaning the sentient beings’ greed, hatred, and ignorance.

In this way, the mind is always in meditation, in such powerful meditation, and also in this way the mind is always conscious of sentient beings. One thing is this—especially for those who took

bodhisattva vows, this is the most practical thing that helps not to break the vow. Because those who take bodhisattva vows, whenever any tiny action is done with self-cherishing thought, the bodhisattva vow is broken. This practice would help a great deal to continue the vow, to continue the precept. Any way, for those who purely keep the bodhisattva vow, the sentient beings are kept like the heart—they have to be always conscious of sentient beings.

9. Firm merits, indestructible—merits that cannot be destroyed by any negative mind, cannot be moved by any negative mind.

10. All causative existence is impermanent.

11. The path of the square. As there are three vehicles, there are different practices according to the level of intelligence of the person, according to the realization of the person. But all these different practices are the path of one person to receive enlightenment. It is not opposite, like hot and cold, that the person cannot do that. For instance, there are many other examples, but when the person was in the lower training—I think this is simple, for instance, like this: Guru Shakyamuni has shown Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana teachings. Those who have lower intelligence have shown Hinayana, middle Mahayana, and higher Vajrayana. But the whole Hinayana teaching that was shown to the lesser intelligent beings was to lead them to the Mahayana, then to the Vajrayana: totally to enlightenment—there are some things forbidden for the person of the lower training, but these can be done in the Mahayana. According to the level of intelligence the disciplines change, because here changing the disciplines helps us to more quickly receive enlightenment. For example, the higher intelligence being went through realizations in the tantric practice for instance, and when they were in the Hinayana the action was forbidden, so he received the path quicker—if he doesn't follow that discipline he cannot receive the graduated path, cannot raise the level of intelligence. Such as the wine and meat that we are forbidden; there are many other things. But for the person who has control of the mind, higher realizations through enlightenment—there are many things like this that change as he gets to a higher level. So the action forbidden in the lower level and doing the opposite on the higher, both are the cause of enlightenment—so it's all one path.

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“Square” means that—if it's a square table it has four corners but it is still one table. It has great meaning.

12. In regards to prostrations, there will be more explanation when I explain the prayers.

13. It is good during this course, when you go to bed, to visualize yourself in the form of Guru Shakyamuni, but by losing the old mind thinking that you are separate from Guru Shakyamuni, and sleeping, laying down in that position. And also thinking like this, as you are visualizing yourself in the form of Guru Shakyamuni laying down.

Question: The quote sounds a bit self-cherishing.

Answer: Without the subject, how can you get out of suffering, for whom am I going to meditate?

Question: Right; but it doesn't sound like bodhicitta motive to me—”I'll be first.”

Answer: Many people think that just thinking of “I” is wrong. If the “I” has to be ceased there’s not that person existing—there’s no way to receive ultimate peace, to help sentient beings, to escape from suffering. If that’s so then the “I” who am suffering in samsara wouldn’t exist. Like this—simple—we were talking before about the mirror; first the mirror was dirty, then it was clean; like the cup, it was dirty and it was cleaned for food—it existed before and after. The person, “I,” always exists.

Question: But why does is say, “May I lead,” instead of “May I help lead?”

Answer: What’s the difference? I’ll tell you one thing—“May I help to give you 1,000 dollars” or, “May I give you 1,000 dollars”—is there a difference?

25. From your side also, you can think that the taste of the food is beyond that which you taste, and as you taste it, try to visualize that all sentient beings felt it. This way it becomes charity, even your food. If one knows the techniques there is a way to make charity of the food, even one bowl of food. From the Mahayana point of view, charity does not depend on physical sharing and all sentient beings having a physical share but on yourself being not miserly and not attached, thinking it is completely given up and that all sentient beings received it, and are enjoying it. In this way if you enjoy, it is not involved in self-cherishing thought and you lose attachment, as you have given it up to all the sentient beings. It is a very effective, powerful practice and through this, even it is one bowl of food, one makes charity to every number of sentient beings. More explanation will come about this in later meditations, there are more details.

Actually, completing the practice of charity does not depend on all sentient beings becoming rich and leaving not one single beggar. It is not like this.

26. Even one doesn’t have to remember the whole thing—the first part is enough.

29. Just as in the example before, of that clock appearing in the teaching, even if there are negative words—rude words, anything, complaints—try to use it for the practice of bodhicitta.

30. Also, one can visualize the excrement as it is all sentient beings’ delusions and you are cleaning it out, making them to not have any spots of delusion.

Question: How should one think when one’s bladder is full?

Answer: Think that all the sentient beings are released from the pee-pee suffering.

31. Also think, “May the sentient beings see the whole existence as illusory.” Here is a long sentence but one can make it short.

If one does this in the rest of the fourteen days as much as one can, remembering and relating it to the daily life actions, it makes this time useful and profitable. Actually if you do—it’s up to the individual. If the person does, he is making the meditation course beneficial; if he doesn’t, he is not making the meditation course beneficial and practice. If it is done it makes it worthwhile to come from such a far place, the West, taking the difficulties.

Also, dedicate the merits of keeping the precepts, “May I receive enlightenment for the sake of the sentient beings, by receiving fully renounced mind, bodhicitta, and realization of the absolute true nature due to the merits of keeping the precepts.”

Day 16

November 1 [actually this should 01/12/73]

6am

Before taking the ordination, for it to become Mahayana ordination depends on the individual motive. Therefore, it is necessary to cultivate bodhicitta, the Mahayana thought. It is necessary to think briefly like this, “Myself and every other sentient being experienced the suffering of the naraka stages numberless times, from beginningless previous lifetimes. Same thing, we suffered numberless times in the preta suffering realms. Same thing, in the animal realms, and the same thing in the realms of the humans, suras, and asuras from beginningless previous lifetimes. Same thing, we suffered numberless times in the preta suffering realms. Same thing in the animal realms, same thing in the human realms, sura realms, and the asura realms, the realms of the samsaric gods.” (Try to think back and try to imagine it.) “We don’t recognize and we don’t remember; it’s only a matter of not remembering, not being conscious of our previous lives, because of the intervention of death and rebirth that is mainly caused by ignorance.

“Therefore, not remembering our previous rebirths and these sufferings, due to ignorance still we continually follow the control of delusion and karma by continually believing that impermanent things are permanent, impure things are pure, and non-self existing things are self existing; still continually following this old habit, those wrong conceptions, therefore it is definite that we will exist in samsara and suffer continually as we experienced before, as long as we continue living in this old situation, following the wrong conceptions. The buddhas such as Guru Shakyamuni are not eternal, intuitive buddhas who didn’t have beginning. Guru Shakyamuni was also an ordinary man like us in previous times. But he met a guru, received teachings, and followed these precepts. He received enlightenment and enlightened so many sentient beings. As his following and keeping this number of the precepts benefited him so that he was able to reach enlightenment, and great numbers of sentient beings received enlightenment and ultimate peace in the same way he made the trip, we too can become enlightened and enlighten many other sentient beings by following these precepts.

“As we have time, as we have met this precious chance, many things have come together from our side and from the other side, perfect conditions that are difficult to receive. So without wasting this, at least we must try to cease wrong conceptions, which are the cause of samsaric suffering.

“Once we, ourselves, are released from samsara, this is not enough. There are infinite beings who are the objects from whom we received past, present, and future happiness and perfection including enlightenment. And most of the sentient beings are in incredible suffering, without wisdom eye to understand Dharma, not having met a guru to lead them on the path, not knowing which action is positive, which action is negative, not knowing many things that we have received. So, we are responsible to repay them while we have possibility, and to guide them from suffering. The best way to repay and guide them is to lead them to enlightenment, the best way is for us as individuals to receive enlightenment—this is necessary to bring sentient beings into that state more quickly. Receiving enlightenment depends on the purification the negative karma of body, speech, and mind and the elimination of all the delusions, all the wrong conceptions. So the most powerful, quickest

way is to follow the precepts, disciplining body, speech, and mind. Therefore, think, I am going to take the Mahayana ordination.”

Visualize the person granting the ordination as Guru Shakyamuni.

Generally it's like this—people may think it is nonsense to tell you to visualize the form of Guru Shakyamuni. Actually, like this—the Guru Shakyamuni that you see has to be created by you. Whether you see Guru Shakyamuni in the form of dog, in the form of animal, in the form of human being, or in the form of a buddha, it is a creation of your mind, such creation depends on the level of your mind. Also it depends on ... anyway, it is based on devotion and mainly purification—how much the person's mind is purified, the level of the purified mind. Anyway, it is not something like this—it is not like us; when we are in the East, not existing in the West; or when we are in the West, not existing in the East. It is not like this. There's omniscient mind—the actual Guru Shakyamuni is the omniscient mind—such fully knowing mind has no specific place. Also, similar to Christianity, as it comes in the blood, “God is everywhere.” Maybe people don't understand how God is everywhere but they still say it. So, whatever their cognition is, omniscient mind has no specific place. There's no such thing as omniscient mind seeing some existence, but not seeing some other existence, it is not like this. It is a pervasive mind, so it is inevitable that his holy mind exists at this place, where we are taking ordination. Also, there's a connection to each living being, to each of us there's a connection. The reason we have such karma to practice Dharma, to create some merits is because of the relationship between Guru Shakyamuni and ourselves. You can understand slowly.

So visualize—anyone who are not taking the precepts doesn't have to repeat, no need to take the trouble of visualizing—so visualize the person granting the ordination as Guru Shakyamuni, not thinking that you are taking ordination from a little boy, surrounded by infinite buddhas, bodhisattvas, and arhats, and repeat the prayer.

(Ordination Ceremony)

From the holy teaching of the great bodhisattva, Tenzin Gyatso, “The sun, moon, and the rosary of lightning (“rosary” means it is narrow, like a line), even though it dispels the external darkness, how can it dispel the inner darkness? But bodhicitta helps to completely destroy the darkness of the living beings' minds.”

So, this is setting up a competition between external powers and the mental power of bodhicitta. For instance, in terms of the mental power of bodhicitta, even there are millions of suns together, and that many moons, and also that much lightning, all of them together have no power to destroy the inner darkness as bodhicitta has. Through the practice and achievement of bodhicitta, besides being able to dispel the inner darkness, by so doing one can also dispel all the external darkness by mental power, without the need of the help of the planets.

Just like this example, the best kind of light is the light of the Dharma, that which can be lit in the mind. By lighting the inner light within our minds, the inner darkness is destroyed, and so the external darkness can also be destroyed without depending on the help of the external light. So the best light of Dharma is the light, or the lamp of bodhicitta. So without completing, if one does not depend on, if one does not light the lamp of the Dharma, then the need for the external light, and the action using the external light has no end. There's no way to end it, it cannot be once, we will never finish using the external light. As long as the living being does not light the lamp of the

Dharma in his mind, the need for the external light and the action using the external light cannot and will never finish until he destroys the inner darkness by the lamp of the Dharma within his mind.

As we have received the perfect human rebirth and all these precious chances one time, and as especially we have met the teachings of bodhicitta, the work on this, starting even from now, since we don't know how long we will exist with this body, even the action of listening the teachings should be possessed by the pure motive, bodhicitta. So think, "The attachment that is attached only to the happiness of this life and samsaric pleasure and samsaric higher pleasure, and however much I can make this life happy and receive happy future lives, it is still in the nature of suffering. It's like honey on the edge of the sword; the person is attached to the honey, but doesn't recognize that the sword is cutting the lips and tongue. This is only a matter of not recognizing that it causes suffering. Always we are cheated by our attachment to samsara. So there is a great need to be released from samsara as quickly as possible. Releasing oneself from samsara is not enough; there are infinite sentient beings in incredible suffering who are the objects from whom I received all my happiness. Therefore, I am responsible to guide them and help them from suffering and repay them. Therefore, I must lead them to enlightenment; but first, it is necessary for me to be enlightened in order to show them the different methods. So, to achieve enlightenment I must complete the graduated path. That depends on fully understanding all the meanings of the graduated path, without any wrong conceptions. Therefore I am going to listen to these teachings on the graduated path."

The listening subject is the graduated path, which is divided into three. This is about the path of the lower beings.

There will be subjects that do not agree with your mind, with which your mind doesn't agree. However, listening to that mind that doesn't agree with the meditation subject only keeps you in a foolish state, is not a skillful method, is not the method of a clever mind. In spite of the mind not feeling it, and finding difficulty with the subject, you should not care for it, you should not care for your own mind as it thinks. If you always care for your mind, listen to it, then there is nothing but always the person cheating himself—from beginningless lifetimes until now, what we have been doing is this. That's how we still don't discover ourselves, still do not recognize what we are, what the mind is. It is not a subject that is outside, far away in Tibet or China or somewhere; however much we study in schools and universities, study outside, we still do not discover this. This is only the fault of following old behavior and old actions that are created by old thought. By the way, how you should be with the mind is like parents with children. At first, the children don't want to go to school, get tired and always want to play. But in order for the children to become well educated, well qualified, the parents should be skillful, the parents should know that if they send the children to school, without thinking of the difficulties, all the struggles, all the tiredness, without concern for this, they should keep sending the children to school and keep the children in discipline. So that as the children grow up they have to be good, relaxed, with subdued behavior, and a good personality so that they becomes harmless with other people, that other people like him. And also, if the parent knows that by treating children in this way, continually sending them to school, colleges, and university, gradually they can be educated like this, qualified, and the children will find jobs, have good reputations, and can live by themselves. Even if the parents die, they can live by themselves. If the parents think like this, treat the child in this way, it is possible, this is the general nature, it is possible. So like that we should treat our minds—we, the parents; our minds, the children. So in this way the mind can be developed, the mind can be qualified to reach enlightenment, which is the

highest qualification, which has capability to bring infinite benefit, to bring intuitive, infinite benefit to every living being.

If the parents always listen to what the child says, if the parents always follows the child's desires, what the child wants to do ... anyway, in that way it is extremely difficult to educate the child. There's no progression, this is ridiculous. Worldly people think this is ridiculous. They always think that parents should educate the children, make the children knowledgeable, without letting them waste time and be lazy. Even if the child cries or whatever it does, the parent has much love and is concerned for the future, to receive a happy life in the future. If they were only concerned about the present, they would care about the present worry—anger, crying, whatever it is—but they see the future as more important. From the child's side it is very difficult to think as the parents think. So just like this, we should treat our mind in this way.

The subjects we have finished are “The Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Usefulness Of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “Life is Fragile,” “Death is Definite,” “The Time Of Death is Indefinite,” “After Death, No Other Methods Can Prevent Death or Help At Death Time Besides Dharma.” Why is there need for Dharma? Because after death it is more definite that we will be born in the lower suffering realms because of many reasons—even in one morning we create more negative karma than positive karma, and also in this day, month, year, and even in this life. Even if we think we didn't create any bad actions, like killing people and so forth, in numberless previous lifetimes we have created so many horrible negative actions, and also more negative than positive actions in all those lifetimes. Even those who think that, “I created much negative karma in this life,” we who remember this, we too created much worse karma than this numberless times in previous lives. So because many of these reasons, even if we try to practice Dharma in such short time, we spend very little time in Dharma. Even if we practice Dharma it is not pure. Pure Dharma is very rare in this life. So for all these reasons it is more likely that we will be born in the lower suffering realms. So it is necessary to practice Dharma.

Death time is like sleeping, the intermediate stage is like a dream, and then waking up we are suddenly in the lower suffering realms, suffering there. Even in the intermediate stage there is much fear, great fear; you get caught in such a large, flaming fire, or are underneath huge mountains pressing down. Also there are visions—you get caught in the cracks of mountain and are chased by such strong wind. There are all kinds of very fearful visions.

When the living being is born in the first suffering stage where he is killed again and again, because of the karmically created beings, all of a sudden anger arises towards the other beings there, and they fight each other. They are killed many hundreds of times; they strongly fight with all kinds of different types of weapons. After fighting so strongly, they tremble (sic); and after they wake up, they start to fight again. This happens many hundreds of times a day. Just think of how much we suffer when we touch incense, or a tiny thorn goes into the flesh—even if there are no knives or swords going through the body, it is greatly unbearable. So even a tiny suffering there is many times greater than our human suffering.

The second narak stage is like a carpenter working with wood. They burn lines on the body with red-hot iron wires, and the places where they are put on the body becomes black. Then the carpenter cuts along those lines with many different weapons.

The third one, the third example—we suffer by a huge mountain that is in the form of the head of the animals that we have killed in previous lives—these are not small mountains, but huge, great mountains. We are killed, squashed, many times, and we just suffer there. There is no way to escape; we are stuck in those mountains. Besides being stuck we are also squashed. There are all kinds of things. Also, sometimes it is like this—there is sometimes the suffering of being ground up by the miller. There are many ways to suffer, according to our karma.

When we meditate on these things we shouldn't think that the suffering is for one minute, one hour, or something—we should think that it is long period, many trillions of years. Actually if you are going to count in human days, the length of suffering there it is unbelievable.

In the fourth stage there are those sufferings that are caused by following the ten immoralities, such as continually drinking wine, and having strong habits, without discipline, without rules. Those also cause us to be born in these stages.

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Paragraph 3

Also such suffering as being cut into pieces. When we are born in the narak stages even the blood—each piece that we are cut into has consciousness, has mind. It is not like the present body, even a drop of blood has consciousness, and each piece has consciousness, and as it is dropped on the red-hot ground there is great suffering. Here the suffering body is small—in the narak realms the body is huge, so large. And the skin is so soft, thin, like a newborn baby's, so sensitive to suffering—like the wound with the skin taken off, you feel even a hair touching you—but only in suffering. Besides that, the suffering is greater.

It is the same thing even with babies. When the baby is in the mother's womb and then when it comes out, it is similar to that—as the skin is very thin and very sensitive, even the mother touching it with her hand, even the best cloth that is put on the baby is like a thorny place with much suffering. There is much to say also in the evolution of the suffering of babies. That is why during the infant stages children cry more—then as it grows up it cries less and less. There are many sufferings, visions, and troubles that the baby experiences. But we don't feel it as the baby experiences it. Even if the mother has the baby in her stomach and the baby suffers, the mother cannot experience it. Just as in the same way the mother cannot experience what the baby thinks: what makes this happen, even if it is in the mother's womb? That is because ... anyway, you try to check by yourself. If I give the answer you may not understand.

Paragraph 4

A trident has three points, and it is put inside the body and one point comes here, one here, and one comes out of the top of the head. The weapon is not just a tool—it is also very hot, red. Rebirth in this realm can be caused by such things as harming celibates who are observing ordination, and also by harming your parents and other beings.

Paragraph 5

In this realm you are rolled flat—like this, like a cigarette is rolled in paper. Just like this, one who suffers in these stages is rolled by very hot, red, flat irons, very tight. There is no way to escape, and the bones come out of it—like when you squash an orange the seeds come out—the bones come out, and there is much suffering and no way to escape. It is like this—it's funny that we don't remember. When we suffer, the nature of sentient beings is like this—once it is time to escape from suffering, we don't remember the suffering. But when we are in suffering, when there is no chance to follow the method even if the sentient being knows the suffering with experience, that time doesn't help. However much he desires to get out of suffering, however much he has experienced, it doesn't help, there is nothing to do. Just as in a car accident—people who get killed, who have broken legs and broken bodies in a car accident—for them it is finished; there's no way for the suffering that they are experiencing not to happen, however much they desire instantly to be in the usual way. So just like this, so, as they feel upset at that time, as they feel repentance with their wrong actions that caused the car accident, and they feel guilty—it is too late. But if they care for that, if they check up before the danger, it is okay. We are involved in a similar example. Our nature is like this, most of ours.

Rebirth in this realm is caused by such things as taking others' lives, being very greedy for blood, and drinking blood. Also, there are different kinds of suffering, such as the suffering of being underneath two boards—underneath there is a red hot board and also above there is one, and in between is the suffering being who is pressed there. There is no way to escape and there is suffering for a long time.

Paragraph 6

Here the suffering is like this—when we put tools in the fire they get red-hot—our body is like this, the body becomes one with the fire. The only way to know that it is a living being is by the sound; karmically, they make the sound of suffering—only that can be heard but there is nothing to look at, the being becomes one with the fire. This is the worst suffering stage.

The cause of rebirth here is heavy karma accumulated by criticizing real Dharma as non-Dharma, and saying non-Dharma is Dharma, causing confusion. And also harming holy beings, being hateful. This causes one to be born and suffer like this. This is just an example but there are many others. Some other examples of the cause—for people who observe ordination, such as the 253 precepts, breaking the basic precepts also causes one to be born there in this suffering stage. Breaking the branch precepts, those that are not the basic precepts, also causes one to be born in the first stage where they are killed again and again—this is very dangerous. Also, people who get angry with bodhisattvas, and who have disbelief in the guru are born here. Among those who follow tantric precepts, those who break the tantric root vows, the root downfalls—there are fourteen, and breaking them is most dangerous—as the person breaks it, in each second, if the person doesn't make confession instantly, if one second passes between breaking this root fall and confession, that karma causes the person to be born in this worst suffering stage and suffer for one eon. So it's very dangerous (I think it must be a split second, but I'm not sure)—so with each split second that passes before the confession, the person created this negative karma that causes him to suffer in this worst suffering stages for eons equal to the number of seconds between breaking the rule and when it was confessed. This is very dangerous. It is something you don't want to do, even if it costs you life.

The reason I'm telling about the precepts, even though we are not keeping precepts now, is that it helps in the future. Also, here there are all kinds of people, so it is important to know.

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Paragraph 8

There are all such karmic creations of suffering. The tongue is stretched that large, and like animal leather stretched tight. Then a huge iron ox plowing; the iron is also very hot, goes very deep, very hot.

Paragraph 9

Here the being is forced by the hell protectors, which are in different shapes like different animal heads, which is also the karmic creation of the suffering being.

These are only eight examples of the hot narak stages. For each of these stages, at each side there are another four smaller, different narak stages. So even after finishing the karma to suffer in each of the main stages, then the being has to suffer in the ones at the side. After the karma finishes, he believes he found a way to escape, but finds himself in another one. For example, it may be like a very large ground or fireplace, very red looking, like when there's big fire and everything around it gets red.

Question: How does one finally get out of these stages?

Answer: To completely cease? We started ... it comes. It's difficult to understand. It can be mentioned in one or two words, but it is difficult to understand. It can be explained with details, but that also is difficult to understand.

...Then all of a sudden the suffering being gets stuck; his body is in the fireplace, he sees his legs inside the fireplace, and he sinks, as if he were in very hot quicksand, and drowns. He finds it difficult to escape and gets deeper in. And also, other karmic beings come to eat what is on the top. At another stage there is a very dirty quagmire—all of a sudden the person gets drowned in the quagmire, his entire body in that, and he finds it difficult to escape away. There are many tiny insects going through his body like needles, eating, and causing him suffering. Besides the very dirty quagmire like kaka, he is eaten by insects, which feels like needles being put in the body.

After finishing suffering in one stage he gets stuck in another, and, finishing that, escapes into another. In of these stages the ground is a ground of swords, pointing up—there is no place to escape where there are no swords. So as this suffering being puts his feet on them, they cut, they split his feet. As he lifts them up it gets better and as he puts them down again he gets cut. So he suffers like this for a long time, and has to experience this until the result of that karma finishes.

Also, there are huge trees like mountains, and he hears his relatives calling him from the top of tree, so he feels extremely pleased and tries to run up the tree, and then all the branches of the tree becomes swords and they all go through the body. Besides that, that person's karmically created beings, the vultures, come and frighten the person and eat from his head with their beaks, causing much fear and much suffering. Also, again as the person comes down, again the branches point up in the form of swords that go through the flesh, the body, and karmically created dogs come to eat him besides.

In all these hot suffering realms, the whole ground is always a hot red iron ground, and all these beings suffering in the hot stages are on it. Living beings who degenerated the precepts and who enjoy wrong materials, such as those who make money from holy objects and use it for eating are born here. There are other things, such as money received by selling holy objects—if the person uses that money for enjoyment, such as eating, he receives pollution to the mind. This is not pure material, not pure enjoyment.

Also, those who enjoy things stolen from other people, things they get by cheating other people—there are other examples. Anyway, the hell-protectors put them down on the hot red iron ground and ask, “What do you need?” And the beings say, “We don’t see, we don’t know, but we feel hungry and thirsty.” So they put extremely hot water and red hot coals into their mouths, which burn them inside and cause them much suffering. These are just a few examples.

Paragraph 10

This is talking about the time period, the day and year of the beings in the first stage who are in the first category, *gyaltsen*, as I briefly told you yesterday.

Cold Hells (Page 64)

In the cold hells it’s completely dark, nothing can be seen. The whole bottom is ice ground, and there is such a strong wind blowing, and storms, and snowfalls above and also sometimes in the cracks of the ice mountains. There are many different ways of suffering. It is extremely cold, and you only can only make noise from the throat each time the situation changes, each time it gets colder. Then later on, you can’t move your teeth, all the teeth get stuck. The cracks in the body are not just simple small wounds—they are very large, like lotuses. They are blue, and then change to red as it gets colder, and then they fold, with so much pain. The cracks come with a big noise. Besides that suffering, there are many insects biting the wounds.

There are also ordinary narak sufferings, smaller narak sufferings, even on the human earth. Especially in places where there are no people, in deserts. Some people can see them, some people cannot. Also, even those small, common narak sufferings, which are on the earth, even for those beings there is not one definite kind of suffering—there are all kinds, according to the individual karma.

This is interesting—in previous time there was one very rich leader of the business people. There were many hundreds of business people, and the leader, this person, after he was born, had very expensive jewels and ornaments, such as rings. So anyway, he and many other traders left to get jewels from the Atlantic. When they came back from the Atlantic the leader felt tired and went to sleep. The other traders left. After he woke up, a strong wind came and obscured the trail with dirt. Even the animals, the vehicles, the donkeys, couldn’t find the trail and went all over the place. The leader couldn’t find the trail and he went around, wandering in such a beautiful extraordinary place. In a palace there was a man and four goddesses—they looked like samsaric gods. At night these five living beings enjoyed pleasure in such a rich way, a comfortable way, just as the samsaric gods, the suras. At night he saw they were like this. But in the daytime the palace became a burning iron house and the four goddesses became four dogs, and the man was lying down and the four dogs ate the meat from his backside, taking pieces and eating them. Again, when the sun set, the leader of the traders asked the man what the cause of this was. The suffering man answered that he used to be a

butcher, killing animals in a previous life. This man was instructed by the arhat Phag.pa Kha.ta.ya.na to take ordination, so he took it and kept the vows at night, but in the daytime he didn't follow the precepts. In the daytime he was a butcher, taking others' lives. So this man's suffering, being eaten by dogs in such a place like this, was the result of not following the precepts by day, and the whole thing changing to having higher enjoyments, rich, like the gods, was the result of keeping the precepts at night in his previous life. These are the common small narak sufferings on the human earth. The leader of the traders, when it became dusk, was asked by the suffering man to take a message to a nearby village to his son, to ask him not to be a butcher, and to tell his son to make offerings to the arhat when he came to beg. The man who was suffering like this sent the message to his son to make offerings, and asked the arhat to dedicate virtues for him, so that he could get out of that situation. Because of this, we do like this. Of course, the best thing is to try to create merits from the person's side. Usually in Tibet, when the person dies the family tries to do many things, making pujas and so forth which are involved in different methods. They give the person's possessions to the monastery or to the high lamas in order to create merits for that person, and also to ask them to pray. Due to the merits of the prayers, the suffering being who died can be helped. There are so many ways to make pujas. So, because it was nighttime he sent a vessel, a pot full of gold to his son, otherwise the son wouldn't believe the leader. This pot is buried under the place where he kept the sword for killing animals.

Sometimes, unexpectedly, in some places, at certain times, we have to suffer being cold, without any pre-arrangement, without knowing before. Just like this, there are greater cold sufferings on the human earth, much greater than this, greater suffering than this that we may experience in this life, before death. Not being conscious of the karma, not being careful, for sure one will have to suffer in these cold stages in future lives. Sometimes people find themselves in such terrible cold places, they took root there and have to live there. This is some kind of karma, even though there are many other places, they have to finish their lives there, suffering from cold. The whole family taking root there is also the result of karma. Also many people spend their lives in a very hot place, unable to leave that place—that is also the result of previous karma. Just as there is such evolution of karma, it works in exactly the same way when beings are born in these suffering stages and suffer.

So the leader of the traders left from that place, and again he saw a beautiful palace. Inside there was one man and one woman, and both were very beautiful, enjoying very much, but again it changed. The leader saw the woman become a snake and eat from the man's head. This happened at night, and in the daytime, as in other example, both human beings enjoyed well. That is because the man followed precepts, took ordination from the arhat Kha.ta.ya.na in the day, and didn't observe them at night.

There's a form of tantric yoga practice in which the practitioner goes to cemeteries. Also in previous time, in India, there was one person—when he went outside he saw a butcher, and in the sky he saw a palace and a butcher was born in the form of this, in a very strange form, born as a flame on the tsampa, and the butcher's servants born as a mountain of bones and much suffering.

There are so many other examples. These happened in Tibet, they were discovered by many high lamas. These lamas discovered the previous lives of many animals born in lakes, trees, and stones, such as fish, and then they were eaten by many other insects. Based on this, those high Lamas explained their previous lives.

Meditating on this suffering is so useful. One thing is that it puts down the pride, it helps a great deal for us to lose the pride, thinking that, “I am well educated, well qualified.” We can lose this pride by meditating or remembering the sufferings of the naraks. Also meditating on the narak stages helps a great deal for us to receive the mind renouncing samsara; that means renouncing the negative mind, greed, ignorance, and hatred, which is really a great help. There are many special techniques, higher tantric techniques, but for beginners who don’t have the mind renouncing samsara, the mind renouncing the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, who don’t have bodhicitta, this meditation is very useful to stop the negative mind from arising, to protect from negative karma. Then the special higher tantric techniques can be used. Those become ... since we do not have the strong mind renouncing the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, since we don’t have the strong mind renouncing samsara—greed, ignorance, hatred—or bodhicitta or realization of the absolute true nature, no matter what special, higher tantric techniques we use, they do not work to control our negative minds, to stop our negative minds from arising, to protect us from creating negative karma. These techniques don’t work as quickly as meditations on the hells. Also, they help us a great deal to receive the mind renouncing samsara.

The reason I am giving so many examples is so that by recognizing, by seeing these, we take care in creating negative actions. A strong desire to not experience these sufferings, the fear of this happening, causes us to observe the present action karma. So meditate on this, understand this—this is the result of the negative minds, of attachment, hatred, and ignorance. The more we understand this the more we meditate on this, and the more we see clearly, have a clear feeling, a deeper experience. By doing deeper meditation on this, that much more we have understanding that this would be so unbearable, terrible, and unbelievable if it happened right away, and also knowing that this is caused by attachment. As much as you are frightened by this, as you are much frightened of the cause, attachment, so you are frightened of greed, ignorance, and hatred, and you renounce the negative mind easily. Not like this—the police confiscating all your clothes, possessions. In this way, it is all done by one person, it’s freely done. In this way, you do more continual practice and meditation, and receive a deeper experience and feeling of this through meditation. As the person is that much afraid of this, understanding at the same time that it is the result of attachment, so one is afraid of the attachment. Just as a person who eats poison, such as *datura*, once he gets terribly sick and knows the cause, he hates it, he no longer wants to take it. As much fear as he has of the result, that much fear he will have of the cause. Even if he sees the plant growing outside, he gets afraid. The clearer we see and experience deeper feelings arising through meditations, the more fear arises of the cause and of creating negative actions.

What does meditating on these examples shown by Buddha do? It helps us to be conscious and careful of our actions, always observing the actions—” Is it right or wrong?” Even when you speak, walk, or sleep, due to the fear, you will always be conscious, and in that way you can observe karma well. You create less negative karma, and you develop the mind renouncing samsara. In this way it is easy to receive the renounced mind.

So as you strongly, deeply feel the sufferings of these stanzas in your meditation, in the same way you can figure out that the suffering beings in these narak stages even now are in incredible suffering. As you are meditating, they are suffering extremely. So in this way, you feel compassion for these suffering beings. Why do you feel very strong compassion, how does that arise? Through your own experience, you can figure out something. Just like this—if I had an epidemic disease, if it was my experience that I felt, then if another person gets sick I know how much he suffers based on my experience. I know that suffering is trouble and I build up compassion—not like pity, “Oh, he’s

suffering”—some American’s compassion us like this (I am just playing). So anyway, I can figure out clearly the suffering he is experiencing, and also have the desire to do something for him. Great compassion helps us to achieve bodhicitta soon. So meditating on suffering is not simple or easy. But there are so many things, so much knowledge, that we can gradually receive by experiencing these meditations.

During the meditation time, as I talked about this morning before the subject began, there may be people who don’t feel anything for the subject, finding no purpose or reason to do this meditation, not having belief or understanding in such things as past and future lives, or people who find that they have no faith in Guru Shakyamuni, who find that they have no love for sentient beings. Actually, this is not an easy thing to receive, this is not something that just comes. It is something that we have to create—love for sentient beings, faith in Guru Shakyamuni, belief in past and future lives—we have to create it, it does not come unexpectedly. But even though you don’t feel these things, even if you are missing these things, still it is worthwhile to do the meditation to receive these things. To receive these takes time, to create these things in our minds it takes time, but it is not same for all the people because each person’s mind is at a different level. There are all kinds of different levels of delusions—some have enormous delusion, some don’t have such strong delusions, some have that much strong negative karma, delusions; they are not all the same. So what stops us from receiving faith in enlightened knowledge, love for sentient beings, belief in these lives? The mind is obscured, so strongly obscured, so far away from the ultimate peace, from realizations; the mind is so strongly covered by delusions, kaka, so strongly obscured.

So in order to receive these things for that mind, what is necessary, what skill do we need? Purification. Without purifying, thinking, “I don’t have this and that so there is no need to meditate,” in this way can never make it. This is only deceiving oneself, putting oneself in prison. Like I told before, with children and parents. The person shouldn’t worry. It is worthwhile to worry, but there’s a way to worry—there’s worthwhile worry and not worthwhile worry. If you have problems like this, visualize Guru Shakyamuni more, with the light absorbing into you, purifying the delusions that stop these things—faith in enlightened knowledge, love for sentient beings, belief in past and future lives. Spend more time in this purification meditation. Totally, it is lack of purification, so something has to be done; it is lack of some skill.

The Realm of the Pretas (Page 65)

9 p.m.

Maybe it is good, in place of reading books, as I read, you visualize—sorry to continue your problems. But people who become neurotic, nervous by meditating ... well anyway, by meditating, when this anger arises ... anyway, I think it is worthwhile to try to visualize as I read. When I mention pretas, you should pretend, imagine that you are a preta.

Paragraph 4

Also try to feel that your body is very heavy, that you find it difficult to walk, difficult to carry, like an old man or old woman.

Paragraph 5

Like those dirty waters that we see in the cities, full of rubbish things. Even if you find water, the protectors do not allow you to enjoy it, do not allow you to be near the water. They chase you away

from the water. Even if you have been feeling hungry for many hundreds of years and experiencing extreme suffering—hunger, thirst, and besides that, having much fear.

Paragraph 6

It takes much time to find food—for some pretas it takes eons. Even if they find food or water it is very dirty. Even if there are no hindrances chasing them away from the water, the water is terribly dirty. Or, as the preta sees a lake from a far place, and it has such longing for the water because of thirst for hundreds of years, as it runs the lake dries up, or all of a sudden becomes dirty. Even if the preta finds a little drop of water or even if it finds water without all those hindrances, it dries in the mouth because of poison, not going through. Even if it goes into the stomach it feels like throwing matches in petrol or kerosene. All of a sudden the whole thing becomes fire—just like this, even a little drop of water goes into the stomach after eons of thirst, and instead of ceasing the problem it causes burning in the stomach, flames coming from stomach, much burning and flames coming from the mouth.

Because of feeling extremely hungry—some eat their own flesh by peeling the skin.

Animal Suffering (Page 66)

Also visualize yourself in the ocean, visualize yourself in the form of an animal, a snake, a fish, whatever it is. There are all kinds of fearful animals, and think that you are under the ocean with many other animals who will attack, and you are trying to escape, and you feel hungry and thirsty and feel so much fear. Whatever you visualize, put yourself in the form of an animal, as a big snake who is a fish, trying to escape from the enemy who will kill you, and finding it extremely difficult to find a safe place, the mind always in fear, great fear, besides the physical suffering, think.

Also think that you are attacked by other animals, the enemy, and killed or eaten, and suffering such. Also think that you are attacked by hundreds of other different kinds of animals, that there is no way to escape, and it is very frightening.

Now think about those worms crawling on the ground that are attacked by hundreds of ants—yourself put in the place of the worm crawling on the ground being attacked by hundreds of ants, and they are biting all over you, grasping you and eating all over you, over all sides. It is extremely difficult to escape from those ants, they never allow you to be free, no matter how strongly you desire it. The bottom, all the sides of the body are being eaten, and you move very much because of the unbearable suffering. Visualize also the ants as very big—not small, the way we see them—like the size of an elephant. And think that you can no longer move, that there are wounds everywhere, pieces of flesh taken off, extreme suffering. Also think that those big ants cut your body in pieces and take it away, and that you become very terrible looking.

If you find it difficult to get an idea, think how you find it when a little bug bites your body, and then figure out how this small pain from being bitten by tiny bugs compares with that of a worm being eaten by ants.

Think of yourself still as a worm, and chickens are eating you, putting their beaks in your body in different places, pecking, the beaks going through the body with incredible suffering—it is happening, it is not new to us. Just like when a chicken kills a big worm—they peck in different

places and cut the worm to pieces and swallow it. Put yourself in the place of the worm, the chicken putting its beak through you, with much fear and suffering.

If you find it difficult to get an idea, think about how you find it, what your experience is when a small tiny needle goes in the flesh. Then by figuring out from this, think about how it is for the worm with the chicken putting its beak through its body and being cut into pieces with its beak. And also visualize the chicken swallowing the pieces into its stomach.

Now visualize yourself as a bird on a tree, having nestlings in the nest, but there is much wind blowing, storming, the tree is moving extremely, there is lightning, and you are extremely frightened. It is very foggy, storming, there is very strong hail dropping, and you find it very difficult to escape or hide, being very worried about the nestlings, and extremely frightened. It is also completely dark. Also think, even in the daytime, even when there's no storm, also visualize yourself as the mother bird, having great fear about being attacked by other birds, think also about the daytime. Even if it's the daytime, you are the mother bird, flying round in far places to find food, and extremely worried about the nestlings being attacked by other birds, animals. And you find it extremely difficult to find food. And also you have great worry in your mind, also feeling hungry, also aware of the danger of being attacked by other birds, being scared, and always being worried about the babies. Now think as yourself as the mother bird, attacked by another bird, eaten or killed by another bird, taken away by a big bird, held in its beak, to such a far place, and eaten by the other bird. And during those times, think that as the mother bird is attacked by the other bird and taken away in the big bird's beak, the mother is extremely worried about the babies and for her own life.

If you find it difficult to visualize yourself and feel the suffering, then think as if an eagle or big bird were coming down and putting its beak on your head—how frightened you would be. Try to visualize it, the bird taking the flesh from your head. First visualize this, and then put yourself as the mother bird, attacked and taken away.

And think now of yourself as the baby bird, feeling extremely hungry, the mother has been killed and taken away. You continually make noise, and feel much hunger and thirst and such fear, so much fear of being alone, and missing your mother. You miss your mother extremely, your mind holds only the picture of mother, and thinking about when she will come back with food. The whole day passes, much time, and the suffering is greater and greater. You are frightened of other birds flying around.

Now think of the wild animals, such as the deer that are chased by the hunters, extremely frightened. Put yourself in the form of a wild animal, such as a deer attacked by hunters. You are extremely frightened, the hunter shoots you, and you feel extreme pain.

Now visualize yourself as a buffalo at a butcher's place ready to be killed. You sleep in the mud, in a muddy place, not knowing you are going to be killed, deeply ignorant. Think that now the butcher is cutting your neck with a heavy big saw, hitting you on the neck and it doesn't cut, hitting many times and you experience extreme suffering. Your legs all are bound by ropes.

Now think of yourself as a fish, being cut into pieces by a knife, experiencing extreme suffering, so you try to run away to escape, but you have no control. Everything is controlled by the person, the killer, and you never have the choice to escape.

Also think about this animal that is used for oil, a seal. Think of yourself as that animal. People catch you and put you into extremely hot oil, without any control, you are completely controlled by the people and suffer extremely in this hot oil. Think that you are drowned in the hot oil. As the person put you there without any control, however much you do not desire this, however much you have the desire to escape away. You are so frightened, put inside. You are completely drowned in that hot oil in the big pot, suffering extremely—try to feel the extreme suffering of the heat.

If that is difficult, think about how you feel when you put your finger in hot boiling water and figure it out from that.

Now think of yourself as a pig, and your legs and whole body are bound by ropes. At your heart they put such a long needle, a long knife at the heart, and they stir it at the heart. You make much noise, being completely controlled by the person, having no choice. Then you have great pain, and as the body cannot move, they put grass on top of the body, and kerosene, and burned you before death—try to feel this.

Think of yourself as a camel—put yourself in the place of the camel carrying such heavy luggage, going in the dust and feeling extremely thirsty and hungry and having such heavy luggage and going all day. You are in such a desert place where there's no water, and also having pains in your backside, many pains and wounds. And a man is beating you with sticks, not letting you rest. However extremely exhausted you are, there is no way to escape. You are extremely ignorant, dumb.

This is the way of giving the meditation for us westerners. Anyway, this way we then get the idea about how to meditate on suffering. Otherwise, no matter how clearly it is written in books, we find difficult to experience this meditation.

Dedicate the merits, “May I quickly achieve Guru Shakyamuni and lead all and every mother sentient beings to the enlightened stage due to the merits of observing the precepts, and listening to the teachings and meditating.”

Then as you go to bed, the other meditation on the death process is also useful sometimes. Visualize yourself as Guru Shakyamuni lying down, the right hand under the cheek closing the right nostril with the fourth finger—there is a reason—anyway, your two legs stretched straight with the left hand along the thigh. And at the same time think, “As Guru Shakyamuni passed away in nirvana, may I also pass away in nirvana, for the sake of sentient beings. And as Guru Shakyamuni showed the example of impermanence to sentient beings and from this example enlightened so many sentient beings, may I be able to do like that as well.”

Think like this and also visualize at your head, nearby your pillow, Guru Shakyamuni, very bright, very shining. Then either you can sleep in this way—or as you visualize Guru Shakyamuni at the place where there was a pillow, he absorbs into you, and as he absorbs into you, your mind became one with his holy mind in the form of emptiness, all-encompassing space, and the feeling is infinite happiness, and you are devoid of the self-existent “I,” the wrong conception—like this. And then as you are concentrating in this state, try to fall asleep without being distracted by other things.

Before doing this think; “In order to attain Guru Shakyamuni for the sake of sentient beings I am going to sleep with Guru Shakyamuni's yoga meditation.” If one always sleeps in this way, it makes the mind get into the habit of sleeping in this way and the mind becomes conscious of Guru

Shakyamuni, and it also helps the mind to have less hindrances to sleep due to the power and blessings from Guru Shakyamuni's mind.

It is also possible that in dreams, some fearful things happen, and you remember yourself as Guru Shakyamuni and control the fearful things, the hindrances, the mischievous actions. You can control the hindrances during the sleep, not only in dreams. This also helps at death time because the mind got so familiar, so in dangerous times you can easily remember and it helps a great deal to protect from suffering. Totally, for enlightenment.

Day 17
December 2
5am

Before taking today's ordination, in order for it to become a pure Dharma action, the action should not have any defects of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. Just even that is not enough—in order for it not to become a Hinayana action it should be possessed by the Mahayana impulse of bodhicitta. Therefore think briefly, something like this, "Myself and all sentient beings, infinite numbers of sentient beings that cannot be counted by our limited mind, have been suffering in the six samsaric realms in countless times from beginningless lifetimes. It is definite that we will be endlessly circling round in samsara and experience the sufferings again and again as long as we are under the control of delusions and karma and having wrong conceptions, mainly thinking of non-self-existing things as self-existing. All future sufferings we will experience in the samsaric realms, if we could perceive them, is a very frightening subject, almost the heart comes out of the mouth. If we are afraid of even little sufferings, little problems which arise in this temporal life, the future sufferings are unimaginable and beyond comparison to those of this temporal life.

"Guru Shakyamuni and others received enlightenment by gradually following the path, having met gurus and received teachings, and by following these precepts. Therefore, we also, even if at the moment we are ordinary living beings, if we do similar practices as they did, and follow the path with right understanding, these will definitely be beneficial for us to become enlightened, and also to be able to enlighten infinite sentient beings. Therefore, it's not enough to release ourselves from samsaric suffering, because all sentient beings are objects from whom we received all our perfection and happiness. Therefore, we are responsible to release them. As most of them are in terrible suffering, they have to be guided, saved from suffering—this is needed as quickly as possible, even at this moment. At present we do not have the knowledge and power to do it—who has this? Only the enlightened beings. Therefore, we must become enlightened. Now, we can't even understand our own mind, let alone being able to read others' levels of mind. Therefore, to be enlightened as quickly as possible the best method is to follow disciplines, the path of the precepts. Therefore, I am going to take Mahayana ordination."

Visualize the person granting the ordination as Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by numberless buddhas, bodhisattvas, and arhats.

(Ordination Ceremony)

If the precepts are not followed well, there is a great danger. For instance, a story that happened in previous times, about breaking the precepts—in a place where Guru Shakyamuni was giving teachings in India, one day, in the teachings among the disciples there was one living being who

came in the form of a king, with such high materialistic powers, and great possessions of jewels. So Guru Shakyamuni discovered that this living being amongst the disciples was not serious, and told him, “Listen carefully, you made a wound in the teachings of the previous Buddha Woson.” This buddha had descended and founded the teachings on earth a long time before that period—it has been a long period, so many hundreds of human lives, between the degeneration of that Buddha’s teachings and Guru Shakyamuni coming. So he said, “You made a wound in that buddha’s teachings, you should not make a wound in mine. So listen carefully, in your real form.”

So, the next day the person came in his serious body—his real body is that of a snake—and his head was in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni but his body and tail were very far away in the villages. He was very fearful looking, and the disciples were scared and escaped away. But Guru Shakyamuni, “There is nothing to be afraid of, this is the living being who came yesterday.” The snake had a tree called *elidama* growing on his head, the roots were in his brain, the rest growing out. This was such a big tree, many arm spans in height, not only one hundred or two hundred, but a very long tree. As the wind blew the tree, the roots moving in the brain caused him incredible suffering, pain in the head. So Guru Shakyamuni explained to his disciples, “The reason that he’s suffering like this is that when he was in the period of the previous Buddha, called Woson, he was a monk. One day he was going around a tree that belonged to a group of monks or a monastery, and his head touched the branch of the tree and he got angry and broke off the branch. He didn’t confess well, and death occurred before confession. So from that little karma, from the anger and breaking the tree, he was reborn as a naga with such a long body and the tree growing out of his head. So breaking that precept was small but the result brought so much suffering.”

So, make three prostrations—when you make prostrations you can usually visualize as in the book. But now, the physical introduction.

Putting the hands together has much meaning, according to the vehicles of the Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. It can have the symbolic meaning of the two paths in each vehicle, and so by completion of the two path one can achieve enlightenment. It also symbolizes the two holy bodies. Putting the thumbs inside symbolizes offering jewels—you cannot prostrate with empty hands.

Put the two feet together. Before, there was one boy who made such fantastic prostrations, in the early course. It should look very respectful.

First, the hands go on top of head—this is to arrange the cause to receive the topknot holy sign of Buddha’s holy body when we are enlightened. It is not only Guru Shakyamuni who has all these holy signs; generally when any sentient being reaches enlightenment, he received this body with the holy signs as Guru Shakyamuni has. Each sign has a different cause, so we must create the causes when we are following the path. Putting the hands on the head arranges for us to create that perfection of the holy body when we receive enlightenment. Then at the forehead—this arranges cause for wisdom hair—this is also a holy sign of holy body—which can be pulled out, and it naturally goes back in. So making prostrations here (at the forehead) arranges this. Then putting the hands at the throat arranges holy speech. Some do three, some four (also at the heart) with the hands. These are all to arrange that knowledge and to purify negativity of body, speech, and mind.

Then you go down—your feet, knees, hands, and forehead have to touch ground. This is called the five-point prostration. It should be ... as much as the body covers the ground, the person creates

merit equal to the number of atoms that are under the body, in the ground, in the earth, to receive high enjoyments. Put your hands on ground with the thumbs in—it should look respectful.

Prostrations are to purify pride, to diminish and destroy the negative mind of pride. Of course they also help you to purify any other negative karmas and negative minds. Getting up quickly symbolizes getting up from samsara quickly, auspiciousness to get out of samsara quickly. Repeat this three times to purify negativities of body, speech, and mind.

This is just the physical discipline of prostration, but one shouldn't be only concerned with the body, without thinking of the objects to whom prostrations are made. Visualize Guru Shakyamuni as the essence of all buddhas, bodhisattvas, arhats, holy beings, and protectors. Even though you don't fully understand, it helps—there is such existence of such holy omniscient mind. Just as on the earth there are greater knowledgeable minds existing, there is such omniscient mind. Just because one didn't achieve this yet doesn't mean it doesn't exist. As on earth there are greater knowledgeable minds that can't compare with ordinary minds, who can read others' thoughts and foretell the future, from this example, if you have wisdom you can figure out that there must be the existence of such holy minds that see all past, present, and future existence, and read all sentient beings' minds at the same time. If you reject this you have to reject all minds, even the knowledgeable minds that exist on earth now and that you haven't achieved.

“The bodhicitta of the son of the Buddha,” this is from the holy teaching of the great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyatso—“The son of the king (means the Buddha), which is the place from where all benefits and happiness arise, if this can be compared to material jewels...” If I repeat again, “The bodhicitta of the son of the king, which is the place from where all happiness and benefits arise, can it be compared by material jewels?”

This means wish-fulfilling jewels. In ancient times like this, there were such precious jewels—and putting the wish fulfilling jewel on top of a banner, whatever temporal needs you had, you intuitively received due to the power of the jewel. But even though that jewel had that power, bringing success and temporal needs, whatever the person desires, even with that value, still it is incomparable to bodhicitta. Because that does not bring enlightenment, that does not cause one to receive all the realizations of the path and enlightenment, that does not cause one to cut off the cause of samsara, even though it brings all the temporal needs, as the person desires. Therefore, it is called, “the wish-fulfilling jewel.” Why can it not compare with bodhicitta? Because bodhicitta is much more precious, more important, more precious than the external jewel, because bodhicitta brings enlightenment more quickly, and through this one can cease the cause of samsara and enlighten other sentient beings.

So it is greatly worthwhile to be able to receive this most important, most valuable enlightenment—the ultimate peace-granting jewel, bodhicitta—it is better to try and receive this rather than to receive the limited, material wish-fulfilling jewel. Even though we don't have the material wish-fulfilling jewel, we have met the Mahayana teachings and have the wisdom to discover what is positive and what is negative. If we are in such time, if it is not limited from our side, we are in such a time and place and we can receive any profound Mahayana teaching, and the Vajrayana teachings, the most profound teaching. If it is not limited from our side, from our understanding, there are many possibilities. So in such a precious time it is most important to try and cultivate this pure bodhicitta. It is important to start even from now, this moment, since we don't know how long we can exist with this human body—a month, a year, we are not definite. It is important even to try

once in a day, try to cultivate, plant the seed in our mind, plant an impression. We are that fortunate, compared to most of the sentient beings whose chances are limited.

So briefly talking, “The attachment to the temporal happiness and higher samsaric pleasure is the source of suffering and keeps us in the bondage of suffering, so it needs to be cut off. However much we can make this temporal life happy and receive a happy life in future, all are in the nature of suffering, just like living in a fireplace, burning, finishing oneself, not recognizing it; suffering much, but not recognizing it. And it’s not enough for oneself to be released from this. It is necessary to reach enlightenment, to guide other sentient beings from suffering by leading them on the path in return for their kindness. To be able to do this, it is necessary to completely achieve the graduated path. For this, it is necessary to continually practice. That depends on correct and full understanding of the graduated path. Therefore, I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path.”

The listening subject of the graduated path, if it is divided in three, there are the paths of the lower, middle, and higher beings, and we are in the path of the lower being.

According to the outlines we have finished so far—“The Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” down to “Death is Definite.” As there was continuity of the mind before rebirth, there is continuity after death, so if you check up for each individual, “Will I take a better path, or where will I be reborn?” If it is checked through the karma we create—even in one hour, more negative than positive karma is created. It is the same in day, one year, for the whole life. It is the same as this life, from the time we are born until the present, and it is the same in previous lives, more horrible karmas have been created. Even though we think we are pure and didn’t create much negative karma in this life, we created so many heavy negative karmas previous lives. So as those are stronger, after death it is more definite that we will be reborn in the suffering lower realms. Do we perceive the actual time of death? That we don’t perceive, so, “The Actual Time of Death is Indefinite” and “At the Death Time No Other Methods Can Help.” Even if we are definitely going to be born in the suffering lower realm and suffer there for eons and eons, no other external methods can help. What can help is the inner method—not the negative mind but the development of the pure mind that is achieved through Dharma practice, that which starts from the first step, purity of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas.

Besides the fact that it is more definite that we will be reborn in the lower suffering realms by checking through karma, besides that, even if we try to practice Dharma, we do not do such practice for the whole life, or the whole day; only for such a small time in our life. Even if one practices, it is made impure because of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. So, it is extremely difficult to have pure practice in life. Therefore, for all these reasons, it is more definite that we will be born in the lower suffering realms.

As Nagarjuna said, “The remembrance every day the sufferings of the narak, cold and hot.”

Nagarjuna is the great philosopher; he has his own autobiography as has Milarepa; very interesting, how in such a short time what great knowledge, realizations he received, many things.

Therefore as he instructed with his experience, it’s really very helpful to remember this at any time—when you walk, eat, sleep, at any time, it is so useful to remember. Especially in such dangerous times when there are many problems of negative minds arising—pride, jealousy, anger, greed—

anytime, this is so useful. So first of all, you are unconscious of doing some other thing, following negative mind; then as you remember suffering of the naraks, all of a sudden you feel hate, so there is the desire to avoid negative actions and you don't follow negative mind; because of fear of the suffering of the narak realms, you think, "I must be careful."

Sometimes put a question to yourself, like you are two people, put a question to yourself. "Which would you like, to be born in the suffering lower realms such as the narak stages, and suffer in many of those stages terribly, for many eons, would you like this? Or would you like to never be reborn and suffer?" You put the question to yourself, which one would you like. Of course, you will always say, "No"—to answer there is no problem. The Dharma wisdom asks the negative mind this, so the negative mind says, "No, I don't want to be born and suffer." So the Dharma wisdom says, "If you don't want to be born in the lower suffering realms and suffer, which is the result of the action you are doing right now, if you don't want to suffer for eons, don't create that action." Dharma wisdom says this. The Dharma wisdom who asks this question is you. Then you say that you don't want to be born and suffer. Then the Dharma wisdom says, "If you don't want to experience the suffering result of being reborn and suffering in those stages that are created by the negative action, created by the person following the negative mind..." The Dharma Wisdom says, "If you are scared, if you don't want to experience the suffering result, don't create this negative action, don't follow the negative mind. Such negative mind is the source of suffering. So if you never want to be reborn and suffer in those suffering realms, it is better to kill, to destroy, to extinguish the negative mind."

To think frequently like this is very useful. Perhaps sometimes you may understand about following the negative mind, being a servant to the negative mind, and you may answer, "It's in the future, I don't have to suffer now, it's okay." You are a servant to the negative mind, following the negative mind like this. Anyway, it doesn't matter. So, you may give an answer like this. Then your Dharma wisdom should explain, "When will you care for the time? It is nonsense: just because of time, you making a choice like this is nonsense, because the subject who will suffer the result of these negative actions is only you, not another person. As you suffer now, you will suffer in the future; you, the same person, the same mind."

There is the existence of past and future lives. We cannot contradict the worldly, relative, existence that exists for the logical, relative mind, that is created by the logical, relative mind. If this is contradicted, then—anyway if I say simple, clearly—what object we are calling the "present"? That we should know—not past and future, but the whole present. This is something a little complicated, not knowing the object we call "present." For instance, if you are going back to the West after one year, you cannot say "I will go back to the West in this moment." For the same reason, saying, "I will go back to the West in this present second," cannot be said. That would also be funny, like you are intoxicated. But the time you are going back to the West is after this present second, the time comes after the present second. Therefore there is a time after the present second. The time that comes after the present second is the future of the present second, this time is the future of the present. So now there's a future because there's a future of the present. If you say there's no past existing, that all time is present, if you think so, then this is the same as the other one—your present birth from your mother's womb should be in this present moment, would be in this present moment. This is not true, because at this second, this minute—why aren't you taking birth from your mother's womb in this present second moment? You are over fifteen, twenty, thirty, over sixty, so how can a sixty-year old person be born in this present second from the mother's womb? You are over those ages, so your birth was before this moment, before this present day, before today. You were born before today. So there is past and there is a time before this second, before this minute; there is a time before today. So that time that exists before today is past. The time that exists

before this moment, before this day, this hour, this second, is past—so there is a time before the present, before this present second, minute, hour, today. So anyway, there's a future of the present, and there's a past of the present.

Question: It's only because you say there's present that past and future exist?

Answer: Yes, I said that.

Question: But I didn't.

We cannot say also like this—if you say no past and future exist, only present, then it should be said like this, the same complicated thoughts—today, this day should be called ... if so, following this wrong conception, this complicated thought, there wouldn't be any present. So someone asks, "Is this moment, is this morning, is this yesterday morning, or tomorrow morning?" So someone who believes that all is the present, the person who thinks this believes that as the time goes—you see, for instance, like this. Since we were born from the mother's womb as we were in that day, in each of those days, we counted present, present, present—so we think the whole time is present, no past and future. If so, then there wouldn't be any past and future, all would be past. I know there are so many of our friends thinking like this. Then all the time would be past or all the time would be future. If asked, "Is this morning yesterday morning or tomorrow morning?" what would be the answer? Because if the person says, "This is tomorrow morning," because of thinking yesterday that this is tomorrow morning, or if the person says, "This is yesterday morning," because of thinking this tomorrow morning—this is complicated, that's why ... anyway, this is a good example of checking in order to realize the absolute nature of time.

This talk happened because someone brought a book saying there's no past and future, only present. Just a conversation, thank you.

Also, the wisdom mind, your wisdom mind should say that it is the same person who will suffer, even it is suffering now. It is you who will have to experience the suffering that will have to be experienced in the future, you, the same person. And also, saying, "It is in the future," but the future is many things—the future of this second, the future of today, the future of this present life, many things. So when you think of the future, you think so long, but it's not like this—there is the future of this second, of this minute, of this hour, of this day. So you are not sure when you will experience this suffering result, the cause of which was created by you following the negative mind. If you think like this, it is very useful.

Also, when you dedicate for the hells, the animals, the pretas, the hot and cold narak stages, try to think like this when you try to imagine the different sufferings—this has this cause or this cause, as in the book, killing other beings, criticizing and so on. Or think, "I have definitely created all of these causes in numberless previous lives; nothing is left that I have never created and also I may create more in the future." Then try to meditate that you are suffering in these stages as it is the result of the karma created in your present life, and the karma that you may create in the future.

Question: In your discussion of time, you only talked about the relative and not the absolute.

Answer: First you have to know the relative object. If you don't, how can you discuss the absolute nature?

Question: Is it important to think of external example in meditating on the hells, such as the red-hot iron ground, or just the mental suffering?

Answer: The feeling you are trying to receive, feel stronger, is in your mind; but why do we have to remember, visualize, the examples within our mind now, to think this? We are trying to achieve the meditation in an easy way, by meditating, getting the experience in our mind. It can be that without need of actual physical suffering, without the need of the present body, going to the suffering of the naraks, we are trying to take the easy way. But since most of our minds are limited, and it is difficult to experience the example, it is sometimes important to suffer. Like pastime experience we don't remember, so the sufferings we experience in the present days are so useful. Don't think they are ridiculous. This is another example, of feeling hot and cold as you feel now, which you can increase in your mind, a greater feeling of cold and hot, from which you can figure out the suffering of the incredible, infinite suffering beings who are born in those stages—if those sufferings are in form they are infinite.

Question: Is it best to take the easy way or the difficult way to achieve these realizations?

Answer: It depends on the people. People who have no chance or fortune to understand these subjects—whose minds are far away from understanding these subjects, whose minds are not ready for these subjects, whose minds are disgusted with these subjects—it depends on those people—we are taking the most easy way. Also, it depends on the beings, such as animals, beings suffering such as those in the narak stages, we are taking the easy way.

There may be one or two people here who take the easier way than that, without needing much time in training in the meditations.

When you meditate—like last night with the animals—you are trying to make suffering in your mind. You were not an animal last night, but you were trying to understand the suffering, experience the suffering in your mind, how great it is, without being an animal. Same thing with the narak stages. Also you can watch.

So, when we meditate on those suffering realms—first, it will be very effective, if before you do the visualization, you think of the different causes of these different narak stages. Think that you have created these in previous lives, and if you have created them in this life, and also remember that you may create them in the future. Then think as if you are dying right now, and being reborn there. Now visualize, and in this way it will be more effective. Why more effective? When we visualize, we experience these realms in the mind, and the stronger it is felt, the more upset we feel with the negative karmas that we created in countless times, as the meditation is made on the result of those negative karmas. We feel more upset, and more repentance for those negative karmas created in past lives and the present. The more we feel this, the more it helps a great deal for the future from now on. The more we continue this meditation, the more we have the stronger experience of these meditations in the mind, the more aware we are of not creating those karmas in the future.

There is a possibility, there are methods to cause oneself to experience the suffering results of the bad karmas in a short time, which might otherwise take many eons to suffer. Through certain methods, instead of experiencing them in long time, we can experience them by getting a little sick, and finish that karma—there is such a possibility. But to do this, there are many ways to try. Either

we can finish the long period of eons of experiencing the suffering result of the bad karma by getting sick for a short time, or by not experiencing a single suffering, completely stopping the negative karma—there are many ways. It depends on how strongly you practice the method. To do these methods and to practice powerfully, to stop experiencing the negative karmas, or experience the suffering results through short period of sickness, all those things depend on powerfully practicing the methods. That depends on feeling upset, feeling repentance for the bad karma that was created numberless times in the past lives. The thing is this—you may purify like this, but if you don't have strong repentance, feeling strongly upset with the bad karma you created in previous times, if there's not this strong repentance, then even though you try, even though you think, "I have created so many bad karmas in previous lifetimes so that I may experience the suffering result in the future," and try to purify by certain methods, that would be like this—for instance, if you get a wound, and you put on the medicine to heal it, but as it itches, you scratch, so again you put on medicine, and again it itches and again you scratch, always like this. If you don't have strong repentance, you may still carry on creating negative karma. Just like we who try to meditate and do some good thing—there's no realization, no experience of the suffering lower realms achieved by meditation, there's not that strong fear of suffering these results. Even though one knows that there are suffering results that have been created by the negative karma, even though one thinks that by creating negative karma the suffering result will come, if one doesn't have the experience of the three lower realms there is no realization. He may purify, but he may not be careful in future action. That is the lack of not having strong repentance for the negative karmas, and that is the lack of not having the experience of the meditation on the three lower realms. A good example is when we wash puppies they run in the dust and put dust all over their bodies. A second time we wash them, and again they run in the dust—it would be like this example. So repentance is very important. To have the energy to be careful in the future actions and to not create any more, and to have strong repentance for the past negative karmas, it is necessary to experience the suffering of the three lower realms—it is so important, very important.

It is the same thing when we meditate on, experiment with the suffering of the pretas. First of all think that such things as miserliness, avarice, stealing other living beings' possessions, or hindering other living beings' charity—because you have miserliness you don't allow it—and also such things as calling other people names, giving nicknames, "He is like a preta." This creates much bad karma—it is not difficult, just saying a few words, but the result is so heavy, it causes you to be born in that realm.

There are many examples—in previous times a monk said very rude words, "I will put you in this wood." No reason of the Dharma to help him, just with cruel mind saying, "I will put you in this wood." So just by saying that, after that life he was born in the shape of wood. There are all kinds of things, not definite—sometimes as a pillar, born as a pillar; there are all kinds of things, such as a broom. Karma is so strange, like when we see all kinds of different insects, many different shapes. That is because of all different kinds of karmas created.

Question: You can be born as a broom or a rock, without mind?

Answer: It has mind, otherwise how can it be born?

Question: How can you find out which trees or rocks have mind?

Answer: With the power of the Dharma practice.

So when you have the experience of the preta realm, first think about the cause. Then think, “Of course I did create the karma in countless previous times, and I may create it in the future, and the suffering result will be to be born in that realm.” This way is very effective because it is for sure that we created the karma, and it is for sure that we will experience the result. Whether we believe in it or not, it is for sure. So it is wise, useful, to know the future suffering, to discover it before you get into real dangers. This is clever, try to discover it before you get into real danger. Until you are in real danger, not thinking about it before is not wise. Like this example—we, many people, don’t want to think of death because we are scared, so we try to forget it. This is a completely useless thing that always stops the person from seeking method. He thinks it’s a good scheme, but it only takes him further from the method. So when the death comes, there is no time. Before we are born in the narak realms, just before the suffering, we karmically remember all the negative karmas we have created, and we suffer in different places, and no matter how much we think suffering is terrible, it’s of no use. So to know the danger is clever—this is one purpose for meditating on this.

Generally there are all kinds of sufferings for the pretas, but totally, like this :

1. Outer hindrance
2. Hindrance of the food
3. Inner hindrance

1. Even after long periods, eons, thousands of years of suffering feeling hunger and thirst, even if they find food, the karmically created protectors chase them away or hinder them from getting food.

2. Even without the outer hindrances of those yamas, the karmically created protectors, even though they receive the food, they see the lake or food as very dirty, or dried, or disappearing. Besides hunger and thirst and feeling tired, there is much mental suffering. If you find this difficult, try to visualize when you feel hunger or thirst, when you make a trek and you feel thirst for many hours. No matter whether the water is clean or dirty, you don’t care, you just want water, even if you are usually so careful—try to remember these things, it is very helpful. So from this we figure out, we make it bigger many thousands times. Then imagining oneself as a preta, try to make the experience of a preta, how it is.

3. Even if they get food, it is difficult to put it in the mouth because they have tiny mouths, like the eye of a needle. So even if a drop goes into the mouth and into stomach, which is enormous, it disappears, goes nowhere, nothing helps. And besides that, it can be like putting a match in kerosene. Even if some fortunate preta gets food in the stomach, it never makes the stomach full because it is so wide.

And they have such big heads and long hairs all around, really very fearful looking, with a very awful face and colors. It’s like this—the body is like this—the tree that has vines around it and then you cover it with skin, and when it dries you can see it like an old man’s body, seeing all the veins—like the tree is covered with dried animal skin, looking very dry. And when they walk, they find it very difficult to carry the body. And when their legs meet together they make a noise like two stones coming together, with sparks—very fearful looking. Like a terrible old man with many wrinkles, and a very tiny neck knotted two or three times, so even if they get food, it is difficult to go through. There are so many sufferings. Why does the body look so dried? Because for so many years they

don't get water. But karmically they can suffer for a long time. For example, some persons get some epidemic disease; some die soon. Others suffer for a long time without dying soon.

The place of the preta is not definite. There are places where most of them are situated, but they are also in different places, not exact.

In previous times, one highly realized yogi, called Sangye Yeshe, with his psychic power, with his mental control, went to see the place where there are great numbers of preta. He met one female preta who had 500 babies, and her husband had gone to the human country to find food. It took twelve years for the husband to find food. So during that time she had the 500 children, and they suffered extremely, not finding even a drop of water. She told this yogi that they were in such great suffering. Then she asked this yogi to give a message to her husband, if he met him, to bring food as quickly as possible. The yogi said, "In the human place there are all kinds of pretas. I will not recognize which is your husband." The preta explained the physical signs of her husband—one eye was blind, and his body was injured, not well. The great yogi tried to see the preta in the human place, and finally he met this preta whose eye was blind. That preta said, "To go back to that place is so far, and I have tried to find food for twelve years," and he showed the food he had found in twelve years—a piece of dried spit that he had kept in his hand for twelve years, taking best care if it. "I've been keeping this," he said. You see, it's not easy for them to even get this—it's so crowded, there are so many pretas—we don't see what's happening there. How did he get it? One monk who kept precepts purely spat and said some prayers—there are mantras to say when one spits—he dedicated to the pretas, and so many pretas crowded to get it. That was how he got it and since then preserved it.

Just as in this example, we are also definitely going to have a similar life, and to have such difficulty finding a drop of spit. This is not a new life to us, this is very old, only because of death and rebirth and ignorance, we don't remember—therefore we always think we are a new living being.

Also, another time there was one monk who was keeping the thirty-six precepts of a lower monk. His mother had died twenty-five years ago. One day, this monk saw a fearful preta, and became so frightened and started to run away. So the preta said, "Don't run away." The monk asked, "Who are you?" and the preta said, "The loving mother from whom one son was born is me. I was born in a preta realm that is devoid of food and drink. It has been twenty-five years since I died. I didn't see even a place that has water, how can I see food, I didn't even see water." Then this young monk went to see Buddha and asked him to dedicate, to say prayers. As Buddha dedicated and prayed as requested by the son of that mother, this preta—you see, without depending on her creating merits it is extremely difficult to be born in an upper realm from a lower realm—so as the young monk requested Buddha to pray, the preta died, and was born again as very rich preta. This is the skill of the Buddha, the method. So she was a very rich preta, and had six times greater miserliness for her possessions, and she never made charity. The son slowly, by skill, slowly he tried to take a piece of cloth from her by playing tricks, and offered it to the Buddha for her sake. But the mother preta felt a great loss, so even though the cloth was offered to Buddha, she slowly went and stole the cloth back from Buddha. This was done many times, again offered and stolen.

Also, in another time, there was one monk who was keeping the 253 precepts. He had such very nice robes, and was very attached to it. After his death he was born as a preta wearing something like this robe. Anyway, his miserliness caused him to be born as a preta even though his past life was a monk.

Then, when you meditate on the animal realm, experience the animal suffering. The way we did last night is the way to experience the suffering.

And sometimes also thinking like this—about the animals born in trees and rocks where there's no place to go, such as in bamboos. There are so many things. In corn there are so many animals born, also in beans. Visualize yourself as born in the form of an animal in that food, so tight; there is no way to move, it is dark for a long time, and when the corn is ground you are afraid much suffering, and there is no way to escape. I often see many animals in food, many tiny insects, maybe because of ... when people eat food, I find more animals. Maybe it's bad. So much suffering. At the moment, when the sun is hot it is unbearable, we want to go in the shade or use an umbrella. When it is so cold, we wear a blanket, jacket, or sweater—this is nothing, really nothing compared to animals, not even talking about the narak stage. So put yourself in these positions, suffering for long time, ground or cooked with sand, no way to escape—born there, die there. Also, animals in trees and rocks, eaten by mountains, rock mountains, all around rocks, nowhere to move, nowhere to go, for a long time.

If that is difficult to think about, think about how when someone puts us in prison, where there is no door, or the door is locked or a fence is around us, even if there is meditation, eating food, how much we worry and cry. If we are born as those animals, there is so much suffering. When the animal is born there, in such a specific place, it is purposely for suffering, not for enjoyment, happiness. Why? Because the animal has created the karma to be born there, to experience the suffering result of the karma created by the animal himself. The karma forced that situation; it is not because the animal wishes to be there, never like this—people may think this but it's wrong, that animal made the choice to be there.

Like this—you must have more ideas, as you have seen animals in your life. If you use the examples of the sufferings you have seen, then the trips you made were worthwhile, the sufferings of the living beings you saw can be used in the experience. Also, it's very good, as you are going round to the different places, as you see the different problems of the living beings, try to put yourself into it. "They are suffering like this"—like one dog attacked by many others, being killed by being bitten all over, no one helping him, then think—"They are suffering like this now; at this moment, I am a human being and they are a dog. But I also experienced that in countless times in my past lives. Also there are many other negative karmas that will bring that kind of suffering again, the karma was created but result has not come yet. Also I may create those karmas again. At the moment I am born as a human being but soon, because of these karmas, it is definite that I will be born as a dog and suffer like this." Put yourself in that situation, with other dogs attacking. This is useful, then anything you see becomes a teaching. Actually, you are using the view that you see to destroy ignorance, this helps to destroy ignorance. How? As one is scared of that—the karma was created and the result will be experienced—then because of the fear, the person becomes afraid of negative actions and doesn't want to follow attachment, the negative mind, which comes from ignorance. So the person seeks the principal cause, and as he finds it he tries to destroy it, the ignorance, so he seeks the method. So wherever you go you can see what the people do—fighting, cheating each other—what you see is nothing you didn't do before. Then like this, you are meditating, meditating walking, looking at things, you are in practical meditation. Totally, you are making the life worthwhile, meaningful.

Question: If there is no change from the suffering of being trapped, no relief, how do they feel suffering?

Answer: One doesn't have to have remember being out, doesn't have to remember the experiences being out of that, to suffer there.

And, as you have meditated this morning, whatever is finished, continue the rest of the meditation tonight, on the perfect human rebirth and after finishing, meditating on the sufferings—but don't rush it, take time, do it slowly. That way it's better, there is more meat, rushing is not neat; anyway, not that helpful as when you do it slowly, take time. And as you finish the suffering lower realms, meditate on refuge and karma. But always in the morning, start with the perfect human rebirth meditation, and in the evening on what is left. This morning I saw a note that someone wants to meditate on Guru Shakyamuni, so I am happy—I rejoice that there is such a person.

The reason I am spending more time, not going so quick—I can go so quick, read quickly—but I am very interested in making longer explanations on the first part of the meditation because understanding, having feelings, understanding more of those basic meditations helps a great deal to understand the middle part of the meditations more quickly, and that helps to understand and feel the higher part more quickly and strongly. So this makes much more sense, as you remember the words there is a feeling—one person who had contact with Mao has a kind of feeling when he talks of Mao, but another person who had no contact and didn't see him, just heard the name, "Mao," has no feeling. The one who knows the evolution of holy mind, how it exists, sees that there is something there, but for the one who hasn't, it's like talking about the horns on my head.

6pm

First check up what thought you have, what you are thinking. Think about what motivation you have to meditate. If it is the motive wanting to meditate totally in order to gain the happiness of this life and not being concerned for the happiness of the future life and the ultimate peace, if there is such motive as that, it is negative, it is the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. If the meditation is made with this, besides not becoming the cause of happiness, it becomes the cause of suffering. So think, "The attachment that is attached to the temporal life happiness and even to higher samsaric pleasure is only a cause of suffering. All the samsaric happiness, whatever samsaric happiness there is, is all in the nature of suffering, like poisonous honey. We are always thinking of the present, temporal life effect, perceiving and seeing the present effect, the pleasure, by the limited understanding mind, and being ignorant of the future effect of that enjoyment—as the person enjoys the sweet taste of the honey without seeing the effect of the poison. So, there is nothing to be attached to in the samsaric pleasure, no reason to be attached for two reasons—this is being attached to the cause of suffering, and that pleasure is in the nature of suffering—enjoying it only brings a suffering result. Therefore, there is no reason to be interested in it and to try for it. The most worthwhile thing is ultimate peace.

"So, it is not enough for oneself to receive the ultimate peace; there are infinite sentient beings in suffering who are objects of my past, present, and future happiness and perfection, and also they are much more precious and valuable objects than wish fulfilling jewels—from these most precious sentient beings I receive enlightenment. So I am responsible to repay them. What is their utmost need? To release them from suffering as they are in terrible suffering. To fulfill this success I do not have the capability. Who has the capability? Only the Buddha has it. Therefore I must achieve

enlightenment to have this capability. Therefore, I must achieve the graduated path. Therefore, I am going to meditate on the graduated path.”

So visualize Guru Shakyamuni while the mantra is recited, and also the light coming through making purification. The essence of the light is Guru Shakyamuni’s infinite supreme powers and compassion and knowledge and you are receiving it. As you are receiving the light, think that all delusions—wrong conceptions of self-existing “I” and self-cherishing thoughts, the impure dualistic mind that projects the impure view, and all other delusions—are in the form of darkness and are completely destroyed by this knowledge light, nowhere existing neither out nor in, and think that the body is like crystal and full of this light of knowledge.

Those who feel that, “I don’t have faith or belief or understanding in holy objects, faith in Guru Shakyamuni, I don’t have faith or understanding in the existence of past and future lives, I don’t feel those things, and I don’t have love for sentient beings”—as the hindrances that stops these things is the negative mind, the delusions, the delusions rooted in our mind since beginningless lifetimes, this hindrance has to be purified, needs purification. What is missing is purification. So by visualizing Guru Shakyamuni as perfectly as possible, with the light coming, the “I” absorbing—those who feel that concentrate on Guru Shakyamuni for a longer time and also pray to Guru Shakyamuni. However, even if the person doesn’t have faith now, at present, as the purification is made without waiting for the faith, strong faith or feeling, by continually doing this, saying mantras and visualizing, it is definitely possible that the mind will slowly change as the blessing takes root in our minds. Gradually faith and devotion will arise stronger and stronger, gradually. Also, at the same time the other realizations, the understanding of other meditations will progress, at the same time as the devotion progresses. These things are something we have to create. Devotion, realizations, and understanding are something we have to create; these are things that we will receive in our minds, mental things. So we have to create it; we should not discourage ourselves.

(Meditation)

First, with the Guru Shakyamuni that you have visualized, make the absorption. Then the Guru Shakyamuni seated on the top of your head becomes oneness. Now, out of that emptiness, out of that state, a large throne, lotus, moon, sun, and yourself as Guru Shakyamuni arise, with a holy body in the nature of light, and your body, speech, and mind becomes oneness with his holy body, speech, and mind.

Day 18
December 3
5am

For the action of taking ordination to become a Mahayana ordination, the individual motivation must be the pure motive of bodhicitta, the pure thought avoiding the worldly Dharmas. Therefore, try to cultivate bodhicitta in a short sentence, but one that contains the whole graduated path.

“The attachment that is attached to only the happiness of the temporal life and even to the higher samsaric pleasures is only the source of suffering, and the destroyer of ultimate peace and enlightenment. Therefore, there is no reason to follow the attachment to the happiness of this life and the higher samsaric happy life that we will receive in the future. All those happinesses are only in the nature of suffering. Therefore, besides not being reborn in the three lower realms, we must try

to get out of samsara, the bondage of suffering. Even just achieving this release is not enough. We are equal—as I desire happiness, all sentient beings desire happiness, and as I do not desire suffering, all sentient beings do not desire suffering. So there is no reason to take more care of myself than other beings. As most of the sentient beings are living in terrible suffering situations, not having the wisdom eye to understand Dharma—what is negative action and what is positive action, and the results of the actions, the results of the karma—and have not met Dharma. And besides not meeting the Mahayana teachings, they often create the causes of suffering.

“As I have that much freedom, chance, and also the wisdom eye to be able to distinguish what is prohibited and what is permitted, so I am responsible to guide them from suffering. As they are objects of my past, present, and future happiness, I must repay them. The most beneficial way of repaying the sentient beings is causing oneself to receive enlightenment, and that is disciplining one’s body, speech, and mind, subduing the unsubdued, untamed actions of body, speech, and mind. The best method for that is following the precepts.”

There’s a way to take eight precepts without taking Mahayana ordination, but taking eight precepts with a Mahayana motivation creates more benefits and merits than just taking eight precepts from the object, without visualizing infinite buddhas, bodhisattvas, and without having pure Mahayana thought. Compared to the Mahayana ordination, that other one has much less merits and benefits. It is fortunate that we are in such a time in which we can give or take such valuable ordination; this is such a valuable time, being able to take the most beneficial Mahayana ordination.

Visualize the person granting the ordination as Guru Shakyamuni and surrounded by buddhas, bodhisattvas, and arhats.

(Ordination Ceremony)

Always try to remember yourself as a servant of sentient beings, as you are the best servant of sentient beings. Always during the day, frequently try to remember, as you see people and animals, that there are suffering beings in the narak, preta, animal, sura, and asura realms, great numbers of sentient beings beyond our thought, most of them in such terrible suffering; and at the moment, physically, you can’t help them by going there and taking them out, like taking a prisoner out of the prison—there’s no way to do that, so the best way is to discipline yourself, keep the precepts and discipline your body, speech, and mind on the basis of sentient beings. Keeping the precepts with the sentient beings as the object means abstaining from harmful actions to sentient beings. Frequently try to remember that you are keeping the precepts for the sake of the beings in the narak, preta, sura, and asura realms. For each of them that you see in front of you, think that you are working for them. This way you cannot break the precepts, because you will feel guilty if you break them, as you are keeping the precepts for infinite sentient beings and then breaking them. This is very selfish, breaking the precepts after talking about how to help those sentient beings. Thinking like this is very helpful for us not to break precepts.

Also, whatever suffering, whatever problems that are happening such as hunger or anything else during the day, think that you are experiencing this suffering for other sentient beings, for other’s happiness. You feel joyful, glad that it is worthwhile to get sick by working for sentient beings, greatly worthwhile to get sick by working for infinite sentient beings rather than getting sick working only for oneself. Just like this, try to think about we who are attached to the relatives and friends—we work for people to whom we are attached. When we work for them, in spite of the difficulties,

problems, we don't care—we only think of the other being's kindness that we too received and we are only concerned to make those others happy, not caring about the difficulties of body, speech, and mind. This is very common, many worldly people do this, but this action has not much benefit and is not even creating merits, because the mind is attached to them, and mostly the work is done with the evil thought that is attached to the happiness of this life, even if it is done to repay those relatives and friends. Just like this example, we do these things, but the benefits are limited, also because the numbers of people are small. So, if it is worthwhile to surmount hardships working for relative and friends, why is it not worthwhile to experience difficulties working for sentient beings by keeping precepts, meditating, for the sake of sentient beings? This is greatly worthwhile. Getting sick, having trouble, finding difficulty due to samsaric action, this is usual for us. To get sick working for sentient beings is so rare—maybe once in a life for a few Westerners.

From the holy teaching of the great bodhisattva, Tenzin Gyatso, “The water trees, by giving the result, they finish. But bodhicitta, by giving the result it increases.”

This means that the water trees, the trees that grow in dependence on the element of water, as we enjoy the result of the fruit that is brought by the tree, it doesn't increase, it decreases. But it's different than bodhicitta, the inner all-wish-granting tree; bodhicitta is different. The more we enjoy the result given by bodhicitta, the more it increases. This always causes the result to increase. There is a big difference. Therefore, what we should understand is this—we should not only rely on the external result, the external enjoyment of those results with limited understanding mind, and we should not only live on relying on the external results received from trees or from external crops. As this experience has no beginning, we should end this work, we should try to end relying on these enjoyments. By ending the need for external enjoyments, the work for external crops finishes, and this brings the result of enjoyment, that work is finished. And it's more precious, more beneficial to work for the inner crop, the inner all-wish-granting tree, which continually brings the result when we enjoy it, unlike the external crops. By living and relying on the enjoyment of the result given by the inner all-wish-fulfilling tree, bodhicitta, it causes us to cease, to end the external enjoyments that rely on the external crops. Also, this all-wish-granting tree, bodhicitta, causes us to cease the meaningless work, the beginningless work for the external crops. Then when should we try to achieve this all-wish-granting tree, that inner tree of bodhicitta, when should we start to try to achieve this? If you plan after a few years, five years or even one year—it is not certain that we can do it, if we will still exist in that time—even in one month, it is not certain if we still have the chance to practice it. Also tonight or tomorrow, is not certain what will happen—it is more definite that we will not have time to practice it, to study it. Therefore it is necessary to do it right away, to try to practice right away, as we have the time, the chance, as we met the precious Mahayana teachings, as our mind is capable in this time. If the motivation of listening to the teachings is possessed by the Mahayana thought, then even hearing one or two words, whatever it is, it all becomes Mahayana action, great profitable meaningful action. Therefore, if it is even one hour of work, it is necessary, important to do it with this motive. So think as we said this morning, briefly think like this, “It is not enough not to be born in the lower suffering realm and to be born in the upper realm after death; even releasing myself from suffering is not enough. Most of the sentient beings are in incredible suffering, and they are the objects from who I have received all my past, present, and future happiness, so I must repay them. Therefore, I must achieve enlightenment in order to lead them to enlightenment. To do this I must remove all wrong conceptions and purify my negative karma. To do this I must achieve the graduated path. Therefore, I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path.”

For those who went through, who studied and meditated on the graduated path, just by hearing this short impulse there is a feeling of the whole graduated path. For this person it's like seeing the whole teaching. The whole of Guru Shakyamuni's extensive teachings are included in the *Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment*, written by great yogi Atisha. Guru Tsong Khapa wrote a commentary to that called *The Graduated Path to Enlightenment*. Those who meditated on and studied that, who have quite a deep understanding of the meanings of this "graduated path to enlightenment," by hearing this short impulse, this person can feel the whole thing.

So the listening subject is divided into three—the paths of the lower, middle, and higher beings. Now this is about the path of the lower being—the outlines of the subjects of the meditation. So far we have finished, "Perfect Human Rebirth," "The Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth," "The Difficulty of Receiving It," and "It is Very Fragile and Impermanent." We have also finished "Death is Definite" and "No Other Methods Can Stop Death." The reason it is necessary to be afraid of death is because the mind's individual birth is created by the mind, by the individual mind that was existing before. So just as the mind doesn't cease at death, as it splits from the body and continues—death is just the mind splitting from the body. That time when the life finishes, the end of the human life, is called death—because the life is the combination of mind and body. That is the meaning of "life." So the mind continues after death. The different place that we will take rebirth is according to karma, the person's previous action. So our minds, where will they take rebirth, where will we be born? Since we are not out of the circle of death and rebirth, since we were reborn without choice and since we die without choice, as long as we are in this circle, it is definite that after death we will have to be born in one of the six realms, the three upper realms or the three lower realms. This is already decided according to our karma, the decision is already made according to our karma. So, will we be born in the upper or lower realms? It is more definite that we will be born in the lower realms for many reasons—so many negative karmas were created in the previous lives and in this life, more than good karma, even in a day or a month. And we who want to practice Dharma only give small amounts of time to the Dharma practice. So, for so many reasons—also we try to create merits, but we destroy the merits—there are so many dangers. So merits are collected gradually, like a drop, not even continually, just sometimes. Because our negative minds are so uncontrolled, and our negative minds arise so easily, and we follow our negative minds so easily, so as they arise the merits created in previous times are destroyed, nothing existing, no result, nowhere existing, and they become empty, useless—that is, if the merits are not dedicated. Even if they are dedicated, because of the negative mind that arises, the result of the actions becomes hindered, and it is difficult to experience the result of the merits quickly. When the negative mind such as anger and heresy arises, it postpones, it puts off the result so far, so that we do not experience the result of the merits for a long time, like sometimes for eons. So there are so many dangers. For many of these reasons it is more definite that we will be born in the lower suffering realms. And still, is the time of death definite? No—it is not definite when we will be born in the lower suffering realms—tomorrow, one year, two years? Not sure. Among us, after the death of all of us, some are born in the preta realms, some are born in the narak realms, some in the animal realms. We are not excited now, at the moment we don't feel anything, no fears, nothing. According to our individual karma there are all kinds of things—some will be born in such incredible places, having incredible lives. Since we don't try to do something with the karma that we created, it is definite that we will be born in those lower suffering realms, it is only a small matter of time. It is not happening now, but it is something that is definite as long as we don't do something with the karma we created—those future sufferings are definitely going to be experienced, it is only a matter of time.

So, death time is like sleeping, and then as we go to the intermediate stage it is like dreaming, and as we go to the lower realms it is like waking suddenly and suffering there.

According to the individual karma, some are naraks, some are pretas, some have to be born as animals and experience suffering. If our future lives were a subject that we could see, it would be very frightening. We wouldn't care about the works of only this life. We would only be concerned about arranging a way to stop that rebirth as quickly as possible. So, that energy is supposed to be received through meditation on suffering, on the suffering realms, and through understanding and meditating on karma. Otherwise, there's no way because of attachment and following the negative mind and laziness. There is no fear that causes us to make arrangements to not receive a suffering rebirth in the future. Anyway, as the number of people we are here, a certain number are going to be reborn as animals, a certain number of us will be reborn as pretas, and some will be reborn in the narak stages.

Also, when you meditate on this, first think of the causes that you have created in hundreds of previous lives, and you created them in this life remember them, and also think that you will create them in the future. Then think of the suffering result and meditate as if you were born there—in the narak, the preta, and the animal realms.

In regards to animals' suffering, there are all kinds of suffering animals on the human earth. Also, there are places where there are many animals, such as where there's no light, complete darkness, such as the Atlantic, completely underneath. But besides talking about the different animal sufferings, even the animals who are in the country, around people, if we talk even about even their suffering there are all kind of different sufferings that they experience. Wandering dogs is one example. Whether it is cold or hot they don't have anything to manage it—if it is cold, they cannot put on more clothes; or if it is hot, with the skin and hair, how much they suffer. Most of those animals they don't have daily life food like we people have—food at a certain time, all set up, arranged ahead of time for today, tomorrow. Most of the animals don't have freedom, choice, like that. Even if they try and find food near the house, they get killed or beaten, many things. Not only beaten and killed, but called named, "Such an awful dog"—even harmed with speech, besides physically—"This horrible dog." Anyway, they have much worry, much fear of being attacked by people or other animals. They always have this fear, they are never safe, living a secure life. Wherever this dog goes, it is always scared of what will happen, worried that it will be attacked by people and other dogs, besides feeling angry and other things. It is not certain that you will not be born like that in one or three years, walking around your house. There are many examples of people who died and were born as animals around house. Now, at the moment when we look these animals, as soon as they are seen by people they are killed. The people have hate for that ugly shape and want to make non-existent. Soon we will be born in such an ugly shape that no people like, and as soon as they see, they want to kill it—such as snake, many things.

One example—I think this was in India—in ancient times, a yogi was begging in the family house and he saw the son who was eating meat, had a baby on his lap, and a dog eating bones beside him. The story is this—that son's father and mother both died. The father was reborn as a cow and was killed, and that was the meat that he was eating—the cow whose past life was his fathers'. The dog that was chewing bones in front of him was his mother in his past life. The baby that he was keeping on his lap was his enemy in the past life. So the enemy was born to him as his child, and he held the enemy on his lap, while eating the meat of the cow whose was his father in its previous life, and

giving the bones to the dog who was his mother in his previous life. This yogi perceived this with his psychic powers. Besides this there are so many other stories.

Also, even the place in India where we lived for eight or nine years, in the Tibetan refugee monk camp, there were so many dogs outside. There were so many bells ringing there. There were groups of monks in the houses and at food times they rang the bell, or for other schedules. So there were so many dogs and there was a big bell at the wide platform. There were four sects of monks and they all came to make pujas and debate on the philosophical teachings written by the Indian pandits (actually, this is a form of checking meditation), the general number is 1000 or 1500. So there was a big bell on this platform to call for puja. When the bell rang, the dogs made a crying, weeping noise, as if they were being killed or beaten. They didn't usually make this noise, but only when the monks rang that bell to call for pujas. That is because those dog's previous lives were monks who didn't keep their precepts properly during their past lives, so they were born as dogs outside the house. There is clear proof that the monks fed the dogs—that's why there were so many. The Indians often tried to get rid of them, they came with guns and took them away, but the monks protected them or the dogs came back. So thinking of these examples is very frightening. Otherwise, there's no reason for the dog to cry when he hears the bell. But there were strong imprints—maybe the monk didn't want to go to puja, didn't like it there, and when he heard the bell ...

The most powerful karma that causes rebirth as an animal is calling people names, and disrespecting the Dharma and those who are giving Dharma. There are so many examples. In previous times, one man saw a monk and he called that monk a name—"He's jumping like a monkey," he complained. So just by saying this, that karma caused him to be reborn as a monkey 500 times—because the person that he called a name was a higher person. Why he is higher? Because his body is precious. Why more precious? Because he was keeping 253 precepts. Therefore, he was a holy object. Therefore, as that is a holy object, the result of the karma has to be experienced many times—it is very dangerous, negative karma that we create with holy objects. But holy objects do not definitely have to be in the form of monks—they can also be laypeople, or animals. They don't have to especially be monk, or have great names such as "Rinpoche" or "Lama." Even someone is called "crazy" it's not certain, even if someone is called "mad." But there is too much to talk about on that subject, so there is no need to go farther. So one has to be very careful. Since our mind is not completely purified, and we don't have the knowledge to perceive the holy beings, and we can't see who is holy and not holy, who are bodhisattvas and not bodhisattvas, who are buddhas and not buddhas—we have to be careful in all actions. Negative mind causes us to create negative actions, but there is the danger of creating very heavy negative karma since my mind doesn't perceive what he is thinking. My mind doesn't even perceive its own nature. Maybe he is a bodhisattva or a buddha. I'm not sure, so I should be careful, it is better not to create the cruel action. This is very helpful, this is one of the methods that causes you to have a good personality and good behavior and not create problems with other people, and not to create negative karma with other living beings as the object. This helps a great deal to not create heavy bad karma.

Such as in this example—some people may know about this, some may not know—just one example, I think the name is in "The Lineage of the Teachings"—Asanga (Page 5). This highly realized pandit was trying to attain the buddha called Maitreya, the buddha who will descend to Earth from Tushita and will do exactly as Guru Shakyamuni did—taking a princely life and all those twelve events, doing austerities retreat—as Guru Shakyamuni did, he will do—and showing the form of receiving enlightenment at Bodhgaya. So anyway, this highly realized pandit, Asanga, tried to attain this buddha, Maitreya. He spent twelve years there but he still didn't attain it. First of all he

spent three years and came back from the cave, his mind discouraged. But due to some example he saw on the way—someone was cutting rock with a thread—he thought, “If the thread can split the rock, why can’t I attain Maitreya?” So he went back, but after three years nothing happened, so he came to the village. He saw something else—a water drop making hole through a stone, little by little. He saw this example and thought, “If water can make a hole in the rock, why can’t I achieve Maitreya?” So this gave him courage, but after three years he still didn’t attain Maitreya so he came down. On the way he saw a bird that had a nest in a hole in the rock, and as it flew, its wings tore out the rock. He thought, “If soft wings can wear down the rock, it is silly that I can’t attain Maitreya,” so he went back for another three years. But still he didn’t achieve Maitreya, so he came down. In the village he saw a dog with a wound on its bottom, full of worms. And all of a sudden due to seeing that dog he had such strong, extremely strong, great compassion—caring for others more than oneself, such strong bodhicitta. So then he cut the back of his calf—he wanted to pick off the worms, but they would have nothing to live on over there, so he cut his leg for them to eat. To lift the worms with his finger would hurt them, so he did it with his tongue. It wasn’t a dog, actually, but he saw it as dog because his mind was not purified. And as he did this action with strong bodhicitta and compassion, it became a big purification, a powerful purification, so after he did this, the dog appeared to him in the form of Maitreya, its manifestation changed. Asanga felt a little upset and complained, “Why did it take such a long time?” Then Maitreya said, “I was always in your cave,” and showed proof—when Asanga was in the cave he used to spit, and Maitreya showed it to him. Then he asked for teachings, so Maitreya asked him to hold his robes and with psychic powers, high realizations, Maitreya took this highly realized pandit to the pure realm of Tushita, and he received the teachings. There are five different divisions of teachings given by Maitreya to this pandit Asanga. It’s not one or two books, it’s many subjects—it took fifty human years according to human life to explain all these teachings, but in that realm it only took one morning. What I want you to understand is that even though it looked like a dog, it wasn’t a dog. Like if a person plays crazy, we don’t say he’s crazy.

So, to emphasize—as this meditator’s mind wasn’t purified, even though he was like that, meditating all those years, so our mind is far away from that. So we have to be careful with any other being.

As the great bodhisattva Shantideva said, “Being born and suffering in the lower realms, even in 100 times 100,000 eons, those lower beings do not hear the words of the higher beings, the happy beings.” (The happy beings are those born in the upper realms, and those born in the lower realms are recognized as unhappy beings.)

So being born in the lower suffering realm, it is not possible to hear even the sound of the happy beings, of the beings born in the upper realms, even in 100 times 100,000 eons. Such beings born in those realms are lower suffering beings who die there and keep being born there for a long time, even that many eons. What he is explaining in his teaching is that at the moment we are not born in those realms, as are those suffering beings who don’t even hear the words or sounds of the beings in the upper realms, the happy beings, even in 100 times 100,000 eons. So what he is trying to explain is that before we are born as those suffering beings, it is important for us to destroy ignorance, to not follow ignorance; that’s the quickest and best way—to destroy ignorance.

To destroy ignorance there are many different levels of methods. Like the example of a patient whose disease is changing—then also his treatment has to change. Also, sacrificing such beings as animals is very dangerous to make the cause to be born as an animal and to be sacrificed by other people. People who sacrifice also think that it is one method for peace, they also think it is a

method, but that does not mean it is correct. Generally, whatever method that we are using, trying to do, if we are not foolish, since we are not like animals, it is necessary to check up on the benefits of the method. The most important thing is to check the future benefits of the action. There are some methods of which we do not recognize the usefulness of the present practice—that does not mean that the practice, the method, is useless, dangerous. What we should discover is the effect, the result that it brings in the future, by continuing the method. For instance, if one does not check or think about the future effect, but only cares about this method, what this subject does to the mind, only concerned with the present thing, this isn't a very highly skillful method—not checking the future effect, the benefits that will arise in the future, that can be gained and achieved from the method. That can be discovered either through logic or through the enlightened being's quotations, the enlightened being's words that are explained with his experience and his understanding. Also, there are many other past stories about continuously following the methods such as the practice on the graduated path. They have gradually made the experiment, gradually achieved the result.

For instance, if one cares only for the present, what it brings, if one only cares for the present problem, not checking the greater future benefit that this method brings, then for instance, in the cases of the great yogis Milarepa and Naropa, their methods of purifying negative mind were not living in luxury places and so forth. There is always much struggle; they went through many physical sufferings, even these great yogis who achieved enlightenment in one lifetime, or in the intermediate stage after death. There's not enough time to tell about all their holy practices, their methods of practicing Dharma. But as most people know, the great yogi Milarepa went many times through many difficulties and had to experience much hard work. He built and rebuilt the tower many times, and even though there were big wounds on his backside like an animal has, he was still obliged to continue work. If he had thought, "This is much problem, this is bringing me much suffering," and if he had decided not to do this work given to him by his great guru Marpa, thinking, "This never helps me, it only causes problems to my mind and body," he wouldn't have achieved enlightenment in one lifetime. But he had such a wise, skillful mind, only concerned with the future, what it would make him, by continually suffering this as he was instructed by his great guru Marpa. Even the mystical wife of his guru Marpa tried many times to help him and felt much compassion for Milarepa. She sort of felt upset that Milarepa was suffering like that, doing those works by himself, even with wounds, and not receiving teachings. However many times she asked Marpa to give teachings, his guru Marpa continually let Milarepa do those hard works. Once the mystical mother, without asking Marpa, sent him to one of the disciples of Marpa, another great yogi, to receive teachings. Anyway, Milarepa continued whole this thing, he continued without caring for the present mental and physical troubles that the work brought. Finally, the total result of experiencing all those troubles for working was that he received enlightenment in that lifetime. Comparing that work and meditating on this, what Milarepa did is an incredible thing. So meditating on this graduated path is a much more happy, pleasant way of doing Dharma practice, without need of the sufferings that Milarepa experienced. Without going through those, we are trying in the simple way.

So therefore, remembering those examples, things like this, is important. No matter how you understand—even though you don't understand now, you feel as you meditate or read, not understanding, finding problems, not receiving realizations right away. This is not a skillful method. Just because of this, not wanting to practice, or not wanting to understand, generally is not recognized as skillful method.

Anyway, however, if the practitioner's mind, if the aim of the practitioner's mind is not long enough, nothing can work. I mean, it is extremely difficult to escape from samsaric suffering and receive

ultimate peace. If we cannot do that, if we don't try for that, to achieve this, no matter whatever other action or method is done, it doesn't help for that, it is of no value.

I left something out—the sacrificing. In ancient times, the father of one family sacrificed animals. They used to have a big stone at the back of their house, and they used to sacrifice animals there. Later on the father died and was born as a cow or buffalo, and was sacrificed by the son. Then again he was born in a similar shape and sacrificed six times by the son. To understand the evolution of karma is so interesting and very helpful—as much as we understand, is that much more helpful. It makes our mind conscious, gives us an idea of how it works.

Paragraph 4

Mungalipu is the closest disciple of Guru Shakyamuni. Usually in tangkas you see two arhats standing—Mungalipu is the one who had the high achievement of psychic powers. Mungalipu performed this with his psychic powers, magic powers, to prove, because explaining may be not strong enough for those disciples, those two monks. He had such high magic powers or psychic powers to perform such things.

Paragraph 6

The reason they can't eat and they vomit is because of worry, that they would have such a rebirth. Even we people are worried, we cannot eat or sleep as usual—but what we worry about is different.

(Page 67)

Paragraph 3

Because they were so worried they asked Mungalipu if they would be reborn in the lower suffering realms.

Paragraph 3

He replied that, “Until all delusions are ceased, you two will be in samsara.” That means sometimes in the upper realms, sometimes in the lower realms. Because it is not enough, one life's work, just becoming a monk and creating merits, if the delusions are not ceased. Even if the result of that good karma, of taking precepts and creating good karma, brings the result of living in the upper realms and having enjoyments, after this, the being has to experience the lower realms. If one doesn't try to stop delusions and continually try to stop being born in the lower suffering realms, then it is possible to be born there.

Paragraph 5—9

These are notes taken from past courses.

Anyway, so by continually experiencing and meditating on the suffering lower realms, when you—the definition of having had the experience of the lower suffering realms is having the feeling at that time just like in the example of those two young monks—feeling scared, frightened. Now for us, this life is like talking about a dream, something that is not serious. But as you continually meditate on

this, as I explained in terms of the animals, you see it as more and more serious. You find it more and more serious, real, as you have further experience, continually doing the meditation. Then, when you have the experience of this meditation, then you are very frightened, like those two boys. Right away you want to do something, to arrange some way to not be born there and suffer. Also, you see the suffering as very close, very close. There's great energy and great will, right away, this minute, this second, you want to do something, to make some preparation to completely stop being reborn in those lower suffering realms and suffering. Such strong desire not wanting to be reborn there and suffer because of the extreme, horrible, unbearable sufferings is because of this experience, arises from this experience.

Therefore you want to find, to seek, perfect refuge.

For instance, like this, a similar example—let's say I am guilty, I am a criminal, I did something wrong, and am going to be punished. I broke the law of the country. So according to my criminal action, I am supposed to be killed at the court or something, and it is definitely sure that I am going to be killed. I am at the court, and I see another person being killed. As I see the other person being killed because of his guilty action, I become so extremely frightened, so much afraid, so right away I want to do something, to find some top person, who has the power to help, who has no criminal actions, who is not guilty, who does not have any of these problems, but who has power and control and can make a change, can guide me, can help me to not be killed. So right away I want to take refuge in such a person, a person who has power and who is not guilty. When I eat food, when people offer tea, whatever, even though it does go through, it gets stuck because of the fear, the worry. Just like this—when we feel the longing, the strong desire to find someone perfect, and the wish to seek refuge right away, as quickly as possible, to make sure that we will not be reborn as a person with that experience, we have received the experience of the worry of the future sufferings. Even we find it difficult to enjoy food, differently from before. At this time, the person has the experience of this meditation, the person has received this experience. It is necessary, since there's that much suffering. For instance, like this, taking oneself: we are not born in that realm at this moment, but it is definite, in a time, that we will be born in that suffering realm. So do we want to be born in that suffering realm and suffer? So, we don't want that! So how to stop that rebirth and the experience of that suffering? From our side is there's any method, any power? No, we don't have any power. So, do we have the power to guide? We don't have the power to guide ourselves from those rebirths without depending on another object. By ourselves we can't guide ourselves, we can't stop our rebirth and suffering. So, now this causes us to seek refuge. It is necessary to seek refuge because we are powerless to guide ourselves from suffering without depending on another object and we have fear in the suffering if we are not free from it.

Seeking refuge is the most important thing, not only so that we will not be reborn in the suffering realms after the death, but also that we will never be reborn in the suffering realms in all of our future lives. So we should seek refuge.

Who has that power, who has that great power that can guide us from suffering, from rebirth in the lower realms, from the sufferings? The ultimate refuge is the Enlightened One. This is the perfect object of refuge because—why it is the perfect refuge object? He himself is released; he has not one tiny, slightest defect of samsara. Another way of saying is that he has not the slightest delusion and not even the slightest self-cherishing thought, and no existence of even the slightest impure, dualistic mind. He has finished all his works, completely finished, he has gained the highest self-support, he has completed the whole path, which means realization—not one tiny realization is left, there is

nothing that has not been achieved by the Enlightened One. He has great, infinite power to work for sentient beings without depending on superstitions and effort. Just as the moon reflecting in all the different waters on the Earth—the reflection of the moon arises on all lakes and waters of the Earth without effort—so the way the enlightened power works for each sentient being is like this, effortless. So this is the ultimate refuge, the most perfect refuge object.

Why is it that the lower arhats who are just out of samsara, who have only achieved the cessation of samsara, who have not received bodhicitta not the ultimate refuge? Because they still have not eliminated the wrong conception of the self-existing “I.” Therefore, the arhat has not finished his own work. His own work is not completed because there is still self-cherishing thought, and the dualistic mind is not completely purified. Also, as his own work is not completed, working for other sentient beings is also limited, not extensively pervasive like the enlightened being’s actions. So even the arhat is not the ultimate refuge—even though he is out of samsara, he is still not the ultimate refuge object. So beings living in samsara, how can we rely on them completely? The power of their guidance is limited because they themselves are living in ignorance, still in samsara. So, any beings living in samsara are not objects worthy of our refuge—we cannot rely on them with our whole life, cannot depend on them with our whole life. There are many beings, such as Vishnu, Laxmi, those higher samsaric gods who are more powerful than ordinary spirits. Even those, as it is explained in the teaching of the great yogis and the teaching of the Buddha, even those beings are also in samsara, those samsaric gods. They may give temporal guidance but not ultimate guidance, because they are in samsara, they are also not out of ignorance, as we are not. So anyone going in samsara, as we are, is always limited in their power, more so than the arhats who are out of samsara. It’s like this—we, all of us people, all drown in the quagmire and ask each other, “Please guide me from the quagmire, release me.” Just like this, it is the same thing taking refuge, completely relying with our whole lives on those samsaric beings, those samsaric gods. Anyway, they don’t have the power that arhats have to guide us from the suffering of the lower realms.

Also, there are many other spirits like those samsaric gods who can give temporal, material help; sometimes maybe they can bring temporal success like work and business. There are many spirits who can help like that, but they cannot be objects of the whole refuge because they cannot solve the whole problem. So, maybe there are not that many people in the West taking refuge in spirits, giving the whole refuge completely and relying on the spirits. Anyway, there’s nothing to trust in the samsaric gods or spirits. We can never trust that they always help and never hinder. Also in Tibet, there are many spirits who can give us temporal help, then after they betray us, and we get sick or many things happen. Families in certain places have spirits that can harm people that they don’t like; also they can give temporal help. We should not surrender to these because they are not objects that can solve the whole problem.

For instance, in Tibet—there are many example, but one example—one Tibetan man had a goiter, and he was on his way somewhere, I think a place that is after Lhasa. He had to spend a night on a mountain on the way. Usually in Tibet on the mountains where there are spirits situated they build up stones and put flags on the top, and as they pass these places on the road, especially the laypeople say some words. So the man slept in one of these places and that night the spirits had a meeting, an invitation of meat, sharing the most. Maybe they couldn’t find the meat, so as man was sleeping there, without any idea of what would happen, the spirits took his goiter away. When he woke up he was extremely pleased that he didn’t have the goiter. So he got home and there was another man there with a goiter. This man had belief and trust in this first man’s experience, and he went to sleep in the same place. But the spirits of that place didn’t enjoy the goiter, so they put it back and they

put the other one on top of the first one, so this man ended up with double. Therefore, there is nothing to trust in these temporal helpers. One reason is because these beings do not have the achievement of the impartial mind and compassion. The reason for telling this story is to say that there is nothing to trust in, and no reason to rely on or to completely take refuge in any being that is not out of samsara—the worldly gods who are not out of samsara.

6 p.m.

So, the worthwhile object in which to living beings who desire liberation, who desire the release of the samsara should take refuge is Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Chandrakirti, who had great achievement of shunyata, absolute true nature, and who wrote many commentaries, many teachings on Madhyamaka, the Middle Way, said in his teachings, “The three, the Triple Gem, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, are the objects of those who desire liberation, the release from samsara, to be unbound from samsara.”

The release from the bounds is the meaning of nirvana, is the meaning of liberation. Binding is the meaning of samsara and unbound is the meaning of nirvana, liberation. Even in this subject what is the object that is bound, and what binds—there are many things to think about. So, as this great pandit pointed out in this teaching, ignorant beings know where to take refuge and are not misled, led in the wrong way, don't make mistakes—these three are necessary to have, to the three objects we have to rely on, just as a patient who has to rely on the doctor, medicine and nurse. The sickness cannot be cured without medicine even if there is a doctor. So they have to rely on the medicine too. Then it is also necessary to have a nurse to help the patients take the medicine, and other things. So the Buddha is the Doctor, the Dharma is the medicine, and the Sangha is the nurse.

(Page 60)

Milarepa's quotation.

Totally, what he is saying is this—after understanding and fully realizing the eight restless stages and impermanence and samsaric suffering, being scared and not doing anything, not trying to achieve any methods, the right methods that cause us to be released from suffering is silly. To seek the right method, the person must take refuge in the founder who has shown the right method. To seek the right method one has to rely on someone who shows the right method. Without relying on a founder, there is no way to achieve the right method; without taking refuge, without relying on the founder, there is no way to achieve the right method.

For instance, a patient who does not have belief in or does not rely on the doctor, who doesn't have confidence in the doctor, will not take the right medicine that was given by the doctor. Anyway, it is the same thing—if you have fear, if you are scared, it is necessary to make this beneficial, not just saying, “I'm scared, I have fears,” and doing some other things that don't help to stop suffering and only create more suffering. This is silly, this is foolish. So it is necessary to take refuge. We have no perfect method, so, to release ourselves from suffering it is necessary to take refuge in the founder of the right method, in the founder who has the right method. As we suffering beings take refuge in Buddha, it is also necessary to take refuge in Dharma and Sangha.

Paragraph 4

1. The delusions that are rooted in greed, ignorance and hatred.
2. The more subtle ones, the impressions left by the delusions (*nyon dip*). *She.dip* are the very subtle obscurations.

Paragraph 5

Sincere practice—achievement of realizations.

Paragraph 6

Cannot be an object of ultimate refuge, even if he has that much psychic power, if he does not have the Buddha's power.

Paragraph 7

The Sangha is the helper to attain the refuge. What refuge? The real refuge, the Dharma.

So totally, the total knowledge that Buddha has, the knowledge that makes the Buddha the object of ultimate refuge is this knowledge—completing one's own and others' purpose, one's own and others' work. His great compassion is equal for all sentient beings, to every and all sentient beings. This means as he has great compassion to one sentient being—just as he has great compassion for me, he has great compassion for every and all sentient beings. No matter how the sentient being looks, whether it's a creature, a human being, a samsaric god ... whatever it looks like—beautiful, awful, rich or poor—he has equal compassion for all the sentient beings, he has equal compassion. For oneself or from the man who criticizes, who complains how awful he is, what a liar he is—the compassion that he has for this person criticizing Buddha is exactly the same as the great compassion he has for me, unbiased. The samsaric worldly gods and worldly beings who can give much temporal help don't have such power—these gods always help those who admire and make offerings to them, and hinder those who don't believe in or cause trouble to them. They are partial, so there is nothing to compare to Buddha's great compassion. Just that unbiased great compassion that the enlightened being has, that great knowledge having unbiased great compassion, without impartial mind, retaliating.

And working for each and every sentient being without depending on who helped and benefited, or who didn't benefit or help. The worldly gods are the opposite of that. The ordinary people's help and work for other people is not equal, is always partial. They help, do the work for those who help them, and they don't give help or do the work for those who don't benefit or help them. But the Enlightened One helps and works for every and all sentient beings without depending on sentient beings' helping him, without depending on retaliation—that those sentient beings helped, those sentient beings criticized, without depending on anything like this. And enlightened beings are extremely pleased when you controlling your own mind, subdue your own mind. "Offering of attainment" means subduing one's own negative mind, body and mind. This is the best offering to them, better than material offerings.

So, any being who has this knowledge that I have briefly mentioned, this total knowledge, is a buddha, is a perfect being, even though it is not called "Buddha." Like this—if Buddha or the Enlightened Being, or Perfected One is not himself completely released from delusions and sufferings, then he cannot guide other beings from suffering, just as the example that was given

before. If he does not have equal compassion for each and every sentient being, then all suffering sentient beings would not receive his help. Some sentient beings would receive help, some sentient beings wouldn't receive help if he had no unbiased, equal compassion, or if he has partial compassion, which means thinking that some sentient beings are closer and holding some sentient beings farther away, like our mind, our present mind can do. We give help to those who like us, admire us, and help us, but we don't give help to those who criticize us. So like this, if there's such thought, for example, some people don't receive help even though they are suffering. Also, if he has no unbiased equal compassion, he can't guide all sentient beings because he has partial compassion. He can guide sentient beings because he is completely released from all the delusions, the defecst, the illusive mind. He can guide all sentient beings from suffering because he has unbiased, equal great compassion. He can guide all sentient beings from suffering because he makes the action, he works for each and all sentient beings, without depending on whether the sentient beings helps him or not. Because of this reason, all sentient beings are guided by him. So if we take refuge in him, he can guide us—because of this total knowledge. And also, what pleases him does not depend on material offerings as it does for the worldly gods and ordinary people. Ordinary people are not much interested to know that a person has realizations or is making pure practice of Dharma—it is extremely rare to please others in this way. Usually we please them by material gifts, material offerings, not by enlightenment, disciplining one's body, speech, and mind and keeping it pure. By achieving the path, by completing the Dharma practice, by completely achieving the whole path as he experienced it, we can receive all the realizations, the stage of enlightenment. If you follow, take refuge in the Dharma, in the method that was shown by him, it is definite that it can guide us from suffering. It is definitely possible because he became enlightened by following that path, by taking refuge in the Dharma. By following a Dharma method he received enlightenment. So it is logical. Also great numbers of sentient beings received enlightenment by following the path shown by Guru Shakyamuni. Also, these later beings, also they have shown the path, so it is logical. So if you take refuge in the Dharma as shown by him and correctly follow it, there is no such danger that it may betray or cheat you, cause problems or sufferings—no danger.

So, as we can take refuge in Dharma, we can take refuge also in Sangha. Sangha is the helper for attaining the Dharma, and those who pure practice Dharma can rely on Sangha also. There's levels of Sangha like this: the actual Sangha is one who has the achievement of the full realization of the absolute true nature, who has the achievement of the fully-seeing path—that is called Sangha. But also, four monks living in the precepts, that is also called Sangha. One monk is not called Sangha. When there are four ordinary monks it is called Sangha. The noble beings who have the achievement of the fully-seeing path, because of the realizations, can be called Sangha. Guru Shakyamuni is the Buddha, and also his omniscient mind is the Dharma. Usually it is explained like this—Dharma, the cessation of suffering, is achieved by following the true path. The true path, the full realization of absolute true nature is also Dharma—the true path, which means the realization of absolute true nature, which leads to the cessation of suffering. There are levels of the cessation of the delusions of suffering—so all these are Dharma, cessation of suffering and true path. So Guru Shakyamuni also has achievement of that cessation of suffering and true path, so he is also Dharma.

Sangha is the one who attains the cessation of suffering and the true path, so Guru Shakyamuni is also Sangha.

So tonight at this time, do the visualization of Guru Shakyamuni, and try to remember the knowledge of the Buddha that I briefly talked about, and the meaning of Dharma and of Sangha, and think that he is also Dharma and Sangha. Visualize the light coming from his holy body and

purifying all the negativity of body, speech, and mind. Besides thinking that it purifies all negativity of body, speech, and mind, this light also purifies all negative karma that I have been creating in relation to the object Buddha, the object Dharma, and the object Sangha. We have created much negative karma in relation to the object Buddha, the object Dharma, and the object Sangha. Usually when we create negative karma it is in relation to the object sentient beings or the object holy beings. So as you remember Guru Shakyamuni is the total Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, also remember the negative karma that you created in relation to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

(Meditation)

Do the absorption from the throne, lotus, sun, moon, and Guru Shakyamuni, and visualize that it comes down to the center of your head and absorbs into you, and as it absorbed you, your wrong conception of the self-existing “I” and the dualistic mind, the whole thing became completely empty, those old views nowhere existing, and your mind became oneness with Guru Shakyamuni’s holy mind in the form of emptiness and in the nature of infinite happiness. Wherever there is your mind covering you become oneness; the holy mind that you become oneness, wherever that is covering, there is also holy speech and holy body.

From the emptiness visualize a large throne and lotus, sun, moon, and yourself as Guru Shakyamuni ... seated, very beautiful, shining with a body of golden light. Think also that your mind, speech, and body become oneness with Guru Shakyamuni’s holy body, speech, and mind; indestructible.

Day 19

Tuesday, December 4th

5 a.m.

The action of taking ordination should be possessed by the Mahayana impulse, and besides this it should be possessed by pure thought—that which is detached from the happiness of this temporal life. Therefore, try to make the action of taking ordination be possessed with these things by this condensed way of thinking, brief impulse, “The attachment to temporal happiness and the higher samsaric pleasures is the source of samsaric suffering. Therefore, there is no reason to continually follow those negative minds. However much we make this present life happy or receive a happy samsaric life, it is only in the nature of suffering. Therefore, there is no reason to have interest to be attached to it. Totally, there’s not even a little samsaric pleasure that we have not experienced countless times. There is no tiny suffering that is left in samsara that we have never experienced, we have experienced these samsaric sufferings countless times. Also, there is no samsaric highest pleasure that we never experienced—we have experienced these countless times. Also, there is no heavy samsaric suffering that we never experienced—these have been experienced in numberless previous lives. Therefore, nothing of the samsaric experience is new to us. Therefore, even for this reason, as it is nothing new, there is no reason to be attached. Also, there is no reason to be attached to the samsaric happiness because being attached to the samsaric happiness, experiencing the samsaric happiness with attachment, causes us to suffer in the first place.

Releasing oneself from samsara is not enough. As infinite number of sentient beings are objects from whom we received our past, present, and future happiness and perfection, they are in suffering and not having met the Dharma and are missing many things. So we must lead them from samsara. First we must become enlightened. First we must discipline our body, speech, and mind by purifying

the negativity of body, speech, and mind. The most practical way to do this is by following the precepts.” Therefore think, “I am going to take Mahayana ordination.”

Visualize the person granting the ordination in the form of Guru Shakyamuni surrounded by numberless buddhas, bodhisattvas, and arhats, think that you are taking the ordination in their presence, and repeat the prayer.

(Ordination Ceremony)

9 a.m.

From the bodhicitta teachings of the great guru, bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen, “Bodhicitta should be acquired to help, to benefit all others; to be the guru for all others, bodhicitta should be acquired.”

Repeating again, “To benefit others bodhicitta should be acquired; to be the guru for others, the founder of the teachings, the founder of the path, bodhicitta should be acquired; to be a friend of others, bodhicitta should be acquired.”

If the action of benefiting or helping others is done with bodhicitta—besides not harming others by that action and being a greatly profitable action—it is a more beneficial action. Also, if one becomes a guru with the achievement of bodhicitta, the teachings—there’s no danger of misleading, no danger of leading someone into the lesser vehicle while the disciple has the chance or the fortune to follow the great vehicle. Also, the importance is that the disciple receives bodhicitta quicker, as the techniques, the teachings of bodhicitta, are shown.

being a friend of others with bodhicitta, there is no problem of causing them danger, no problem of causing confusion, causing harmful actions to other beings. Ordinarily, with worldly friends, because of the partial mind, even if we help some people, we cause problem to some other people.

Therefore, even to be a friend of others it is a great help, and useful to have the achievement of bodhicitta. Anyway, this important, precious, and pure thought of bodhicitta is necessary to be achieved by us while we are born as perfect human beings, perfect human beings who have the chance to practice, to listen to teachings about it.

Therefore, it is necessary even to start the practice of that as quickly as possible, because we are not sure how long we will exist. It is indefinite whether tonight or the next life that will appear first—it is more definite that the next life will appear than today’s night. Therefore, if I haven’t had a chance to train the mind in this pure practice, this pure thought, it is necessary, it is important, even if there is only one hour left to exist. Therefore, it is important to start right from this moment. Therefore, it is necessary that the action of listening to the Mahayana teachings be possessed by this pure thought.

So, as I went through it this morning, there is no need to tell more. Think briefly like this—”I must achieve enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings in order to release them from suffering, besides myself being released from samsara. Therefore, it is necessary to fully achieve the whole graduated path. Therefore, it is necessary to fully understand the whole meaning and complete the practice. Therefore, I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path.”

So, going through the brief outlines of the meditations that we have finished so far—"Perfect Human Rebirth." (Actually "Beginningless Mind" and "Possibility of Enlightenment" are included in the graduated path, but usually the way of giving the explanation of the meditations on the graduated path that are given by the Tibetan lamas to the usual people is different, not exactly like this. First they give the explanation of the guru practice, then secondly perfect human rebirth—the door of the path, guru practice, and then the perfect human rebirth, and then like this. Also, that is the way the outlines of the meditations are set up in the Tibetan texts for the meditators. It is like this, but I preferred—anyway, this is the way I set it up, according to what I think, what I felt from the European people. Because the thing is this—basically it is the same human being but the understanding is different, the basic understanding is different, the root is different. Like the root of the tree.)

"Perfect Human Rebirth," "The Great Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth," "The Great Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth," "The Perfect Human Rebirth is Impermanent and Fragile," "Death is Definite." Because at death time no other method can stop death, cease death, and after death we are more definite to be born in the lower suffering realms than to be born in the upper realms. We are more certain to go that way, even though there are many other possibilities, many other ways to die, many more peaceful, better forms of death. Even though there are many better possibilities, better paths, we are more certain to take the black path, which is to go to the lower suffering realms, even though there are many beings, fortunate, virtuous human beings, practitioners, taking the easy way at death time.

The highest practitioners, the most knowledgeable, the highest practitioners, stop death, cease death. The middle ones do not have suffering at death time, and the third group of practitioners do not have any worry at death time, are not upset at death time. According to the practitioner, like this. Some practitioners at death time, instead of going to be reborn in the lower suffering realms under the control of force by their karma, many of those practitioners are invited at death time by many gods and goddesses with prostrations, with all kinds of music, such as bells and drums, cymbals, and many other interesting kinds of music, and also incense, very scented, sweet smelling incense, and many goddess. They make prostrations and they invite them to the pure land. They come to invite the practitioner at death time or as the person is in the intermediate stage. There are also those like this—this is the experience of many past practitioners, meditators. Those practitioners never have worry or suffering at death time. Those practitioners are waiting for death like they wait for a picnic, like ordinary people go on a tour in another country. It is exciting. For these practitioners it is not suffering, it is like going for a picnic; more than a picnic.

Also many times, also in Tibet, many retreaters, meditators, achieved the vajra rainbow body, which means that there is nothing left, no body, no corpse can be seen in the cave, in the place. It all dissolved. Many times this happened in Tibet—those are very high practitioners. And the cave is full of sweet smells, many good vibrations. Many times this happened.

Anyway it is good to try one of those as I have mentioned, the three levels of practitioners, how they go through death. Making that kind of tour is the best tour. If we want to make a trip, in place of spending our whole life making a trip on earth on a physical level, the best trip is to make a trip at death like those practitioners.

So at the moment, for us, it is more definite that we will be born in the lower suffering realms. And the actual time that we will be born in the lower suffering realms is not definite. We have definitely

created karmas to be born in the narak, preta and animal realms—not just once or twice but in many previous lives. So, if we don't work something out with the karma, don't do something with those karmas we have created before, and also if we don't try to stop creating negative karma in the future, then we are definitely going to be born gradually in all those three lower suffering realms. So, as we are fortunate at the moment, we are fortunate that we didn't meet the time to be born there and suffer—at this moment we did not arrive in that time. Let's say right at this moment the time to suffer there arrived—how strongly we would desire to find refuge, to be secure from suffering. At this time no one can rescue us, no one can save us, because the karmic power and the power of the Buddha is equal, so in such a time, if we are in such a time, suffering in those realms in a second, how strongly we desire to take refuge. But even if there's such a strong desire to seek refuge, there's no savior, in that time there's no savior saving from suffering. Therefore, in that time, from all directions, from all the ten directions, up and down, from all the directions, even we suffering beings try to seek a savior, try to seek refuge, and cannot find savior to save us. The method is finished, there isn't any means. In that critical time, the method is finished. Therefore, thinking of this, thinking of such uncontrolled, miserable situations—even if there's the desire to seek refuge there is no savior, the power of karma is very strong. So before coming to the time, it is necessary to be clever, skillful, to be careful. So the way to be careful not to be reborn in such suffering stages is to seek refuge in the holy objects in order to save us from the danger of being born in the suffering realms. The person cannot be saved from those dangers. We, for instance, cannot be saved from danger—however much the family has power, however much the government has power—we cannot be saved, they cannot save us from such danger. Even if all the countries becomes one country, all the countries that are on this earth becomes one country and make just one powerful country, still there's no power to save us from such danger.

So, the holy object who can save us from such danger of the suffering of the lower realms are those three holy objects, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Those are the holy objects that never betray, never cheat. Those three holy objects never causes any danger or problem by following them, by taking refuge in them.

Another way of saying this is the founder, the method, and the helper—Buddha, founder; Dharma, method; Sangha, helper—the helper to achieve the method. The way to be careful and to be clever is to seek the refuge ahead of time, before the danger. It is necessary not to make mistakes in seeking refuge, it is extremely important to find or to receive a perfect holy object for seeking refuge. It is necessary that the object in whom we seek refuge be perfect and holy, not a misleader. A misleader leads us to suffering—the misleader leads, and the person follows with the expectation of peace, but what he receives is suffering. It should not be like this—he should not be a misleader, a founder of a wrong method or a wrong helper; it shouldn't be like this. So first, it is extremely important to seek the right object, the object which is perfect for putting your life in it. It is necessary to check how this works—does it cause you to release from, does it guide you from such dangers as the sufferings of the lower realms? And it is important to check whether the method is perfect or not, whether the method has perfect power to guide you from those dangers. Discovering this depends on the founder, whether the founder is perfect or not, whether he has achieved that power or not, whether he is living in that power or not. Because the method has to be shown, whatever power the method has must be shown with his experience, if he has the power that the method has.

So it is necessary, before putting your whole life, completely relying, it is necessary to check the founder, as he has the achievement of the power to guide you from suffering such as the suffering of the three lower realms. It is necessary to check the knowledge, the achievement of his knowledge.

Anyway, so totally talking, in regards to a being such as Guru Shakyamuni, there is not one tiny danger in taking refuge, completely relying on such enlightened being. This is because he is the true founder, because he has the achievement of all the powers, great knowledge, compassion, and they can be achieved through his methods. How can that be proved, that he has achievement of the power, infinite knowledge and compassion, that he has the real, the perfect ability to guide us from those dangers, not only the temporal sufferings but the great danger, the suffering of the three lower realms? That has proven by his followers, by his followers who have the same achievement of great power and knowledge and compassion, who attained this by correctly following the methods shown by Guru Shakyamuni. And also, the third followers, also they did this same thing, they also had the same achievement of the power, knowledge, and compassion. So it is proven that Guru Shakyamuni was the true founder, as they had the same achievement as the second person, who achieved enlightenment after Guru Shakyamuni. Like this it is proven—through experience, not only through words. Therefore, Guru Shakyamuni is the true founder. Why he is the true founder? Because his teaching is the true teaching, because the method shown by him is the true method, the pure method. Is not like—something is there, there is Buddha, something is there in the sky, without any explanations— whatever it is, how it come, it happened, with no explanation of the knowledge, it is there, something we cannot become—it is not like this. Holy mind, Guru Shakyamuni or Buddha—so far these are the names that we know. Actually, there are great numbers of different names of Buddha—many. Like this—I think it is good to say through this prayer (Page 19). *Shakya* (caste), *Tubpala* (control)—means Shakyamuni, same.

There are about different names but it is like this: *lama*— guru; *tonba*—founder. So there are about seven names like this, and all the names start from guru. So actually, like this—that is the actual guru? The very first name, guru, what is that? The actual, the absolute guru is omniscient mind, the holy omniscient mind, that which can also be called Vajradhara. So that holy mind, that Vajradhara appeared as *Guru Ton.ba*; *Chom.den.de*; *to.shin.sheg.pa*; *da.chom.pa* (which means arhat, but literally, “the one who destroyed the enemy, delusions.” This is the meaning of arhat). One way is like this, according to the Hinayana, arhat. He is called *da.chom.pa*. So, this holy mind is also *da.chom.pa*. *Dzong.pe.sang.gye*—fully enlightened. *Pal.gyal.wa*. *Shakya.tub.pa.la*—as in the book. The rest of prayer—as in the book.

So all that is, all we are making offerings and prostrating to, all that is the holy omniscient mind. Some may think, “He is talking too much, too much hung up on Guru Shakyamuni. There are so many manifestations, why he doesn’t mention something else?” Some may think this. Guru Shakyamuni is just one manifestation, just one different name, like I have many different names in different places, but I am one person. It is just a matter of different names. I had name given to me by my parents, then by lamas who gave ordination, then by others according to the place. There are different names, different names and different ways of looking. For instance, one person, when he was a sweeper in the bathroom, at that time he was called “sweeper.” Then when he carried food in a hotel, he was called “bearer.” Then he becomes the “manager” of the hotel. Then he becomes, if he is educated, there are different names—“professor,” and so forth, according to his occupation. Then when he is educated, “minister.” Then “president.” So now, it’s one person but the name is given according to his occupation and way of looking. But it is one person, all one person

So anyway, this holy mind, Guru Shakyamuni, is just one manifestation of the holy mind, to subdue, to control sentient beings’ negative minds and delusions, in order to enlighten them. So there are numberless manifestations of the omniscient mind, the number of which are beyond the objects of our mind—so like this. So now some people may think, “How can we become Guru Shakyamuni,

achieve Guru Shakyamuni? It is ridiculous talk, such an impossible thing.” It is not like this—it is definitely possible, this does not mean he no longer exists—not like this. There is no change, there is no such time that he does not become Buddha, that he passes from this stage, even if all the sentient beings achieve Guru Shakyamuni. Our achieving the holy omniscient mind, that in itself is achieving Guru Shakyamuni. However, there are many different aspects of Buddha, wrathful, peaceful—achieving the holy omniscient mind is achieving all the buddhas, all the enlightened holy beings.

Because there is no such thing, no such Guru Shakyamuni that is different from the holy omniscient mind, because there is no such other enlightened being that is different from the holy omniscient mind—different or separate.

Refuge in The Holy Guru (Page 10)

The prayer from the morning prayers—*Lama Sang gye Lama Cho...*

It is necessary to have physical discipline. If you are unhealthy it is okay, that is exceptional. During the teachings there is need for physical discipline—even in ordinary school there is much discipline. Generally, according to the discipline of the teaching, the teaching cannot be given—there is such to talk about it—the holy teaching cannot be taught by standing, with both people standing, and cannot be taught with the teacher lower than the listener—to subdue the negative mind, one also cannot give teachings in this way. There are many disciplines—they have purpose, it is not just egocentric discipline, they have much purpose. This again has much to talk about. There are many other things, many details. The teachings cannot be given to those who sit with umbrellas or hats on their heads. I’m sorry if anyone has, I’m just giving information on the actual way of giving teachings, the discipline.

In previous times—just a little story, but there are many other things to talk about—there are also disciplines from the side of the person who teaches Dharma, there are disciplines from both sides; disciplining of body and mind, it is not easy. In previous times, during Guru Shakyamuni’s time, there was no teaching recorded in the text, the teaching was only revealed orally. Anyway, generally Guru Shakyamuni—there are many ways that Guru Shakyamuni revealed teachings according to living beings, many different ways—orally through speech, from the topknot, revealing teachings through trees being blown by wind—so many different ways that Guru Shakyamuni gave teachings, according to the living beings. Anyway, after Guru Shakyamuni passed away, 500 arhats got together for the future living beings. There was a danger of losing the teachings that were revealed by Guru Shakyamuni. So the 500 arhats, such as Arhat Kungawo, got together and they listened and recorded. Those who had teachings to say gave the teachings. They made a sort of a throne by putting many yellow robes piled up together, and then they let the Arhat Kungawo sit on that and give the teaching. Even those arhats did like this. There is much reason, but no samsaric reason involved in that. The person who sits on that and who makes the throne—it is only for the enlightenment. There are many other stories, I’m just giving some idea. Even the arhats who listen to the teachings from other arhats did like this.

Anyway—for what purpose, for what aim? For enlightenment. The listeners, the followers making the higher place for the person who gives the teaching, the speaker of the teaching, that is the responsibility of the followers, the listeners to the teaching. It is only for a Dharma reason. The thing is this—it is because of the teachings, the teachings which cause us to subdue the negative mind, to purify all these many hundreds of wrong conceptions, the delusions, and release us from

the quagmire of suffering and enter the boundless stage, nirvana. Because the teaching is so precious, priceless. The reason the person giving teachings is respected is because without the person, the teaching cannot be received; however priceless the teaching is, without depending on the person giving, it cannot be received.

Anyway, there's much to say, this is just to have some idea. Also, generally it is a discipline made by Guru Shakyamuni for the sake of sentient beings, to control sentient beings' negativity.

This prayer has much, has such a profound extensive meaning. It is something that one can talk about it for months and months. Also in a tantric way there is much to talk about in terms of the meaning of this prayer. In tantric subjects, in a tantric way there is much to talk about. Also, this prayer is very interesting; as you understand it, it is very interesting to say, to use it, to receive it and say it at any time, very powerful. Also to use it for grace, food offerings. In another course, I started to explain from the top, from the prayers, and it took much time, not getting into the real subject. The explanation that we started, only this, took five or six days, a long time. Actually, it's the same thing, the explanation on the prayers and the explanation on the meditations is the same thing—it is making the explanation of the graduated path.

Te is a grammatical word—when they compose verses, if there are not the same number of words in one verse as in the others, they add these grammatical words so that they flow correctly.

Jepa means creator of the subject (as in subject-object).

So, as we were talking about before, the originator is the holy omniscient mind. That appears, that takes the manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni, taking such a position like that. Also, that also works for sentient beings by taking manifestations as Maitreya Buddha, and as all the future buddhas. There are four great eons—one great eon includes the existence of one universe, one place, and the universal beings living there. The four great eons are the great eon of evolution, the great eon of existence, the great eon of decay, and the great eon of emptiness of this physical world, the living beings, the physical universal beings, and the universe. Now is the time of the great eon of existence. So in the great eon of existence, there are 1000 buddhas who descend on the Earth. They come, like Guru Shakyamuni, to reveal the teachings. Guru Shakyamuni is the fourth one. Anyway, even these 100 buddhas have different names, although all these are also manifestations of the holy omniscient mind, the holy omniscient mind manifested, just as this holy omniscient mind manifested in those wrathful deities that are the object of the meditations. Just like this, the holy omniscient mind manifested in different physical aspects of buddhas, and also the holy mind takes the manifestation of the female aspect of the deities, peaceful and wrathful. Also this guru omniscient mind manifests as bodhisattvas, it manifests also as arhats, it manifests also in gods and goddesses (*dakas* and *dakinis*; Sanskrit), and also in different aspects of protectors.

Also this—one thing, how is it possible for us to receive enlightenment? First I will explain this, the first verse. Because of these reasons, so all these buddhas are created by the guru, the omniscient mind. All the buddhas that we have just mentioned are created by the guru omniscient mind, the omniscient mind which is the guru. All these Dharmas, the realization of all these different aspects of buddhas and bodhisattvas, arhats and protectors, all that is also created by the guru omniscient mind. The Dharma that is the realization, the Dharma that these holy objects have, the realization. In Dharma there are two things—the Dharma of realization and the Dharma of words—this means the explanation of the Dharma of order, and the Dharma of realization. So the Dharma of order, the

holy object, is all created, originated from the guru, omniscient mind. So that's why all creator is the guru as it is in the prayer. This is one way to understand. "All creators are guru," this is one way to understand, in this way.

The meaning of the first verse is as I told you yesterday, according to Guru Shakyamuni, this object Guru Shakyamuni. So same thing, the guru omniscient mind is the Buddha because that is all the buddhas' knowledge, the infinite great knowledge, compassion, and power. Briefly talking like this. It is Dharma, the omniscient mind, the highest realization. That is the stage of enlightenment, so that is of course Dharma. That is also Sangha because it is the helper to receive enlightenment by following the path. Also it is all the knowledge of what Sangha has, no knowledge is missing.

So this holy omniscient mind also takes the manifestation of ordinary human beings. It shows itself in the ordinary form of human beings. Also, besides human beings, also in the form of animals, different kinds of animals, it shows itself in the form of different animals. Also it shows itself in the form of spirits. It shows itself in these different forms for the different sentient beings, according to the different living beings, whose only way to see the holy omniscient mind is in that manifestation. Anyway, these manifestations are taken or shown by the guru omniscient mind as it fits the level of the sentient beings' fortunes, their level of their minds. Like this. Also among human beings in all kinds of forms—such as in the form of a king, in the form of a beggar, such as crazy, such as greedy, or in the form of a woman—like this, according to the necessary manifestation. So totally, all that manifestation is done for the sentient being to be able to receive enlightenment. Actually, there is much to talk about in terms of examples, stories, ancient stories, many things to talk about.

Anyway, to make a brief explanation, this is to have some idea. They manifest in different ways like this, and can be seen by those living beings for whom such manifestation fits. According to the sentient being, he may see this being as a dog, or a fearful spirit. But the dog that was seen by that disciple was not a dog. It can be the same thing with a human being, the king, which an ignorant ordinary sentient being sees as crazy, but is not crazy. As crazy a manifestation as he sees, it is not crazy; as it seen as an ordinary woman or a greedy person, it is not a greedy person or an ordinary woman. Even the manifestation that the ordinary human being, the ignorant being sees as an ordinary, ignorant being—is that an ignorant being? It is not an ignorant being. Like this. The guru omniscient mind appears in different ways such as this.

Anyway, so what I want to say in this—the purpose of showing the different manifestations like this is to lead the sentient beings into enlightenment, to release them from the sufferings. How do those different manifestations lead the sentient beings into enlightenment? According to the sentient beings there are different manifestations, different examples, and different influence. For the fortunate beings, orally having contact, such as through teachings; then for the lower, the other, less fortunate beings having a different influence, giving different examples that cause the sentient being to lose the negative mind of pride and jealousy, many things. If someone is creating bad karma, then appearing as a different manifestation and showing some example that stops them, that makes them lose the negative mind that lets him create negative karma. So in this way, by giving different influence, example, and teachings, there many things in order to stop creating negative karma; totally, to diminish or to lose negative mind.

In previous times there was one king—just one example to have an idea—there was one king who was an expert at playing violin. Though he was the best in the world, he had much pride, and spent all of his time doing that, completely hung up on that, and had such pride. So Guru Shakyamuni

manifested as a beggar and came with the violin, and he was playing outside his palace, outside the door—he heard another sweet violin and got a big surprise—”There is a more fantastic player than myself.” In this way his pride went down, so his pride was destroyed by Guru Shakyamuni playing the violin. So, however, later on his whole mind was changed by that—before, he was spending all his time creating samsara, being attached to the pleasures of the temporal life, and having much pride thinking that he was the most expert person. Later on Guru Shakyamuni gave teachings, and his whole mind changed. This is just one example; similar to this there are so many other examples, according to the different beings’ level of mind. So this way, this being gradually renounced the attachment. So like this—the whole thing is because of the Guru Shakyamuni playing a more interesting, a sweeter violin. Just like this, there are many other things. By this the negative mind diminishes, and gradually great change happens in the mind, then slowly the being follows the path and receives nirvana. So by that the person creates merits, and by understanding the teaching, the person changes the mind. Due to the collection of the merits created by that person, he received nirvana or enlightenment. All those living beings are persuaded by the guru omniscient mind through different examples, according to the living beings’ different levels of mind.

All sentient beings’, one sentient being’s virtues and merits are the action of the Buddha, the action of the omniscient mind. The creator of these actions is the guru omniscient mind, who manifests in different ways, giving you an example, treating you in different ways, according to the level of the living being’s mind. The creator is the guru omniscient mind. How? By showing different examples, treating beings in different ways for the final aim, to receive enlightenment. When the accumulation of merits and the accumulation of transcendental wisdom is completed, all the impurities of the delusions are completely purified at the same time. When we have completed all the merits, finished creating good karma—creating good karma has an end—whenever these accumulations are completed, all the obscurations are finished at the same time. That virtue is the action of Buddha. It is like water—we put drop by drop in a big pot, and it gets full—so when these merits, this virtue gets full, by completing the accumulation of merits and transcendental wisdom and the complete purification of the obscurations, at that time we reach enlightenment. As the present virtue is as the action of the guru omniscient mind, the same thing with our future omniscient mind—it is also the action of the guru omniscient mind. That is also the guru omniscient mind; that is also Guru Shakyamuni, omniscient mind. That is also Maitreya omniscient mind—all those different buddhas that have different names.

That omniscient mind that we will receive in the future is the action of Guru Shakyamuni’s omniscient mind, is the action of all different buddhas’ omniscient mind. The creator is even the action of all other different manifestations of Buddha. So we are now on the way to developing that virtue, on the way to developing it. The creator of Buddha’s actions, the creator of the guru omniscient mind’s action, that is the guru omniscient mind that manifests in different ways, manifests in different forms, in different times. Even for one person, it may appear in a different form such as an animal or an ordinary human aspect, according to the level of the other person. The object of the action of subduing, in that object living being’s mind, virtue progresses, and as the mind progresses, as his obscuration become thinner and thinner, at the same time the object, this manifestation of guru omniscient mind will be changed. This will also change always into better and better shape, appearance; also this manifestation changes. Even though it was seen as crazy, ignorant, and foolish before, at the very beginning, slowly as the object of the action of subduing, according to his practice and development of realization, as his realization gets higher, the manifestations of the guru omniscient mind, which is the creator of that object living’s virtues, that manifestation changes, and it is gradually seen in the form of the nirmanakaya, or the sambhogakaya.

Gradually like this, it is seen as an actual different aspect Buddha. Even the statue—now we say it's a statue, but at a certain level of realization we see it as a Buddha. There are many stories, many ancient stories.

So, as before I mentioned the others, those holy objects, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are created, and the creator of those is guru omniscient mind. Now, talking about ourselves, our future Buddha, and true path, these realizations such as our future omniscient mind. Even the realization of the meditations, understanding of the Dharma, all our virtuous knowledge—all these are created by the guru omniscient mind. So also, as we achieve the true path, the fully seeing path, we attain the Sangha. As our Dharma is created by the guru omniscient mind, also our Sangha, our attainment Sangha is created by the guru omniscient mind. So thinking on individual side, our Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—for instance, my Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—is created by guru omniscient mind. So as it is created by guru omniscient mind, in the same way it is created by Guru Shakyamuni, those different manifestations of buddhas. Because without depending on the omniscient mind, the holy omniscient mind, there's no such other Buddha, there's no way that such other Buddha can exist separately, without depending on guru omniscient mind. So totally, the last, the end, how the omniscient mind guides us—this is one way to understand. That is in this way—of course, some people may find this subject very complicated, like soup, noodle soup—something going there, going there, the long noodle soup not the short one—but I think this may help us to have some kind of arrangement. To actually fully realize, and to clearly see it, to fully recognize—now, at the moment the problem that we have is recognition, not fully recognizing is our problem, not fully recognizing and not fully seeing in that way is our biggest problem. To achieve enlightenment this problem has to be solved; no being reached enlightenment without solving this problem. So meditation is necessary. To solve this problem meditation is necessary. Through continual practice of the meditation and purifying, one can fully see in this way, according to the evolution as it works in this way.

So we, working for enlightenment, actually sincerely working for the achievement of enlightenment, that itself is taking refuge, taking refuge in the result. There's a causative refuge and a resultant refuge. Actually from the individual's side, working for enlightenment, really trying to achieve enlightenment, is the actual way of taking refuge, causative refuge and resultant refuge. The resultant refuge is the individual future Buddha, and the causative refuge is the beings such as Guru Shakyamuni—the creator, different manifestations, being different manifestations, creating our virtuous knowledge, the path, the realization.

6 p.m.

The reason that I jumped from refuge to the morning prayer—we should actually understand when we say this prayer, in order to understand it, besides saying the refuge prayer words, to have understanding of the meaning. Also, taking the refuge and understanding what this powerful prayer says is very effective, taking the refuge by knowing the full evolution of the way it's working, the way they guide, the way the holy objects guide, the evolution of the holy objects—our own holy objects and the holy object belonging to other holy beings. Anyway, the refuge that is done, the refuge prayer that is said, the refuge done with holy objects with this understanding helps a great deal, and becomes very powerful for the purification of the impure dualistic mind and its impure view.

There is also a way of making confession and purifying with refuge. Traditional things such as counting the number of refuge—you say prayer of refuge and continue saying it 1,000,000 times—

this is a way also to do confession, purification, by visualizing the refuge object. Usually, when we create negative karma we create negative karma with sentient beings as the object, like this—cheating sentient beings, telling lies to other sentient beings, taking others' life, harming other beings, cunning, being jealous of other beings, proud of other beings, so many things. As we create negative karma with sentient beings as the object, also we create negative karma with Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—there are many things—creating negative karma with actual living beings, with actual living holy persons, and also the symbolic idols, the idols of the holy being. There are many ways karma accumulates, such as getting angry, breaking the orders, causing ... there are many things. Heresy arising, disbelief in the enlightened beings' teaching, or disbelief in the enlightened being—such as thinking, “There's no existence of the enlightened being,” or “There's no such enlightened being who fully sees past and future lives.” There are many ways of creating negative karma. And there's also negative karma created by depending on the guru from whom ... Anyway, there's also the possibility, so many ways of creating bad karma—causing trouble, causing unhappiness. Like, for instance, if the disciple does some very evil thing that breaks his vows or precepts or something, some very evil thing—just an example—and makes the guru unhappy in this way; things like this, unpeaceful. There are many other things, such as disbelief in and disrespect—things like this. With details there are many other things, but this is to have some idea.

The reason I am introducing these things is because if we want to receive enlightenment we have to know the points. If we don't know, although we want to be good, to receive enlightenment, we make mistakes. So, for the consciousness of those points I am saying these brief things. Creating negative karma with the Dharma is something like this—“The Mahayana path is very complicated, very confused, too much trouble; it is much more simple to follow, much better to follow the Hinayana path, which is less complicated, and try to achieve nirvana for oneself. This way is much quicker, the other is too complicated.” This is just an example. So criticizing like this is a very heavy negative karma. Also, saying such as in another way that, “The Mahayana path is not the path to enlightenment, is not shown by Buddha,” or “Vajrayana is not Buddha's teaching”—things like this. Also saying, “The Hinayana path is not path to enlightenment,” also criticizing the Hinayana path—that also creates negative karma, criticizing. Anyway, these are just a few examples, there are many other things.

Also, with the symbolic things there are many ways of creating negative karma, such as with the holy statues, Buddha figures, paintings, tangkas, and pictures of the Buddha. If these are put on the floor and put under the bed, under your seat, stepped over, put under the bed, under your seat, stepped over, put under the feet, used for kaka—anyway, I'm just giving you the idea. There are many things—using them to clean things, to clean pots, things like this. Why? We think it's just paper, but it's not like this. If we are going to talk about what is symbolized by each figure, each line, each spot, we can talk for years, for lifetimes about the meanings and the teachings symbolized by those figures, those lines. Anyway, it symbolizes—we don't understand—but it expresses, that holy being's figure or statue itself explains the knowledge, the infinite knowledge, the infinite great compassion, infinite powers. It's only a matter of from our side not realizing, not seeing, not recognizing. Just as the holy omniscient mind or Guru Shakyamuni, as he's that precious, priceless, having infinite great knowledge, it is the same thing with a statue, such as the figures of the holy being, enlightened being, these are also holy, just as Guru Shakyamuni is holy, just as omniscient mind is holy. And also, those things symbolize the holy omniscient mind; they have meaning, they contain much meaning of the teachings. It's like—another way—it's like the teaching that explains about the path and knowledge of the buddhas. Also we can understand their infinite knowledge and realization by looking at it, by checking through each thing. So they should be respected, they cannot be put on the floor, things

like this, they cannot be used for cleaning pots, or put under the seat. They always have to be a little bit higher than your place, higher than the seat on which you are sitting, in a better place, a clean place. Just as we should respect Guru Shakyamuni, in the same way we should respect them.

For instance, like this it is possible—even though you see a statue, from our side we see it as a statue, as an ordinary man, always as an ordinary something, but for certain people who have certain realizations, they see it as a real Buddha, with holy signs. They are seen at the same place, but seen in different ways than ordinary people. There are many past stories. Also, anyway, however it is, it is always creation—what we see, the statue, or the actual creation, nirmanakaya, sometimes in the form of a monk, in different ways although it is at the same place. The statue that we see, the ordinary person that we see, the object Buddha or nirmanakaya can be seen as Guru Shakyamuni exactly at the same place and same time by different people. The object they see in their view is the creation of their own minds, and depends on the level of realization and the amount of obscuration. Those who have deep devotion and less obscurations see it in this way, as a better object, as a living object, such as seeing the real Guru Shakyamuni. Also for us, also it is definitely possible to see in the figure of the enlightened being, a statue, as the real form of a living Buddha, by achieving realization, doing purification on the basis of strong devotion. It is definitely possible, it is just a matter of doing it, making that trip.

So, if you do like this, it creates negative karma—stepping over them, putting them in a dirty place, under the bed—things like this—stretching your legs towards the idols that symbolic things of holy beings, putting your feet on them, and also, putting dirty things on top of them. Also, carrying them with cushions used on the floor. In this way we create negative karma with the holy objects. We don't have any specific ill will, it is something we are doing out of ignorance, not knowing the evolution of karma. Even if it's not hurting Buddha, not hurting the holy omniscient mind, even if you break this statue into pieces making atoms, it never hurts the holy omniscient mind—how can it be possible? If it hurts, how could it be out of samsara? If that were possible, then there can't be holy omniscient mind! So we should be careful, be conscious and observe, protect, in order to save ourselves from suffering, from creating negative karma. Why does it create negative karma? Because the object is holy.

We shouldn't think that this is the same as robes, same as rubbish; the person may think it as same as rubbish, if one uses the object like this also one may create negative karma—not like this. Because those other things are not holy objects that explains the path, the enlightened knowledge. Therefore, it doesn't create negative karma. Some people may think if that is so, even if I step over or walk over anything it may create negative karma. This is not so—we cannot make everything as a soup. We cannot mix everything, milk and soup and honey and everything into one; sweet and salty—anyway, not like this.

So just as this, it is the same thing with the books, especially books that explain about teachings, about the path to release from suffering, that explain about the knowledge of Buddha, the nature of samsara, and the nature of suffering. Anyway, it is the same thing with the letters—even a piece of letter should be respected, cannot be stepped over, used for cleaning things, or put on the ground. It should be kept on your lap or put somewhere a little bit higher than your seat. And also, you cannot carry books with cushions together, or together with your bed. Anyway, also shoes—this way also creates negative karma, negative karma with Dharma, one creates negative karma with the holy object, Dharma. Why should it be respected? It is holy, a holy teaching. It's holy because it makes us holy; by understanding this, practicing on this, meditating on this, so we become holy. As we respect

Guru Shakyamuni, so we should respect this—Guru Shakyamuni also became holy by understanding this, so we become holy. As we respect Guru Shakyamuni, so we should respect this—Guru Shakyamuni also becomes holy by understanding this, these subjects. This explanation, meaning, is something that releases us from samsaric suffering; not just from temporal suffering, from all the wrong conceptions, so it's a holy object. So always try to remember how it helps, this way of helping, and try to respect it—this is something that gradually makes your mind holy and yourself become completely holy. Also other buddhas became holy through this, these understandings, this practice. So see the value as this. Whether the person accepts karma or not, it doesn't matter; he still creates negative karma.

This is out of doubt, lack of knowledge—thinking that if person doesn't believe in negative karma he doesn't create negative karma. This is our knowledge taught by ignorance—thinking like this is a mistake. If that were true then this is the same thing—a person kills another because he thinks it's good. For example, a soldier, in order to receive the reputation that he's brave, thinks how much he can kill other people, thinks it's good, thinks that the more he can kill the better, stronger, he feels that much more precious. His not accepting it as negative karma doesn't mean it doesn't become negative karma—it does not depend on his understanding, his recognition. Otherwise, it becomes like this—if without understanding, without recognition one doesn't create negative karma, but with understanding and recognition one creates it—then no reason to practice Dharma. Then, better to take LSD (I'm joking). Many people think like this, but it is a big mistake, cheating oneself—instead of making profit, cheating oneself. Also, this is what is explained. These evolutions, these karmas are negative because of the suffering result—this was explained by the Enlightened Being in his teaching. There are many stories of those who suffered negative karmic results through such actions. Generally, like this—for instance, even if there are a few letters, they should be respected if it is possible, as much as you have the chance, not used for something else. Anyway, as much as possible they should be respected, according to the chance that you have. Like this, why is it holy—another way of saying—the letters? Because the whole knowledge of enlightenment has to be achieved by depending on those words. For instance, to receive enlightenment, all that enlightened knowledge, depends on the practice of the path. The practice of the path depends on the full understanding of the meaning of the path. That teaching has to be listened to or received from guru, and also you have to study the text—same thing, making notes, same thing, reading those meditation books—like this time we planted some seeds in our mind, we created some good karma. So from this good karma, this seed that we planted in this time, the seed is left, the impression is left on the mind by meditating, studying, or reading the teaching, and we are also creating good karma through this—this causes us to receive the realization of the meditation. This becomes a little donation to the cause of receiving realization, and these realizations become the cause of higher realizations, and those the cause of enlightenment. So receiving enlightenment depends on, is rooted in, the seed, the impressions, the good karma created by reading this book and listening to the teachings in these words, these twenty-six letters of the English alphabet—receiving teachings in these twenty-six letters—reading, studying these talks and explanations in the twenty-six letters. So the seed, the impression that is left, helps up to enlightenment. The enlightened knowledge is received by depending on these twenty-six letters of the alphabet—if there's no A, no B, how to translate? Therefore, they should be respected, they are also a holy teaching. Therefore, sometimes thinking like this, we should respect these books and letters as Dharma. We should respect them. For instance, just the letter "A." Without depending on this there's no way to explain the teaching, to follow the path, to receive enlightenment to discover the sufferings, because this is like the life of the letter. For instance if the person has no life it is dead; another way of saying is that it is like the brain.

So, Sangha—many negativity can be created with the Sangha. Getting angry, getting jealous, pride, causing disunity, causing harmful actions, causing unhappy mind, such as punishing them. There are many things such as this—in place of respecting, abusing.

So anyway, the whole thing is this—according to the person, there is also a way of saying the prayer a number of times to purify all the negative karmas created in previous lives. When this is done, when we do these prayers, even a few times, if you can say the refuge prayer with this understanding it is very meaningful.

Also think like this—when you eat food there are two ways.

1. As in meditation time, completely visualize yourself in the form of Guru Shakyamuni. Completely thinking that you are the real Guru Shakyamuni, without the wrong conception of the self-existing “I,” being devoid of the view of the self-existing “I” and the impure dualistic view. Then as you are enjoying tea and food, or whatever enjoyment is being offered, as you enjoy them, think that you are offering them to Guru Shakyamuni and that Guru Shakyamuni is enjoying it, taking it, like this. Same thing, when you put clothes on you can think like this—you are in the form of Guru Shakyamuni and you are making an offering of clothes. This can also be done. This way all the enjoyment of the senses becomes an offering, can be used as an offering to Guru Shakyamuni. Practicing in this way has a great purpose to achieve enlightenment soon, to receive our future enlightenment more quickly, to come closer to our future enlightenment, to becoming Guru Shakyamuni. It is a very special, profound technique or teaching. There is no need to explain much at the moment, but it is very useful to do this. Especially if you do retreat, try to always be conscious of yourself as Guru Shakyamuni—when you meditate and when you don’t meditate—it helps a great deal to have less distraction in the meditation. Anyway, this helps until enlightenment is achieved.

2. Then, another way of making an offering. Even though you don’t visualize yourself as Guru Shakyamuni, always visualize that Guru Shakyamuni is seated at your heart. As you visualize outside, that manifestation of the holy omniscient mind that is called Guru Shakyamuni, the same thing visualize at the heart.

And as you enjoy the food, try to completely dedicate to Guru Shakyamuni, don’t think, “It is mine, it is my share”—then it is a real egocentric action—”This is my share, this is for me, this is for my pleasure.” Besides being egocentric, this is an action of attachment, the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. A powerful, beneficial way of eating the food by the meditators, by the truth seekers, is dedicating the food, completely dedicating the food to Guru Shakyamuni, who is the holy omniscient mind manifested as Guru Shakyamuni. Or can think of him as the total manifestation of all buddhas, as he is.

First, completely dedicate, “It only belongs to Guru Shakyamuni, it is not mine.” If it is food that belongs to him, there is the idea that it is his share, and no conception that the food in his bowl it is my enjoyment. There will be a similar feeling to this, the mind detached from his food; so the same thing if you strongly think that this completely belongs to him. This is the real way of dedicating. Why? Because you are throwing the attachment—actually you are giving it up. Why? You are giving up the attachment to the food and the self-cherishing thought—there are two things to be given up—self-cherishing thought and the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. So this way also destroys miserliness. Giving this up does not depend on throwing the food out or not eating it; only

that does not mean giving up—even if a person is not using things, still he can be involved. Only that action is not giving up—in fact it can be the opposite, cannot be giving up, because the action of using the food or things can be involved, can be an action of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, so how can that be pure giving up? You are not doing it for a Dharma reason but for a samsaric reason. So by thinking this, then you enjoy and take the food as you are offering it to Guru Shakyamuni, visualizing the guru holy omniscient mind that is manifested as Guru Shakyamuni. Same thing, with the lotus, sun, moon, also visualize this here. And this way, even though you are eating food, the visualization becomes a cause for enlightenment, a cause to release you from suffering. Such a small action becomes the cause of such a thing, becomes a very practical, very beneficial action.

Then after, also you can think that Guru Shakyamuni has received infinite pleasure, happiness, by being offered this food. Then after eating the food, from Guru Shakyamuni's holy body as there is an aura, much light, and many beams coming, your whole body is full of light and all your obscurations of nirvana and enlightenment are completely dispelled in the form of darkness from your body.

Question: What actions should be dedicated to the sentient beings?

Answer: Even though you practice this you can dedicate. First you offer to the holy object, and second you dedicate to the sentient beings. There are many technical ways to think, there are many different ways to use the actions—the Mahayana way, the tantric way, many ways to use them. Each method becomes more and more profound, deeper; each action, according to the practitioner's understanding and his practice, can be made a very profound method to receive enlightenment.

Question: Can you dedicate the food to the holy omniscient mind and the merits of that to the sentient beings?

Answer: Most welcome! You can do it in both ways—like this. Like the actor—you just watch what he does, it's nothing that you practice, just an object of watching. Anyway, maybe not.

You Can think like this, some simple thing—the enjoyment when you take food, any enjoyment you receive with tongue and mouth, think that all sentient beings receive this enjoyment that I feel now, dedicate like this. Especially the different divisions of the sentient beings—narak, preta, animal—your mind thinking of the different groups—“I am dedicating the enjoyments to all these sentient beings.” This is very effective. Perhaps as you just say “sentient being” there is no feeling in the mind, only emptiness. So by going through the suffering beings—narak, preta, animal, human, sura, asura—the sentient beings, the other sentient beings who are not enlightened, all of them receive this enjoyment, this taste. Think that each of them is feeling the same taste that you are feeling—try to dedicate in this way. Not only do they receive this taste enjoyment, but by receiving these taste enjoyments, it becomes nectar, all this enjoyment, taste that they are receiving. And then it completely purifies all their negativities and delusions, even the subtle delusions. All of them are purified, and all of them become Guru Shakyamuni, like this. This can be done with the enjoyments, with the taste. Because when the food gets in the mouth or the tongue there is pleasure—so it is very good to dedicate like this also, one way. The food itself can be dedicated, like the enjoyment, as if all these sentient beings who are in six different samsaric realms receive it as if you have completely dedicated it for them. Think that, “I have completely dedicated for them, given up for every number of sentient beings,” and think that as they receive it, as they enjoy it, it becomes the

cause of solving whatever sufferings or problems they have. Like pretas, they feel hungry as well as experiencing other sufferings, so enjoying this food becomes a cause to release them from their problems. Same with the narak and animal beings. This very a powerful, technical practice. Especially it is important to use these techniques in retreat time, as they help a great deal for purification and for meditation.

Question: Can sacrificing other beings and dedicating this to Guru Shakyamuni create good karma?

Answer: Harming other sentient beings is the opposite of Dharma. As we take refuge in Dharma, we cannot harm any other beings—the stronger we avoid harming other beings the stronger our refuge becomes.

Answer: Same as the previous question. Taking drugs and eating food—dedicating that is different. Taking the drug depends on person—for some people it causes them to become crazy and lose the mind ... That kind of action is forbidden from the Dharma point of view, because that action doesn't help the person, only causing confusion. That is different from dedicating LSD as any of your possessions can be dedicated—as any possession can be dedicated, drugs can be dedicated too—it is also a possession. Dedicating it is skillful action, but taking it, which causes more confusion, suffering and death problem, is not a skillful action, that is an ignorant action. It's an ignorant action, the same thing as a sacrifice offering—it only causes you to suffer in samsara. The same thing I mentioned before—the Brahmin family where the father was born as cow or buffalo and sacrificed six times by the son.

First quote (Page 11)

The story is about these two great yogis, Tilopa and Naropa. Naropa is the disciple, and he received enlightenment in the intermediate stage, or after death or something, due to something. There was some study that he did with his great guru, yogi Tilopa. They were not just ordinary meditators, they had incredible psychic powers, tantric powers to use poison as medicine, to enjoy kaka as nectar in great infinite bliss nature—not just simple people. Anyway, as Naropa, the follower of the great yogi Tilopa, was coming in, he saw a statue of a tantric deity, another manifestation of the guru omniscient mind, of Guru Shakyamuni, a tantric aspect, a deity who is a great yogi. As Naropa was coming in, Tilopa asked him, “Who are you going to prostrate to first, me or the deity Heruka?” So Naropa thought, “It is more important to prostrate to the deity,” so he prostrated first to the deity and then to his guru. Then Tilopa said this quotation. This explains what we talked about earlier today, about the evolution of the guru omniscient mind. This explains the whole thing in two short sentences. This has much sense, it has a very vast meaning, much explanation. Totally, it means that without the omniscient mind, there's no existence any other Buddha, there wouldn't be anything called Buddha. So what the great yogi Naropa did was inauspicious. Actually, he was supposed to first make prostration to the guru and then to the deity, according to the evolution. So Tilopa said this was inauspicious, kind of like a bad omen, and due to that something happened in the future. Also, there are some good things—auspicious things.

Last sentence (Page 12)

“The guru is oneness” In reality the guru is sameness with the Three Jewels.

Generally it is like this—in ancient times, also in Tibet, the meditator first of all checks the guru, he tries to find out all the information—how he practices, how he is in regards to daily life, his knowledge—he checks up. Take Atisha, who wanted to receive the teaching from the great bodhisattva, Serlingpa. At that time Serlingpa was well far-famed for giving bodhicitta teachings. But the great pandit Atisha didn't take the teachings right away upon his arrival in the country where the great Serlingpa was. First of all—the great bodhisattva Serlingpa, his followers, his meditators—before going to take teachings from this great guru, he checked up with the meditators, the followers, about his knowledge, daily life, many things. He spent some time, and then he went to take teachings from this great bodhisattva. Then, after receiving teachings for twelve years, he also became a great bodhisattva. It took much time for the great yogi Atisha, it took almost three months on the ocean, by going on the ship crossing the ocean. He had a very hard time on the way due to hindrances. Because he was going to take teachings on bodhicitta, to be able to realize, to receive bodhicitta, the evil doers, the black spirits, tried to hinder him so in order to interrupt his receiving the teachings and realizations of bodhicitta.

Day 20

Wednesday, December 5th

5 a.m.

The action of taking ordination should necessarily be possessed by the pure thought, bodhicitta. Besides being possessed by the pure thought, that is, devoid of evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, that which does not allow action to become Dharma, it should also not be possessed by the self-cherishing thought, that which is opposite to bodhicitta, since it is indefinite that we can continue to take this Mahayana ordination. Therefore, it is fortunate take the ordination with a pure thought, the Mahayana impulse. This creates a powerful particular cause for enlightenment. Like this impulse, “The attachment that is attached to the happiness of the temporal life, and the attachment that is attached to the happiness of the higher samsaric pleasures is only the cause of suffering, it is the creator of sufferings. Therefore, there is no need to follow these negative minds. Also, however much we can make this temporal life happy and also receive higher samsaric pleasures even in future lives, it is only in the nature of suffering. And as there's not one single tiny samsaric happiness left that we have not experienced, as we have experienced all of them countless times, same thing, there's not one tiny samsaric suffering left that we never experienced, as we have experienced all of them countless times. Same thing, there's not one samsaric higher pleasure left that we have never experienced, as we have experienced them countless times, same thing, no heavy suffering is left that we have never experienced, as we have experienced them countless times. The enjoyments of those samsaric pleasures will always cause sufferings. Therefore, for many of these reasons, there's nothing to be attached to, there's no reason to have interest in them. Same thing, there's not any samsaric bondage of suffering; nothing has helped yet, no matter how much we enjoyed samsaric pleasures, they are only keeping us in the bondage of suffering.

“So as we came in time to recognize these things, and receive the teachings, it is wise that we try as quickly as possible to release ourselves from samsaric suffering. Releasing oneself from suffering is not enough—there are infinite sentient beings from whom we received our past, present, and future happiness, and we must repay them for their kindness. The best way to repay them is to release them from suffering and lead them into enlightenment, as most of them are in terrible suffering and have not met Dharma. At present I have no capability—I have not even the capability to recognize my own nature, and even do not fully realize what is positive action and negative action, what is my own positive mind and negative mind. So who has the capability? Only Buddha has the capability,

the supreme knowledge, power, and compassion. Therefore, it is necessary for me to achieve enlightenment first, it is necessary to subdue my mind. How quickly I receive enlightenment depends on how strictly I abstain—keep my body, speech, and mind away from the vices, from the negative actions. So, the best method is to keep the precepts. Therefore, I am going to take Mahayana ordination.”

(Ordination)

Even if we are suffering from cold, think that this is just like an atom, this tiny suffering cold is like an atom, like playing. There is much greater cold suffering than this to be experienced, soon in the future—such as those cold narak realm sufferings. Tonight, tomorrow, after one hour—so not sure. Think, “As this suffering is unbearable to me I must make strong Dharma practice, stronger than this suffering, to escape away from the cause of suffering,” using your suffering to build energy.

(Lama Thubten Yeshe)

(Rinpoche)

From the holy teaching of the great guru, bodhisattva Tenzin Gyatso, “Those who desire the benefit of the sentient beings, when they check up what can benefit sentient beings with their compassion for the sentient beings, it is discovered that bodhicitta is the best.”

Those who desire to benefit sentient beings, such as Guru Shakyamuni, when those noble beings check up with their great compassion for sentient beings, it is found that generally bodhicitta, developing bodhicitta, is the best, the most practical thing. As they discover this with their great compassion, at such a time as this during the existence of the Mahayana teachings, the guru showing, and having the fortune to develop bodhicitta, it is foolish not to develop, practice, and meditate on bodhicitta. It's like a person who arrived by a fortunate opportunity in a jewel land, but went back without taking jewels, being empty—just like this. Still, that example can never compare to the great waste, the great loss of such chances to practice bodhicitta—this is much greater than that example. Therefore, even for one hour, two hours of the action of listening to the teachings, it is important that the action be possessed by the pure thought of bodhicitta. Not only this, but trying to achieve bodhicitta leaves more and more impressions, plants seed in order to find bodhicitta more easily; it has many purposes. That is why I often repeat, emphasize this before the subject. There is much importance to this.

At the very beginning, when the teaching is given, the teacher checking the impulse and developing the impulse is one particular way of giving teachings. It is one kind of knowledge, some special way of giving, explaining Buddhadharma. Especially for ordinary people it is necessary, it is important. Especially for ordinary people, it is necessary to repeat. But teaching about impulse is not emphasized in other religions—this is a particular thing of giving Buddhadharma. One hour, two hours, one day, whatever work we do, it becomes practical to one's own mind, it becomes beneficial, it becomes like medicine to subdue the negative mind. It has great importance.

Totally, this is why I often repeat. Now it seems we are doing Dharma, but this depends on individual things, not sure, depends on the person himself. The reason that we are doing this course or explaining all these things are not to use them to create negative karma, to create samsara. It is to be able to go into the Dharma. Therefore, I often start the subject with an impulse, no matter what

I'm taking about. Dharma—if it doesn't go into Dharma it doesn't become effective. The main thing, our hang-up is this—not understanding the subject but trying to subdue the negative mind, the hindrances to receiving nirvana. This depends on understanding, so it is necessary to understand the subject. The main thing is to purify, and it is necessary to understand the subject. The main thing is to purify the inside. From my side, I plan for that, so it is important from your side to also do it, to become practical. Like, if the president, ministers, and population all agree, all the minds are going in the same direction, then it becomes powerful. If a country's independence gets lost, to regain it, all the people's minds should be harmonious, with the same aim—then the independence can be gained soon. But if the top person thinks one way and the population another way, it is very difficult and takes a long time to bring success. So just like this example, the aim, the main point, the reason that you are listening, that is so important—your main aim, for what main aim you are listening to Dharma, doing meditation—it is important for that to be correct. So anything you are listening to—if I tell a story, give an example—if your aim is to clean your negative mind, to change the actions from negative actions and change the mind from negative mind, the delusions, if your main aim, main point is that, what you think in your mind, then everything that you listen to becomes helpful, becomes method, helps for that change, to subdue the negative mind, to fertilize the unsubdued mind. This is important. Sometimes, for certain people, it becomes effective, beneficial; for others it doesn't become beneficial, effective, it doesn't make sense, it makes them tired—one reason is not planning for that, not listening to the subject for the main point, fertilizing the unsubdued mind. We are truth seekers, but truth seekers receiving truth is not easy, not easy; it's not easy.

Also, same thing, so it came out of this talk. Actually, doing this course—who gives the course? You give the course to yourself; if you don't there is no progression in your mind. So the individual is responsible for the progression of the generous mind, not negative mind, the noble mind—it is an individual responsibility. Meditation time is the place of thinking of some other thing, the mind thinking like dreams—a dream has no exact thing, all kinds of things are happening, we are not trying to remember the subject, not following the subject. For instance, like this: if one person never tasted the taste, how can I give an idea of the taste to him? Then he gets taste, gets an idea—same thing with the meditations. You have to put in the mouth—it is not enough holding it in the hand, you can't taste candy without putting in the mouth—then try to be conscious, check it. In the same way we should work in these meditations. So just like this—without your own trying, the person not tasting the candy, how can he contradict that there's no such taste? That is foolish.

Think, “Besides releasing myself from samsara I must reach enlightenment to release all beings from suffering and lead them into enlightenment. Therefore, I am going to listen to Mahayana teachings on the graduated path.”

If it is divided into three, we are in the path of the lower being. The subjects so far finished according to the outlines—“Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Great Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Great Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Perfect Human Rebirth is Very Fragile And Impermanent,” “No Other Method Can Stop Death,” So “Death is Definite.” After death for us it is more definite that we will be born in the three lower realms and “The Actual Time of That Rebirth is Not Definite.” So therefore, before the danger, it is necessary to stop, to make arrangements to stop those future sufferings, to close the door of the suffering beings ahead of time.

Why is there such a thing as the mind not seeing at death as it did before rebirth? In the West recently one man died and the doctors declared completely him dead and put him in a box, and took

him to the cemetery, where there are tombs. Then a priest came. There was a noise in the box, crying; they opened it and the doctors checked up and proved in their view that he was really dead. But they couldn't understand what or how it is.

In regards to sufferings, there are the sufferings of the narak, preta, and animal realms. So how do we try to make the arrangements to save ourselves from the future danger of the suffering realms? We, from our side don't have any capabilities to save ourselves from this danger—no power, no method from our side. So have to rely on someone who has complete control over rebirth in the suffering realms; and someone who besides having complete control, also has the cessation of delusions, the achievement of the cessation of the delusions and the true path.

The most perfect, the ultimate object is Buddha, or the Enlightened Being, the holy omniscient mind. Totally, the most ultimate object of refuge, the ultimate object of refuge, the ultimate Buddha—another way of saying it is the absolute buddha, the omniscient mind, the most ultimate object of refuge. There are two—absolute buddha and relative buddha. Svabhavakaya and dharmakaya are—as is written here (page 69)—absolute buddha, and sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya are relative buddha.

Here is just a brief example of that knowledge, the different aspects of refuge, the absolute buddha and relative buddha. This is just to have an idea, some seed. But actually it is a very vast subject, something you have to study through extensive discourses, such as those texts shown by Maitreya the future buddha, and those ancient great philosophers—by study and with practice, you can understand deeper and wider. But the time when one achieves enlightenment is when one really fully realizes this.

I. The Knowledge of Buddha (Page 69)

A. The Totally Omniscient Buddha's Knowledge

1. Svabhavakaya—*ngö* is nature; *nyid* is self; *ku* (Skt. *kaya*) is holy body; *she.dip* is the impression of the delusions—that is the clearest way to say *she.dip*.

For instance, now at the moment, each person, each sentient being, has its own clear light nature of mind, each sentient being's mind has clear light nature. So now, at the moment, even though we have clear light nature, the mind has clear light nature, we cannot call it svabhavakaya because it is not completely purified of those two defilements. So, whenever the nature of our mind is completely purified of those two negative minds, it becomes the svabhavakaya of our future buddhahood. Same as the example as I mentioned before, when our clothes are dirty, not washed—there are clothes existing before they were washed, even after they were washed, the clothes exist. So there is always the nature of our mind, but at the moment it is obscured, like the cloth that has much dirt. When the clear light nature of our cloth is completely cleaned of dirt, just like that, it is same thing with the mind.

2. Dharmakaya

So as the clear light nature of mind goes like this, it always exists like this. While it's obscured by delusions and when the obscuration are purified, it always exists. At that time, as we achieve the enlightened stage, the clear light nature of that mind becomes the clear light nature of the

omniscient mind, the clear light nature of our future buddhahood. This is the same thing as the clear light nature of mind, same thing with the mind.

We people think that mind is one with negativity, one with delusion, oneness with delusion. That means, to be able to achieve the stage of enlightenment the mind has to be ceased, the mind has to be cut off. We, many Westerners, also think that at the death time mind ceases, like the flame of the candle; when it finishes there is no continuity, when extinguished, no continuity. Thinking the mind is oneness, the mind itself is delusion, is a big mistake—mind itself is not delusion, mind itself is not oneness. Thinking that the mind has to be ceased in order to reach enlightenment—not like this, not in this way. As the mind is not inseparable with delusion, so even though the present mind is living in delusion, when we purify the delusions, when the obscurations are completely purified, that mind becomes omniscient mind—the continuity of this mind that is living in delusion obscured by delusion, the continuity, the future, the continuity of this mind, that itself becomes the omniscient mind.

Just like this—just like a man. Before, in his childhood, he didn't have any knowledge. So by going to school, college, university, and slowly being educated, his mind becomes more and more, he becomes less and less unknowing of those subjects such as mathematics, as taught in school, college, and university. Then later he takes the highest degree—just like this. But before, the person who did not know any of those subjects in earlier life was him—the same person, the same continuity. The same person not knowing was him, was the continuity of the person who becomes a doctor in the future. It is his continuity, a similar person, the same continuity, even though he may have a different name, is now called doctor according to his qualifications, according to his knowledge. It is the same continuity from the time he was born until then. So same thing, the present mind we have now and the future mind that is completely out of obscurations is the continuity of same mind; just as in the example of the person. Only because of the obscurations and relationship with the object it is called, “sentient being's mind,” and the other in the future is called, “omniscient mind.” So it's a big mistake to think that mind has to cease. Then it would be like this—the person, to become a doctor, the person may have to be ceased, the person not knowing the subjects has to cease in order to be qualified as a doctor.

Just as this, there are also many examples. For instance, the pot—when we put it on the fire it becomes red, burnt by the fire for a long time. Before it was, for instance, the frying pan, before it was black; but then, after keeping it on the fire for long time, it becomes all red—but the iron is still there, the frying pan is still there. Before being burnt by fire, there is the frying pan; after being burnt, it is still there. The pan is always there, same thing.

Or hair—it's first black but as the person gets older it turns white. Like the animal hairs, color changes; but the hair is always there, it was black, it becomes white. Same thing with our mind. While it is obscured by delusions it is the sentient being's mind, when it is cleared of delusions it is omniscient mind—but the continuity is the same. Because of this, and the pure nature of the mind, as it is not oneness with delusion, it is just temporarily obscured by delusion, because of this logic, these reasons, all sentient beings can reach enlightenment—those who are suffering in the narak realms, suffering in the preta realms, like this. So therefore, there's a generation—the Tibetan term is called *rig*—that every sentient beings' mind has the ability to become an enlightened being.

Dharmakaya—so, such as our future dharmakaya, Guru Shakyamuni's dharmakaya, the omniscient mind of Buddha—it has the power of understanding like this (see also page 70, 3(a)). For instance,

as Guru Shakyamuni has the achievement of dharmakaya he has such a great power of understanding. If every number of infinite sentient beings ask questions, different questions to him, by saying one word he has the power to give answers to each number of sentient beings, to their questions. He mentions one word—his holy speech—and this can be heard, his holy words in different way, it becomes one word that he mentioned, his holy word—becomes a different answer to the different questions. It gives all the answers in different ways to all the sentient beings, according to their questions. Also, when he was giving the sermons on the explanations of Dharma in previous time to his followers, such as the arhats, different-level minded followers, as he mentioned, “This is impermanent”—someone who has higher intelligence hears, “Shunyata, absolute nature,” and someone else hears, “Impermanent,” according to the level of intelligence. Just as the example we were talking about regarding the physical manifestation according to the level of mind, so same thing, his holy speech has the incredible power to work in this way, as his holy body can manifest in billions and billions of different manifestations.

And his dharmakaya has such great power of understanding, reading, able to clearly see every single thought of sentient beings, at the same time, in one split second. His dharmakaya has such great power to fully, clearly see all the sentient beings’ different thoughts at the same time. Not only this, but clearly, fully seeing all the past, all the future; he clearly sees everything, even one shortest second, everything he sees is like having an apple in the hand, so clearly—this is just an example, an idea. (But we don’t really clearly see, even if we have fruit in the hand, if there are worms inside without opening from the outside.)

That his dharmakaya fully, clearly sees all the past, present, and future, everything, every existence, at the same time in the shortest second, it is always like this, for even—not for one day, a few hours—since he received the dharmakaya, it is forever like this, without change.

So this is the knowledge of the omniscient mind, the dharmakaya. For instance, all the bushes that are in the different countries, trees, and the mountains put in the ocean, made into such tiny pieces and mixed up with everything. Then take a little bit from there that is stirred in the ocean and, for instance, each atom, like sand, wood, or dust, whatever it is, asking where each one is from before? He can clearly see each piece, each sand, those tiny things—which mountain, which place, his holy dharmakaya has such that knowledge.

I think many people have doubt about omniscient mind, “How can it be possible to achieve such mind? We don’t have it in the West.” I think many think like this, “And I don’t have it.” It is definitely possible to think this way, but it’s important from your side to check up, to figure out the example that I have given. One way person was a baby before, not able to say even “mother.” Then slowly, slowly the baby learns, the cooperative cause is that the parents talk to him, so he slowly learns in that way. Then as he is sent to school he learns those different subjects, the mind becomes knowledgeable in these subjects; and then to college and university. And then, studying such as religion, many things. Then his mind becomes much more knowledgeable, understanding so many things; gradually, there’s a way to develop like this. As long as his life permits, if he exists 500 years he can develop that much; 1000, 10,000—he can develop more and more, learn more and more things. Also learning all the different countries’ customs, religions, many other subjects. So by continually studying the subject he doesn’t know, his mind becomes more and more knowledgeable like this—more knowledgeable than usual people. This is one example.

One example is—there are people in the world who can predict things, predict next year, have powers to foretell. This is not crazy; besides in the East, there are so many in the West, there are many things that occur, such as children remembering past lives. Even in the West, there are so many who tell stories to the parents; also the parents gets shocked because the child remembers what he did in an earlier life—this happened many times—it is not crazy, because what he said in the past, the father proved it; and also what he predicted in the future occurred, So this knowledge can be developed by following the meditations, through certain techniques it can be developed. And seeing—as the example, remembering just one past and one future life—besides this, there is the possibility to see all the past and all future by following bodhisattva's path, the Mahayana path. There are ten grades, ten levels to achieve enlightenment from—if one does not, there's no way to be closer to enlightenment by following these ten levels without depending on tantric practice. So when one reaches this level one has the ability to see 100, 1000 past lives, as one proceeds further on the levels. At the same time, as the person perceives thousands of past lives, the person sees thousands of future lives—gradually it develops like this. You see, the reason why the other person, who studies in schools and universities like this, even though his knowledge can be developed bigger and bigger like this with different methods—touring the world and soon—why can't he predict things? Because the method that causes him to have that knowledge is missing, so that is why his mind doesn't have that knowledge—he didn't follow the method that causes him to have that knowledge. So the best practical, actual, perfect method is following the bodhisattva path. The quick way to develop this understanding and knowledge is following the bodhisattva path, which leads to enlightenment. So by following these methods, that knowledge, the understanding of the past and future, one can predict things, can be developed more and more, up to the time of mind becoming omniscient.

You shouldn't think that receiving the omniscient mind is something that falls into your mind from outside. The mind that will become omniscient we have here, now; we are using it in many different ways—we are using it to create samsara, to create our own suffering, which we don't want. It is like this, we shouldn't think it is something falling down from outside. So as there is the possibility to develop gradually, in this way it is definitely possible to receive omniscient mind, the holy omniscient mind. If you think in this way it makes it understandable, you have something to check up; with nothing in the book, if there's no letter, nothing written, you can't check this subject, the paper is empty. So like this you can check up. If you have doubt, think in this way, check up with these examples.

You have to understand, either with this logic or with the explanations, quotations that are explanations. If you don't understand, if one don't understand through this, then you have to think through logic, check up. Actually, you cannot see clearly at the moment, while the mind is kept in obscurity, in the deluded mind. So we cannot see clearly, as we see on palm of the hand, like this we cannot clearly see—because we didn't experiment, it's not our experience, so how can we see clearly if there is the existence of path and method, and develop this knowledge? If you are going to wait to practice the method using this logic and these quotations and following the path until you see clearly as you see the palm of your hand, then it is impossible—it is impossible for the person if he tries in that way, waiting.

3.Sambhogakaya

(e) *tse.n.sang*—to mention everything—there's also, each thing has its own cause. While Guru Shakyamuni was following path, the cause of these thirty-two and eighty perfections were created; so

there are also explanations about the cause he created to achieve all of this—so, if you want to understand all with details, then later on, after, you can try.

tse.n.sang there are certain knowledges, holy signs, such as the hairs on his holy body that go up, while ours go down. Under the feet, there's no arch, it's full; and very soft skin, like small baby's skin; and it is higher in front, here (chest). He has long hands, and webbed fingers. This means that he is a holy being, but all of these things have merit, the cause was created while he was in the training. It is not something that was uncaused. The color of his skin is golden, and his skin is very thin. There are many things.

Pe.je—the color of the nails is copper, that is one of the *pe.je*. The *pe.je* mean that he has the achievement of such knowledge inside.

Anyway, with details you can study deeper afterwards, from other teachings that have further explanation. But it is fortunate to know even this much, the knowledge of the enlightened beings.

6 p.m.
(Page 70)

B. The Knowledge of the Perfected One's Holy Body, Speech, and Mind

1. Buddha's Holy Body

For instance, the ordinary beings on this earth, all their fortunes and merits made together still cannot compare to the merits, the cause of the result of such a tiny part of his holy body, like the pores of his holy body. Even we ordinary people, our merits put together cannot compare with the cause of that result of a tiny part of his holy body the size of the pores—still cannot compare.

Telling with just a little more details so that we can have some idea—to achieve just a tiny part of his holy body, how much good karma we have to create. This way we can understand how Guru Shakyamuni had patience to surmount the difficulties to complete the path, and how much merit he created. We are expecting to receive enlightenment without experiencing any difficulties, in a week, a month. Anyway, Guru Shakyamuni created merits over three countless great eons; by creating merits for that long he received enlightenment, he received the holy body whose tiniest part, even the pores, are composed of a great collection of merits. The followers following the lesser vehicle, the Hinayana path, and those beings like samsaric gods who have great fortune of possessions—those who are following the path and all those higher samsaric gods—and all the worldly beings' fortunes, all that together—becomes a cause to achieve a tiny part of his holy body, the pores. That much fortune is one cause to attain one tiny part of his holy body; only one pore, not all the pores.

Making this cause 100 times becomes a cause of the holy signs, *pe.je* and *tse.n.sang*, so hundreds of these causes is the tiny pore, one pore of Guru Shakyamuni's holy body, so hundreds of these causes becomes the cause to achieve one holy sign, one *pe.je* (the meaning is, the holy sign outside, which proves he has the achievement of inner knowledge). Such as the example that I mentioned before, the color of the nail copper, this is one example of *pe.je*—so to achieve this one sign requires hundreds of these causes.

So there are about eighty of these *pe.je*, so by making hundreds of the cause of all these *pe.je*, this becomes the cause to achieve one *tse.n.sang*, of which there are thirty-two in number. That is to

signify or to prove that he is a true or holy being. The hundreds of the causes of all the *pe.je* are the causes to achieve one *tse.n.sang*. Just even one hair that is standing up, one sign *tse.n.sang*—the cause, hundreds of the cause which bring the result, all the *pe.je* become one cause to achieve just one *tse.n.sang* such as the example of having long fingers or one tiny hair. So thousands of fortunes, that many causes are needed to be created for the thirty-two holy signs called *tse.n.sang*—so making thousands of those causes of this holy sign, *tse.n.sang* becomes one cause to achieve this wisdom hair. So thousands of those—there's that many causes needed to achieve the wisdom hair, the curl—thousands of these causes are the cause to achieve the hair knot. The cause that brings the result, attainment of this is 100,000 of these. 100,000 of these causes is the cause to achieve the hair knot. So 10 times 100,000 is called *che.wa*, so 100,000 times that is the cause for achieving the hair knot. Then much more, more than ten times, 100,000 times of that cause then becomes the cause to achieve the Buddha's holy speech.

So as Guru Shakyamuni's different holy signs, each of these, each pore, each hair works for sentient beings, besides fully seeing every single existence just as a high holy omniscient mind, each of these can work for sentient beings, can make the work of speech. Each of these hairs, pores, his holy body—this is part of the holy body, but each one of these tiny things can work for sentient beings by doing the actions of all three, body, speech, and mind. They can be the mind fully realizing, and the action of the speech working for the sentient beings, showing different methods, giving different methods orally. Even if it is Dharma, giving different explanations according to the level of this being. And also each tiny one of these can manifest in billions, great numbers of embodiments, according to sentient beings. Each tiny part of his holy body is the same as the whole thing, it has the whole knowledge of the holy speech, holy body, and holy mind. Not like ours, just the physical, ours is different—the speech cannot do what body can do, the body cannot do the actions of our speech, and the mind cannot do the actions of speech or body. We have to depend on all of these three. Each of these things cannot do as even a single hair of Guru Shakyamuni can do—as regards power, it is much limited.

For instance, without making the physical tour we cannot really clearly see the place, things. Mind itself has no power to go there and see things—like this body being here doing meditation, and the mind going to the West visiting friends, enjoying those things. To do this, the body has to be there, the physical body meditating here has to be there. But Guru Shakyamuni has such great knowledge, that wherever his holy mind is, there is his holy speech, and wherever his holy speech is, his holy body is too—actually, there's no such place where there is no existence of Guru Shakyamuni—it is good also to meditate like this. After the absorption think of this, because this is what we are going to be after enlightenment. This is a special technique, a profound special technique to train in even from now. Anyway, there is no need to explain much of these points.

Also in other texts, such as the Bible, there is talk that the holy mind is everywhere. So by clearly understanding the graduated path it is definitely possible to understand those other subjects, what they mean. The problem is this. Not from their side, the problem, it is from our side—in this way it comes to the same point—so it is not only in the Tibetan Buddhist dharma. But why we do not see it, why? It is important to know this, why? Why do we not feel it, not see it, not realize it, not fully realize it? Anyway—for this omniscient holy mind, doubting or believing or not existing, because we do not see and doubt its existence—this is just fun for them. Like I believe that she does not exist even though she's there, due to not seeing, due to some defect of the eye, I believe she does not exist, or doubt her existence, it is just a place of fun, to laugh, from her side.

If we do not purify the hindrances that stop us from seeing or realizing the holy omniscient mind, even if we are together with a holy being, living together for years, we cannot see him as an enlightened being. We can still see him as a cruel person, as a liar, as false, see his many mistakes, because our mind is full of mistakes, not purified. This projector, which is within one's mind, as long as we don't destroy this, purify this, there will be same problem like this wherever we go. Even if the person says, "I have the achievement of enlightenment, I am Buddha," even if he tries to tell us frankly like this—we will never believe, we can see him as a liar, as ignorant, many things, no matter how much he is enlightened being. If one has less obscurations, less mental hindrances, we can see even material objects—such as these symbolic things, such as statues—as real living enlightened being; even if the other living being is not an enlightened being, they can be seen as an enlightened being. If we solve the problem that we have in our mind, purify this wrong projection, these wrong conceptions, these impure, dualistic, wrong conceptions, even an object animal, an ordinary person, can be seen in the form of Guru Shakyamuni, as a living enlightened holy being with all these holy signs.

For instance, in ancient times—another example why, if the mental problem is not cured by Dharma practice, then if even the person lives for a long time with an enlightened being they cannot see him—for instance, this example. In ancient times, when Guru Shakyamuni existed in the form of a Bhikshu, a monk, he lived in different places, giving many sermons. He had one follower, a disciple called Leg.pa.kar.ma, I think he was a brahmin. He lived with Guru Shakyamuni for a long time, so many years. Also he had learned much—I think the three divisions of the teachings, the Tripitaka (*De.no.sum*)—anyway, he knew many Dharma words, learned much, could everything by heart. But even though he had learned that many numbers of texts, many volumes, he never saw Guru Shakyamuni as an enlightened being, but always saw Guru Shakyamuni as a liar, as a very negative person, differently from the other followers, always seeing him as very false. So he always followed Guru Shakyamuni when he went to beg or was invited by benefactors. Every time Guru Shakyamuni was offered something he predicted, "Due to these merits you will be reborn here, in this realm," and so on. But this disciple always saw him as false, a liar. There was one pagan, an anti-Buddhist who had wrong realizations, the opposite of Dharma, not accepting karma and those things; and he believed this man more. This disciple who didn't believe in Guru Shakyamuni took this man as his guru. I think, the person who had wrong realizations got sick. Then what happened was that Guru Shakyamuni predicted he would die, and told him that he shouldn't take honey otherwise he would die at such time. So the disciple went to tell him that Guru Shakyamuni said, "He will die after ten days, one week"—and he got very angry that Guru Shakyamuni predicted like this, and went to give message that Guru Shakyamuni said he would die at such a time and shouldn't take honey. The disciple thought that if the man took honey he would get better, that Guru Shakyamuni was cruel and wanted him to die. So this Leg.pa.kar.ma told his guru that he should take honey so that he would get better, and completely believed that Guru Shakyamuni would lose, that what he predicted would not be accurate. The disciple let the other person take the honey and the man died after one week. And then he came back and saw the man dead, that Guru Shakyamuni was accurate. Still he felt very shy, and couldn't tell Guru Shakyamuni that the other man was dead since he had such a problem in his mind, as you say, ego. So he told a lie in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni. Then Guru Shakyamuni predicted that the other man was born as preta—and as the disciple was walking on the road there was a noise near the road, some noise—so anyway I think he was told by Guru Shakyamuni that the man was born as a preta. Anyway, there are stories like this, this is just one, there are many.

Also in ancient times, in Tibet, one lama was giving the readings. That means granting the continuity of the blessings of the teachings—as he received the reading from another lama, there is a lineage like this, like the graduated path that I read has a lineage from many other highly realized lamas. One lama was giving teachings in Tibet, in Lhasa. A particular man never saw the text, but among all the listeners he saw only piles of dried meat—the whole time he saw the lama eating meat, but all the other people saw that he was reading text.

There are many other stories. It took the great yogi, Naropa, much time to find, to see his guru Tilopa. What caused him to seek Tilopa was a prediction made by a yogini, a manifestation, a female aspect (but actually Buddha). The pandit Naropa thought that he wanted to gain, to achieve control over the mental distractions, to have the power of one-pointedness. As this manifestation appeared to him—it was after their retreat or during the retreat—he asked the yogini, and she instructed, “If you want to achieve that go to see this guru in India.” He reached Tilopa’s place and kept asking, asking. Some said, “He’s not here,” and some said, “He’s just left—” many different things. Then he found a monastery, they were making puja inside and there was a kitchen outside. Inside was a very ugly man—very thin, very cold looking, with blue skin and just a short sari, thin cloth—so he had much doubt, “Maybe this, maybe not.” The man’s body was very fragile, thin, ugly looking, and very easy to be blown by the wind—he was sitting nearby the fire, putting fish in the fire and eating it. So this is how he saw—actually there is much longer story—this is how the great pandit Naropa saw the great yogi, who had the achievement of enlightenment, like this. So for some time Naropa kept asking, “Are you Tilopa?” Sometimes the man said, “Yes,” sometimes, “No,” sometimes “Yes.” There is a long story. Actually, the yogini who instructed him was oneness with his guru, Tilopa.

Same thing, when this great yogi, Milarepa, saw his guru Marpa, he saw him in a very ordinary form of a monk, digging and having dust on the face and drinking wine—as a very ordinary person, like this. So before, he was looking at a very ordinary person. Then he went slowly after that. When Milarepa reached the place Marpa was completely different looking than before—very magnificent looking, very powerful.

Like this, even if there’s not much problem, no wrong projector, no wrong conceptions, purified—when we are ready from our mind, it is possible for our visualization to be seen clearly as they are real. Now we see them as visualization but when the mind is ready from our side, purified, they can be seen as living. It happened to the past Tibetan meditators, as they made purification they saw great numbers of different aspects of buddhas. There are many other stories. Also, when our mind is ready, we can also see Vishnu, Laxmi—many other things can be seen, can appear to the person in form of an enlightened being, can be seen in form of an enlightened being by this person. Also, when our mind is ready, even the idol of Jesus Christ appear as a manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni, with all those holy signs—to the person whose mind is ready, whose mind is cleaned. This is also because of the powers of the omniscient mind. So it’s only a problem from our side—not seeing is a problem from our side—not a problem of their not existing. No matter the place, even in the bathroom, if the place is dirty or clean, if the person’s mind is ready, through purification that person can see an enlightened being, can communicate, can always contact, can always receive teachings, and can always be together. Wherever the person goes and when the person has difficulty and does not have an answer to his problems, he can immediately contact—that happened to many yogis in previous times.

So also, when you make prostration, prayers, and visualizations, even when you are in your own room, you shouldn’t think that, “There is no existence of Guru Shakyamuni or holy omniscient

mind, but anyway I do this, because other people do, and I am obliged, and if I don't other people will think I am bad." Without following our old friend, our enemy—this is involved with our old friend, the enemy—if you can think as if the holy omniscient mind is really in front of you, the more you try to have full confidence in this existence, and that much more your visualization will be effective and powerful.

It's like this. Saying these prayers asking to grant blessings, and even if one is offering incense, we will think he is really there. We have to make arrangements slowly in order to purify, so the more we think for sure he exists, the stronger our confidence in the existence of the omniscient mind, and that much more the purification, whatever you are doing, will be powerful. That purification, that Dharma action, done with full confidence, will cause us to receive the blessing quicker. In that way you are quicker to receive Guru Shakyamuni's blessing in your devotional mind, in the whole of the devotional mind.

When there's doubt, think of these two extreme examples. When one's mind is ready, even non-enlightened being can appear as enlightened beings to the person, even symbolic things. If the mind is not ready, there are many problems; even the enlightened beings can be seen as evil people. So this is very important for your practice, to make the practice pure.

The reason I emphasize these things—we have to do meditation because we have to solve the mental problems. But only doing meditation is not enough, never enough. Receiving realization, achieving this meditation, developing the inner knowledge, the karma knowledge, depends on the blessing of the guru omniscient mind, receiving this blessing within one's mind. So if there's no devotional hole, the mental hole, the blessing cannot be received, cannot go through. Anyway, receiving realization, of course, depends on meditation, for sure. But it depends on this and it also depends on purification, creating merits and making purification. So meditating, creating merits, purifying, receiving blessing by praying—all these bring the realization, like this.

Dedicate the merits of meditating, listening to the teachings, and keeping the precepts, "Due to those merits may I achieve Guru Shakyamuni as quickly as possible to enlighten all sentient beings in his stage."

Day 21

Thursday December 6th

5.a.m.

The action taking of ordination should become a Mahayana action—that depends on creating this action with bodhicitta, with the Mahayana motive. If the motive is pure, with no defect of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, this pure motivation which is the Mahayana motivation makes the ordination become a Mahayana ordination. So briefly think like this, "The attachment that is attached to the temporal life happiness and even to the higher samsaric life pleasures is the cause of suffering. However we can make the present life happy, even though we may receive higher samsaric rebirths such as those of the samsaric gods, however much that life has great, high enjoyments, however much we enjoy even nectar and the food of concentration that is not material food, that is not matter, all of those pleasures received from these enjoyments are all in the nature of suffering. However much the living being is enjoying it, that short period, he is not out of the bondage of suffering, he is not out of the circle of death and rebirth, he is not out of the concatenation of karma. Therefore, in all those samsaric pleasures, if it is small, if it is greater, there

is nothing to be attached to. It is just as in the example of poisonous honey, the same as eating it, or scratching the wounded place where there's an itch. There's not one tiny samsaric happiness or pleasure that we never experienced, we have experienced them all countless times; there's not one tiny suffering that we never experienced, we have experienced them all countless times; there's not one highest happiness that we never experienced, we have experienced them all countless times; there's not one greatest suffering that we never experienced, we have experienced them all countless times. Also, there's no such karma in samsara that we have never created. Therefore, nothing of those things are new, therefore there is nothing to be attached to, thinking it is new. Therefore, by understanding these evolutions, it is important to be as detached as possible, as detachment is the cause of enlightenment because detachment is the opposite of that.

“Releasing oneself from suffering is not enough as there are infinite sentient beings in suffering. Those sentient beings are also objects from whom we received past, present, and future happiness and enlightenment. Therefore, we must repay for their kindness. At the moment most of them haven't received a perfect human rebirth and haven't met the Mahayana teachings, and do not have a leader leading them on the path to enlightenment, and do not having the wisdom eye to fully distinguish the positive and negative actions. Therefore, so far even if we have repaid them in the material way, that is not enough, that does not release them from suffering. Therefore, in what way we should repay them, what do they need? We should release them from suffering. In order to do that, it is necessary that oneself to be enlightened so that one has the capability, all knowledge, compassion and powers to guide the sentient beings from suffering.

“Receiving enlightenment depends basically the discipline—while the action of body, speech, and mind is unsubdued it is necessary to have discipline, while it is unsubdued it should be subdued by following the precepts, just as the mad elephant has to be subdued by those precepts, just as the mad elephant has to be subdued by those iron tools, hooks, and many things. When the elephant is well subdued, listening to what the person says, then he doesn't need those tools. While the body, speech, and mind is unsubdued it needs to be disciplined, just like in the example. So when the elephant is subdued in that way it does not harm other people, and the same thing with the body, speech, and mind—when it is subdued by disciples it doesn't harm other people. The correct way of subduing is by following the precepts, the powerful precepts, especially the Mahayana ordination, the eight precepts, keeping them in a Mahayana way, which is more powerful, which also caused Guru Shakyamuni to receive enlightenment. Therefore, for this reason think, “I am going to take the Mahayana ordination.”

It is undeserved, saying that such ordinary person should be visualized as Guru Shakyamuni—that person is unworthy. But it is possible that even the evil spirits can appear in the form of Buddha if the person's devotional eye is opened and the equipment is ready. So, thinking of these things, of these examples, this can be done. Visualize the person granting the ordination in the form of Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by all the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and arhats. Think that as they are living, as they are really existing, vividly, and facing you and also looking very pleased; just like this—like parents are pleased when the very naughty boy, the usual naughty boy who never listens to the parents' instructions, but one day does something good. We are also like this example, as the naughty boy one time is doing something good, we are similar to the naughty boy, doing something good in this time even though we have been evil creators in most of our time, acting mostly opposite to the true Dharma.

(Ordination Ceremony)

9 a.m.

(Lama Thubten Yeshe)

11 a.m.

Rinpoche:

From the holy speech of the great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyatso, “The moon of the mind is bodhicitta, the sun of the mind is bodhicitta, the jewel of the mind is bodhicitta.”

As this great bodhisattva said in his teaching, the bodhicitta is the jewel of the mind, sun of the mind, the moon of the mind—there’s nothing to compare to the knowledge of bodhicitta. The bodhicitta, which are these three of the mind, can never be compared to the exterior moon, sun, or jewels. Even if one sun covers that much, dispels, extinguishes that much darkness, the darkness of the world, and however great the value of the material jewel, however precious it is, even those who have that much, even if they are that useful, still it is limited according to the infinite knowledge, bodhicitta.

Therefore, it is necessary to be able to achieve this bodhicitta, pure thought, as it has such incomparable knowledge. It is a worthwhile thing to be achieved even by the people who are not called Buddhist, who have no interest, even those who only believe in the existence of one life. And besides human beings, even the lower creatures trying to achieve this pure thought is very badly needed. It is a subject that must be achieved, has to be achieved, even by the lower creatures, those lower beings who have limited chances. The fact is like this: it is an important subject that has to be achieved by any living being. Why? Because all living beings desire profit and do not desire loss. The achievement of bodhicitta is the greatest profit, making the greatest profit, receiving the greatest profit. For that reason, desiring profit and not desiring loss, it is worthwhile to practice this. It is worthwhile, it must be achieved by any other living being. But the problem is not recognizing that there is such method, a most profitable path, a pure mind that can be achieved, not having met the teaching that explains about that, the teaching explaining about the graduated meditations that brings the realization of the bodhicitta. So we, as every other living being, have this same desire, desiring profit and not desiring loss, desiring happiness and not desiring suffering—having this desire is equal to the lower creatures—but what special thing do we have, what makes us special compared to other creatures and other human beings? That is having met the teaching which explains the methods, the graduated methods that bring achievement of the bodhicitta, totally, the Mahayana teaching. Besides meeting them, from our side we are trying to practice—just meeting is not enough—we practice it by listening, trying to make preparation in the mind. Therefore, because of these additional things, besides having desire, we are special compared to the other beings. Even among most of the humans, we are more fortunate.

Actually, it is a time, a point, where we can be really pleased, can really rejoice and be happy—actually we are at such a point. It is such a time that we can be pleased and rejoice ourselves, thinking, “A long time, a long time we have been in the darkness where there is no light of bodhicitta, where there is no teaching on bodhicitta.” So when you meet the light of the bodhicitta, the Dharma of the bodhicitta, besides talking about it, explaining about it, it is necessary to light it in your mind—the lamp of the bodhicitta has to be lit within the darkness of your mind. And then, in

this way, it is worthwhile to listen and talk—it makes it worthwhile to listen and talk about it. So it is important frequently to cultivate the pure thought. It is not like the exterior seed—taking from another place, planting it in another place—but bodhicitta is something that our mind has to become, something that has to be created within our mind, through many efforts, through much habituated training.

So think, “I am going to listen to the graduated teachings on the Mahayana path in order to receive enlightenment to release sentient beings in the narak, animal, preta, sura, and asura realms, and non-enlightened human beings from suffering, and lead them on the enlightened path.”

So the listening subject is the graduated path, and if it is divided into three, is the path of the lower being. The subjects finished according to the outlines are, “Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Perfect Human Rebirth is Fragile,” “No Other Method Can Stop Death,” so “Death is Definite.” After death, for us it is more likely to be reborn, according to the karma we have created so far, it is more definite that we will be reborn in the lower suffering realms. “The Actual Time of Death, or the Time of Rebirth, Is Not Definite.” When it will happen is not sure. But it is always soon, not far, is always quick. So, according to karma, it is more definite that we will be born in one of those three, and experience the suffering of the narak, preta, or animal realms. Therefore, it is necessary to stop that danger, to close the door of the lower rebirth ahead of time. So, the preparation of closing the door of the lower rebirth is necessary, and it is more skillful and wise to start it even from today. So the fundamental thing, the actual thing that saves us from that danger, the way we close the door of the lower rebirth suffering is by taking refuge.

Why there is need for taking refuge? We have no power or capability in our mind at the moment to save ourselves from suffering. At the moment we can't guide or save ourselves from the temporal problems—forget about closing the door to lower rebirth—without depending on a perfect object, a perfected being who has enlightened knowledge, the achievement of those four aspects of the holy body—svabhavakaya, dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya. One who has achievement of these, who has achievement of the knowledge of the holy body, the knowledge of the enlightened speech, no matter what it is called—even if it is called “devil,” this perfected being is called “devil” by ordinary people, many things, or “crazy,” whatever it is called by the ordinary beings—whoever has the achievement of these knowledge is the perfected, highest holy object, in whom we can take refuge, who can never cheat us, who never misleads us. It doesn't have to necessarily be a Tibetan monk, something specific. It can look like anything, no matter what it is called. So therefore, it is a pure object. Therefore, we should not make mistakes in the object of the refuge; this is the most important thing, because our purpose in taking refuge is the most important purpose, more than anything else—therefore, it is necessary not to make mistakes, to find the right perfect object that has all the knowledge.

Of course, we have to depend on the holy object, take refuge in something, depend on something. Even for the temporal problems, sickness, we have to depend on a doctor, take refuge in, rely on, put our whole life in the doctor's hands. It is in his hands whether the person lives or dies, everything is given in his hands. Patients having operations completely rely for their lives on the doctor. So you see, even to solve the temporal problems we have to check up on the best doctor, the most experienced, the one who cured the most sick people. So any doctor who can cure more people is more practical. The people go to the doctor who knows more about it; they try to meet him, try to see him, because of their confidence in him and thinking that he has the knowledge and

power to relieve the disease, the sickness. So by checking who is better—like this then the patient puts the life in his hands, and listens to whatever he says. The right patients, the wise patients do this. Whatever the doctor tells them, they completely rely on him. If you think in this ordinary example it will be successful—we know how to take the actual refuge if we think of the example. So, if the patients get in the hands of an uneducated, not well experienced, unskillful doctor, then even if it is a sickness that can be cured by another doctor, there is danger to the life in the inexperienced doctor's hands. There is the danger that patient will make mistakes in the object if the patient doesn't find the correct, perfect doctor. As in this ordinary example, ordinary people think that it is the most important thing not to make any mistakes, now that the ordinary people are checking up, it is only to do with one life, with this present body. If it is so much more important not to make mistakes, to find the perfect doctor, why shouldn't it be important in whom we take refuge, the object of the refuge of our many other future lives, not only the present?

The object of the Dharma refuge is this—not only the object of the refuge of this life but the object of the refuge of all the future lives. Therefore, it is most important to find a correct object for this purpose, the object of the Dharma refuge, that refuge of many lives. This is more important to check up than the object of the temporal life refuge. That example—ordinary people think that a perfect doctor, highly qualified, experienced, is the most important thing to find, but still the patient has to die, and in a future life suffer the disease again; again and again. Therefore, this is much more important. If we find the right object in whom we take refuge for many lives, this object has the power to save many other future lives, or mislead and cause danger to many other future lives. Therefore, I emphasize these points.

So as it is necessary to depend on someone even for temporal problems, of course it is necessary to take refuge to surmount, to stop the suffering of the three lower realms. And besides, taking refuge is not only for that reason—to stop all samsaric suffering. This is still not sufficient purpose. The Mahayana way of taking refuge is to take refuge in order to release oneself and all beings from samsaric suffering and to stop the rebirth in the suffering lower realms.

During the break times, read the books through—whatever subject you don't remember, the subjects that are finished, the subjects that are coming—not only reading but checking and putting yourself in the subject and checking.

For beginners, the three refuge prayer is much more profound than those tantric subjects. Impermanence and refuge is much more effective and powerful to save you from danger, to guide you from danger, than those higher, very profound meditations.

Mahayana refuge is taking refuge in the Triple Gem in order to guide sentient beings from suffering, from the samsaric sufferings. To take this kind of refuge with feeling, you need compassion, and it is necessary to first of all feel that other beings' suffering in samsara is unbearable. To feel that it is unbearable, that you are not willing for others to suffer in samsara, to have this feeling, to cause this feeling to strongly arise, it is necessary first for oneself to be frightened of one's own samsaric suffering by understanding the samsaric sufferings, the ways of experiencing them. This also depends on having fear and understanding of the suffering of the three lower realms. Like this. So taking refuge in the Mahayana way is not simple, it depends on many things. It is a big mind, a great mind, that needs many fundamental understandings, many things.

So even for refuge there are three ways—the lower, middle, and higher beings' refuge. The higher is the Mahayana refuge. The lower being's refuge is being extremely frightened of the suffering of the three lower realms, and having full confidence in the perfected being and the Triple Gem. The middle being's refuge is being extremely frightened of samsaric suffering and having full confidence in the perfected beings, completely putting the life, as in the example of the doctor, in the perfected being's hands with full confidence in his enlightened knowledge. The higher being's refuge is completely relying on the Triple Gem with full confidence in their knowledge, such as in the perfected being's enlightened knowledge, and feeling extremely unbearable that other beings are experiencing samsaric suffering. So, completely relying on them, all of these three—the only difference is regarding suffering—the object is the same. The first mind is scared only of the lower suffering; the middle, of samsaric suffering; the third, feeling that it is unbearable that as oneself is experiencing suffering, so other beings are experiencing suffering. So to guide other beings from not having this capability, therefore it is necessary to completely rely on the enlightened being's powers, knowledge, and compassion, to rely on the enlightened beings for help.

So actually, generally it is like this—perfected beings are not objects who have partial mind; that if one doesn't take refuge, they don't give help. Not like this. Even though we don't take refuge we are always guided by them, according to our karma. So anyway, to receive the help quicker depends on how pure a mind of refuge we can generate. And pure refuge depends on how much full confidence and understanding we have: full confidence in the enlightened being's power and knowledge and compassion, full confidence, with understanding of the knowledge. Not only full confidence in the knowledge, but also strong fear of the suffering. So the full confidence and the fear are that much. How does it release? As the person has that much fear of the suffering, the person wants release from that as quickly as possible, according to know how strong his fear is. Also, that much more quickly he wants to seek refuge, to rely on a perfect holy object who has the power to guide him from that. So from that, everything becomes much more sincere and pure. Therefore, it is also the reason why the refuge part, the knowledge of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, comes after impermanence and death and the suffering of the three lower realms. It is set up according to the mind evolution.

There is suffering—now what to do? What is the method? Then it shows us that there is a holy object with power and knowledge that can guide us from suffering. The way the meditation is set up is always with meaning, much connection, the way it works. If the refuge comes on top, it doesn't make sense; there is no reason because there's no understanding of suffering. What causes us to take refuge? Very simple, that are two causes, fear of suffering and full confidence in the perfected beings' knowledge—knowledge and power and compassion—these two cause us to take refuge.

Last paragraph:

Because Buddha's holy body, speech, and mind are oneness in nature.

(Page 70)

Paragraph 2

Totally, these four knowledges—the first, that he has completely released himself from all fears, all suffering, all dangers. For instance, in ancient times Guru Shakyamuni was invited over by some family with ill will, in order to destroy and harm him. The family made a hole outside their door and made a big fire in it and obscured it with dust, so that when he walked he would fall into it. Then

they invited Guru Shakyamuni. But when Shakyamuni came in that place, as he stepped in each place a lotus dropped down—so they were extremely surprised, developed much faith, and that helped them to lose their negative minds. Then they took teachings from Guru Shakyamuni and had much repentance for such cruel actions.

At another time, a family invited Guru Shakyamuni and offered poisonous food, wanting to destroy Guru Shakyamuni. He didn't allow his followers to enjoy the food before he started—and then he took the food and nothing happened. So the family was surprised, felt very upset, and took teachings, changing their negative minds. At another time, some evildoer sent a mad elephant to destroy Guru Shakyamuni. All other arhats wouldn't stand with this mad elephant, and with their psychic powers they flew in the sky. But not Guru Shakyamuni; he stayed there and no danger happened, and the mad elephant became peaceful when it came near him.

There are many things like this. In stories, there are so many things about how to enlighten others, such as evildoer who have much negative karma, and about how he showed different methods to enlighten them. He has no partial mind, his compassion is equal. For the evil ones who always want to destroy him and for all others, his compassion is exactly equal. Once Guru Shakyamuni was taking medicine from a medical doctor that cannot be digested by ordinary people. An evil person was jealous and wanted to compare. So he tried to take the medicine and got sick—he couldn't compare. So when he took the medicine and got sick, Guru Shakyamuni, by saying the true words, with great love and equal compassion, cured his sickness. But for us ordinary people, if there's a person who tries to destroy us, if he gets sick we feel we are lucky, it is good, we clap our hands. Nothing like this exists in Guru Shakyamuni's mind.

The reason that we gathered here and are doing this, trying to create some merits, is also because of his kindness, the kindness of his help, his guidance. Even though we don't know any of his knowledge, and even though we were not thinking of him, not concerned for him, have no feelings, not asking for his help, our creating merit, talking Dharma, trying to create merit by talking about Dharma is also his help. Without his help it wouldn't have been possible, there wouldn't be this chance to create merits. There's another way to talk about it that's very profound for us at the moment. But the straight thing now—listening to the teachings that I talk about—the path is shown by him, so this is his kindness, the kindness of his great compassion for us. The existence of the teachings, the Dharma teachings so far—now this is a degenerate time, but until now there was something to talk about it, meditate, experience—this is due to his prayers, Guru Shakyamuni's prayers, that he did while training in the path. Understanding, discovering many things about life, about mind, about death, about rebirth, many things, the new subjects we discovered in this time—that is his kindness, that is his help. This way it is quite simple to understand the way the enlightened being, the omniscient mind, guides us; easy and simple to understand. Same thing, these days there is much Dharma spreading in the West. If there was no Dharma existing, Dharma very soon degenerating, there wouldn't be the precious chance that many people from the West could study or meditate, practice, or experience. It is his kindness that the teachings exist, the power of his compassion in order to guide the sentient beings from suffering. “Guiding sentient beings from suffering,” doesn't mean relieving it in one second like this, like a snap of the fingers; not like this. Even to create one merit during the meditation course, just one single merit, that is the kindness of Guru Shakyamuni's great compassion.

The reason there's much greater meaning—also refuge and that other prayer that comes in the morning (Refuge to the Holy Guru—Page 10)—I am making the explanation relating to that

morning prayer and this—it has much meaning, it is a very profound subject. Understanding this helps us understand the refuge and understanding the refuge helps us understand the prayer and that part of the meditation.

So in many ways, even if the sentient being doesn't take refuge, it is guided by the enlightened being with many different manifestations, persuading you to create good karma. I will give you a short introduction. For instance, in Tibet, also in regards to ordination there are many different levels of ordination. First, the person is taught the alphabet for the goal of achieving enlightenment, to follow the path; for that reason the alphabet is taught. Then even for sutra subjects, he has different teachers who give him teachings on Sutra. And then, when the person is capable of keeping the bodhisattva vows, the tantric vows, another guru gives ordinations, and different teachers give him different tantric teachings. Like this. So, each of these is the helper to create, to develop the person's merits. Those different teachers persuade the person to create merits, which are the cause of his future enlightenment, the cause of his future omniscient mind. For instance, this great yogi, Atisha, had about 150 gurus. Anyway, these teachers are the ones who persuaded him to create merits, to create the cause for enlightenment, who persuaded Atisha to develop his merits, to develop his cause of enlightenment by showing different manifestations of human beings and showing different subjects to Atisha. It's like this—like sending different members who have different body shapes to help from Nepal, to help someone, to help another country, by giving a job to each person. Each of these members are working for different things—factories and many things—but totally they are all trying to help the other country on behalf of the king. Just like this, those 150 teachers that Atisha had were like the members of Guru Shakyamuni, the enlightened being. Anyway, those were different manifestations of Guru Shakyamuni's omniscient mind, which led him—a group like that for one disciple, Atisha—into enlightenment.

A short talk on this subject. Generally, like this—as much as the guru has that much great knowledge, that much knowledge the disciples receive. This is generally talking, like this—it does not mean it is intuitive, you should not have such a wrong conception, becoming intuitively perfect. Like if you take a picture of a very beautiful tangka that has so many beautiful details, many paintings, and you take a picture, also in the picture the drawing show up. Of course it depends on how you see the camera, but generally talking it is like this. Sometimes it is also possible that the object is not so beautiful but your picture is very beautiful, very attractive; this is also possible—if you see the real object as not so attractive; this is because of how you use the camera, the technique, many things. There are many examples like this in Tibet because the disciple has intelligence knowing how to practice in the right way—his teacher has less knowledge than the disciple—but the disciple has intelligence and practices in the right way, like the example of the camera, and through his right practice and intelligence, as his knowledge develops, according to the power of this, also he sees his common teacher in a different way. He sees him as knowledgeable and enlightened. This intelligent disciple can see through the meditation, through the purification, the practice of meditation, he can see him in the form of Guru Shakyamuni, in the form of deities.

Generally, there are Hinayana gurus, Mahayana gurus, and Vajrayana gurus. A Mahayana guru has to have certain knowledge, such as living in the three higher conducts. This is the basic knowledge that the guru showing the lesser vehicle is supposed to have. Then the guru showing the Mahayana path has to have more knowledge than that; and the guru showing the Vajrayana has to have much more knowledge than that. There's no time to give more explanation than that, the need for knowledge. Saying one has this knowledge, it is worthwhile, like this. At least it is necessary for him to have knowledge, for him to live in the three conducts and live purely and have compassion (not the

modern love) and the understanding of reality. At least it should be like this, and at least he should be one who is more concerned with the future life than the present life—if not this then he cannot be a guru. At least he should be like this, one who explains more of the future, at least he should say, be concerned, that the future life is more important than this life, and mainly care more for the future life than this life. Also he should not be attached to the happiness of this temporal life, he should throw the happiness of this life backside, keeping it behind, putting it behind him, not caring about it, and keeping the future life in the front. The one who shows his back to that is the guru we should seek. If not, then there's danger of being misled. If the teacher's mind is more concerned for the present life than the future life there is danger of being misled, because the basic thing of Dharma practice is to give up the attachment to this life—if not, there's no sense in practicing Dharma, it is not Dharma practice meditation. Also, if the person is more concerned with this life, then there's the danger of letting the follower only work for this life, so it means letting the disciple work for attachment, for the negative mind. That kind of teacher is completely opposite, not a Dharma teacher, but a teacher showing the samsaric path—this is very important to know, so important.

The reason that I brought up this subject here? Since we have interest to practice Dharma, since we have the desire to seek liberation, the point is this: we want to take refuge? Yes. But how should the holy object, the perfect being guide us? We have to follow the path, the teaching shown by the perfect being. To follow that we have to understand—to understand we have to practice, to practice we have to understand—and to understand we have to be taught. So the most important thing, from beginning of the path up to enlightenment, is person who shows the teachings. Like the talk of omniscient mind—because we don't have the power to see the mind in that manifestation until we reach that level, there is no way to communicate and receive teachings. We have to try to reach that level. For that, many realizations are necessary; much experience of the path, meditation has to be made. So the whole thing depends on that, on that person, that being who you see in ordinary form, from whom you take teachings. Everything depends on him. So if he misleads you, this is the biggest danger. Before I talked about Guru Shakyamuni as this being, but now I am talking about the same subject—it is a matter of understanding.

So now it's like this, the reason I am telling you this is that the whole responsibility is there—anyway, examples are not necessary. It's very important on whom you put your rope, your hook. If you are going to get out of a hole, you throw a rope and hook it there and then you hold the rope and get out. If you put it unsafely, on the wrong hook, if you put the rope in the wrong place, there is the danger of falling down and hurting yourself. It is necessary at least that the other one should have a higher realization than the disciple, and based on that thought—explaining more the future than the present, leading the disciple not to be attached; besides himself having these things, also not leading the disciple towards temporal happiness and not to be attached. But in such degenerate times it is extremely difficult to find a guru who has all this knowledge. One thing is, in degenerate times, as we are people our fortune is also that much down, so it is that much more difficult to see—because of our obscurations it is difficult to recognize from our side—our problems as I mentioned last night with the example of Guru Shakyamuni and his disciples. So actually—now why this is so important—we take refuge, of course. But the way we are guided, the whole thing depends on him. How are we are guided by the guru omniscient mind? By following the path. Following the path is not simple—it depends on right understand and right practice; this depends on right explanation, so again the whole thing depends on that being. Some person may think, “He is admiring himself, he is trying to make himself important”—it is not like this. I have no knowledge, I didn't deserve this, I have not even the smell of that knowledge. But I am obliged to try to do this,

to try to imitate ... something like this. The reason I'm telling you this is because I know our problem, we Westerners' problem. You may not understand now, but after some time you will realize.

This is the most important thing. So I will briefly mention some short benefits of seeking the guru. Actually there won't be anytime to take off that practice, but as there is the explanation of the Buddha, it makes sense to talk about it together like this, so it may be useful to know this, becoming closer to enlightenment.

Benefits of Following the Guru

- Pleasing all the Buddhas.
- The person cannot be hindered by evils (the outer evil and the inner evil—the outer evil spirits, devils, and sinful friends relatives. “Sinful friends” means evil friends who give you wrong influence, and then you follow it and it causes you to create negative karma; he puts you in this situation of creating negative karma). Not being hindered by the evils, inner and outer, and evil friends.
- All one's delusions and vices intuitively cease and
- The experience and the realizations of the path and meditations increase.
- And never, in all future lives, will your life become empty of the guru. The arrangement of this present life causes you to always meet gurus in many future lives. Because there is a long way to go to enlightenment, so it takes many lifetimes, so to find a perfect guru—this makes arrangements in this life.
- Not to be reborn in the three lower realms.
- Bringing all success as one thinks.
- Receiving enlightenment quickly.

So the part of the Buddha's explanation is finished, really finished.

6 p.m.

Those are just the total, eight brief points on correctly following the guru. Correctly following has all that benefit, by correctly following one makes that much profit. Also there are eight shortcomings of not correctly following the guru.

So anyway, before taking the teachings, checking is important since the teaching is taken from the guru for receiving enlightenment, to get out of samsara, even if one heard only four words. So since that time there's no such thing—the worst negative karma—it's not like an ordinary school teacher—if you don't like him, then you can kick him out—this and Dharma is completely different, the purpose of each is completely different as the earth and the sky. The purpose of school—students studying and teachers teaching—and the purpose of the Dharma way is completely different; the one is for a temporal reason, the other is for enlightenment and to escape from samsara. Even the root, the mind, the motive is completely different—one is evil thought, the other is pure. Since we heard only four words, there is nothing to change. Even though you see, the ordinary person, the disciple sees many negative things, faults, it is projection of the wrong projector, the negative mind; that is from disciple's side. Why? Through purification, at certain levels it can be seen, even an ordinary being can be seen, can appear to that disciple in the form of deities, wrathful or peaceful, or as Guru Shakyamuni, according to his meditation. There are many other

stories—no need to talk much. There are many things that previous meditators saw through guru yoga practice.

So therefore, the method is this—try to stop thinking of the negative things and think of the knowledge, the good things more, and try to stop the negative parts. This doesn't break the relationship and helps a great deal to create less negative karma. Like this—when you see more knowledge—by continually thinking this, you see the knowledge more and more, stronger—and even if in your view you see mistakes, faults, it doesn't become big hindrance to your mind because of the understanding and strong feeling in his knowledge. So you don't see his faults as important, they become very small—anyway, this is his responsibility. It is our responsibility, we who want to receive enlightenment—it's our responsibility. That's all.

There was one religion called “Bon” in Tibet, before Buddhism was established. There was a person who follows that teaching—they also had certain powers, temporal, psychic powers can be achieved—there was one person called Naro Peshong, I think he was the one competing with great yogi Milarepa—reaching the top of a mountain when the sun rises, the person walking on the mountain riding on a drum, at the same time drumming. The story was something like this—he wanted to compete with the great yogi Milarepa and see who could reach the mountain first. That's one of the famous mountains, called *Thi.se*, a holy place in the upper part of Tibet. So the next morning, when the sun got to the top of the mountain, the other person started very early in the morning and almost reached the top, but Milarepa was still down there in the same place. Just before Naro Peshong got there, going up riding on the drum and drumming, as the sun got on top of the mountain he, Milarepa, flew on the top of the mountain; and he who started very early in the morning with many hang ups was late. So Milarepa threw some of the snow at him saying, “This is your share.” So this man said, “The person called Milarepa—so famous, a great sound before seeing him, like a great Indian Pandit, when really seen is an old naked person.” Because there was no beauty, nothing—he had beauty but it was difficult to recognize it—and even the color of his body was not like we have, he was kind of blue, and hairs ...He was such a great yogi, who had achievement of such control, realizations of tantric path, who had not one single self-cherishing thought and wrong conception of self-existing “I,” who had control over the impure dualistic mind. Nothing could hinder him, he had such great power, nothing could hinder him. He could transform into many different bodies, he had such great power. While he was at one place, one village, at the same time there is another Milarepa in some other place—so people got confused, “Milarepa is here,” “Milarepa is there.” He was someone who had complete control over death and rebirth. But an ordinary person whose obscurations and negative mind is not purified sees him like this, in ordinary form.

So totally like this—in the Hinayana way, the guru is followed as abbot; in the Mahayana way, the guru is followed as the real Guru Shakyamuni; in the tantric way, the guru is followed as the total essence of all buddhas. Anyway, there's a whole trip on that, a whole meditation on that, much explanation on that. So after, as you understand there is something practiced like that, you can try to understand those subjects and experience them. In the Hinayana way, whatever is a positive work or thing is done, listened to, and followed by the disciple. And whatever is a negative action, or difficult, is not. But in the Mahayana if there is difficult work, or something you cannot do or think is wrong, you respectfully ask three or four times, you emphasize if that must be done. Still if the answer is certain, it has to be done. In the tantric way, whatever the instruction, it has to be followed. So the person who follows has to have greater will, greater power. And following the Vajrayana way one needs still more knowledge and power, because each path is more profound.

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Last Paragraph

“The true cessation of suffering”—the true path is the absolute Dharma.

(Page 72)

III. The Knowledge of Sangha

Absolute Sangha is those who have the achievement of the absolute Dharma.

Relative Sangha is the bhikshus, monks—if there are four, that is called Sangha; if there is one, that cannot be called Sangha.

“Heretics”—evil; cannot follow the evil doers, the evil friends who have wrong conceptions, wrong realizations. “Follow” means this—it doesn’t mean you can’t have compassion with that person—because with his wrong realization he creates negative actions, so you cannot do the same; if you do follow the action you are destroyed, your knowledge is destroyed. What is the way of receiving help, guidance, by taking refuge in enlightened being? By correctly following his orders, the path that was shown by him; that is the way of his saving us from samsaric suffering, that is the way of his guiding us. Through following the path that was shown by him we are released from samsara, this is the way the enlightened being saves and guides us, and this is the way we receive the help. For instance, not doing what he says, not following the path as it was shown by him for us, doing something else; even if the whole time we pray, “Please guide me,” 1000 times—if the action is done in an opposite nature, not following the path as he says, his order, no matter how much we pray, there is no way to fully receive his guidance, his help. And to guide and save us from samsaric suffering and ignorance is extremely difficult and it takes much time as long as we don’t follow orders and path as shown by him. His responsibility is finished; now it is our responsibility to follow the path—if we don’t, there’s no way for him to guide us, to release us from suffering. Therefore, it is necessary to put our whole life toward correctly doing as he orders, as the path was shown, not doing opposite things, not following evil doers who have wrong realizations.

Then, same thing—the way the Dharma guides. That is the way the enlightened being—called “Buddha” or not, who has that knowledge, in whom we take refuge—that is how he guides us. So Dharma, as we completely rely on Dharma—refuge means this—due to full confidence in its knowledge and fear of samsaric suffering. So the way the Dharma guides us from suffering? This is by following the disciplines, by following karma; basically the essence is following karma. This means avoiding negative karma as much as possible and creating good karma as much as possible. This is what “following karma” means. Avoiding negative karma—the way the Dharma guides. If I talk essentially, by avoiding negative karma as much as possible, that much quicker we receive the help and guidance of the Dharma. Like this. So doing the opposite of the Dharma—harming other beings, not avoiding negative karma—there is no way Dharma can guide us. No matter how much you say prayer, all the time, if your action is opposite to this, there is no way the Dharma can quickly guide us from suffering.

Same thing, the Sangha—if one follows heretics who believe there is no such thing as past and future lives, the Triple Gem, absolute nature, many things; who believe the self is permanent, the

person's self is permanent, there are many things. So if the person follows this, there is no way for the Sangha to quickly, practically guide the being from suffering.

So actually, like this. Our future buddha guides us from all the mental shortcomings, all the defects of the delusions. And our Dharma, following the path, following karma, our Dharma guides us away from the suffering. Our Sangha guides us from suffering, like this. The most practical way to guide yourself is like this.

Rinpoche Question: What is Dharma, the meaning of Dharma?

Answer: The way to unbind yourself.

Rinpoche: Is your keeping precepts the way to unbind?

Answer: Yes.

Rinpoche: How?

Answer: Because it develops ...

Rinpoche: Negative mind? (I'm joking). It develops what?

Answer: The pure positive mind to penetrate, perhaps deeper understanding. It gives power.

Rinpoche: How? How does it help receive deeper understanding?

Answer: By concentrating the mental energy.

Rinpoche: Is that agreeable?

Answer: Yes—it is creating good karma and avoiding negative karma. It allows us to avoid the results of negative karma, and to experience good results that allows Dharma practice, and so understanding gets deeper.

Rinpoche: How does keeping precepts help achieve deeper understanding?

Answer: It keeps all the actions positive.

Rinpoche: How does positive action help to have deeper understanding of Dharma?

Answer: Less distractions, less desire for temporal happiness.

Rinpoche: How does decreasing the desire help achieve deeper understanding?

Answer: It's purification.

Rinpoche: Purifying what?

Answer: The mind.

Rinpoche: Ceasing the mind? Destroying the mind?

Answer: Destroying delusions clouding the mind.

Other Answer: By taking the precepts you voluntarily put yourself into the opposite action of your usual actions of unconscious actions, and by taking yourself out of this one can see these usual actions.

Rinpoche: That is correct, before—it purifies ignorance, so it makes a place for the knowledge. Why is there no enlightened knowledge yet? Because there is no place, because of the opposite, the defilements. It is the quickest way to purify and develop deeper understanding.

Question: Do the precepts prevent the addition of more obscuration or more bad karma?

Rinpoche: Bad karma creates obscuration.

Question: And the precepts prevent occurrence of negative actions?

Rinpoche: Yes. Keeping precepts with pure thought, that is Dharma. Now you answer.

Question: Is it possible for keeping precepts to create delusion?

Rinpoche: There's no way to create bad karma—keeping precepts means abstaining from the evil actions.

Question: But isn't the motive for keeping precepts important—say keeping for a day and feeling arrogant after?

Rinpoche: That's not purely keeping. What makes the possibility of receiving enlightenment?

Answer: Pure motive and development of acute awareness of your actions to differentiate between pure and impure motive.

Rinpoche: How does it lead to enlightenment?

Answer: Once you can differentiate between pure and impure motive, all your actions can become positive and release you from samsara and put you on the path to enlightenment.

Answer: To reach enlightenment, we must be released from samsara.

Rinpoche: So when you have acute awareness of delusions you are out of samsara—so you must be enlightened first to be out of samsara? Delusion has no beginning so how does it end?

Answer: I think it has beginning—it begins with impure mind.

Rinpoche: Why does it exist, does it have a creator or not?

Answer: Yes.

Rinpoche: Who?

Answer: The impure mind.

Rinpoche: So the impure mind has no beginning? Delusion has beginning but impure mind has not?

Day 22

Friday, December 7th

5 a.m.

To take ordination in the Mahayana it is necessary to be possessed by the Mahayana thought, the pure thought of bodhicitta, besides the action is done with pure motive, that which is opposite to the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. Try to cultivate this pure motive briefly like this.

“The attachment that is attached to the happiness of the temporal life and the higher samsaric pleasure is only the cause of suffering. However much you can make this present life happy, pleasant, even if we will receive a more pleasant life than this, like being born in the realm of the gods, all of these pleasant lives are in the nature of suffering. As there is not one tiny suffering left that we have never experienced and we have experienced all of them countless times; same thing, there is not one tiny samsaric pleasure left that we have never experienced, and we have experienced all of them countless times; same thing, there is not one great samsaric suffering left that we have never experienced and we have experienced all of them countless times; same thing, there is not one great pleasure left that we never experienced and we have experienced all of them countless times. So totally, there’s no samsaric karma that we never created. Therefore, since all of these are not new, since they are old, there’s no reason to have interest, be attached, to try for that. The opposite—we have been trying for that since beginningless lifetimes, now it is time to stop continually being attached to these things—it’s important because by stopping this, one can be released from samsaric suffering.

“But releasing oneself from samsaric suffering is not enough, not sufficient. There are infinite sentient beings in samsaric suffering now. These sentient beings are the objects from whom I received my past, present, and future happiness and enlightenment. At this moment, most of them have not met Dharma, do not have the wisdom eye to know positive actions and wrong actions, and do not have a leader leading them in the path to enlightenment. There are many things missing. As I have this chance, I must repay them in the best way, to rid them of the cause of suffering. At the moment I have no capability, therefore, I must become enlightened. To become enlightened depends on subduing the body, speech, and mind—the best way to subdue these three is by putting them in the disciplines, following the precepts. Therefore, I am going to take the Mahayana ordination.

(Ordination Ceremony)

9.a.m.

(Lama Thubten Yeshe)

3 p.m.

From the holy speech of the great guru, bodhisattva Tenzin Gyatso, “One should cultivate bodhicitta to benefit others—if one desires to benefit others, one should cultivate bodhicitta; if one desires to benefit oneself, if one desires a happy path, also one should cultivate bodhicitta.”

It is for sure that we and every living being desire happiness—no doubt, we desire a happy life, desire a happy path, a peaceful path, and desire the method of peace. The only problem is not recognizing the actual method of peace. It is definite that the work that we do in is either done for oneself or for others, so the best way to benefit others, the best way to benefit oneself, however the work is done, it is necessary to cultivate the bodhicitta. Why? The work is done to benefit either others or oneself. Basically it is for the achievement of the peace, which is devoid of suffering—so therefore, the pure thought of bodhicitta is of utmost need within our mind. Therefore, it is necessary to practice, to train the mind to become bodhicitta.

To practice bodhicitta, to receive this, to practice this in other realms of samsara is extremely difficult, because of the deep ignorance, the karmic deep ignorance, and the life, the way they live, and the limited chances—such as having an enlightened being descend, such as communicating the Dharma thought and speech—it is extremely difficult. In the three lower realms, besides those hindrances, the lack of freedom, the karmic ignorance, and limited chances, there is much suffering. Also, in the upper realms, the realms of the gods, for some of those gods, because of their karma, it is difficult to achieve everlasting peace, and also difficult to practice bodhicitta. In many ways, it is extremely difficult to have the chance to practice bodhicitta, not like such a precious chance that we have now. Therefore, we are in such a precious period, such a precious period, being at such place where there is the existence of the Mahayana teachings, and besides that, from our side we also have the chance to practice, to study, and to discuss about the practice of bodhicitta, the chance to listen, many things. So while there a chance, it’s worthwhile to practice, so in this way we never lose the precious chance—it makes being in such a condition, receiving such teachings and listening to them, meaningful. It is necessary to start training the mind now, even from this minute, since our life is always short. Therefore, before listening to the teachings, the motive of listening to the teachings should be the pure thought of bodhicitta. There’s no actual bodhicitta received but we are training, meditating on bodhicitta, trying to plant the seed of bodhicitta.

So think, “It is not enough for oneself to be released from suffering—I must achieve enlightenment in order to release sentient beings from suffering and lead them in the path to enlightenment. Therefore, it is necessary for me to completely achieve all the graduated path. Therefore, it is necessary to make correct, perfect practice. Therefore, it is necessary to perfectly understand all the meanings of the graduated path.”

So the listening subject of the graduated path, if it is divided into three we are on the path of the lower being. So far, the meditations from the lower path that we have finished briefly are, “Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Great Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Perfect Human Rebirth is Very Fragile and Easy to Decay,” “No Other Methods Can Stop Death,” therefore, “Death is Definite.” After death, since even in this life, one year, one day, even in previous lives, more negative karma is created than positive karma, therefore it is more definite that we will be reborn in “The Suffering Lower Realms.” Because there was a mind before the rebirth, there is a mind after the death. So the time of that rebirth is indefinite—“The Time of Death is Indefinite,” so the time of that rebirth in the three lower realms is indefinite, not sure when it will happen—it is something that will happen

unexpectedly, without knowing. Even if the person thinks it's not time, it is not my time of death, whenever there is the karmic arrangement of death, when that is ready, it will happen.

So therefore, since it is more definite that we will be born in those lower realms and suffer, it is necessary to do something, to make arrangement ahead of time, before that danger happens. At present, from our side, we have no power, no great supreme knowledge, no great compassion. We don't even have the power to guide ourselves from temporal problems—we have to rely on other living beings to even solve temporal problems. So, of course, it is necessary to solve the great problem of rebirth in the three lower realms. To save ourselves from that we have to rely on something, rely on someone. It is greatly worthwhile to rely on someone in order to escape from this. But it is most important not to rely on an imperfect guide, an imperfect leader, not to rely on an imperfect object. That is the most important thing, more than anything else in life. By making mistakes in this way, we lose this life and many future lives. So by finding the correct guide, the perfect guide, and by relying on such a perfect guide, besides being great numbers of profit, the cause of everlasting peace can be created in this life. Besides this, also in many future lives great profit can be made—peace, profit, always less suffering, attachment, always progressing, getting closer to the cessation of samsaric suffering. So what knowledge is necessary to have the object in whom we take refuge, on whom we rely? That I briefly explained, so there is no need to repeat. Anyway, the perfect object should have, as we talked about before, such great, infinite power, compassion, and knowledge, totally impartial compassion for every number of sentient beings. No matter, anyone who has these enlightened knowledges—even if he looks like a hippie, no matter what he is called—that is a perfect object from whom we can take refuge on. Even in many other future lives there is not even the slightest danger of being betrayed or misled. Such as these perfect beings, they achieved knowledge, the infinite supreme knowledge, through the path. There are countless enlightened beings, such as Guru Shakyamuni, for instance, who achieved his knowledge, power, and compassion through the path. How did he become a perfect object that we can take refuge in, rely on? That happened by following the perfect path, the teaching. Therefore, we can also take refuge in the teaching, in the Dharma jewel. And also in the attainer, the Sangha, of the Dharma jewel. The most practical way to guide oneself from these sufferings and to release other sentient beings from suffering is for yourself to become Buddha, for you to achieve the Dharma, for you to become Sangha—that is the most practical way. But to be able to guide yourself by the achievement of the Dharma and by becoming absolute Sangha, this cannot happen intuitively, it needs the guidance of the outer Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Without that it cannot happen intuitively. So therefore, what we are trying is this. Even the very first chapter, subject, we are trying to understand “The mind beginningless”—that is also method for us to be able to achieve our own Buddha, the individual Buddha, our future Buddha, and trying to achieve the Dharma and Sangha to be able to guide our individual selves from suffering and also guide other sentient beings from suffering. Each time we meditate it is for that reason. Even if we are making one prostration, it is also for that achievement.

It is important—this is the last emphasis—it is important, before you put your whole life in that direction, to think about whether this path caused the release of any sentient being from samsaric sufferings, from the circle of death and rebirth? By achieving this path, does any living being enlighten other sentient beings, release other sentient beings from suffering and death into enlightenment? By following the path, does it rescue them from rebirth in the suffering realm? This is important. Why do we follow a path, why do we seek truth? Because there is a problem. Why does the person need to take medicine? Because he is sick, there is a problem. Same as this example—why is he following a path that is not a materialistic method, why is there need of that? This is

because of problems. There are problems that we recognize and problems that we don't recognize; there are problems that we recognize with the ordinary mind—the very gross ones, the heavy ones—there are subtle problems in our minds that we don't recognize. But without completely destroying these problems that we don't recognize, there's no way to stop the problems that we do recognize. So the subtle problems that we don't recognize can be recognized by the following inner method, following the teachings, following the correct path—so without following the path, without destroying the subtle problems that bring the gross problems that we recognize, these gross problems cannot be destroyed. Anyway, so in regards to the need of seeking truth, seeking path—that is to solve the problem. There are all kinds of problems in our minds, some that we see, some that our limited mind doesn't see. So it is not enough stopping only the temporal problems that we recognize, and not stopping the problems that we don't recognize, but which bring these temporal problems. Therefore, the path we are trying to seek, the teachings should be useful to destroy the seed, the whole suffering—even the seed of the whole problem. So it is important to check up first, besides the temporal problems, the problems of this life, besides this, check this path, this teaching. Did any being, by following this teaching, stop rebirth into the suffering realms? Could anyone control samsaric suffering, ignorance, the circle of death and rebirth? By following this path, did anyone enlighten other sentient beings from ignorance, from suffering, from samsara?

Check this by using your wisdom, with logic. If this is clearly proved, that by following that path many living beings, the followers, achieved control over those sufferings, then it is worthwhile to make the trip on that path, and also to take refuge in the founder of that path.

The Benefits of Taking Refuge (Page 73)

Introduction: Paragraph 1

If it were possible for the benefits of taking refuge to appear in form, with color and shape, then it could fill up so many universes. “The three worlds” means a great number of universes—not as written—thousands of galaxies—(“senses, form, and formlessness” as printed is a mistake).

The eight benefits are just the total number, the brief benefits of taking refuge.

1. Just like saying, “bodhicitta.” Many people think “Buddhist” is a name to use for partisanship. Just as there are many names in the world that do not depend on realization or development of wisdom, just taking the name, “I am this and that,” and because of this conception, fighting, putting even the life in danger, not depending on realization, not helping to attain ultimate peace. This is not like this. It is like saying realization, the bodhicitta achieved, and even if people think you are crazy, you are a bodhisattva. If you have control achieved through tantric practice, mahamudra, even though it is looked at as crazy by other people—it doesn't matter. Even if he is looked at as crazy, it is their problem, the other peoples' problem—it is alright, he has done his job, he is free in his mind.

So just like that, “Buddhist” is a matter of having realizations, knowledge. This also depends on having that knowledge, just as becoming a bodhisattva depends on having knowledge of bodhicitta. So the equipment, the knowledge that makes the person become an “inner being?” That is strong fear, and full confidence in the enlightened being's knowledge, power, and compassion and completely relying on it, putting the whole life in his hands. This is not easy, even this is not easy. Besides having fear of samsaric suffering, an unbearable feeling of great compassion, energy, strong compassion for other beings' suffering is not easy. The other one is more difficult—the fear in the

suffering of samsara is more difficult to receive than the fear of the suffering of the three lower realms. Why is the energy to have compassion for other beings' suffering is difficult? First of all one should feel strong aversion towards one's own samsaric suffering. To have such strong fear, an unbearable feeling towards one's own suffering, one should realize what samsara is, the samsaric suffering nature. One should also recognize the suffering of the three lower realms. To have the fear of suffering of the three lower realms depends on understanding negative action and positive action, depends on understanding karma, that different lives are brought by karma. This depends on understanding beginningless mind. So there are many ways to come, it is a long way to come, not easy. But to become inner being is easy. For many people it is easy to become Buddhist, like shaving the hair (like I did today—I thought I would become Buddhist) and thinking this is the way to renounce.

But to become an inner being does not depend on outer change, outer looks. It is only defined by having this understanding, this mental knowledge that I briefly mentioned—this full confidence in the enlightened being's knowledge, power, and compassion, and fear of those levels of suffering, and completely relying on this perfect being and trying to avoid negative karma and create good karma as much as possible. Since it is only a matter of this mental knowledge, this equipment, this inner knowledge, the inner being can be among laypeople, even if the person never knows any prayers, not having a rosary to put on the hand—anyway, it does not depend on outer looks. Even if the outer look is perfect—head shaved, putting on robes, looking perfect outside—becoming Buddhist depends on mental knowledge. We cannot be sure where the inner being is; not sure who is an inner being, who is not an inner being—it is difficult to judge from outside. It is important to understand this, so we know—to say this is not easy. When one checks up in one's mind it is funny, mostly empty, like an empty pot. Like this, not sure—even if the person is sitting on the throne.

Question: If one cannot judge from outer appearance, why should one respect any monk or nun as the real Sangha?

Answer: That is the other person's responsibility; you are talking about respect—we can respect all sentient beings, even the animals—there is much to talk about. It is our responsibility. Anyway, no need to talk much in this subject, by meditating on this subject we can understand, the whole answer is there. But generally it is our responsibility to be humble, taking care of others, respecting others, keeping oneself in a humble place. This is one's responsibility, and it always gives peace within one's mind and it always creates the cause of happiness. It is always good knowledge, no matter who the other person is—it is always the opposite of pride, jealousy, and negative mind.

Generally, all sentient beings can be prostrated to, as we prostrate to Buddha, to enlightened being—as we receive enlightenment by depending on him, same thing we receive enlightenment by depending on sentient beings. As we make offering to Buddha, it does not mean all sentient beings are Buddha, all sentient beings are perfect object of refuge—it does not mean this. **Because of the reason, why we make prostration to the enlightened being!** For this reason, so we can prostrate to sentient beings, as we receive enlightenment by depending on them. But it does not mean that sentient beings are perfect objects of refuge. All sentient beings can be prostrated to by looking at them. But it does not mean that sentient beings are perfect objects of refuge. All sentient beings can be prostrated to by looking at them as a guru or as an enlightened being, as Guru Shakyamuni. It is true, there are people like this—he becomes a monk so that he doesn't have to do things like this. It has also two things: one is being scared of creating negative karma, not wanting to kill people, but one is a person who is lazy in worldly ways, doesn't want to suffer the problem generally, the

difficulties. Just as the example thinking, “If I become a monk, put robes on, I will find food easily,” without much idea of future lives and enlightenment, thinking, “If I become a monk, I will find my life easy, I can go to beg”—lazy mind. This is a lazy mind also from the Dharma point of view; as this is a lazy mind from the worldly point of view, it is also lazy from the Dharma point of view. Because he puts robes on, because he is attached to the happiness of this life, he doesn’t want to work, wants to make the life comfortable. So, for the other one there can be two motives—one is being scared of those heavy negative karma. Of course, it is better not to have any bad karma created, not to have any luggage of that bad karma to carry with the person to his next life—it’s better not to have it.

So when you hear the word “Buddhist,” if your mind can remember the knowledge it is useful, very effective for your mind, not thinking it is just a name or partisanship, but thinking of the knowledge that it means.

2. This we understand if we figure out the purpose of taking ordination. The purpose of taking ordination is because of these fears, the three fears—fear of the suffering of the lower realms, fear of samsaric suffering, and the unbearable fear for other sentient being’s suffering—these fears and full confidence in the enlightened being’s knowledge. This causes us to keep the ordination and to take the ordination, and the purpose of taking ordination is to release us from these fears. So, in this way it is easy to understand taking refuge—refuge is the basis of all ordinations.

3. It’s negative karma that person has created, and it can also be purified by refuge—taking refuge has that much power. For instance, in previous time, the king of some place killed his father who had the achievement of the noble path, who was noble. That action was one of those extreme actions, the heaviest negative karma, one of the five extreme negative actions. So by taking refuge, even that heavy karma was purified in his lifetime. There are many other examples. Also, the man who killed 999 beings—how he could purify all that heavy negative karmas? That was also through the power of the refuge. Actually, there are many other stories.

4. For instance, another way of saying three is, a person who has refuge, because he has fear of suffering and is scared of the negative karma he created in his past lifetimes, he always tries to purify through methods shown by the enlightened one—he always tries to diminish it many ways, with many different methods he tries to purify. So with this refuge, because of this fear of the sufferings, the person is obliged always to create good karma. And also, it gives him longing, the wish to create good karma as extensively as possible. There are also many other stories.

5. In previous time, in a country where a king was punishing people, he left the people he punished at the cemetery for the spirits at night, and nothing was left by the next morning. There was one man that the king punished and left at the cemetery. But this man found a piece of old red cloth from a monks’ robe, so while he was at the cemetery he put it on top of his head and strongly took refuge—this means he was relying completely on the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—thinking of these things and completely relying on and putting his life in the Triple Gem’s hands. All night he took refuge, this is a mental action—mainly it’s a mental action, not mainly an action of speech. So no one hindered him, no one disturbed him during the night, so he could come back. I think it was in Tibet, and he met an animal called *teh*—it looks like, not exactly a horse, but maybe that wounded him. So later on he met a lama who asked him what happened and he explained. So the lama gave refuge, and later on he met the animal again but the animal didn’t bite him again as before, just smelt him and left.

Even saying a prayer, even the prayer has so much power. Even if there's not much understanding in the mind, even just saying the prayer has power and benefit. But generally, just saying this prayer, imitating this prayer, does not make an inner being, because an inner being depends on mental knowledge. For instance, a story of how just even the prayer has power. In ancient times, in Tibet, there was a meditator in hermitage—he has a shirt offered by a benefactor, of quite good quality, from India. So a thief came to his hermitage and saw through the hole, and saw the shirt hanging on the wall. So he asked the monk about the shirt—the meditator didn't let him come in, but the meditator asked him to stretch the hand in and he would give it to him. Instead the meditator tied a rope to his hand and tied it to a pillar. Then he beat the thief with the rope saying, “Go to refuge. Buddha; go to refuge, Dharma; go to refuge, Sangha,” beating him stronger and stronger. So the thief went away and it was becoming dusk, and on the trail was a bridge recognized as a mischievous place, where people are scared to go at nighttime because of the spirits going round. The man was scared and hid under the bridge. Then he thought how good it was there was only three, “Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha,” otherwise he would have been much more exhausted or killed. He didn't know the meaning, yet as he was very scared and couldn't find any other thing, he kept repeating that refuge prayer all night—so that night nothing happened to him. There are many other stories about how even just by saying the prayer, people are relieved from dangers. In some families there are mischievous spirits—they go to bed inside the room, but at night the bed comes outside. But when Tibetan laypeople who have taken refuge go inside, this doesn't happen.

Taking refuge stops rebirth in the three lower realms. For instance, like this—this is easy to understand. In the lifetime, since the person took refuge, the person who has refuge in the mind always creates good karma in order to make arrangements not to be reborn in the three lower realms by always remembering the enlightened beings. Also at death time, if one can remember the enlightened being, this knowledge can help a great deal not to be reborn in the lower realm. Anyway, starting from the perfect human rebirth up to enlightenment, the whole realization, the whole path, is achieved on the basis of refuge—it's all received from refuge.

As the person has stronger, more pure refuge—even within the refuge there are levels—those who have achieved renunciation have the purest refuge. Anyway, the more pure refuge one has within one's mind, the quicker one receives enlightenment.

Also, this prayer that we often say before the meditation, by saying this prayer (page 19) and reciting this mantra (page 20), it purifies 40,000 eons of negative karma. This mantra has the power to purify. This prayer, that which comes before the mantra, includes many things—refuge, prostrations, offerings, and asking for blessing—it is short, but it has many things—this is also a refuge prayer. (Please repeat). By reciting this mantra, it has the benefit of purifying 40,000 eons of negative karma. But the one thing is, there's no such time that we never created negative karma before this, there's no such time that we started to create negative karma. There are many other mantras that we started to create negative karma. There are many other mantras that have much power. As our ignorance is beginningless, as our ignorance has no beginning, as our ignorance has always been creating negative karma, just making the pure recitation of this mantra does not purify the whole thing. This mantra and prayer is received from this guru who has the great achievement of bodhicitta, Tenzin Gyatso. It is received from him.

Usually mantra has great power—why does mantra have benefit and power? Because of the power of the omniscient mind. Also, through mantra there are many things to stop dangers, to cure disease,

such as leprosy, which are difficult to be cured by modern chemical medicines. There are many people, not only monks or meditators, but many laypeople, too, who can cure other peoples' dangerous diseases by reciting mantra. Especially the diseases caused by the mischievous actions of spirits, which are extremely difficult to be cured by the elements, the medicines. There are many things. Also, there are mantras that can help at the time of death by reciting and blowing on the corpse, the animal, or the person dying. There are those that cure the disease of the poisons. Also mantras that bring success—for many different actions there's a power of a mantra to bring success for each thing. Anyway, all of the power is the power of the omniscient mind, and is only because of the knowledge of Buddha or the enlightened being. So anyway, if one is going to talk about how the power or benefit or the mantra is great, it can never be finished at any time. It is all because of the power of the omniscient mind, the action of the omniscient mind. Even reciting mantra, helping in so many ways, even that is the action of the omniscient mind.

6 p.m.

Whatever meditation you didn't finish this morning start from that, putting yourself in the evolution of the future death as if it is happening now. Then try to make the experience of the sufferings of the negative karmas that cause rebirth in those different narak sufferings, and the bad karma to be reborn in the animal and preta realms, thinking for sure that you have created those, and thinking as if you are dying now and being born and suffering there—as much as you can remember, try to feel it, then meditate on it in order to get out of these sufferings. After the meditation on suffering, think, "If I am born right away in those realms, there are incredible sufferings like this; if I die right away I meet those incredible sufferings—it is such a great shock. At the moment I wasn't born in those realms so I must do something. So I must take refuge."

Then meditate trying to remember the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni, of the omniscient mind, try to remember the knowledge as much as you remember, his supreme great knowledge, which means omniscient mind, his power and his compassion. In regards to great knowledge, his holy body, speech, and mind have such great knowledge. Same thing, his holy body has power, as does his holy speech and holy mind. Like this, checking the knowledge.

And as this holy being who has this perfect knowledge, this holy object in whom I can take refuge, as all these knowledges are received through Dharma, then Dharma is also a worthwhile object to take refuge. Then check Dharma knowledge. Then the graduated path, following the guru up to enlightenment, the perfect human rebirth up to enlightenment, the whole graduated path—that is also Dharma knowledge of Sangha, the attainer of Dharma, those noble beings who have the achievement of the absolute Dharma.

And think how the Buddha guides, how the Dharma guides, how the Sangha guides; since we take refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—checking like this. And also how those three cause you to achieve your individual Buddha—one's own Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—and how one's own Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha guide oneself—check like this. Then so ... like this. The way the Buddha guides is ... as the path was shown by them, the way the Buddha guides me is by helping me to achieve Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, so achieving these three depends on following the path as it was shown by the enlightened being, following the graduated path as it was shown by the enlightened being. The basic thing, the essential way of following the teaching, the path, is observing karma. Without observing karma—that means trying to avoid negative karma, and trying to create positive karma—without observing karma, there is no way to achieve the Buddha, Dharma, and

Sangha; so then there's no way that the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha can guide me, there's no way to achieve Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and no way that the outer Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha can guide me, save me from suffering.

Then meditate on karma (Pages 74 to 80). First, "Karma is Definite"—that means (more details will come, tonight this is just the introduction of the outlines)—karma is definite. "Karma is Expandable," "The Result of Karma Which Wasn't Created by Me Cannot be Experienced," "Whatever the Karma is Created, However Long it Takes, It is Definite Not to Lose, is Definite to Bring the Result," whatever karma I have created so far, it is definite that I will experience the result. Relating these things to negative karma is more effective, it helps to achieve the renounced mind of samsara. Think like this about negative karma.

Karma is definite means that from negative karma comes a suffering result. Then you check up—whatever negative karma is created, it is definite to bring suffering result. Just as this—you plant hot pepper, then growing, raising something else—as this is impossible, so is creating negative karma and experiencing peace, a happy result.

And whatever negative karma is created, it is expandable. Just like planting one rice seed it can bring many grains of rice, so by creating one negative karma, the suffering result has to be experienced for a long time and brings many suffering results—from one tiny karma.

And whatever negative karma is created, even if it is billions and billions and billions of eons and the result has not been experienced yet, it is sure to be experienced soon, the result never gets lost. Think before going through this, think, check, try to remember all the negative karma from today, how many negative karmas created, then yesterday, then the past month, the past years, then in the lifetime, going back to the childhood time, try to see this as much as possible. You should not think, "I didn't kill people, I didn't do anything like this, I am positive, I am okay, nothing wrong." We can feel like this since we do not perceive the past things. Try to think that as the deluded mind has no beginning, in my previous lives I have been an animal numberless times, and so much negative karma has been created by being different animals. For an animal, such as a tiger, from the time they are born until death even to show even one positive karma is extremely difficult. Just like this, with many other animals, mostly all black, negative actions. It's like a dark room where there's not even a tiny light—all negative actions created in the life means all negative karmas, not even one tiny positive karma can be shown. So our being an animal, not only once but numberless times, means we don't know how much negative karma we created in previous time. Also, similar to this, as pretas and human beings and also suras and asuras we have created many negative karmas—even though we didn't kill human beings in this life, we may have killed them in previous lives. We have done the five extreme negative actions, we may have created them in our previous lives.

After all this, think that negative karma will definitely bring a suffering result—then it is also expandable. So each negative karma that I have created and collected up until now, all have a suffering result. There are numberless negative karmas whose results are not finished yet, that were created in great numbers of past lives, for many trillions of eons; but still they are not finished. All these negative karmas have for sure a suffering result that all have to be experienced by me gradually, which may take infinite eons. And for the negative karmas that have been created in each time, each result can be increased, expanded so much more—not just one suffering result that finishes in one time, in only one life, but moreover the result is expandable, so there is much more suffering even though the cause was one. So then, there have been incredible numbers of negative

karmas created, and so if the result of each of those is expandable, the suffering result I will experience is incredible. So think like this.

(Meditation)

Rinpoche: Did you find out why delusion has beginning or is beginningless?

Answer: Delusion has beginning because it was created in our previous lifetimes by our ego.

Other Answer: Ego is delusion.

Rinpoche: So delusion has beginning? Why should it exist—what made it exist?

Answer: Our imagination—it doesn't really exist.

Rinpoche: So actually there's no hindrance to enlightenment—we are just thinking? Is there enlightenment?

Answer: Sure, everybody has enlightenment.

Rinpoche: Is everybody enlightened?

Answer: Yes—not actually, but there is the possibility in everybody.

Rinpoche: But why are you not enlightened?

Answer: Because my mind is still attached and not yet tamed.

Rinpoche: Attached to what?

Answer: Temporal pleasure.

Rinpoche: It's just a creation of my mind, it doesn't really exist.

Rinpoche: So you have no attachment? Yourself doesn't exist. You don't have a hand?

Answer: I think at the moment it exists, but I'm not sure about it.

Rinpoche: So everything not sure?

Answer: Yes

Rinpoche: So what really exists?

Answer: Beginningless mind.

Rinpoche: Isn't your beginningless mind a creation of your mind?

Answer: No.

Rinpoche: So it has no creator.

Answer: The beginningless mind is part of the universe.

Rinpoche: So it has no creator?

Answer: It's a part of God.

Rinpoche: So did God create it?

Answer: It's beginningless, it always existed.

Rinpoche: So your today's mind has no creator?

Answer: No.

Rinpoche: Isn't your today mind created by yesterday's mind, caused by yesterday's mind?

Answer: There are influences of my mind, the beginningless mind.

Rinpoche: Is all your beginningless mind pure?

Answer: I think so.

Rinpoche: So your present life mind is also pure?

Answer: No, in previous lifetimes it became impure.

Rinpoche: Why did the pure beginningless mind become impure?

Answer: Because of delusion.

Rinpoche: Why was there delusion?

Answer: It's explained in the book.

Rinpoche: Is beginningless mind pure?

Answer: Yes.

Rinpoche: Pure what?

Answer: It's pure, but it has delusion sticking to it.

Rinpoche: So it's impure and pure?

Answer: Yes.

Rinpoche: If beginningless mind is pure, why should it be purified?

Answer: It's not pure, it has delusion sticking to it. It has delusion in it.

Rinpoche: So it's like if there's kaka in the bowl, you don't know what is kaka and what is bowl.

Answer: Yes, it's hard to tell ...

Rinpoche: Why does the mind have clear light, clear light nature of mind?

Answer: Consciousness is the ability to perceive and the clear light is the image of that ability—when it's void of delusion then it's clear light.

Rinpoche: Does the flower have clear light because it has void nature?

Answer: I don't think so, because the flower has no consciousness—it has void nature but not clear light void nature.

Rinpoche: But why is void nature of mind called clear light?

Day 23

Saturday December 8th

5 a.m.

To take the ordination in the Mahayana way it is necessary that the motive be the pure thought, the Mahayana thought, devoid of the eight worldly Dharmas. It is worthwhile to take the ordination with the pure motive, to be very careful in the motive and try to take it with pure motive. This ordination is something that has to be taken and can be taken with great happiness, not something forced—being forced to take ordination by some other person, or being obliged to take ordination because of the meditation course schedule, not being concerned with enlightenment or the Dharma—thinking like this is very limited in power, the power of mind, the power of thought is very limited. It is something that can be taken with great happiness, great pleasure—like a beggar receiving jewel.

For instance, if we are born as a narak being, as those lower suffering beings, as an animal—even if we are born as a sura or asura—for many reasons, suffering and deep ignorance, it is extremely difficult to take this ordination if you are born in those lower realms. If we are born in the sura and asura realms, it is very difficult due to distractions and hindrances. Even if we are born as human beings on earth, in each country, the people keeping these eight precepts is so rare, so rare. For instance, it is also more rare in the West—think of one's own country—it's very rare, so rare; perhaps you who are taking the precepts, perhaps you is the only one among the people in that country. And besides taking just the eight precepts, taking the eight precepts in the Mahayana way has more benefits, more profit can be gained, and it becomes a more powerful cause of receiving enlightenment. Also, Guru Shakyamuni, many other beings, received enlightenment by keeping these precepts.

So, “Attachment that is attached to the temporal happiness and the higher samsaric pleasures is only the cause of sufferings. There’s no one tiny happiness left that we have never experienced, we have experienced them countless times. There is not one tiny samsaric suffering left that we have never experienced, we have experienced them countless times. There’s not one greater samsaric pleasure left that we have never experienced, we have experienced them countless times. There’s not one greater samsaric suffering left that we have never experienced, we have experienced them countless times. So for these reasons there is no reason to have attachment to those samsaric pleasures, and, secondly, all these samsaric pleasures are in the nature of suffering. Therefore, we must be released from samsaric sufferings. Only that is not sufficient, not enough. There are infinite sentient beings who are in suffering, who are the object from whom we received all our past, present, and future happiness and perfection. Therefore, we are responsible to repay them and guide them from suffering. Therefore, it is necessary to first to enlighten ourselves. To receive enlightenment it is necessary to subdue one’s body, speech, and mind. The best way to subdue them is by keeping precepts. Therefore, I am going to take the Mahayana ordination.”

(Ordination Ceremony)

9 a.m.

This is from the holy speech of the great bodhisattva, Tenzin Gyatso, “Without making differentiation between rich and poor, without making differentiation between wise and foolish, and without making differentiation between higher and lower, the bodhicitta which equally benefits all should be cultivated.”

This means, in regards to the pure thought bodhicitta benefiting sentient beings, there is nothing to differentiate like this—like bodhicitta benefiting only the poor and not the rich. Bodhicitta benefits only the foolish, not the wise, bodhicitta benefits only the lower, not the higher. There is nothing like this in regards to the object that bodhicitta benefits—the bodhicitta benefits equally. As bodhicitta is a strong will to receive enlightenment for the sake of others, for the sake of each sentient being, therefore each sentient being, those who are rich, those who are poor, those who are wise, those who are foolish, those who are higher, those who are lower—there is no such thing as these objects having stronger benefits, and other beings having lesser benefits; there’s no such thing. The pure thought of bodhicitta, which can equally benefit without depending on differentiation, if this is received there is no way, there’s not even the slightest way that the bodhicitta would harm others, harm others or oneself. It only benefits every other sentient being, its function is only benefiting each sentient being equally.

So achievement of this bodhicitta is of the utmost need for the achievement of enlightenment. Why is the Enlightened Being, Guru Shakyamuni, obliged to help or have compassion equally to all sentient beings? That is because of the bodhicitta he received while he was following the path, his previous achievement of bodhicitta. Therefore we, since we also want to release sentient beings from suffering, to reach enlightenment it is necessary to have the achievement of this bodhicitta, that allows all sentient beings, every other sentient beings to receive help from the enlightened beings, whether the sentient beings take refuge or not, whether the sentient beings believe in him or not—they still receive help and guidance. That is the kindness of Guru Shakyamuni’s bodhicitta which he received while he was training in the path, such a great, beneficial realization, the pure thought bodhicitta.

Not trying to achieve this precious, pure thought while we have received the perfect human rebirth, such a precious chance, is foolish. So it is worthwhile to train our minds in bodhicitta even from this moment, even from this hour, this minute. If the work, especially the work that we are doing now, is possessed by this thought, it is greatly beneficial to other beings. Therefore, try to think—"I am going to listen to the explanations on the graduated path in order to receive enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings, every other sentient being—those who are suffering in the animal, human, sura, and asura realms, and also for the sentient beings who are not enlightened."

So the listening subject is the graduated path to enlightenment—if it is divided in three, into the path of the lower being, the path of middle being, and the path of higher being—this is the path of the lower being.

So far, what has been briefly finished by explanation is, "Perfect Human Rebirth," "The Great Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth," "The Great Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth," "How The Perfect Human Rebirth is Fragile, Easy to Decay," "No Other Method Can Stop Death," therefore, "Death Is Definite." At death time the mind does not cease, as there was mind before the rebirth. It is definite that we will be born in the upper realm or the lower realm. It is more definite, according to the level of the mind, the present situation, our individual present situation, it is more definite that we will be born in the lower realm. In regards to positive karma and negative karma, more negative karma is created—in a month, a year, even in this life—so besides creating more negative karma in previous lives and even in this life, because there are negative karmas created and not purified, there is nothing arranged to prevent the suffering result. Therefore, it is definite that it will bring a suffering result. Therefore, for this reason it is more definite that we will be reborn in the lower suffering realms, and not only is it definite—from one karma, the suffering result is not one type, just one small suffering result as the small negative karma created—the suffering result is not the same as the karma. Even for negative karma, the suffering result cannot be finished in a minute as the karma was created in a minute; the suffering result cannot be finished in a second as the karma was created in a second. The suffering result has to be experienced, according to the karma, for many eons, for many lifetimes, and even that is not just one type of suffering, it is different types of suffering. Therefore, it's definite that we will suffer longer and more in those lower suffering realms.

So far we didn't achieve any realizations of any path to cut off the cause of suffering. So therefore, it is definite that we will experience the suffering result of the individual karmas we have created. And it is impossible to experience the true path and the true cessation, nirvana, that are achieved by other people; it is impossible for us to experience by us the true path and the true cessation, the nirvana that was achieved by Guru Shakyamuni or by other living beings. If it is possible that although someone followed the path and achieved it, and we receiving it by not following the path—if this is possible then it is not necessary to follow Dharma—we can experience other beings' realizations, other beings' ultimate peace, everlasting peace. If there is such possibility like this, there is no need to practice Dharma, it is not necessary to observe karma. But besides this, one person experiencing another beings' pleasure of eating food, even this ordinary thing is impossible to do. Our not working for food or eating, and trying to experience the pleasure the other person has is impossible to do. This ordinary thing is impossible, so of course it is impossible to experience another's ultimate peace. Therefore, experiencing the results of karma not created by us, any result of karma that wasn't created by us, is not possible; it cannot be experienced, there is no way to experience—as long as we don't try to do anything from our side with karma, it is definite that we will be reborn in the lower suffering realms. It is more definite that we will be born there and suffer, because any

karma that was created from eons and eons ago, trillions of eons ago, can never get lost. So therefore, it is more definite that we will be born in the lower suffering realms after death.

So, we should do something ahead of time. The actual time of rebirth and death is not definite, not definite, we cannot trust, cannot think it will not happen in this year, in this month, this week, tonight, tomorrow. Thinking and trusting, “I am happy now, there is nothing wrong, my body is healthy”—thinking this cannot give an answer and is not sure, is never definite. Even if someone is so well, so healthy now, maybe after a certain number of hours, all of a sudden gets disease, gets sick—either with a mental problem or a physical problem. Even if in this minute someone is well, no one knows what will change, so there’s nothing to trust in the present situation.

So as we don’t have the capability or power to save ourselves at the moment, we have need of taking refuge in a perfect object. The Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are the three perfect objects, so the most practical way, what really guides you from these different levels of suffering is your own Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. This depends on the help of the outer Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Receiving help from the outer Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and your own Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha depends on following karma; without following karma it is extremely difficult. Therefore, the whole thing depends on karma. Just as in this example. For the patient, the main thing is the patient has to cure himself, he has to; the main, important thing is that the patient cures himself being skillful. But this depends on the wise doctor and the practice, the right, perfect medicine, and the nurse. So the whole thing—the patient himself solving his own sickness, guiding himself, and the patient receiving help and being guided by the doctor, medicine, and nurse—what does this depend on? Whether the patient listens to the instructions or not. If he doesn’t listen, take them correctly, nothing happens; this is simple, easy to understand. So as we understand this, we should understand this evolution. The way refuge works is like this. The whole thing depends on the patient following instructions and advice, that is the most important thing. If the patient takes wrong diet that is forbidden by the doctor, if the person doesn’t follow, doesn’t take the medicines correctly, takes the wrong medicines, not following correctly the instructions at the time they are given, if the person does this, besides curing himself, he gives suffering to himself, no matter how wise the doctor, how rich and perfect the medicine, or how well-qualified the nurse.

So therefore, the whole peace, the ultimate peace, the highest peace—enlightenment, cessation of suffering—and even the ordinary happiness, a single ordinary happiness, even the happiness of feeling cool with the wind blowing when you are hot, all the happiness, the whole happiness is the result of the virtuous karma. The greatest sufferings in the lower realm, even a tiny suffering such as headache, back pain, knee pain, feeling cold, even a tiny suffering is a result of negative karma, of evil karma. Therefore, anyone who desires peace, happiness—for instance, with details like this: of course, for those who desire enlightenment, there is great need to observe karma; and for those who want to receive a better rebirth, the fundamental thing is observing karma. We forget even those things, leave those things; for those who are only concentrated of one life, they also desire peace and happiness, they never want to get sick, to get into any problems; even those beings who are only concerned or believes in only one life, since they desire peace, they have to observe karma. It is not something that someone forces on you—following karma is not something only obliged by the enlightened being. If you check up, to make this work, actually who obliges? We, the suffering beings who have suffering oblige; if we don’t have ignorance there’s no suffering, so there is no reason to create karma or to observe karma in order to avoid suffering. So his suffering is created by himself. As the living being desires peace, wants peace, observing karma is his job. For the person,

even the person who only believes in peace, doing this job, observing karma, has to be done. Even if he doesn't have idea or belief or understanding of Triple Gem, following karma is his responsibility.

There's no way to receive an uncomplicated life without creating the karma, without ceasing the ignorance of that person. Therefore, as long as he doesn't recognize that important point, that important subject as important, as long as he doesn't observe that important point, there is no way to make his life uncomplicated and satisfactory, no way. Why no way? Because as long as the person creates negative karma, as long as the mind is under the control of the collection of delusions, collected from beginningless lifetimes, there's no way to receive the uncomplicated, satisfactory life.

What happens is this—in modern times with people. During life they never seek this point or try to find out this important point; so when death comes it is finished, and there's no time after death to seek it, as this is the time of experiencing the suffering result. Even during the lifetime, even if it is explained, even if the person met the method, if it was shown, the person goes away from it, wants to close it, doesn't want to understand it and gets shocked. Just like in the example, when a person gives food to an animal, the animal escapes away because the animal doesn't know the situation, doesn't know about the person; the animal only thinks he is harming, making complicated—that's why he runs away, making more trouble, the animal himself causing more trouble. Anyway, this is the modern situation, the life of people. Like this.

Karma is not something that only Tibetan people have and Europeans do not have. And it is not something given by the enlightened being, like a material thing given to you in order to keep it. It's a matter of recognizing and understanding. It's like this—in Tibet there's an example—a man had a few animals, several donkeys. He was riding on one, and counted the others, but not the one he was riding. So always one was missing, and again he counted, and again one was missing—such worry! This was a useless complication made by himself—not recognizing the donkey he was riding on. So same thing, the samsaric sentient beings have to observe karma.

For instance, as the impulse is important at the beginning of the meditation, at the beginning of the Dharma practice, the first thing is observing karma. The door of Dharma practice is observing karma. As long as the person doesn't observe karma, even if the person does retreat his whole life, it cannot help, he cannot guide himself from rebirth in the suffering realms. In previous times there was a meditator who made much long retreat on the tantric deity, and by meditation on this wrathful tantric deity, he achieved certain powers and with that killed so many people. After his death he was born in suffering, in the stage of the narak, even though he was a meditator in his previous life. This is because of not observing karma.

Anyway, whenever we meditate, the meditation is supposed to help us to observe karma. Otherwise, if it doesn't help us to observe karma, how can it help stop suffering? So the meditation, whatever we are doing, should make it useful to observe karma—then the meditation, whatever we are doing, helps to stop suffering. There is no need for the meditation to create the cause of suffering; there are billions and billions of actions, no need for the extra action, the meditation. So meditation should be made useful to observe karma—observing karma also helps the meditation. So, if we meditate to help observe karma, observing karma helps us to realize the meditation more quickly, to achieve the realization of the meditation more quickly, like this it helps.

In previous times in Tibet, in Tenpo, close to Lhasa, there was a meditator who meditated on the tantric deity called Yamantaka [sic: Yamandansa]. But he didn't have deep understanding of the

Dharma, didn't have the understanding of the important points of Dharma practice—he was only concerned about the deity, but did not have a strongly renounced mind of samsara, and did not practice bodhicitta. After his death he was born as a preta that had a similar shape to the deity he meditated on before, in his previous life. He was born as something like this—he was born as a preta and he came to his meditator friends of his previous life—he came to beg the smell of burning from his previous life's friends, the meditators. Usually, the smell of burning meals, there are certain pujas to do—they burn tsampa in the fire and mix it with things and put it outside to make charity to the pretas—there are many ways to make puja, to make charity to the pretas so that they find food. Also it causes the spirits to soon be born in the upper realms. So as he was born a preta in that shape, he came to beg the burning smell. So, if one is not careful with karma, karma can be very heavy. If one does not observe karma, the suffering problem cannot be ceased no matter how much the person is learned, wise, or famous, no matter how much he has magic powers. If the person doesn't observe karma, he can't guide himself from suffering.

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1. Action done with greed and hatred and meritorious actions done for future lives. But any action that is done for future lives is not necessarily meritorious. If the person doesn't know what is meritorious karma and demeritorious karma, without knowing exactly is it possible that they are creating negative karma expecting to have a better life in the future?

(a) This “circle of three” means the person himself—for instance if a person is making charity—himself, the object, and the material he is giving, thinking of the absolute nature of himself, the object, and the material, and then giving it—the action being possessed by the wisdom of the absolute nature, the understanding of the absolute nature.

(b) This means meritorious karma that is created, such as keeping morality, precepts, or creating charity to have a better life in the future, even if it is not done with this concentration.

(c) Siddhi—samadhi. Meditating siddhi for the achievement of greater pleasure.

3 p.m.

The way karma is explained by the Enlightened Being is exactly the way that the evolution of karma is working—not that Guru Shakyamuni explained one way and the actual evolution is something different—not like this—Guru Shakyamuni explained the factual evolution.

Everything that the enlightened Being explained about the evolution of karma is accurate: what arises from what—what positive result arises from positive karma, and what negative result arises from negative karma.

Even the moon and the sun can possibly become non-existent in a time; even the countries, the earth, can be destroyed; when the color of the sky is not definite, it can change; now it looks blue, in a time it can change. Everything has change. But the order of the Enlightened Being has no change. Even though those phenomena can possibly change like this, the Enlightened Being never tells even one single untrue word. If we can remember, continually, the whole life, the continuity of the whole life, if we can remember—if we can remember, the situation becomes something like this for the person who remembers his past lives—he has to achieve Dharma practice, has to achieve the

method to stop it, to stop the cause of suffering, the continuity of suffering. Even though other people insist that he not practice Dharma, as much as other people insist that he doesn't practice Dharma, he is in such a situation that he has to practice, he has to find a method that ceases the suffering.

This can have a result—such as indifferent feelings—you can check up.

Karma: Principal and Cooperative Causes (Page 75)

For instance—negative actions, the principal cause, impure impulse or the delusions. The thing is this, one thing is—for the continuity of your Dharma practice, of course, it depends on the environment, the place where you are, and the people. If your inside understanding is not deep it easily gets changed by people, influenced by other peoples' ideas, you easily become controlled by ideas, conflict, the environment, many things. If your inside understanding is strong, unshakeable, then also your practice becomes unshakeable; then you can continue, it is stronger, as it is that much stronger in your mind—the understanding and fear of samsaric suffering, and the understanding of Dharma—your practice will have less disturbance. If your understanding is not strong, if you have disturbance, and you follow the disturbance, the person himself easily follows the interferer. If he has fear of samsara, and of creating negative karma—if this is strong, as much as this mind is strong in that person, that person will be that strong in not following the interferers, the negative influences. He cannot be easily influenced by other people in a negative way, by the people who don't follow karma, the evil creator people, living beings who are the evil creators.

Especially if you have if one has precepts, if one has made a vow and is keeping precepts, for this person the place is very important, it depends a lot on the people whom you are with. And the main thing that really keeps your precepts, your main protector, the main method that makes you keep your precepts, is the more you understand the nature of samsaric suffering, the more you understand the evolution of karma; the way the evolution, the terrible negative suffering result has to be experienced from the creation of negative karma, and fear, strong fear in karma, in creating negative karma. And samsara—this depends on understanding, which has to arise through your own meditation, the experience of these meditations. If one does not have such strong fear in samsaric suffering, in the creation of negative karma, if there's no strong fear, then the person's precepts will easily get broken. As the person is in the situation—in such an environment, with such people, the most main important thing that we should try, the most helpful, main protector, is your understanding, the great fear of suffering, and the understanding of it. This is the main protector that will protect us from suffering, that will protect us from creating negative karma, not breaking precepts; this is the main protector. If this is not strong, then just only running away from people cannot help—this is the main thing, only running away from people cannot help—we cannot exist without seeing people.

The main thing is this—as long as we don't have this strong protector in the mind, even though other people, surrounding people, do not disturb you, do not disturb your Dharma practice, because this protector is not strong, not strongly achieved, there is much interference inside—the cooperative cause is outside, and in the mind there are negative interferences, and in the mind no strong protection—so the negative interferers are stronger and you disturb your own practice—generally like this, the person disturbs his own peace because he listens to his inner interferer. The reason he listens to the inner interferer and can't protect himself from not breaking the precept and not disturbing his Dharma practice is because of not having a strong protector, not having a strong

protector, the strong fear of the evolution of negative karma and samsaric suffering; totally, samsaric suffering. There's danger, even though your surroundings are positive, not disturbing, that you will be disturbed by following your own negative interferer—besides disturbing one's practice there is danger also to make it stronger, more powerful than the inner protector. Totally this—the main disturbance to Dharma practice is the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. The main hindrance is this, also the disturbance. The hindrance, the negative interferers that hinder your Dharma practice, the meditation, keeping the precepts, no matter how much we talk, it is the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. As long as we think this is good, and follow it, there's no way to make continual Dharma practice, and it is extremely difficult to keep the precepts pure.

If a person who feels that creating negative karma and the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas are a poison that can cause danger to life, besides the person being scared to take the poison, he doesn't want those poisonous things that cause danger to the life around, he is so scared of the suffering the poison can cause. Being extremely scared of this, besides of eating the poisonous food, he is scared of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas as poison. And the same thing with creating negative karma—this is like taking poison, and he can't be easily disturbed in his Dharma practice, keeping precepts, whatever it is. He cannot be disturbed by his negative interferer inside, and he cannot easily be disturbed by other people, however much other people try to please him by giving him food, by giving him clothes. Anyway, however it is done, his practice, the one who has that much fear of creating negative karma and of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, his practice becomes that pure and can't be easily disturbed, and that makes him continue his pure practice, such as keeping precepts and many things.

As long as we don't have this much fear it is easy to disturb the Dharma practice—we don't need other people to disturb us—we disturb ourselves before the other people do. The main thing that really makes the person keep, that gives him the energy to continue his Dharma practice, keep precepts, however the situation changes—happy situation, unhappy situation, whatever place he is—the main thing that makes him continue Dharma practice and keep precepts is continual meditation on death and samsaric suffering, trying to see all of samsaric pleasure as suffering. Because, as I said before, the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is the main interferer. The main thing is, one thing is this—lacking deep understanding of the nature of samsaric suffering, he sees samsaric pleasure as a real pleasure. So in that way, due to this wrong conception, he easily gets attached to it. This great yogi, Milarepa said, “..and materials and demons' spice—give up, don't trust.” I do not mean you should die of starvation, practice Dharma always, it does not mean this. Because, you see, food and so forth is just one example.

Anyway, even though we try to think in meditation, “Samsaric happiness is in the nature of suffering,” why do we, during life, easily get attached, the opposite of what we think in meditation? One thing is, the meditation is not really made practical. We do not have a strong feeling as we say the words, intuitively seeing it as we say the words, not being conscious, not being continually conscious. So again, what is missing? The fear, it is the lack of fear. The mind easily gets attached because of this cause—the evil thought comes—the person's protector, guide, police is missing, and because that is missing, the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas can come—these two cannot exist together. So sometimes even the meditator doesn't know, because of not having strong fear and not being conscious, not feeling, discovering that this temporal life is in the nature of suffering. So even if we try to use Dharma, try to meditate, the mind easily gets attached and we don't realize how the mind easily gets attached, don't recognize it, even don't recognize what mind is—the thief, the thought of the eight worldly Dharmas came and got attached. So after a time, then you discover,

then you realize that thief, that evil—the eight worldly Dharmas came and stole your inner peace. Because being attached to samsaric pleasure always causes negative karma, and so avoiding that itself is the cause of peace. Avoiding the thief itself is the cause of peace. When the thief comes, he steals the inner peace, the inner freedom—just as a cat sneaks into the room to eat meat. First of all you don't know the cat came into the room, and then when the meat disappears you realize it. So continually meditate on samsaric suffering and karma, and especially on impermanence—this can become the real protector.

The pure Dharma practice comes if the person continually tries to watch the thief, the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, and tries to fight it. Always watch it, but only watching is not enough. It will be like this—the police standing in the house and letting the thief steal everything. What the police are supposed to do is not only see the thief but stop him from stealing, to destroy the thief, take him out. So, same thing, we should work with our thief, putting ourselves as the police, always watching and trying to fight. Everything comes—pure Dharma practice, successful meditation—everything comes from this. And this helps a great deal with karma; just this itself is observing karma. It helps in many ways.

2. Karma is Cause and Effect

Karma generally means action. It has to be a secondary mind. Within secondary minds, there are fifty-one. Karma itself is a secondary mind but it can depend on action.

For instance, as the action is created, it leaves impressions, some ability on the mind. For instance, a person kills a dog—but how does that make the connection to his future life's karma? The relationship, how it happens is, the action leaves an impression, an ability, a seed on the mind. So as mind continues, that impression is not destroyed or purified; that seed—like the seed of a grain that is planted, cultivated—the ability ripens whenever the time is ready.

Last Paragraph

Also, we talked about this before in the example of precepts. This causes loss of the ability of the body, the power of the physical energy, also this becomes a big hindrance to meditation, such as causing us not to have a clear visualization, the mind being easily distracted, the mind not being in a safe place, in a firm place. It is like paper in the wind, easily distracted, not firm, not strong. As it affects the body, it also affects the mind—as the body is the vehicle of the mind, so it affects the mind. The sense base relies on the subtle physical body, so when that very calm physical object or vehicle gets disturbed it also disturbs the senses. So as the ability, the physical energy is lost, it also affects the vehicle, so it affects the mind. Things like that—it can cause many hindrances.

Also, especially in tantric meditations, this is one of the disturbances to not achieve the tantric meditations. This is only telling just one part of evolution, the changes that it causes, without talking of the future suffering result of this karma.

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Dul.wa.lung quotation. Generally there are five paths:

1. The path of accumulation.

2. The path of conjunction, which means leading to the right seeing path from the path of accumulation. Without this second path there are four degrees. When one approaches the third degree then that living being is definitely not going to be born in the suffering realm again. It's not because the seed, the ignorance is destroyed, but because the cooperative cause is stopped, like the elements—if there are no elements, the seed of the rice cannot grow; it's not because the seed of the rice plant is destroyed, it is because the cooperative cause is not made, so it is not growing. So the being who has reached this third degree of the path is definitely not going to be reborn in the lower suffering realms.

Four Powerful Remedies

When we make confession, if we do so with all these four, it becomes much more powerful. With these four powers it becomes perfect, the confession becomes powerful. The confession done through these four can purify more negativity.

The most important thing from these four is the great fear of the negative karma that was created and making the vow, the promise not to create them again. These two are the most important things in the confessions. As strong as the person's fear in the negative karma that is created is, the person then makes the vow not to do it again for the rest of life, by fixing a time like this. If the fear in the negative karma created is not so strong, it is also difficult to make the vow, as there is no fear in the negative karma created before. If there is no strong fear, even you have made the vow, in the mind you would feel not sure, you might break it—so the mental decision depends on how strong the fear in the negative karma, the suffering is.

I think I will explain the confession after; now there is no time.

It would be good to understand the outlines on karma and the outlines on the meditations on samsaric suffering, to keep by heart, understanding the total meaning of it. Then it will be useful—when you meditate, there's something in the mind to meditate on.

6 p.m.

Four Powerful Remedies (Page 77)

1. So when you make confession, visualize Guru Shakyamuni as he is all gurus and all infinite buddhas, bodhisattvas, as he is all noble beings. Think, "I go to refuge to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha," thinking of him as Buddha, as Sangha, and his realization as Dharma. "I go to refuge until enlightenment is reached." Also, at the same time think of the meaning of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, taking refuge completely from the heart, completely relying with your whole life on him, not being just doubtful of whether he can guide you or not. This meditation on confession is for those who will use the confession. For those who are not interested, it is not necessary to listen.

2. Then, "Even in one second I have created negative karma that will cause me to experience a suffering result in the three lower realms, one of the three lower realms such as the narak stages, the worst suffering stage, where I am suffering on burning red-hot iron ground, becoming oneness with fire, extremely suffering, for eons. The sufferings, if they could manifest in form, would be something that is infinite." Also, try to visualize the narak stages at the same time—try to feel the

suffering, try to see it—such as getting angry, the negative mind arising with bodhisattvas, noble beings, harming the holy beings, getting angry, giving harm to other, besides to these noble beings, also to gurus; killing Dharma practitioner, creating these five extreme negative actions, the heretical mind arising toward the Enlightened Being's teachings and the teacher, and the heretical mind arising toward the guru. There are so many other things. Anyway there are many other heavy negative karmas that cause us to be born in those sufferings stages; such as criticizing the holy Dharma and the noble beings who have higher realization. These are examples of the very heavy negative karmas.

“Even one second of negative karma such as those heavy negative karmas—such as anger, such as heretical mind, such as criticizing—causes the result of being born in such suffering stages for eons. And I created those not once, those heavy negative karmas, I created them many times.”

Question: Does this mean speaking out to a person, or just the thought that arises and you try to fight?

Answer: Yes, it can be mental as well as speech. Once you really have the thought, it creates karma.

“Many heavy negative karmas that I know of and that I don't know of. Even in this life, I have created those that I know of and those that I don't know of. Some of those heavy negative karmas were created in previous lives, many times. In one day, one month, one year, more negative karma has been created than positive karma (this is generally talking), also in many previous lives, since there's no such time when I started to create negative karma, no time before which I never created any, there is no such thing. So there's such a great collection of negative karma.” Then thinking like this, “It is definite negative karma.” Then thinking like this, “It is definite that I will be born in these suffering stages.” At the same time you are thinking this, try to see it as if you are born there, and think, “Sine I desire happiness and do not desire suffering, I cannot live like this, without doing something. Since I desire happiness and do not desire suffering I must cease, I must completely destroy the whole collection of negative karma. Before death happens, I must do it; I must do this before death. So after this second, this minute, death is more sure than existence. Existing or not existing? Not existing is more sure after this second, this minute, so it is more definite to be born in that suffering narak stage after this second, minute. So according to the beginningless, the great collection of negative karma, it seems that I'll never receive enlightenment and only suffer in these suffering realms, mostly in the narak stages, besides the animal and preta realms. So therefore, right away, right this minute, I must purify all these negative karma that I have created. So therefore, right this minute, second, I must purify all these negative karmas.”

Also try to remember if precept were broken, whatever they were, “I must be purified of this. I must purify now, right this time. I must make it so that I never experience the result, right now.”

3. Then ask the holy object to purify—the third number, penance—to purify negativity by remembering the guru, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. So, as you have done the visualization of Guru Shakyamuni before like that, then request to purify all those negative karmas right away by completely relying on the holy object, the Enlightened Being. Just like this—as a person is going to be punished or killed, then the person goes to the judge, and the person from the depth of the heart asks for guidance not to be punished. So just like that, as that suffering person makes the request sincerely from the depth of his heart, so should it be done with confidence, not just an imitation or like playing. Sincerely making the request is important.

Then this time, with this you can try the visualization of the knowledge, of the light coming from Guru Shakyamuni's holy body, absorbing into you and purifying every single negative karma, all the delusions, and every single negative karma that has been created. Try to feel, to think, that every negative karma has been completely destroyed by the light—nowhere existing anywhere, neither inside nor outside the body—and try to feel your body as very light; like when you take a bath, you feel light, sort of clean—more than that, light, as if nothing is left, not one single negative mind or karma is left. All the negative karma, activities of body, speech, and mind are completely purified. Also, after you think like this, as you are completely cleaned, also you have to deeply think that you are really completely purified. “Now all the negative karma that I have created becomes purified, so now I never have to experience all the negative karma created in the past times.” During this confession time, this strong feeling has to arise.

Then you have to make the promise, the vow, otherwise it does not become a perfect confession, there's one missing from the four powerful remedies if you don't make a vow, therefore it is not perfect. Therefore, you have to make a vow—for instance, either you think you will try your best to observe—this is still not completely a vow—not as strong as, “I will never do it”—“I will do my best,” is not as strong. For instance like this, as an example—if you have told a lie to some people or if you have cheated, or stolen something, or without knowing you have stepped ever holy books, or such as broken precepts, there are many things—you can make a vow like this, “From now on I will never break it again until death time,” or “I will never do it again until tomorrow.” So this way, by making the promise until tomorrow—if you make the promise until death time or for long time, but break it after a few seconds, it becomes telling a lie; so in order to create less problems, you make the vow for a short time. You can still observe the action even though you didn't make the vow for many days. Since you observe the action, tried to observe it, it is not creating that negative action, this action is possessed by the promise, that promise made for one day. So if it is broken after finishing the time of the vow it is less negative karma, and heavier if broken during the time of the vow—it becomes telling a lie and is much more negative karma. This is just a method, a skill. There are many other methods, but these four are the way of making the confession with the four powerful remedies, which makes the confession powerful. If there is one missing from the four powerful remedies, it doesn't become such a powerful confession. So with this confession, after thinking this, you can recite mantra, make prostrations; there are many ways to make the purification. After this, then one can make prostrations with concentration, or do recitation of the mantra of different deities, such as the Guru Shakyamuni mantra, according to individual practice and choice. There are many other methods and choices. Also, the mandala offering. There are also ways to make confession by reading; there's also a way to make confession by reading the profound, holy teachings, such as a text explaining about absolute nature, shunyata. There are many other ways to make purification.

It is necessary for us, who have created great numbers of negative karma, to make the confession every day. Also, it is said in the teaching that if this confession is done with the four powerful remedies, if this confession is done three times each day continually for seven years, so much negative karma can be finished. Also, there is a quicker way of making confession with guru yoga practice—this is not important to explain now.

So, for instance, the suffering result of one negative karma that has to be experienced for many lifetimes gets shorter with my making confession sincerely and strongly and continually. These negative karmas that have to be experienced in many lives finish; just by getting sick it finishes the

whole thing. Sometimes it finishes with some temporal problem; sometimes it finishes according to the confession you made. Sometimes none of those negative karmas have to be experienced. Sometimes you get something, shocked in a dream, some fearful dream—just by that, you don't have to experience the suffering result of a negative karma which would otherwise have to be experienced for a long time with great suffering. Something that finishes by that little event, through making confession. All these are according to how much the negative karma is purified; the whole thing depends on how strong, how powerful, and how long you make the confession.

But one should not think, should not have this idea, thinking, making plans to create negative karma and thinking, "I can make confession." This only cheats oneself, one only goes round and round in a circle; it doesn't help to stop negative karma.

First, you do meditation on death and a brief meditation on suffering. Then do meditation on karma. Then do meditation on refuge, remembering the knowledge of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and how the outer Guru Shakyamuni's Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha guide you, and how the outer Guru Shakyamuni's Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha help you to achieve your own Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and how your own Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha guide you from suffering. Then you remember how to make confession through the four powerful remedies, and then you make confession.

Rinpoche: Do you want to stop the problem of death?

Answer: Yes, I want to stop the problem of death.

Rinpoche: How do you want to stop?

Answer: The problem of death entails suffering in the lower realm, therefore I would like to take refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

Rinpoche: How do you seek the teaching to guide from suffering of death?

Answer: I'm not sure I have understanding of what the problem of death is.

Rinpoche: So you can't escape from the suffering that you don't see. So you don't make arrangement to stop the future suffering?

Answer: The only arrangement I'm conscious of is being here.

Rinpoche: You know nothing of the future?

Answer: Not really.

Rinpoche: So you are not sure whether or not you'll experience suffering in the future?

Answer: No I'm not.

Rinpoche: You see the possibility of problem death, you think it's possible?

Answer: Yes.

Rinpoche: So do you want to go through or not?

Answer: I have to go through it, I have no choice.

Rinpoche: So you desire not to have the problem of death?

Answer: To stop the suffering—yes.

Rinpoche: So therefore, what method you are seeking?

Answer: Two methods—one is seeking the teaching, the other is to remain in touch with my heart.

Rinpoche: So how do you seek the teaching that can guide from suffering?

Answer: By trying to listen as well as hear, and by meditating and practicing.

Rinpoche: How do you know it can guide you from suffering—is it agreeable that you can be guided from suffering by the teaching? Whatever you think, give a sincere answer.

Answer: We have seen the example of beings who have released themselves from suffering by following these teachings.

Rinpoche: Thank you—but other people who didn't get the answer should check up.

Day 24

Sunday December 9th

5 a.m.

(Ordination Ceremony)

(No notes taken)

9 a.m.

From the holy speech of the great guru, bodhisattva Tenzin Gyatso, “When one is humble there is happiness arising, when one is rich the pride is dispelled. Cultivate bodhicitta, which is the only thing that never betrays, never cheats us in samsara.”

Once one has the achievement of bodhicitta, this pure thought, no matter if he is rich or if he is poor, there are much less mental problems; such as pride arising when one is rich, having reputation, possessions. But with bodhicitta, no matter what one is, there is no problem in the mind. Usually, when people are poor there are mental problems, being jealous of others' possessions, other rich people, jealousy, dislike. And because of feeling hate, jealousy, there is ill will arising to destroy others' possessions, thinking how to make the others not have the possessions, lose the possessions. This is common in the world, not only with one person but with countries, societies, groups—starting from two people. But with bodhicitta there are none of these problems—even if the person is rich, there is no pride.

Anyway, however much we rely on friends, relatives, family—we can never trust our possessions, they can cheat us; there's nothing to trust in people, it is possible they can cheat us, as they cheated us numberless times before. As long as we are in samsara, the circle of death and rebirth, it is definite that they will continually cheat us, as long as we are living in ignorance. So therefore, nothing lasts, so there's nothing to trust. Even our minds, we even cheat ourselves. How? By following the deluded mind, ignorance, we cheat ourselves; even our minds cheats ourselves. So the one on whom we can completely rely, the one that can never cheat, can only benefit? That is the individual, our own achievement of bodhicitta. Among all the minds, the one that never cheats us is the achievement of bodhicitta. Therefore, this mental medicine, this pure mental medicine is worthwhile to cultivate. Even if one has relatives, friends, billions—it can be possible to be cheated; in place of benefiting, they cheat. It is much more worthwhile to try to achieve bodhicitta in place of trying to have more and more friends, more and more friends in more and more countries so that one can be happy. This is much more worthwhile, trying to find the best friend within your mind, that never cheats, always benefits—this is much more worthwhile than finding billions of friends in the world.

However, between the person who has bodhicitta and who has billions of friends in many countries, there is big difference in the peace in the mind. The one with friends has always problems of attachment; the one with bodhicitta has the best friend in his mind—it cannot be stolen, destroyed, killed, or taken away by other people. Trying to have this is much more worthwhile. Anyway; there is greater peace for this person's mind; so it is worthwhile since we need friends. For what reason? Not for suffering, of course, but because we desire happiness, pleasure. Therefore, it is worthwhile to try—from our side, friends, many people desire happiness, leisure of this life. So as one goes round in the countries, in order to have less problems and to make the life comfortable, going round trying to make friends, giving things, trying to be well-known, there are many things in the person's mind—problems, hatred, greed. So for this friend, bodhicitta, we don't have to give material gifts, we don't have to pay compliments, there's nothing to worry about. Anyway, through this, by finding this friend, this mental friend, even if one desires happiness, desires this life's peace, one can receive greater peace with this. If you are too close with worldly friends, if you live together a long time—they very easily become the enemy for some reason, due to problems of the mind; very soon they becomes the enemy, the creator of problems. But the actual, the inner best friend, however much we live together, only enjoying more peace, greater happiness, it only causes us to subdue the negative minds more, only makes us closer to receiving enlightenment.

Therefore, when we have such a chance, having met the teaching, explaining of the techniques of bodhicitta, the Mahayana teachings; and from your side also, bring intelligent, having time to study, many things coming together, being at such a place—when all these things are practiced without such a pure thought, bodhicitta, it is a big loss; it is wasting a great chance—it is of a foolish nature. So anyway, try; even listening to the teachings we should be possessed by the pure motive, thinking, “I will listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path, in order to receive enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings.”

So far, the subjects we have finished are: “Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Usefulness of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Perfect Human Rebirth is Fragile,” “No Method Can Stop Death,” “Death Is Definite,” “It is More Definite to be Reborn in the Lower Realms,” due to karma, and “The Time Of This Rebirth Is Indefinite.” To stop these dangers, what is the main thing? Oneself doesn't have the power, so one has to take “Refuge” in such a perfect being who has received this knowledge, and attained this path—this is a

worthwhile object. So if we take refuge, how do they guide us, how do these three, the refuge and the individual refuge, guide us? By observing karma—without following karma from our side, the path they showed, there's no way the perfect being can guide us, and also there's no way the individual Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha can guide us from suffering. Therefore, observing karma is necessary. For this reason karma comes after the refuge—anyone takes refuge and wants to be guided. The way the person is guided is by following karma—so therefore, the explanation of karma comes like this.

Just like this, the example, for instance, like this. Why, if we don't work from our side, why we can't be guided by refuge? Like a person in rain never tries to seek cover, never makes effort to work, just sits in the place where there's no cave in the rain, getting in trouble and making such noise, calling, "Where's the cave?" So just like this—desiring and calling for the cave doesn't help save him from the suffering of rain and cold and wet. If you think carefully you can see how to take refuge. Even if you have faith and devotion in their knowledge, and fear of suffering, after having these two it is necessary to put yourself in the action, the action is most important. For instance, this person in trouble in the rain knows the knowledge of the cave, has belief in the trouble of the rain, knows the knowledge of the cave, rain, and problem; he has belief and he also has fear in the trouble caused by rain. But because he himself is not making any effort, not working, being lazy, not finding the cave, he doesn't get in the cave. So just only desire and knowing is not enough. Therefore, the main thing, the main practice is, as it is necessary in the example for the person to make the effort to find the cave—to do that it is necessary for the person to know about how the cave saves him and have knowledge of the problem of rain. As those two are necessary to put into action, so to observe karma, the fear of suffering and the understanding and developing the knowledge of the holy object is necessary, just like this.

Also same thing, yourself not putting into action and thinking, "God will do anything for me, Buddha will do everything for me," yourself not making any progression—this is similar to the person sitting in the rain thinking, "The cave will come to me."

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What causes billions of karma to ripen at different times?

If there are karmas created like this, like these things here, which of those karmas would bring the result first after this life? Those are the previous karmas. The karma that is heavier would bring the result first. If all these karma are the same heaviness, whatever is closer, that brings the result first. Closer means closer to ripening. If all are the same in closeness, whichever was done more, more habitually, more trained will bring the result first. Even if all the karma are the same on that level, if the habit is equal, then the karma that was created first, second, third, fourth, like this—that would bring the result first. So this is talking about those billions and billions of karma created in previous lifetimes.

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The Ten Immoralities of Body, Speech, and Mind

1. Killing

(b) Means as you created the cause, gave harm to other beings, as other beings suffered in that way, made the life short; so even the person born human has a short life, similar to the cause.

(c) The horrible place where the person is born, he has to live there—that object, place, is possessed by him.

2. Stealing

(b) It happens many times, one steals something from other people and it is stolen from one, even without waiting for the future life.

Worst—many things—from a group of monks, a being who has higher realizations, bodhicitta—which can mean higher and lower bodhicitta—but as the being is higher, stealing from him, the karma is more heavy. Also such things as happening in modern times, like stealing monastery things, statues, tangkas, things that belong to the monastery, monks—this is very heavy karma—even if it is a very tiny thing such as a broom, it is very heavy because of the object. The holy symbolic idols, symbolic of the enlightened beings—talking off the cloth they put on the holy objects, the statues; taking out those things such as the holy texts or the cloth that covers them. Things like this. In Tibet, and also in Nepal and India, the texts have covers; not because the book is catching cold, but for respecting the teachings and creating good karma. We also put cloth around the statues. We don't see the actual Buddha to make offerings to create good karma; so as the statue is symbolic of him, by remembering its knowledge, power, and compassion, and also our suffering, as it is necessary to create good karma, we think of the Enlightened Being and making offer this cloth like this—so whom you are offering to is actually the omniscient mind; whom you dedicate to is the perfect being, omniscient mind. That does not only depend on the object being nearby—mainly it depends on your mind being out of miserliness and attachment. So even though it is done on the table with this thought, it creates much good karma, makes much purification.

Question: If after offering the body to the Triple Gem one does a negative action, it is stealing?

Answer: If it is completely offered and then immediately something is done with self-cherishing thought, of course it is negative, it becomes telling a lie. For instance, if one keeps bodhisattva vows, everything has to be dedicated—body, speech, and mind to the sentient beings. So if one, after making this dedication, uses it with self-cherishing thought after this vow and dedicating like this, it can become telling a lie. It is not stealing but it is telling lie; it becomes cheating.

Also things like stealing things that belong to the holy beings, celibates, create more heavy negative karma than stealing from laypeople. Because if the object, the celibate, is keeping that many precepts, he is that much more pure than the layperson.

3. Sexual Misconduct

(b) You see—actually, there are things that we really see as we tour the world, there are all these problems, or we may have these problems. So it's good as you see the problem, it is good to remember the cause as it was explained by the Enlightened Being; it helps oneself be careful of karma. Such as some families who always get robbed, no matter how much they try to take care; strange situation. Or some men or some ladies always have problems; they try with another one, again split, another problem. And also they try with another one, again split, another problem, disturbing, many problems with other accusing, always hostile, disturbing.

Worst: That is also because of the object, mother, because it is the mother of this present body. Here it says mother, but also father, and also quite similar thing with brothers.

4. Telling Lies

Siddhi means realization.

The worst object to lie to is a holy being.

5. Slander

(b) Not being harmonious, always having to be away from them.

(c) Such as very low, not a peaceful place, not a beautiful place, very horrible, very down; or sometimes way on top of a mountain, not happy place, but always the people have to suffer much, being in some place like that.

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6. Harsh speech.

(b) There are all kinds of people, they are human beings, but unhappy by hearing distressing words—opposite to the beings who rarely hear distressing words, and are always happy.

7. Gossip Mongering

The worst is about religious people, Dharma practitioners. Such as talking to people who want to spend more time in meditation or do some virtuous action, wasting his time just telling stories and unnecessary things that don't help us to lose the negative mind. That karma is a little heavier than gossip mongering with a person who is not in such a situation. Even if the person has complete control of it, in the time of doing some virtuous action, if you talk about some things that do not help his virtuous action, or your virtuous actions.

8. Covetousness

Just because the material is good, so attached.

(c) There are some families in isolated places—to buy food they have to go far, experience much difficulty. Karmically they are situated, took root in places such as this.

10. Heresy

(a) These are just examples—it cannot be definite—it depends on how strong the heresy was. Heresy can cause us to be born in the narak states; there would be different karmas like this, depending on how strong.

(b) Not allowing, having wrong conception, wrong beliefs; not allowing himself.

(c) Such as heresy in bringing good result from good karma.

There's a way to also study these things (the ten immoralities) with many details. Even the precepts have many text—it is called Vinaya text. Vinaya—there are five divisions of philosophical teachings to study. So part of explanation of the precepts, the opposite things with much detail, there's many text.

The Prayer (Page 81)

Ngeng—evil. *Song*—past of going, i.e. gone. Totally gone in an evil place.

Jig—fear; also destroying. *Chog*—sublime. *Shing*—grammatical.

During the break times, go through the following meditations, such as the third and the fourth meditations and try to keep the outlines by heart. Also, do this with the total idea of the meaning of the outline; without this total idea there's no way to do the meditations.

Anyway, it is good to talk, of course it's good to hear these higher meditations, of course it's good—generally. Still, there's not much understanding of the basic thing, in these first part of the meditation and not much feeling with it, not really feeling it.

Anyway, these subjects are not something you can understand by taking one course. I'm sure the people that attended all the courses, each time they understood a new thing. It is not something that you can fully understand in one time.

3 p.m.

In regards to the part about the karma.

First of all, the understanding of how karma is definite. From a positive karma created it is definite that only a happy result will arise; from a negative karma it is definite that only a suffering result will arise. This is the most important thing to understand, as much as possible, and deeper. When the person has the strong understanding of this, then the rest of karma is easy—karma is expandable, no result of karma that wasn't created can be experienced, etc—the other four are easy to understand if there is strong feeling and understanding for the first karmic evolution.

From negative karma it is definite that only a suffering result will arise. So when there's the deep understanding of these evolutions in regards to the definite result of each karma, then as there is that much strong fear of the suffering result, there is that much fear of creating negative karma. Then, from this fear arising from understanding comes the decision—"I will avoid the heavy negative karma and create the positive karma."

Then, through understanding that karma is expandable, we understand that from one small cause there can be many, from one small negative karma comes a suffering result for a long time, of different types and in different realms, as explained before (page 78). So the result experienced in the suffering lower realm is not the last, it has to be experienced for a long time and in different realms and with different types of suffering. With the understanding of the second thing, karma is expandable, the mental decision comes, the mental energy and will to not create even a tiny negative karma as the result can be so great. So with this understanding and fear of suffering the desire comes, before it was—"I will avoid heavy negative karma and create great merits," but now the desire comes, "I will avoid even the tiniest negative karma and create even tiny merits," as the good results are also expandable and can be experienced for a long time. Therefore, we shouldn't think there are preparations—it doesn't have to be something like killing other beings, some big arrangement.

For instance, like this—also, there's no such thing as the karma that was created, negative and positive, there's no such thing as "Perhaps I created that but perhaps it was lost and I don't have to experience it." There is no such thing as it getting lost without from our side causing it not to be experienced, without destroying it. It will definitely arise in time. Just like this—in a bowl you put curd and then raisins, then salt and pepper, all kinds of things, so when you eat each thing you taste it; you get raisin, raisin; salt, salt; pepper, hot—but the whole thing gets mixed in the bowl, pepper doesn't become sweet by putting raisins around it. So all the negative and positive karmas are together, but as the karma ripens at different times—negative karma bringing suffering result, positive karma bringing happy result—it cannot be because one positive karma created making negative karma happy, like raisins can't be put with peppers trying to make them sweet.

In regards to people whose minds are close to the realization of karma, just by seeing one animal being eaten by another they can have the realization, the experience of the karma. But for people whose minds are sleeping in the thick cover of ignorance and are far from the realization, they need much training, much meditation, much purification—much meditation on karma. In one previous time, one ascetic Tibetan lama, just seeing a small ant eating another insect, he received the experience of karma.

Some examples that happened in previous times—in order for us to be careful by understanding these examples, to be careful in our own actions.

In previous time there was a person called Nyenpa Samden. He had very ugly body but a very interesting, sweet voice. By listening to that voice you wouldn't believe that he was so ugly—there was no harmony between body and voice. The karma? In previous times, a king was building a stupa; so that person was one of the workers, one of the hired workers. So the man thought—"This stupa is so great, so high; why did he build such a great stupa, it won't ever be finished." He complained like this. So after finishing the stupa, he felt much repentance about the words he had said before. So for that confession he offered a bell to the stupa. The reason that he had a very ugly body was because he complained about the stupa—ugly and small; and the reason he had such an attractive, sweet voice, that everybody wanted to listen to—that was the result of offering the bell that had a nice sound. This is to say, the complaint was just words but the result was that even though he was born as a human being, he had very ugly body like this. So it is definite, the suffering result from negative karma and the positive result from positive karma.

Also in previous time, one monk was having butter tea in the prayer hall, where they make puja; so the monks, the Sangha were on the bed. As he was having the tea it spilled on the bed, made the bed black by the butter; just by not being careful, and that thing belonged to a group of monks. Because this karma was not purified, in one of his future lives born as a human being and his backside was very black—it was not something you can wash, it was in the skin.

Example: how the karma is expandable—inner karma is more expandable (the inner karma is the inner cause and result) than the outer cause and result, that is, the outer example, such as the crops. By planting one bean or rice seed it can bring many beans or rice from that one. But the karmic cause and result is more expandable than the outer example. One previous example—in China one person made the complaint that in these modern times the wise persons are like snakes. He wrote a book that was called the *Text of the Example of the Snake*. From that cause, that karma, the author himself, in that lifetime, had a terrible sickness that struck his body and legs. Slowly it became the body of snake. His head exploded, got cracks. Then the head of the snake came through that. So in

his life slowly, slowly, the body changed like that—later it really became a snake. There are many people who are born with usual strong body, but later they cannot move much, walk fast, they are crippled. Anyway, there are many other examples with the physical body like this.

Also in India, in previous times there were 500 fishermen fishing—they caught a big fish that had eighteen different heads. At that time Guru Shakyamuni was there. With his power to foretell, his power of prophecy, he came to the place where the fishermen found the fish with eighteen heads. Guru Shakyamuni came to that place with his psychic power, even though it was far away, to explain the karma of that animal. Guru Shakyamuni asked the animal, “Who you are?” and the fish mentioned his previous names as human beings. Guru Shakyamuni explained the karma. At the time the fish was a man, there was a big debate in a certain place in India when he was very young. His mother told him to debate there, among the many learned people. His mother advised him to call the others different names, saying, “You look like a dog,” “You look like a cat,” “You look like a tiger,” if he lost the debate. So, as he was instructed by his mother, when he lost the debate he called the others names. Later he was reborn as this fish with eighteen heads—with one body and a head for each name he had called them. So it is just words, a very simple thing to create, to do, but brings a very heavy result.

There was a nun called Upli who was a celibate. Before she was ordained as full nun she had two children, one older and one younger. One child was eaten by a wolf, one was taken by the river, and her husband was killed by a snake. Her parents, her family, had died from being burned in a fire. After that, she became another person’s wife and she had another son. The second husband got intoxicated one day and killed the son, and made her eat his meat. She escaped from him and got to another place, and met a person whose wife was dead, and she became his wife. Again, that man died, and the people in that place buried her with her husband’s corpse—but a thief came and dug a hole and she became the thief’s wife. That husband, the thief, was killed by the king, so again she was buried with that corpse, at the cemetery. The karma that brought this all on was this—she was one of the wives of a king in a previous time and she killed her son, and many times she swore an oath that she hadn’t done it.

There are many other texts explaining karma as shown by Guru Shakyamuni. It is helpful to know these stories that happened in previous time. The reason there are so many stories about the previous beings’ karma is in order to help the modern practitioner. They were recorded by Guru Shakyamuni’s followers, the arhats, for the future ignorant beings to realize there is such a thing as karma working like this.

Introduction to Meditation Three (Page 82-85)

The General Sufferings of Samsara

Samsara, “out of samsara,” does not mean being out of the country, being away from this earth, does not mean out of New York City, out of the country, or house; these are not the actual samsara—they are samsaric existence, but not the actual samsara. Even our clothes are not samsara. The circle of death and rebirth, the uncontrolled circle of death and rebirth is samsara. A part of continuity of the deluded body which goes round in death and rebirth, death and rebirth under the control of delusion and karma—that is samsara. The deluded mind is samsara—the object that is circling the different bodies, the different realms, the different minds of the deluded bodies, of the samsaric beings, circling round on the deluded mind of the body of the different samsaric realms.

The subject circling, the mind or the person, the samsaric being, where the subject circles is, at the moment, in this deluded human body; in another life, another deluded body. What causes us to circle round is ignorance, the deluded mind. So the uncontrolled body, the deluded body that we have now, which was born without control and will have to die without control, and which gets sick without control and produces many problems—this is samsara.

Whenever the continuation of taking the different deluded bodies under the control of delusion and karma is broken, stopped, this is the release of samsara, this is nirvana.

Also, if one doesn't know what the actual samsara is—many people think the country, the field, the houses, things like that are samsara, where the laypeople live are samsara, cities are samsara, the laypeople's clothes are samsara—many people have an idea like this. This is not a correct idea, a correct understanding of samsara. Even in Tibet the laypeople often make mistakes in their recognition of samsara.

In previous times there was a disciple of a great lama, a highly realized, greatly knowledgeable Tibetan lama. That disciple was a kind of servant for that lama. This servant came to see another ascetic, highly realized lama. So this lama thought he must be special, have some knowledge, as he was with such a highly realized lama. So he asked the servant, "Did you take any teachings from that lama?" The student said, "I don't know anything but I have just been released from samsara." The lama asked, "How?" So he said, "Three days ago. I took off my pants." He had a wrong conception of what samsara really means. So the lama didn't feel good, he was a little upset—he was expecting some fantastic things. It can happen like this; not like this—it is not that easy, there is a long way to go. One has to completely stop, purify ignorance. Even the seed of delusion has to be completely purified by following the path.

Someone asked me to explain about tobacco, cigarettes. Just a brief talk on that, just brief information about that evolution.

The evolution of the tobacco plant, cigarette tobacco, started 100 years after Guru Shakyamuni passed away. The blood from an evil woman's menstrual period dropped on the ground, and the plant grew out of that. The evil beings prayed that all other future living beings would enjoy this plant, and that, "When the snake of this earth goes into space, may many millions of the cities of the gods that are situated above the earth be destroyed by the snake going in the sky. And may the power of the smell going under the earth and destroy many places of the nagas."

In Tibet it is like this—there are many places that people make dirty, make kaka on those places where there are nagas, or put other dirty smells there. This interrupts the nagas, and the person receives mischievous action, gets afflicted, the naga offends them. The person gets different diseases such as leprosy, or wounds that spread, starting from very little. Then as you scratch them, they spread—there are many things when nagas offend people. Sometimes the feet are full of wounds and pus and there is much smell, very horrible looking. There are pujas to do if they are offended by nagas, related to nagas. There are many ways to do pujas, according to the sickness, just as there are many different methods to stop the rain, such as mantras and prayers, as given by Guru Shakyamuni. In his time when there were problems, the common people often asked him and he told them what to do. So there are all kinds of methods to stop temporal problems, and they were preserved. They definitely work, this is a very common experience. Sometimes the medicine and puja together; sometimes the medicine does not cure it, any medicine, and then doing puja can cure

it; or else taking medicine after puja. There are all kinds of different things, many different kinds of things—spirits that we ordinary people don't see. These spirits are not in the West where people don't believe in them, but are only where people believe—however, their existence is not a matter of belief. For instance, in ancient times, somewhere in India, a man called Shakya died, but the people of that family had the custom of making offerings, giving food to the corpse. So he died but afterwards he became like a real person, with movement. So the people in that family believed that he had really come back, that the person's mind had become alive again. Guru Shakyamuni existed at that time, and he saw that this man's body was not the person, but actually the spirit who lives on the enjoyment of smell. The people who lived there didn't recognize that because it is a mental thing; they didn't have any power to perceive, to foretell about the mind, to recognize the different minds. Therefore, they thought it was a real person—he became alive. Anyway, there is no need to talk much—that does not prove, does not make them exist.

Also, this evil woman made wrong prayers, “As people are enjoying this, from this may there be continual famines, epidemics, quarrels, fights, and hail storms, due to people enjoying this plant.” So far, this has been spreading much in the world due to the power of her prayers.

Also, there is a story about the great yogi Padmasambhava, who established Buddhism in Tibet, who made the place in Tibet for the establishment of Buddhism. When Padmasambhava came into Tibet to establish the teachings, it was a very mischievous place. The people were like the ancient red Indians who were in America before, living on animal meat. There was no teaching, it was a completely dark place, the beings were so ignorant, like animals. Anyway, this great yogi, Padmasambhava, tried to gain control over nine evildoers who interrupted the teachings. He tried to control them, subdue them with his power, control them under his orders. But one, only one, escaped away—the others were controlled, put under the order. The youngest one escaped away, and the one who escaped away said to the other evildoers, “Don't worry, I will manifest in the form of cigarettes, the poisonous plant, which is called *hala.nag.pa*.” In other countries, like China, this poison called *hala.nag.po* grows around Tibet. (We have too much of this growing around on the mountain near the center). The people bring it to the center of Tibet, and all the people enjoy it. So by enjoying that, the deluded mind becomes stronger, heavier, and increases, and they create the ten immoralities and avoid the ten moralities. And the holders of the holy teaching won't live long. And by the smoke of this plant going under the earth, many cities of the nagas will be destroyed; and on the earth, crops won't grow and rain will not come as expected and there will be epidemics and catastrophes. Also, it will destroy many cities of the gods by the smoke going into space. Also the comet, the inauspicious comet will appear. The man who enjoys this plant will harm the nerves, and the 424 diseases will increase. Anyone who dies by enjoying this will be reborn in the three lower realms.

Also, it is explained that for the meditators who enjoys this, it is extremely difficult to attain the deity, the deity who is the manifestation of the holy omniscient mind, for many eons. The thing is—it makes you impure, the power of the element blocks the chakras, the knots of the arteries. Besides you making impure, it blocks the chakras, it makes it very difficult to open the chakras through meditation. And it is also very easy for one who enjoys this to get epidemics and disease, because as the body is made impure by this, it causes it to lose power; so it's easy for even the outer interferers to hinder, to offend.

It is especially important to keep the place where you meditate clean—it's the place where you invoke numberless buddhas, bodhisattvas, and holy beings—where you meditate, where you

visualize. It doesn't disturb or harm the enlightened beings, for them there's no problem, as no impurity or dirt can be experienced by them, only pure vision. Even though we see dirt, for the completely purified omniscient mind, all we see as dirty appears pure, completely transcended, pure vision by the enlightened beings, the great yogis. But it is important, although it doesn't disturb them, it is important to keep the place clean for one's own Dharma practice, for the achievement of Dharma practice, thinking, as I said before, that the problem is only from our side, not theirs. As they see, as they are always together with us, they always see us, there's no such place that we can be where they do not exist, where we can escape. Also, there's no such omniscient mind that has limited power. So as you visualize like that, think of the room as a monastery, a temple, a holy realm, a pure realm of numberless buddhas, bodhisattvas, and holy beings in whom you take refuge, who guide you. And when you clean it, think of their knowledge, of your guide, as if you are their sweeper. This is done without any self-cherishing thought or negative mind; generally, it is done only in a pure realm, as it is a temple; then you clean it. It helps also a great deal in meditation to have a clear visualization and for the meditation to be acute, sensitive, and powerful, because cleaning with such reason is a way of making purification. There are many stories of beings in previous times who received arhathood by doing purification by cleaning such places, following the orders of Guru Shakyamuni. Anyway, there's no time to talk about those stories. Not smoking cigarettes, keeping the place clean also it gives a good vibration. Actually, there are five benefits of cleaning the room with pure thought:

1. It always makes your mind calm, not sloppy, pleasant.
2. Also, when it is seen by other people it makes them happy.
3. There are also white spirits who look after and help practitioners, also they get pleased. Those white spirits, if there is a bathroom they can't exist.
4. After death it causes you to be reborn in the upper realms.
5. Since it is done with pure thought it can be the cause of enlightenment.

Also, there are many technical ways, meditations to do while the cleaning the place with brooms, there are many things to think about.

You can say, "This dust is not earth dust, this is the dust of greed; this dust is not earth dust, this is the dust of anger; this dust is not earth dust, this is the dust of ignorance," and then think that the broom is the whole graduated path and all you sentient beings are cleaning all wrong conceptions, negative mind, greed, ignorance, and hatred. If cleaning is done with such a pure motive it becomes Dharma, another purification. Also, if you feel it is difficult to meditate, lazy, sleepy, then it is good to do other things that does not waste your time, that become Dharma; there are many things to do.

Actually, this story is very long but I am making it short. There was an arhat named Langchenpa. Anyway, his mother had children many times but they all died. He was the last one. So one old mother told her, "If you have a child, let me know." When she had a child, the old mother told her to take it into the road. So the day she had it she took this last child into the road. She met other people, other religious people. They prayed for the child to live and be auspicious, to have a long life and to be successful as the parents wished. Then Guru Shakyamuni came and she explained all these things to him, so Guru Shakyamuni himself prayed that the child be successful, according to his parents' Dharma mind. The old mother suggested, "If it is not dead bring it back, if it is dead don't bring it back." So it lived, and she brought it back. So he was saved. But at first he was so ignorant—even when he tried to learn two words—when he learned one, he forgot the other, then when he remembered the other, he forgot the first. So Guru Shakyamuni, while has completed all the purposes of other beings, let this young boy sweep outside the monastery. When the boy

finished cleaning that side, he started to clean the other side; and when he finished that side, there was dirt on the first side again—back and forth like this. This was Guru Shakyamuni’s skill in order to purify—he had him saying, “This is not dust, this is the dust of greed, ignorance, and hatred.”

So as he followed Guru Shakyamuni’s highly skillful method, he realized the absolute nature, and he received the state of an arhat in that lifetime. So it is good to remember this, cleaning as if it is the holy objects’ pure realm or temple, and thinking that you are cleaning for them. In this way it doesn’t become an egocentric action. And when you become more conscious of their existence, as you are conscious of this, as it gets stronger, also your negative actions, you do not dare to do your wrong behaviors any more, you have to be careful. Even if you’re alone, you are conscious of their existence, and even if you are alone without other people, you don’t do negative actions. It helps a great deal to observe karma. Also where there is temple or shrine-room, there is no doubt of the existence of holy beings. Whenever there are Dharma practitioners trying to purify, besides all the enlightened beings looking at them, there are also many white spirits who are under the orders of Buddha to look after the practitioner, so if there is a bad smell it disturbs them. Also, if one makes a dirty smell in presence of the holy objects, the karma is much heavier.

So now you meditate—I think it is better to think, without looking at the book. Concentrate on the mind—tonight we are taking a vacation from this meditation—concentrate on your mind, without letting thoughts of other objects arise—try to be conscious only of your mind.

(Meditation)

Rinpoche: How did you concentrate on mind?

Answer: I couldn’t find it.

Rinpoche: But did you do the concentration on mind?

Answer: I tried.

Rinpoche: Where did you think?

Answer: I thought about what the mind was

Rinpoche: What did you find, how was it?

Answer: I couldn’t decide—I thought I’d have to think about it more.

Rinpoche: But how did you do the concentration on mind? Didn’t you concentrate in the brain?

Answer: (No answer).

Rinpoche: Well thank you.

Tomorrow morning meditate on the general sufferings of samsara the eight sufferings and the twelve dependent links. As you read the book, try to visualize it, not like reading a newspaper.

Day 25
Monday, December 10th
5 a.m.

The action of taking ordination should necessarily be possessed by the pure thought, the opposite of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. Besides that, in order to take ordination in the Mahayana, is it necessary for the person taking the ordination to have the pure thought that is the Mahayana thought. So briefly think like this, “The attachment that is attached to the happiness of this life and higher samsaric pleasure is only the cause of suffering. However much I can make the temporal life happy or even receive higher pleasures, samsaric life in the future, it is only in the nature of suffering. There’s not one tiny happiness left that I have never experienced, all the small samsaric happinesses I have experienced countless times. There is not one tiny suffering left that I never experienced, all the tiny sufferings I have experienced countless times. There’s not one greatest suffering left that I never experienced, all the greatest sufferings I have experienced countless times. So actually, samsaric pleasure and samsaric suffering both have been experienced countless times, both have no beginning. As it has been like this, as I have been suffering in samsara by being attached to the future, long as I am attached to the samsaric pleasure I will have to remain endlessly in the suffering of samsara. This is its nature. Before, there was nothing to be attached to in samsaric pleasure, in any of the samsaric births. Therefore, it is necessary that I be quickly released from samsara, from the bondage of suffering.

“Releasing myself from the bondage of suffering is not enough. There are infinite sentient beings who desire happiness and do not desire suffering, who are equal to me. Therefore, there is no reason that I am more important than other sentient beings. Also, there’s no reason to discriminate, “This is enemy, this is stranger, this is friend.” There is nothing to trust, there’s no such permanent or ultimate friend, or stranger—by giving harm and not helping, not harming and helping, by this reasoning, I cannot discriminate. The enemy has also helped me numberless times, the friend has harmed me numberless times, the stranger also, has helped and harmed me numberless times. The friend and enemy have also been a stranger, not doing any of those actions, numberless times. Actually, are all equal; there is no way to say, “This is only friend, not enemy; this is only enemy, not friend.” Just as these three are equal, all the sentient beings think in the same way, are in the same situation—it is equal for every sentient being. Therefore, there’s no reason to be angry with the enemy who is giving harm, or to reach the friend who is helping, because it never stays in that situation, doesn’t last, it always changes and goes round in a circle. Besides this, there is also no reason to harm other sentient beings in retaliation, no reason to retaliate, because all sentient beings have been my mother numberless times, as this present mother has been my mother numberless times. As they have been my mother, they have been extremely kind numberless times. At the moment, most of the sentient beings are suffering incredibly. It is necessary, of utmost need, that they be released from suffering and led to happiness and peace. At the moment, however much they desire happiness and peace, they run only for offering, to create the cause of suffering. However much they don’t desire suffering, they try to destroy the cause of happiness as much as possible, they do the opposite. Always like this, always creating negative actions, not having a leader to lead them on the path to enlightenment, not having perfect human rebirth. At the moment I have a perfect human rebirth and the wisdom eye to see these things, so I am responsible, as I am their son, I am responsible to look after, I am responsible to release them from suffering and lead them to happiness. Therefore, it should be done by me, in order to repay their kindness. At the moment I have no ability to be able to do this. Who has the great knowledge, power, and compassion? Only the enlightened being, so I must be enlightened. To be enlightened, I must complete the collection

or merits and the allocation of transcendental wisdom. To do this I must subdue the body, speech, and mind, the three doors. Therefore, I am going to take the Mahayana ordination.

The mind rejoicing, happy taking the ordination, thinking that it is impossible to take such ordination in the three lower suffering realms. Also in the upper realm, sura, and asura realms, it is extremely difficult—even in the human realm, to receive the chance of rebirth in the human world rather than another upper realm. Within the human world, the different countries and different human worlds—there are many other human worlds that don't have this chance—and when on this earth, people having the chance to take this ordination is rare. Therefore, today we become one, a keeper of the ordination.

From the holy speech of the great guru, bodhisattva Tenzin Gyatso, “The most supreme among the objects of knowledge is bodhicitta; the best among the practices is bodhicitta. Similar to those, the best among the protections is bodhicitta.”

Therefore, this pure thought of bodhicitta, that has great infinite knowledge has to be practiced. It is necessary to train even from this time, even from this moment. While there is the chance, meeting the Mahayana teaching and having the chance also to practice, to do the action of listening to the teachings, if one can make the motive, the pure motive of bodhicitta for listening to the explanation, then one can also try to cultivate bodhicitta. If this is done at once, it can help a great deal in the training of bodhicitta, it can be a part of it. Besides, thinking of the benefits of cultivating the pure thought, think, “In order to enlighten all the sentient beings from suffering it is necessary for me to be enlightened. Therefore, I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path.” The graduated path, if it is divided into three, there are the paths of the lower, middle, and higher being. The chapters we have finished, according to the outlines—“Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Usefulness Of the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Difficulty of Receiving the Perfect Human Rebirth,” “The Perfect Human Rebirth Is Fragile and Impermanent,” “No Other Method Can Stop Death,” therefore, “Death Is Definite,” and we are almost certain to be reborn in the “The Lower Suffering Realm” after death. Even if the physical body is ceased, this heavy physical body, the mind doesn't cease—it is more definite that we will be reborn in the lower suffering realms. According to “Karma,” there's more negative karma that has been created. But, the “Actual Time of Death is Not Definite,” therefore even if there is one hour, half an hour left between death and now, it is necessary to try something, to try the best possible thing that one can do, to stop the suffering at death time or after death, to not have to experience those sufferings for a long time. At least, even if there is such a short time, even if a prayer is needed, it is important to try to find any means; whatever is possible for one to do in that time, it is worthwhile. So the fundamental thing that can guide one from suffering is “Refuge” in the perfect object—the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. So when one meditates on refuge it is important to think more about how the three objects are worthwhile, how the enlightened being is worthy—it is important to check up. Then secondly, to check up the knowledge, to try to understand more extensively the knowledge of the enlightened being, the knowledge of Dharma, the knowledge of Sangha. Further, deeper, knowledge and understanding of this, with more detail and more extensive understanding of the three holy objects, knowledge that can be received by studying other subjects, other teachings. Therefore, other teachings that explained the profound, such as the teachings recorded by Maitreya—there are many other teachings. It is much more extensive, infinite than the ocean, the Atlantic. There is too much to know in the knowledge of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. That which we are taking about is like an atom of this earth. It is worthwhile to study—the more you understand and recognize, that much deeper devotion arises in your mind. Therefore, it is helpful. But to fully understand, to really feel

the knowledge of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha is to achieve it—not through study of words but through complete, full understanding of Buddha’s knowledge—full understanding of the Dharma is also attained at the time when you achieve enlightenment. Then meditate as long as possible, and checking the knowledge of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha is good.

And for instance, if one is really going to measure Guru Shakyamuni’s holy signs, even the top knot, is something that even if one goes to many planets, it cannot be measured. There are many stories of previous meditators who had high psychic powers trying to measure it, going to more planets, but couldn’t see the top of the hair knot. When Guru Shakyamuni walks, he never touches the ground, his fingers never touch, he walks in the space, and the animals and insects that are under him, the insects covered by his feet, even those animals, within a week, both mind and body experienced great pleasure, intoxicated by ecstasy, and even after the death of those insects they were born in the upper realm without being born in the lower realm. Anyway, there are so many things of his body’s knowledge. And also check how they guide, how your Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha guide you from suffering. And also it is necessary to do the checking meditation on the benefits of the refuge—when you are in the actual training of the meditation, according to the achievement of the experience—at the refuge part spending more time, five days a week, checking one subject more than the others. Then, as you spend time thinking of the knowledge, great unshakeable devotion arises through the experience of checking the knowledge. Also try to spend some time on the benefits, do three or four days thinking only of the benefits. So through this, the perfect beings having the knowledge and the path, Dharma, and the attainer, Sangha—they are the perfect guides, and others don’t have the knowledge that the perfect being has, they are not the perfect guides.

As there is that much unshakeable, strong devotion that arises through understanding of the knowledge, as there is that much strong, full confidence and devotion, it helps a great deal to observe karma. So, the outlines of karma are: Karma is Definite, Karma is Expandable, The Result That Never Was Created Can Never Be Experienced by That Sentient Being.

For instance, an example; the result of karma that wasn’t created can’t be experienced: in one time, during the existence of the previous Buddha, in one family there was a mud elephant made for karma. In one of his after-lives, when he was born as human being, he had found a gold elephant and became very rich, and even the elephant’s kaka was gold. So the king wanted, confiscated it. When the king received it, it didn’t work in that way, it became a mud elephant, not even kaka gold. So it was returned to the person and was gold as before. Then it went back to the king and then the whole thing changed. This is because the king didn’t create that karma, so the result could not be experienced. Although all people go together to the same place, one person finds things and others don’t—why does that person find the special thing, but other people don’t, although they came to the same place? Because other people didn’t create the karma to find it. For instance, diamonds, diamond ring—why didn’t the other people find it? Because they didn’t create the karma, therefore there is no reason for them to find it, receive it, possess it, therefore there is no reason for them to have it. Why does that person find it? Because he created karma, so he experiences the result. Even though they are mainly based on this, on the karma. For instance, in a town, many people wanted something, there is a desirable object—for instance, people came from the States so they miss something in Kathmandu, but even if they search they never find it, but another person who desires some object finds it easily. But those people who search, have such worry, don’t find it, thinking that Kathmandu is terribly poor—this is because of karma, if the cause wasn’t created in a previous time the result cannot be experienced.

No matter whether the karma is heavy or small, since it is created the result never gets lost. For instance, such a small karma—just one example, the great pandit Nagarjuna, who has received the siddhi of life, who has received the realization of life, that means control of life, undying. However he, in one of his previous lifetimes, while he was cutting grass, on the way he cut a small ant, cut the body in half—so because of this karma, once when he was born a human being a beggar came to him, a beggar who needed his head. Nothing could destroy him because he had achieved this siddhi—but the beggar picked up a tiny blade of grass and hit him on the neck, and just by this he passed away, such a tiny thing. So, even if that karma was not something that is purposely done, the result is something like this, it can never get lost.

In previous times a pig was chased by a dog around a great stupa. So just because the object was a stupa, which is holy, blessed by the omniscient mind of infinite buddhas, this animal created positive karma, merit by being chased. This had nothing to do with impulse, but was only because the object is so holy. Due to these small merits, after death he was born in the upper realms, the realm of the samsaric gods. He was born as a samsaric god. Then at death time—the gods have to suffer for long time; if you count human years they have to suffer more than 300 years before their minds leave that realm, they have this incredible suffering of worry. So anyway, they remember at that time what their previous life was and also they see where they will be reborn; this is a karmic thing, not due to realization through meditation—so just as this being died, he suffered because he sees he was a pig before and he sees that he will be reborn in the worst suffering narak stages. So he had great worry, he couldn't stand it, so he asked the king of the place, the leader, Vishnu or something, one of these gods, even though he remembered where he will be reborn and what he was before. But that being couldn't find any means to save him from that future rebirth. So later on he asked Guru Shakyamuni, who gave him some skill, some method to create merit. Then, after his death he was reborn in the Tushita realm. So later on the king or the leader checked where he was born in the lower realm—he doesn't have much power to check the upper realms, higher than he is, but he could check the lower realms—and he couldn't find that being anywhere. The karma that caused him to be born in Tushita that small karma that he accumulated when he was a pig chased by a dog round the stupa. So now we can understand from this example—from our side it depends on something, not only on the holy object, it depends on our work. If there are no merits, there is no reason to be born in the upper realms—the reason is always by good karma, merits. So the good karma created when he was pig can result in that much. There's no way for it to get lost; since it was created it can be experienced, whenever the conditions are right. You can understand this more clearly through the following meditation on twelve dependent links, how karma works.

The Teaching of the Fully Enlightened One: The Four Noble Truths (Page 85)

Through the practice of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, one achieves the path, one realizes all of absolute truth and relative truth; through wisdom and by following method one achieves the two aspects. So all existences are included in the teaching, in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha; all existences are included in absolute truth and relative truth; the whole path is included in wisdom and method.

I. True Suffering

The evolution and the way Guru Shakyamuni taught is different. First of all, he introduced the result, the suffering; then by asking his followers to realize this, he showed the cause, because by showing the result, the suffering nature, this is also easier to understand. Their understanding causes

them to check the reason that we are in suffering—to seek the reason and the cause. Then, when their minds were ready to understand the cause of suffering, it was explained by Guru Shakyamuni.

So it has four aspects. These wrong conceptions cause us not to discover, not to discover the mental suffering, and only causes us to experience suffering. Therefore, it is necessary to get rid of, to destroy these wrong conceptions and receive these true realizations, their opposite. True suffering has many adjectives—transience, suffering, voidness and non-selfness.

1) Transience: because it changes, each phenomenon changes.

Rinpoche Question: Is there anything in the West, are there any beliefs of permanence? In fact, what I mean is this—do they accept anything as permanent?

Answer: Yes, death.

Rinpoche: So non-existence is permanent? So the tail on my head is permanent? What I am thinking about is the phenomena according to the Western thought—does it mean there are permanent and impermanent phenomena?

Answer: No there isn't that distinction, phenomena are all impermanent.

Rinpoche: So the connotation of permanence is nothingness, because after death the person is not always dying? ...So the nothingness of the rocket—before, it was permanent; then it causes impermanence.

2) The temporal pleasure that is derived from the external objects is suffering because it is uncontrolled by delusion and karma. So the first realization, that true suffering is transcendent because phenomena change, is to dispel the wrong conception that suffering is permanent. There were wrong conceptions in ancient times, there were many wrong conceptions, so to prove that death is not permanent shows impermanence. One thing is ... permanence has to be existent, both permanent and impermanent have to be existent, they have to be called existence. So the meaning of impermanence, changelessness; the meaning of permanence is opposite to that which doesn't change. Existence that doesn't change in a second that is the meaning of permanence.

(b) So the second wrong conception, that suffering is helpless—such as temporal pleasure, such as the temporal pleasure that arises with attachment, that is attached to beauty and happiness, peace. But it is not happiness, it is suffering—suffering because it is samsaric happiness and is under the control of delusion and karma, not free, not peace, happiness. Such as, for instance, such as happiness that is felt by feeling warm when one catches cold—such as those things under the control of the delusions and karma. That pleasure is in nature of suffering. It is the same thing with food in the stomach, it is in nature of suffering because it isn't true, it doesn't stay as it is at the time, the person finds it a pleasure—but it doesn't last, it changes.

3) Thinking that being unconnected from the cause is a wrong conception. True suffering is voidness because it is void of not having any connection to the cause.

3) Non-selfless covers more than (3). Number (3) is not the same as ... everything is void of independent self-existence, but thinking that suffering is unconnected from the cause. So the true suffering is void, is not unconnected from the cause.

True suffering is non-selfness—the wrong conception that true suffering is self, thinking of it as a self-entity, without depending on numbers of objects, parts. Besides the cause, there are many other things that it depends on—paths, times, many things.

(Tibetan for transience—Me.tag pa. Suffering—Dug.ngal. Voidness- Thong. Non-selfness—Dag.me.)

II. True Cause of Suffering

(2) Wrong conception—without depending on cooperative cause.

(3) Wrong conception pointing at a specific being and thinking that it is created by him.

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3 p.m.

(4) There are also some wrong conceptions of those who used to accept momentarily impermanent things thinking their nature was permanent.

III. True Cessation of Suffering

(1) So, to prove that there is such liberation—that the cessation of ignorance is cessation because it is not tied by delusion and karma, is release from delusion and karma.

(2) Wrong conception—such as sexual happiness recognized as peace.

(3) Wrong conception—such as greed, some delusions are perfect, not negative, thinking that they are needed.

(4) Wrong conception—such as believing that after one is out of the delusions that again they come back again in delusions, which is not logical.

IV. True Path of Cessation

(1) Also there was the wrong conception thinking that there is no path as there was the wrong conception thinking that there was no liberation.

(2) So the way it's proved is that path, which is knowledge-wisdom, becomes the remedy of the delusion. So following the path causes the delusion to cease, that is how that path leads to liberation.

(3) Wrong conception, such as that done without the wisdom realizing the absolute true nature, or without full renunciation of samsara. Those ordinary meditations, done without depending on those realizations, cannot cut samsara, cannot become the remedies of the delusions, cannot become the remedies of ignorance. Cutting ignorance is done without depending on other realizations; such as kundalini meditations; there are many things—ordinary meditations that are only done to be healthy or to make the body feel light, done only for this life, done without these other realizations such as

the full renunciation of samsara, or the wisdom realizing the absolute true nature—without those, you cannot remove ignorance.

This is just an introduction to the four noble truths, but is not an easy subject, there is much explanation, much text. It is something one has to study for long time, and in order to realize them one has to practice.

A. The Eight Causes of Suffering (Page 87)

The Suffering of Rebirth

[From (a) to (e)]

(1) (a) Generally, whenever the rebirth is taken in samsara it is always taken with suffering. Even if one takes a princely rebirth, that being is born with suffering, that living being is born with suffering. In regards that it is equal, it is born with suffering.

There are five sufferings of rebirth, five ways to think.

(b) Because this rebirth was taken ... if this rebirth was ceased there would be no way to increase the delusions, so if this rebirth is taken there is the chance to increase delusion. And it is difficult to control and bring the success of virtuous work, not having control over the delusions.

(c) By taking this samsaric rebirth, this uncontrolled rebirth, it brings the suffering of old age and sickness—if there's no uncontrolled rebirth there's no suffering of old age, sickness, death, and no way to get old, look old. So if it is not taken, these things do not arise.

(d) When the continuity of the suffering rebirth is ceased, there's no problem in subduing the uncontrolled body and mind, no way that the body and mind can become unsubdued and suffering. Such as the mind creating billions of different negative actions, the body creating many negative actions; there's no way for these to arise if the suffering rebirth is ceased.

(e) There is no choice, no control to stop even a moment without life setting close to the death, even from the time rebirth is taken.

Now, in place of looking at book should try to visualize. Try to visualize yourself in your mother's womb.

Rebirth in the Womb (Page 87)

Most paragraph:

The baby's body suffers by contracting these things. Try to think the baby is very sensitive, so sensitive.

(Page 88)

Paragraph 5

Like the baby is put on a sword. Usual people don't fully discover this, the baby's feelings. Also, the reason the baby has such great incredible suffering like this but the mother doesn't feel exactly what

the baby feels—it can't be experienced by the mother, whatever the baby feels. "What the baby thinks can be experienced by the other,"—but it doesn't happen, it doesn't work. The mother doesn't know; others don't know when the baby's mind is conceived, no idea. They only know when this fluid, this combination, is getting bigger—then the mother discovers feelings of discomfort, or the structure of the mother's body changes; but she doesn't know when the baby's mind is conceived, took place. The reason that the mother cannot feel, the baby's incredible suffering, even though the baby is in the mother's womb, even though its body is nourished for months, even though it is formed by the mother's blood and so on? Even so, the mother does not experience as baby experiences because that karma is not the mother's, but the baby's. The suffering is the baby's karma, that is the result of the karma that was created by the baby, not the mother. This also proves that the result of karma that wasn't created by the mother but was created by the child in a previous life cannot be experienced by the mother. Also, the baby cannot experience the mother's sufferings, the baby cannot experience what the mother thinks; the baby cannot understand. Like this. Also, one thinks that not remembering these continuations can be caused by intervention, these incredible sufferings.

(2) The Suffering of Old Age

(b) In that time, the power of the senses it is not strong as it was before, in youth. So as it lessens, they do not find a difference in the enjoyment of the taste of food.

(c) There are many; the old men as they get older, also have more worries about life shortening. But many people whose life is full of shortcomings, who think that there will be another life after death, try to do something, try to create good karma, because of the worry. Most of them have no idea of the life that comes, no skill, no methods, however much they worry to make arrangements at the death time to have less suffering, to find a better path. There's no method to have a pleasant death, to do something; no skill, no methods. So the person thinks he will die, but doesn't want to think of death, trying to forget it. But, however, it never helps, trying and trying in that way. That time gets closer each second—trying to forget it doesn't help, it's not the best skill. During that time, however the person tries before to forget it—trying to distract the mind with other things, surrounding things—when the time of death comes, the lord of death, there is such incredible suffering, worry. Then, however much the person makes noise, opens his eyes in all directions, looking for a guide from suffering, cries, nothing helps, it is too late, finished. So in that way it is finished without creating any merit. That kind of idea, wrong idea, is only cheating oneself—this is a wrong idea. There's the worry about death but also the lack of wisdom. There's no method, they do not find the method, do not recognize the method, do not follow the method; many things.

Also, as he gets older and older, the body gets thinner, with more and more wrinkles, even though it was looking very beautiful in the younger day. As he gets older more wrinkles arise and body gets bent, many things are changing—where there were no wrinkles, there's a wrinkle and veins coming now—the whole thing changes. Then, as the body becomes more and more ugly, also there's worry, also people do not like him that much, as he was liked during the younger days; people are more detached from him, and there are many problems. As people act in that way, don't care much, looking ugly, also there is such worry in the mind. Usually people do not like the very old man. Also, when he stands up, sits down, it is very difficult, he has to rely on something, there is not much strength, and it is very difficult to get up. And when he sits down there's no strength to sit down slowly, as in youth, all of a sudden there's no power to sit slowly as in youth. When he stands it is

like taking up the root of a tree. It is difficult to walk, to walk far. This is the general situation of old age.

It also depends on the family. Those who have old men, old women in the family don't like it much because it them a lot of work. Later on, they can't make much pee-pee, kaka, and they also have to give them food—much work, so not much interest, they wish they would die soon, they think how free they would be if they die soon, how good. The body is ugly, and they don't like it as much as in youth. There are many problems; according to the individual old man, there are many problems. Also depending on the individual old people, it is also difficult to eat strong food, tough food. However much he desires, wishes to eat it, the old man has to eat something different from the young people. According to individual old people there are all kind of different sufferings.

But even old people, even though that much life has finished without creating merits, until death there is the chance to create merits as much as possible. It is possible to practice Dharma until death time, the mind doesn't have to be discouraged. One example that happened during Guru Shakyamuni's time—there was one old man who was over 100 years old. He was in such a miserable situation, suffering. As he was greatly suffering, worried, Guru Shakyamuni explained to him the benefits of becoming celibate, a renounced person. (If there's something wrong please let me know). So as the benefits were explained to him, he told his family, son, and wife that he was going to be ordained. So they all said, as they didn't like him, feeling really disgusted, they said, "You are very old, so there's no need; it is time to go very quickly." They were pleased. This old man went to see Guru Shakyamuni, depending on sticks, and shaking. At that time Guru Shakyamuni was at one place where there were milky plants growing. The old man went there and asked, "Where is Guru Shakyamuni, where does he live?" So the other Sangha told the old man that Guru Shakyamuni had gone to another place to work for sentient beings. So the old man asked, "Who is the highest of Guru Shakyamuni's disciples?" So they answered, "The Noble Sharipu, the arhat." The old man went to see him to be ordained, and requested Sharipu to give him ordination. The arhat called Sharipu, he checked up with this old man, Kindang Palden, and he discovered that he was very old, so he could not do those three works—reading, concentrating, and working in the monastery. So he didn't accept, he sent him back. Then again this old man met Guru Shakyamuni's disciples called Wusang Chenpo and Upali, all arhats, and he requested them. They said, "If Sharipu didn't ordain you, how can we ordain you?" The old man was extremely upset. He came back from that place and stood at the main gate outside, and at the gate he made much noise, upset noise, making noises shouting, "I didn't create any heavy vices, heavy negative karmas since I was born, why didn't they ordain me? There are other people who created much heavy karma, killing many hundreds of people, and also other people who used to be evil before—even they can be ordained. What negative karma did I create that they didn't ordain me?" So with his psychic powers Guru Shakyamuni discovered this, and manifested in front of the old man. Guru Shakyamuni asked the old man about the situation. Then Guru Shakyamuni checked up and discovered that that the old man had created some merits to be ordained in that life. But this merit that was created by the old man that caused him to be renounced, ordained, his highest disciple Sharipu hadn't discovered. So he said it was okay to be ordained. Guru Shakyamuni explained to the old man that Sharipu was not yet fully enlightened through the purification of three countless great eons, through the purification of the obscurations and collecting merits in three countless great eons. He said, "I can let you be ordained, I have created the collection of merits and transcendental wisdom." The old man was extremely pleased, so he was given to one of Guru Shakyamuni's disciples, Mongalipu, and he was ordained by the arhat Mongalipu.

So the old man trained in the monastery. But there were many young monks in that monastery and they teased the old man, asking all sorts of question, and teasing him about being very old. So he got very upset again and thought like this—”When I was at home with the family, I was always causing problems for my son, wife, and servants. Now, even though I am ordained, these young monks make me unhappy.” He thought he would jump in the water. There was a big river near the place, and without telling anyone he went there and took off his robes and put them over the tree, and made three prostrations looking at the monastery, at Guru Shakyamuni’s place, and kneeled down with tears in the eyes, making a decision like this, “I didn’t give up the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, but I am giving up just this body.” He made this prayer—”Due to the merits of reading the holy texts and keeping precepts and making charity, may I be born in a very rich family having such power and many enjoyments, and have control over other people, and again meet the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and have no hindrance to Dharma practice, and again be ordained, and meet a very expert abbot and teacher and receive nirvana.” He made a prayer like this. Then the old man jumped into that very deep and big river.

At that time, his teacher, the abbot, the arhat Mongalipu checked up, “Where is my disciple, the old man?” he checked with his special-powered eyes. All of a sudden he realized that the old man went there and jumped in the river. So all of a sudden with his psychic powers he went to pick up the old man, without going in the river, and he put him on the side. He asked the old man why he had done this thing. The old man felt very shy. He thought that it was not right to tell a lie to his guru, so he said, “Because I was old, and at first, there was suffering with the family, and then second, the monks teased me.” His teacher, the arhat Mongalipu thought that he would frighten this man about recognizing the suffering of rebirth and death. He thought that if he did not frighten him about rebirth, if he had no fear in these sufferings, then there was no reason for him to be a monk. Then he asked the old man to hold his robe, to try not to let go, and they flew up into space. They went to the Atlantic Ocean, very far, and this arhat showed him many of the ordinary narak sufferings—day okay, night suffering, those which are found on earth. He showed these to the old man. Especially, there was an enormous mountain made of the bones of an animal in the Atlantic, so high up that it causes the rays of the sun to stop. Even the oceans nearby are all dark because they do not get sunlight. So they climbed over that and had a conversation about the naraks, sitting on the bones. Finally they started talking about the bones and Mongalipu explained that these bones were his—in a previous time the old man was a religious king who was watching while there was a play going on, and during the play the ministers brought him a man who had created a small criminal action and asked how he should be punished. The king was watching the play and just said to do it according to the law. So they killed the man. The result of that was that the king was born as a huge animal, as a water lion, and these were the bones that were left after the rain, and the sun had worn away the flesh. The old man got very frightened by the narak sufferings and the sufferings of the other rebirths, and thinking of his old body, he did one-pointed meditation, achieved the realization of the fully renounced mind, and also he achieved nirvana in that life time.

The cause that had given him the chance to become a monk was that in a previous lifetime there was a great stupa with animal kaka around, and he was a fly that went around enjoying the smells. Due to this karma that only Guru Shakyamuni could perceive, he had the chance to become ordained and achieve the realizations. The reason I am telling these examples is that there are many times that we think that this is not such a heavy karma, but just by doing it we should create small positive karma whenever possible, not just thinking that it is a small thing and just wanting to do great things. Whenever we have the chance to create even small merits we should do so. Therefore,

it is good to understand the examples of karma—from these we can figure out how karma works and what great results can come from them.

6 p.m.

The Mahayana Equilibrium Meditation (Page 103)

Do the visualization—think of a present friend, enemy, or stranger now, discriminated by your mind, no matter where he is—in the tent, in the country, in your home. The enemy who you don't like, who disturbs you, put in front of you, at the left side. And then the friend to whom you are attached, keep at the right side. Then put the stranger in between these two, at the front. Then also visualize all sentient beings who are in the narak, preta, and animal realm, all surrounding you, infinite, like the infinite Atlantic Ocean, which is so far. Like this, visualize all sentient beings around you and in front of you; the enemy at the left, the friend at the right, the stranger in between; and also visualize your parents.

If you don't have any specific person than you don't have to worry—is there's some difficulty in finding an enemy try to think of someone, another relative or someone causing you problems or causing you to get angry. Some people easily get angry, so think what makes you the most angry—someone telling you rude words, whatever gets you angry, you have to raise the problem. If you get angry by the person saying words or destroying your possessions, then visualize in that way. Or if you get angry by someone abusing you, saying you have such limited knowledge, are foolish, then visualize the person in that way. Whatever causes you to get angry, visualize that that person is giving you that problem and you are getting angry, feeling him as an enemy. If you already have someone who you dislike, who you hate, or toward whom you have pride or jealousy, or a man with whom you have a problem, then visualize that. Then for a friend, it can be parents or relations, or anyone you like best, the person to whom you are attached. The stranger is one who is neither friend nor enemy. And surrounded by all sentient beings.

Then you think of the friend; look at the enemy, the friend and the stranger. When you look at the enemy there is dislike. When you look at the friend there is the problem of attachment. Check what feeling comes when you look at each of them.

If you don't have some specific person in whom you are attached, then try to make it; whatever condition pleases you, visualize the person is doing it. If the person gives you gifts and it pleases you and makes you attached to him, be close to him, then visualize the friend is giving you things. Or if you are attached to the reputation of beautiful sweet words, then visualize the person is saying beautiful words to which you are attached. Whatever makes you happy, visualize the person giving you things or saying beautiful things.

Think of the visualization of the sentient beings and these three people, as I read. As I say this, it has to be checked with the three objects in front of you, in your mind.

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7. By changing the conditions—if I do something that the friend doesn't like, he becomes enemy. If you do something that the enemy likes, he becomes the friend. As these two have changed in the past according to the conditions, so will they change in the future. The friend is not the true friend,

the enemy is not the true enemy. Same with the stranger; he is a stranger at the present, but according to the conditions he can become an enemy; also a friend. Also, the stranger has been sometimes a friend and sometimes an enemy in the past, and same thing in the future. So even the stranger is not a definite stranger.

Therefore, there is no reason to retaliate, to label one as definite friend, one as definite enemy, one as definite stranger, due to temporal conditions. What the friend does, what the enemy does, what the stranger does. Think that in a little bit of time all these things change—friend, then stranger. You can think of your parents, the husband or wife at the moment—think that it has been changing; also the friend, all these. At the moment, those who are like this to you have been changing, each of them have been different in past times which have no beginning; same thing, they will change in the future—parents, father, mother, husband, wife and friends.

Think of this present enemy, the parents, the person to whom you are attached—friend, relative, whatever it is, “These relatives or friends have been the enemy, the relatives and friends have been the enemy numberless times in my previous lives. They have been my enemy by disturbing me in many different ways, and their being my enemy has no beginning, no such time before they never became enemy. From one time they became the enemy, there’s no such thing—their being the enemy which has no beginning.” Think this clearly and deeply, and check what feeling comes into your mind, thinking, “As this present enemy kills you, disturbs you, so this friend, husband, wife, or attached person has done this to me in my previous lives in countless times; disturbed me, harmed me.” By thinking back on their killing or harming you in numberless previous lives, after thinking this check what effect comes in your mind, what feeling you have with them at this moment. Also think that, “These people to whom I am attached now will continually change in the future, will continually be my enemy, continually harm me in my numberless future lives.” By thinking this, also check the feeling, what comes in your mind with those present people. If there is a feeling of detachment, loosened attachment, your concentration is acute and practical; if that doesn’t make you feel detached, then your concentration is not acute, nor practical.

Now check with the enemy. “The enemy has been my friend numberless times in my previous lives. I was made happy by them by giving things, by telling, by offering nice words—just as these people made me happy, which makes me think of them, feel closer and attached. This enemy did the same thing, helped me in my numberless previous lives.” Think back, going back many other lives, and check what feelings come into the mind. Also think, “The enemy, numberless times, will be my friend helping me, telling me nice things in all different lives.” Think that the person is going to do many things in different lives, give as many things as you like. Then check the feeling that is in the mind with that enemy. If there is loss of anger and dislike—if you are feeling anger or dislike—if this becomes loose, goes down, is not as strong as before, not as uncomfortable as before, then your concentration worked, became practical. If it didn’t make any change, then it doesn’t work, you didn’t think properly.

Think the same thing, meditate on this stranger. “At the present he is a stranger, but he has been my friend and enemy in my previous lives, and the same thing he will be in the future.” Visualize many of the future and past lives in which the stranger became the enemy and the future and past lives in which the stranger became the enemy and the friend. Think, “The stranger was enemy equal to the number of times as he’s been stranger. Also, the times he was stranger and friend are equal with the times he has been stranger and enemy. The stranger was not more times the enemy and friend, or

more times the enemy than stranger and friend, or friend more than stranger and enemy—all three are exactly equal, there's no such extra number.”

So, same thing, think with the friend you have visualized, “The friend to whom I am attached now has been—the number of times that he has been a stranger is equal to the number of times that he has been friend, numberless times. And his being a friend is equal to the number of times of his being enemy, so all are equal. Being stranger, being friend, is all equal, so it is not a definite friend, one who is always in that situation.” Try to see the person equal of all of these three as you did with the stranger, and check the feeling that comes in your mind. If there's no attached feeling, uncomfortable dislike, if it is just an indifferent feeling, then the concentration helped, it worked, it becomes practical.

Same thing; think with the present enemy. “He is also equal. The number of times he has been enemy and the number of times he has been stranger is equal to the number of times of his being friend. And the number of times of his being friend is equal to the number of times of his being enemy.” Try to feel by thinking like this.

So just as you worked with these three objects, think with every other sentient being, think of all sentient beings as the three objects equal in those—friend, enemy, and stranger—try to make them similar with all the sentient beings, their being friend, enemy, and stranger, try to have the same feeling with all other sentient beings.

As you visualize like this, also visualize Guru Shakyamuni, and make the request from the heart—”it is not enough that I am born in the upper realms; and even if I am released from samsaric suffering, it is not enough. All these sentient beings surrounding me have been my mother in numberless times, and most of them are in incredible suffering, not having the wisdom eye to distinguish what is positive action and negative action, and always desire peace, but always purposely run to create negative karma. No matter how much they do not desire suffering, they purposely run to destroy the cause of happiness. As I am the son of the mother sentient beings, so I am responsible to take care of them, to release them from suffering, and lead them to everlasting happiness. Therefore, may I be completely purified now and released from samsara, and achieve the great enlightenment, the great nirvana, right now.”

And then visualize the light of knowledge, Guru Shakyamuni's knowledge, coming from his holy body and absorbing into yourself and all other sentient beings and purifying all the delusions and mental defilements. Think that yourself and all sentient beings—as your mental delusions and defilements are all purified, existing neither inside nor outside, in the same way all sentient beings' delusions and even subtle defilements are completely purified. Think that from Guru Shakyamuni's holy body, like so many, many flies coming from honey, so many billions of Guru Shakyamuni's holy bodies come from his holy body and seat themselves on each sentient being's head, and absorb, become oneness. All sentient beings become Guru Shakyamuni, having achieved the two aspects of the holy body—dharmakaya and rupakaya. So the center, the main Guru Shakyamuni, comes down and seats himself on your head and absorbs into you, becoming oneness, and also achieves the two aspects of the holy body, dharmakaya and rupakaya. Also, all other sentient beings who became Guru Shakyamuni, all absorb into you from all the directions.

Dedication:

This is powerful. The reason they dedicate the object is beyond our thought, so if you dedicate, wherever they dedicate, it becomes a very powerful, very white, very extensive dedication. It becomes a strong will, such dauntless compassion, as they dedicated with such great understanding, knowledge. Even if our merits are small, they are dedicated the same way they did it.

The last dedication prayer is the bodhisattvas' dedication prayer; it contains 100,000 countless prayers (see dedication prayer 5, Appendix I).

Day 26

Tuesday December 11th

5 a.m.

At this moment, most of the sentient beings are suffering in the narak stages, suffering hot and cold, and besides that many other sufferings. And great numbers of sentient beings are suffering in the preta realms, and great numbers of sentient beings are suffering in the animal realms, and great numbers of sentient beings are suffering in also the sura and asura realms. Even those beings born in the upper realm are in suffering, the suffering of such distractions, or spending their whole lives unconscious. Even if there's no fight, the mind is always in distraction; however much they live, they do not have even a minute to study and practice Dharma, even though they live many thousands of human years, they do not have even one hour to practice Dharma, it is extremely difficult. Even in the human realm so many human beings, all the samsaric human beings, are in suffering; besides that, those different human beings are suffering difficulties, having different problems—rich people have different problems, poor people have different problems, society problems, country problems, all sorts of problems. Even a king or a president, same thing, he is a man who has much respect, who has also problems; a man who has much education, he has also problems; a man who has no education, he has also problems.

However, on this earth, even in this human realm, in this human world, keeping the eight precepts is very rare, something which has an exact number, which can be easily counted, no matter how many human beings live on this earth. But once we have found the precious chance to take Mahayana ordination and have the precious chance to keep the eight precepts—not three, four, or five, but eight precepts. Therefore, it is necessary to keep them when we have time, as we have found this precious chance. It is necessary to take them with a pure motive, it is necessary to perfectly take them. Therefore, it is not enough to have the pure thought devoid of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas; it has to be a Mahayana thought in order to take them in a Mahayana way:

“Attachment that is attached to temporal happiness and attached to higher samsaric pleasure is only the cause of suffering. However much we can make this life and the future samsaric life happy and more pleasant, it is only in the nature of suffering. As there's not one small happiness left in samsara that we never experienced, they have been experienced by us countless times; there's not one small suffering left in samsara that we never experienced, they have been experienced by us countless times. There's not one great happiness left in samsara that we never experienced, they have been experienced by us countless times; there's no one great suffering left in samsara that we never experienced, they have been experienced by us countless times. So nothing of the samsaric pleasure is new, if we remember clearly, we see that as it has no beginning, it is a very old and samsaric pleasure, it is definite that we will have to suffer until we achieve full renunciation of samsaric pleasure. It is definite that we will be in samsara as long as we are attached to samsaric pleasure, and it is definite that we will continually suffer.

It is not enough that oneself be released from this bondage of suffering. There are infinite sentient beings who are in incredible suffering, who have been our mothers countless times and who are also the object from whom we received all our past, present, and future happiness and perfection. Therefore, I am responsible to repay them, and the best way to do this is to guide them from suffering. At the moment I have no capability, only the enlightened being has the capability and great knowledge, power and compassion. Therefore, I must achieve enlightenment in order to lead all sentient beings from suffering. Therefore, it is necessary to gradually achieve the path. Therefore, it is necessary to subdue the body, speech, and mind. The best way is by keeping precepts, therefore, I am going to take the Mahayana ordination.”

(Ordination Ceremony)

9 a.m.

From the holy speech of the great guru, bodhisattva Tenzin Gyatso, “The bodhicitta, which is the great leading path and which does not allow us to be in samsara and self-everlasting happiness, the everlasting happiness of oneself, which are the two extremes, is worthwhile to depend on the release from these extremes.”

So the whole thing is this—even if one follows the path to enlightenment, if there is no bodhicitta then there is the danger of falling into the everlasting happiness of oneself, and for many eons not receiving enlightenment, just staying in that state, the mind completely being intoxicated or completely absorbed in that state. In such great ecstasy, one doesn’t receive bodhicitta. Therefore, one doesn’t receive enlightenment soon—just completely sinking in that great peace and ecstasy. It is hard to see other sentient beings’ incredible sufferings, to see what the bodhisattva feels. When the living being resides in such great, complete ecstasy, great peace, it is hard, it takes much time, many eons to receive great compassion for other sentient beings. But by achieving bodhicitta one does not experience the two extremes, and only it brings enlightenment more quickly. This is the road, the main way, straight to enlightenment. This is the shortcut compared to first following the lower vehicle path, the Hinayana path, then receiving the state of an arhat, then for a long time following the Mahayana path to enlightenment—this takes many eons, a long time. Compared to that, practicing bodhicitta right at the beginning of the practice is much a quicker to receive enlightenment, receive enlightenment directly. This is a shortcut.

Also, without bodhicitta, even following tantric path one cannot receive enlightenment quickly. Without bodhicitta, however long the person practices there is no way to receive enlightenment. It is the bodhicitta that causes the being to receive enlightenment quickly, so quickly through tantric practice. The bodhicitta makes the tantric path the shortcut; otherwise it does not become the shortcut. This is according to the instructions of Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom, to Guru Tsong Khapa—the advice given by Manjushri to Guru Tsong Khapa. Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom, emphasized that the renunciation of samsara and bodhicitta are of utmost need, the most important thing. Also, bodhicitta causes one to achieve the tantric powers that make one quickly receive enlightenment. Just like fuel in a plane—without fuel, the plane, even a jet, however fast it can go, without fuel it cannot go. The tantric path is like a jet. But without depending on the realizations of bodhicitta, fully renounced mind, and the realization of the absolute true nature, it cannot be a quick path.

Because of these benefits and reasons, it is worthwhile to practice bodhicitta even though we can't practice any other things, practice other methods. It is worthwhile to make our one aim the achievement of bodhicitta, and do anything just for that, always attempting to attain this at any time, thinking that our body, speech, and mind are working for this, always thinking, attempting to achieve this. It is greatly worthwhile even though we cannot practice other things at the same time—doing just one practice like this is greatly worthwhile.

Generally, the aim of receiving knowledge, gaining knowledge in the world, is totally to stop suffering. The main aim is to stop suffering. Why there is need of such knowledge? In order to stop one's own or others' suffering. Most of the worldly, ordinary people try to receive knowledge, be educated with this aim. So, if you want to be educated, to receive knowledge in order to quickly release yourself and others from suffering, then the best knowledge, the best way to be educated, the best way to be knowledgeable is to practice bodhicitta. Then one can quickly be released from suffering, as I have just explained. Then one can quickly transcend oneself from samsaric suffering and the everlasting happiness of self—the lower nirvana stage. Also, it is not a simple thing of meditating one day, one month in order to receive this—not like this. It takes time to achieve the fundamental realizations that have to come before the achievement of bodhicitta. That depends on practice, and that depends on understanding. So totally, it depends on training the mind—even though it is not possible to achieve bodhicitta in a day, a month, or to completely achieve it in a year—how quickly one achieves bodhicitta depends on how strong the practice is, and how continually one trains the mind in bodhicitta. Therefore, it is important for the mind, when doing the action of listening to this teaching for the purpose of receiving bodhicitta, to cultivate the pure thought of bodhicitta. Therefore, think, “I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path in order to achieve enlightenment to release all sentient beings from suffering.” The listening subject is the graduated path. If it is divided in three, there are the path of the lower being, the path of the middle being, and the path of the higher being. The path of the lower being is briefly finished. So now, the path of the middle being. The whole thing is involved in meditating on the suffering of each of three upper realms—the suffering of the humans, asuras, and suras, as well as the total, general samsaric sufferings. There are six divisions dividing all the samsaric sufferings, or three divisions of samsaric suffering. Concentrate on those. Also, concentrate on samsaric suffering in terms of the twelve dependent links and the eight causes of samsaric suffering, mainly the suffering of the human realm.

Yesterday we talked about the suffering of rebirth and old age.

The Suffering of Rebirth (Page 87)

The explanation on the suffering of rebirth is just a few ideas, explanations that are explained in the teachings, that were explained by Guru Shakyamuni. If you think of the suffering of rebirth alone, it is incredible—something that makes you vomit if you think of it while you are eating food, instead of being attached to taking birth in the mother's womb. The whole thing is that karmically the baby's body is very sensitive and very thin, like a cow with skin peeled off, and whatever touches the body, the flesh it is very sensitive, and there is much suffering. Even things that usually doesn't cause suffering to skin skin, when the skin is peeled off if those things touch the red flesh they cause suffering. We don't see this, but for the baby the feeling is like this.

At the moment we are not talking how we see the baby, but how the baby feels, what we ordinary people, even mothers, do not understand, what those who do not have the mental power to see, feel

the baby's mind, level of mind, or nature of mind, what those who do not have the power to receive the baby's experience feel. It's just like this, another example is like this—just as we don't know what animals are thinking in their minds, it is the same thing, we have no idea about the baby's mind. The thing is this—for instance, when poor people look at rich people they think they are always happy, enjoying—they only judge them from the physical level—having a rich house for many years, enjoying the day and night, counting the physical things and thinking this is a happy life. From the poor people's level they think this is happiness. As this is not true, it is the same thing with the baby. We think the baby is enjoying the mother's womb, but this is not true; we think it is warm and comfortable, but we are judging this with the limited mind—it is not true. Briefly something like that.

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(2) The Suffering of Old Age

By thinking of that example, there's nothing to feel discouraged about. Actually there are sufferings like this—as the body changes, gets older, there is less beauty and so many powers are lost. Actually, generally there are sufferings like this, but from the individual's side, there is nothing to worry about as it is not one time, only this once. As long as we are in samsara, it will be worse than that, greater problems than the suffering of old age have to be experienced continually, again and again. But we get worried and feel upset due to ignorance, which doesn't help to stop suffering at all; and then, because of these worries, people dislike it and don't take care, they want to commit suicide, destroy oneself—this is not a skillful method. This does not mean the person has courage and is not afraid of suffering; he is doing that because he is afraid of suffering. For instance, the man jumping in the river does not mean he is not suffering, doing this with complete freedom—this is done with ignorance, therefore he is not free. Also, there is fear, feeling hung up—the old man doesn't want to go through that trip anymore, people teased or disliked him and he was extremely upset, feeling unhappiness because of that. Totally his action of jumping in the river is done with attachment to the happiness of this life. He didn't find any other method, so he jumped in the river because other people disturbed the temporal happiness of his life, teasing him and so on. He didn't want to carry on because his mind was attached to the happiness of this life. It is the same thing for the person committing suicide—this is done with ignorance, it does not mean there is no fear of suffering.

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Sometimes, when we go into the streets of cities we see many other people having problems. We are going, we can do as we like, but others cannot do this—when a person walks, he needs a helper—many things.

As you see this, make it worthwhile, make it useful for meditation, make it useful for your mind. Every time you see the suffering of other beings it is worthwhile—even if you are going once into town—it is very useful, make it meditation. To receive renunciation of samsara it is necessary to understand the suffering of oneself and other beings, and sitting in one's room, it is limited what the mind will remember in terms of the experience of suffering mind. So when one goes outside there are many examples of suffering, things happening.

We think, “It is their suffering, I am happy now, I have no suffering,” based on the idea of the existence of one life and no changes happening—the conception of no change from a happy life to

a miserable life is not helpful, thinking that they are suffering because they are uneducated and so forth, thinking like this is not helpful. In place of that, whatever you see, whenever you go in those suffering places where you can see many things, make it beneficial for your meditation; you can meditate while going in the place. Meditation doesn't have to be sitting, because meditation is a mental action. Also, you may think that some things that are explained in the teachings are not serious, you may not feel them in the mind, but when you see suffering you can feel them, even if it is small. If you have the key in your mind, everything that you see can be made useful. These are the ways that the previous practitioners practiced meditation, the previous yogis did meditation not just when in the cave meditating, but when in cities too.

So if you meditate like this, even one in a noisy place if you have the method you can meditate, it is in your hand. Whatever you want to do with the mind is not in other people's hands; if it were then that would be something else. The physical body and the mind are something different—the physical body can be put in prison, can be controlled, kept by other person, can be held, can be taken away. But mind cannot be handled like this. As another person can put the body in prison, he cannot control your mind, put the mind in one place, in something, and not allow it out, because another person has no control over your mind: he has control over your body but not your mind.

In Tibet—just an example that came up—this is about the Panchen Lama, the head of the Tashilunpo Monastery. Three or four years ago, the Chinese, even though they could control the Tibetan people's bodies, they still could not control the Tibetan people's minds. They have no easy way to change people's minds as they have control over their bodies. They find it very difficult to change the mind as they handle the body—however much the physical body is tortured in many different ways, however much this is done, the mind doesn't go as they instruct, they don't talk, the Tibetan people's minds do not become conditioned in the way they desire, project. So, finding it hard to control the minds of the people, they got this idea, method. They asked this high lama to instruct, give a talk complaining about His Holiness in public—with him sitting on the throne in the usual discipline of the teaching. Then Chinese set it up like this, wanting him to complain about His Holiness. They had the idea that if he gave a talk like this, the people's mind would change, as years of treating the body didn't change the mind. What happened was, in place of making complaints about His Holiness, although there were armies around, in place of that he instructed the public to pray for the long life of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, and for the holy beings who are the holders of the teachings in the world to have long lives, and for the teachings to exist longer, and instructed them to recite the mantra of Avalokiteshvara. So he gave teachings as usual, without any fear, completely opposite to what they wanted. So right after this he was taken away to Peking. He said, "I can give you my body but I can't give you my mind. Whatever you want to do, I can give you my body but you can't have my mind." So just like this—however much the place is disturbing, not quiet, even if the body is in prison—the mind is in our hand, so there is always the chance of using the mind in a Dharma way.

Anyway, these things also help a great deal to not be attached. When the person walks into the market there is always much negative mind going on—attachment, greed, covetousness, for objects you see in the shops. Each time you walk and see, there are all kinds of things happening in the mind, creating much negative karma. Before going there you plan to use things in this way ahead of time, or else your mind gets a big surprise and your mind is not conscious of itself, whether positive mind or negative mind is arising. Before going to town, you plan exactly, "I'm going to buy this and that, meet these people"—exactly as you plan, you do with mind. Then you know the mind has covetousness, attachment, there is much fun going on in your mind; as you see a lot of things there,

you see a lot of things in your mind; as you see ugly things, beautiful things, also you see them in your mind. So like this it is useful.

To stop negative mind, first you must recognize negative mind. Therefore, recognizing that you have more and more negative mind, finding more negative mind is good, not bad. When one practices meditation, trying to stop and recognize negative mind, when one practices the graduated path, one can find many negative minds that the person couldn't find before. Why? Because he wasn't conscious of these, aware of what is positive mind and negative mind, always distracted and controlled by outer objects. Also, the person doesn't think he is negative, thinks he is good, gentle, and has a good personality; but when he practices Dharma—especially the graduated path, which explains and fights negative mind, gives the method to destroy—when one is seriously in this practice, one discovers many other things, many negative minds, garbage, recognizing much garbage in the mind. One sees himself as negative. As we meet each different object and find our negative mind, this is good; this means the meditation that you are practicing is going on in the right way. First of all you have to recognize it, in order to fight it, destroy it. Without recognizing it there is no way.

This is talking about mind. But now, suffering. Before we didn't think we had suffering, thinking: "I am a very happy boy or a girl," thinking that, "Suffering does not exist for me, only for poor people who don't have possessions." Anyway, however much there is suffering, the person doesn't recognize it because there is no understanding of the Dharma, because his mind doesn't recognize it, doesn't experience the suffering. Later on, when the person practices meditation and Dharma, doing the checking meditation on the samsaric sufferings, one finds more and more suffering within one's mind, within the person himself. As he finds more and more suffering himself, through the meditation, that means his practice is good, going in the right way; that his meditation is helping him, benefiting him, protecting him.

This is like first of all, in order to get rid of the poison, introducing the poison that you have taken; without recognizing the poison you cannot get rid of it. Just like this, a telescope. The purpose of the telescope is to see far-away things clearly and more, other objects. For instance, armies use telescopes to see how many of the enemy are there. If the telescope has no power, if one doesn't see those objects, how many enemies, then the telescope is no good—it is not good material or something is wrong. Same thing, if the person's meditation, Dharma practice—however long, however much the person does things and always thinks he is right—if he does not recognize the negative minds or the samsaric sufferings, that means something is wrong, even if he makes the mistake of thinking he is right—that means something is wrong in his practice, with his meditation, something is not practical.

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(3) The Suffering of Sickness

When we meditate on this, whatever horrible patients with terrible sicknesses that you saw in this life, put yourself in their situation and try to see them. Also, when you meditate, remember that even in the human beings, who are much more free than those lower beings with limited conditions, human beings have so many things, clothes, houses, and so forth to take care of their lives, to make it healthy. They have so many clothes, so many rooms, so many things, and so many other people taking care of them, such as servants. All these are for the body, things that lower beings do not

have. People can do as they want, they make money, buy things that they want—so many things are done to keep the body healthy but eventually the human being will have problems of with sickness, all kinds of different sickness. Think of the different sicknesses in the world, not only counting the number, like poor people counting rich people's possessions, but think with feelings of the terrible, unbearable sicknesses.

In the break times, read the part on the Mahayana Meditation, and visualize and check in your mind as you read—this becomes checking meditation. Some people may not have read anything, some may have finished the whole thing. Those who have finished, read it again; since enlightenment has not yet been received, start again. Either read the samsaric sufferings or the part on the Mahayana Meditation, either the Equilibrium Meditation or the Seven Techniques.

3 p.m.

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When you meditate on each of these parts, such as the section on old age, check, try to think of many examples, try to think of the many sufferings of old age. Also, sickness, think of many kinds of sicknesses. Also, many kinds of suffering death.

(5) The Suffering of Release from Beautiful Objects (of Attachment)

Then, when you meditate on the release from attached, desirable objects, don't just think of the title but of many objects. According to the person there is a different feeling, different level of feelings, just by hearing this. So just thinking of the title doesn't help much. It is very helpful and makes much more sense if you can think of and check with many examples, such as other people's suffering from the release of desirable objects, and your own experiences, trying to remember them in the meditation time, trying to recognize your own different sufferings. It becomes useful, remembering one's own experience of this, to see that these objects are meaningless, trivial, and also understanding these sufferings helps a great deal not to be attached, to lose the attachment.

A few examples, a few ideas. "Beautiful object" can be a living being, a non-living thing, possessions. First of all, the suffering is that the person trying to obtain the desirable object does not obtain the desirable object, not receive the desirable object. Even if it is obtained, there is the suffering of release from those beautiful objects; it doesn't last because the desirable object does not last. For instance, the parents' children: they wanted to have children, they like children, the children are a desirable object. But when they have children, it doesn't last, they cannot live together for a long time, soon there is separation—either the children are separate, released from the parents, or the parents are released from the children. At that time there is worry, the suffering of separation, not being together. When they die there is separation, when they leave home there is the suffering of release, when they die there is release from the desirable object, the children. It is the same thing with the parents in relation to the children. Also, the same thing with the relatives; there is suffering like this. Also with couples, there is suffering like this. First of all they obtain the desirable object, then there is the suffering of release from the desirable object, such as death, such as not being together—there are all kinds of sufferings from release, this is common in the world, easy to recognize. Some people fight because of the suffering of release from the desirable object, such as the husband or wife. They destroy other people, kill other people, even if it costs them their life—they give up their life to kill other people because of this suffering of release from the desirable

object. It is the same thing with possessions; when the possession is finished, broken, there is worry; when it is stolen, there is worry, suffering; think of many examples. Even if it is not released yet—possessions, friends, whatever—there is fear that it may be released, fear of release, fear and worry, many things. These are common, easy to understand, usual problems.

In Tibet, in previous times, one man—Indian or Nepali—was invited to make a statue, a very famous statue in Lhasa; he was one of the sculptors. On the full-moon day he cried. Someone asked him why he cried every full-moon day, and he said, “At this time in my home I used to play and enjoy with my wife.” He missed this, so every full-moon he cried. He was asked, “What would you chose, enlightenment or your wife, to meet enlightenment or to meet your wife?” He said he would choose his wife. This is just an example, this is also the suffering of release from the desirable object.

(6) Disliked Object, Ugly Object

Also there are sufferings of meeting, encountering—such as when there are people disturbing you, causing you trouble that cause your negative minds to arise; this is also suffering—the suffering of meeting ugly objects, meeting any object that you dislike; suffering when you meet any disliked object, such as relatives, friends. First of all, there is the desirable object; then after few years, soon it becomes an undesirable object, the suffering of meeting, the suffering of encounters—like this. Same thing, the friend—one who is a friend in one moment then becomes the enemy—again suffering. Before, there was no suffering of encountering the disliked, ugly object; before, it was not a disliked, ugly object. But after, it became that; then there is suffering, but it is the same object. Also with food—when it gets old there is suffering from meeting the ugly object. Same with possessions, clothes, place—when it gets old, torn, there is again the suffering of encountering the ugly object, torn, there is again the suffering of encountering the ugly object. When this person heard ugly words, there is the suffering of encountering the disliked object because the person doesn't like it, hates it. Also, when the climate changes, when there is much heat, there is also the suffering of encountering the disliked object; when it is very cold there is also the suffering of encountering the disliked object.

(7) The Suffering of Not Obtaining Desirable Objects

There also one can check up with many examples, such as the suffering of not finding, not obtaining desirable jobs, possessions, money, many things, or people. Also there are many people who go round the whole world to obtain desirable objects and still don't find them. One goes to another country, goes round and checks up, again goes to another country—there are many examples. At least, even if one obtains the desirable object, there's again the suffering of release; even if it is not released yet there is fear or worry—but the same object—even if it is obtained, there is the fear of release; as it can cause suffering or the encounter with the undesirable object, that object becomes the enemy object of dislike, causing the suffering of encountering it. So with one object the person suffers in three different ways. It is good to check up in your mind in many ways, to make it clear.

(8) The suffering of this body created by delusion and karma.

(a) That is also a problem of the physical body. Because of this body, besides being negative actions created with speech and mind, there are many negative actions created with the physical body—if there is no physical body there would not be negative actions created by the physical body. So because the body is received, there are the extra negative actions, bodily actions. The negative karma

makes the future, many future lives' bodies suffer the result. Also, if there were no continuity of this deluded physical body, if this is ceased this time, then there wouldn't be any continuity in the future lives, there wouldn't be any continuity of the deluded physical body, this suffering body; then there couldn't be any physical body, suffering body, and then there couldn't be any physical sufferings. So those future physical sufferings are based on the continuity of this present suffering body. Billions and billions of times we will receive the body again—human, animal, whatever shape—all the future suffering bodies are based on the continuity of the present. If the present is ceased the whole future, the infinite continuity of the physical sufferings can be ceased, do not have to be experienced. Then we don't have to go through the trouble of feeling hot in the day, cold at night; we don't have to go through this continually.

Answer to question: There can be a pure holy body, there are different levels. As the being approaches different levels of path, the body has less sufferings.

Think of this example that I mentioned, think of the future like this. Thinking like this gives you energy, dislike, to not have attachment. We see the body as the field of suffering, like the field of a crop. One very useful thing is it makes us not be attached. And besides losing the attachment it gives energy, builds the renounced mind of samsara, gives energy to seek the method; it makes us cease the continuity of this experience, the uncontrolled experience of taking the physical body. More and more in this way, deeper we check from this physical body—how the great number of sufferings arise due to this body—the more sufferings we find arising from this body, the more we understand as this is the field of suffering, and within the person's mind there is be that much more strong renounced mind, renounced mind for the samsaric body. Besides losing attachment, there is that much stronger renounced mind. As there is stronger renounced mind, that much the attachment will be less; when there is less renounced mind for the samsaric body, the attachment will be stronger. So one thing, not only thinking of the present body, but thinking all the samsaric bodies—first of all think of this present human body, then think of all the samsaric bodies—the sura, asura body, the lower beings' bodies—think of these bodies as the field of suffering. Then meditate in this way, on the whole samsaric body. This brings renunciation for all of it, the desire not to take any samsaric body, however beautiful it is—such as the bodies of those gods—by meditating on it as the field of suffering and by seeing that it causes many future sufferings. The more we think of this, the more renounced mind and less attachment for the body we develop.

The attachment for the body is what makes us continually take the body, keeps us in samsara, taking this body without choice. So what makes us circle round? One thing is the attachment, so this meditation is very useful.

(b) If one wants to think about this, how to think of the suffering of the body? One can think like this. Talking about our own life, always we people worry much about clothes—wearing different clothes, finishing clothes, many worries, not finding desirable clothes to put on the body—if there's no body, there's no reason for those sufferings and worries to arise.

Also, we have to feed this body, we have to work our whole life just to take care of this body. The poor people working in the station, being a porter, the rich people who work making big business—both of them are the same, working to feed the body. No matter how much the person has a reputation, a place he is enjoying, a business—it is the same thing as the porter making one rupee a day—both do it to feed the body. The poor person is suffering, experiencing the suffering of being a porter, carrying things, physical suffering, due to his physical load there is suffering—that is done to

take care of the body, to keep the body. That job trying to collect the money by working, why does it have to be done? It is the problem of the body. Also to take care of the body, uneducated people use the body for work.

Also, there are numberless, hundreds and hundreds of different sicknesses that arise because of the body, the physical body. Such as coughing, cold suffering—even these small, tiny things are problems of the body, because having this samsaric deluded body.

You see why there are so many problems in the world—wars between countries, societies, classes and races—why are there so many problems in the modern world? Things started off a long time ago but still nothing has been achieved? That is still a physical problem; if there wasn't the physical body there wouldn't be all those things, fighting each other, creating negative karma killing others, destroying them. That is also done because of having this body, because of this body. Also, having fear of being killed, being injured, thirst, physical problems—these are problems of the samsaric, deluded body. Also, people that have to make business with drugs and have to be in prison; that is also a problem of physical body. So this is very helpful.

(c) The suffering of suffering is the suffering of injury, wounds, sickness, and so forth.

(d) Changeable suffering is, for instance, when one feels very thirsty, as one drinks water at first it feels good, feels comfortable, but that is also suffering. Actually, why is that feeling of comfort at the beginning of drinking water suffering? Because by drinking more water you get sick in the stomach. Anyway, same thing with food—first you feel comfortable, pleasant—that is not actual pleasure, that is suffering, changeable suffering. If it is true pleasure it shouldn't change—by taking more food, it should stay there, but by eating more and more food your stomach feels big pain, and afterwards you don't know what to do.

Also, feeling cold and hot. When there's the suffering of cold, as the person goes in the sun to get warm, in that moment when there is less cold, there is a momentary pleasure of feeling warm. But soon the heat increases, and again there's the suffering of feeling hot, and the pleasure becomes cold. Like this—as the cold goes down the heat increases and at that moment it is called pleasure, that evolution is called pleasure. It is not real pleasure, not true pleasure, it is in the nature of suffering—soon it becomes suffering. Same thing, when the person comes in feeling hot, the cold goes up and the heat goes down—for that moment that evolution is called pleasure; there's no other object that can be called pleasure.

(e) Pervading suffering. Whenever there is that body that arose from the delusions there is suffering. From the head down to the toes it is in suffering nature, the field of problems.

In regards to these three sufferings, the first two are easy to recognize but the third is difficult to recognize, to discover.

How to Stop the Three Negative Feelings (Page 90)

The ancient, far-famed pandit, Palden Chodag. This is a very meaningful quotation, this tells how the evolution is working, about that attachment. I think also a similar thing in the Equilibrium Meditation (Page 103).

The ordinary beings always think of the “I” as a self-entity, an independent existence. This wrong conception causes attachment to the “I” and then also there is the wrong conception of my possessions, my things, my body. So, as there is the wrong conception thinking the independently existent “I,” that causes attachment to arise for the “I”—then as there is the wrong conception of the independent possessions and body, that causes attachment to arise for my possessions. Same thing, it works like this for the desirable objects, the wrong conceptions, thinking of the desirable object as a self-entity, independent, so there is attachment. By seeing with this wrong conception, there is attachment to the desirable things. The attachment to the desirable objects interrupts the understanding, the discovery of the faults of ignorance. The attachment explains the object, expresses the object, and it ignores, obscures the understanding of the faults of ignorance, also attachment. When the person is attached to something, as long as the person follows the attachment, the attachment only expresses how good, beautiful it is. The attachment never expresses that if the person follows it in that way he will never discover the faults of the negative mind. When there are problems like this there are many methods of concentration. This way, it is also helpful because the “I” that we think of, that we perceive, that we feel, doesn’t exist, never exists anywhere, either in the body or outside. This is the fundamental thing of the whole problem, any negative mind: pride, anger, greed, and so forth. So when we do checking meditation on the actual evolution as it really exists, as it is, it doesn’t give a place, there is not that strong wrong view because the checking meditation that the person makes is according to this factual way that the “I” exists. It is completely opposite to the view that the usual, old, wrong mind believes in. So as the person makes the checking meditation in the factual way that the “I” exists, this makes no place for the wrong view that is projected by the wrong projector, the old mind, the wrong conception. What is the reason this view changes, this wrong view becomes false, becomes non-existent, nowhere, as the person usually feels, becomes non-existent anywhere? Because at the time of the meditation, checking the nature of the object, the absolute nature of the “I” is stronger than the wrong conception, then the wrong projector that projects the wrong view—the wisdom is stronger and the wrong conception is weaker. So at that time the view of the “I” is different. With this true view, with this correct view, seeing it as dependent, as it is merely dependent, it never arises, and this makes no place for the other negative minds of greed, pride, and jealousy to arise; so there’s no way for the other problems, the actions of greed, actions of pride, to arise.

6 p.m.

Anyway, there is much to talk about in terms of what I was telling you before. There is much to explain about it, many details, there is much to say about it, it is a subject that can be explained for a long time. In Tibet, the monks study the philosophy of these subjects on the absolute nature, they study with much details for years. Anyway, it can be explained for a long time, also it can be explained in one word too. One way or the other—everything can be made into one word, that which is called “emptiness,” or it can be expanded so much that one has to study for many years. So for us at the moment, without talking much, what is the useful thing when there’s a problem like that, what is the most useful thing to do? If you search the object that you see and the subject, yourself, the “I”—the object, possession, or living being, if you search the object as you see it, the total thing is to search for it, where is it? Doing this when there are problems, searching like this, is powerful, helpful because the mind before was occupied with many problems towards that object, anger, pride, or jealousy. If one searches the object and the subject, the “I,” the mind is occupied by that and the other mind, the negative mind of anger and so on goes down. So the more purely, more deeply you search it ... The thing is this—if you find you can’t solve the problem much, if you don’t

find you can't solve the problems of negative mind, this depends on the way you search, your intelligence.

(Page 90)

(2) As I explained before in the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, they way to use the techniques with the object of greed is similar to this. The way of trying to lose the attachment results of the negative mind—how it gave problems in the past, how it will be in the future. Think like this, with feelings, trying to really feel it, the shortcomings of what the negative mind did to oneself, and what it will do in the future.

Using this, remembering the shortcomings proves to the person how the negative mind is the worst enemy, the worst interferer. Anyway, the person gets afraid by thinking the shortcomings, so as he gets afraid the negative mind goes down, and the person doesn't follow it any more, and the problem gets solved. It is very good thinking like this—it helps a great deal to observe karma—with family, friends, relatives, people you are uptight with, something. It is important since we want to meditate. While meditating, the main thing is observing karma. If one doesn't observe karma, meditation, it does not make sense—it is the most important thing, the most essential thing—otherwise there is no sense in sitting cross-legged, closing the eyes. Observing karma is very important, very important. It should be observed as a heart, like you take care of your heart. If there is something that is going to happen, to fall, you cover your head with your hands; if someone is going to throw something, you don't cover your body, you cover your head. So your observing karma—even parents don't observe karma, they don't think karma exists—following karma is an individual responsibility, it doesn't matter. As we recognize karma it is our responsibility to observe it.

As there is negative mind arising for some reason, at that time, especially if your mind is uptight in certain situations or with certain objects, at that time it is so easy for problems to arise. Someone says something with which you disagree, and in a second the negative mind arises and you create negative karma. The negative mind arises so easily, it doesn't need much effort, it effortlessly arises—not like growing bodhicitta. So those times, the mind should be conscious, that is the most important thing, the mind should be conscious of one's own life, taking care of one's own life, being conscious of karma. “Should be conscious of life” means not just one life, but conscious of many lives. Like, at the moment there is a small problem—that is because my mind is attached; then there is a disagreement, then anger, pride arise—this is a small thing, this situation is a little problem. But the negative mind arising is not a small thing—“If I do this, besides destroying the present life it destroys many future lives. Even if I am not born in the lower suffering realms, even if I am born in the upper realms, there is much suffering. Besides I am destroying the cause of enlightenment, the cause of eternal, everlasting peace. This is silly; this, my action that I am doing now, is silly. Due to a little tiny thing I am destroying my many lives by following the negative mind, destroying many lives and destroying the cause of enlightenment, everlasting peace, doing some silly thing.” Try to recognize one's own vices, mistakes. Also try to think of those shortcomings here—if you can remember them it is good.

Karma is very heavy, it is not a simple thing. Once a little negative karma is created, to destroy the karma that is created, even a little one, is very difficult; and to stop oneself from experiencing the suffering result is very difficult, so difficult. It is something that takes much time to purify. “I couldn't purify the negative karma that was already created until now, I couldn't purify; besides not

being able to purify, creating negative karma again is silly, foolish, making myself more tired, nonsense action,” think like this.

So when you think of karma, one cause of karma—” There is karma that is difficult to control, a very heavy thing,” that causes you to be under the control of suffering. “Therefore, this little thing doesn’t matter. Why I should be uptight about this for such a small thing? There are much more knowledge, benefits, profit if I give it up (this object, situation, whatever it is), more knowledge, benefit profit if I give it up.” This means you are not concerned with that, not attached to it. This way your mind, which is like a rock coming up, will disappear, will lose it—then you create peace by yourself. Finding the chance to create peace by yourself is the knowledge of understanding karma, of understanding Dharma. This is something you have to work with peacefully in your mind. This way, also, it keeps other people peaceful, relaxed.

Many times there are unnecessary small things, matters of agreement. A person creates much negative karma just because of food, some little thing in the family, clothes, and little things. Problems seem heavy, big things, but they aren’t, yet much negative karma is created for such a tiny thing. The person—whenever there is some kind of problem like this, disagreement, food and clothes, something like that—the person’s mind explodes, the mind all of a sudden—by a little word, an ugly word—all of a sudden the whole personality changes. Before he was enjoying well, and after a few minutes another personality—like that, easily changing the personality, the aspect of the face. So anyway, very uncontrolled—that is because of the practice, when there are things happening like this, the practice is not so active, the person is not well trained in the mind, not much familiar. And also, depending on the practice, if it is not used in the right way, if it is not practiced in your mind, yourself, no matter how much you meditate, these problems will always happen—no change in your mind, in your vices, in your negative personality. So when there are problems, the person who tries to control himself, who tries more and more subdued action, personality—at that time the practice, meditation, or Dharma practice, has helped him—his Dharma practice.

Generally, Dharma can never give harm, disturb, or cause the negative mind to arise—but if your individual practice of the Dharma is not done in the Dharma way, not used in the Dharma way, not done on you, your mind, your practice can cause the negative mind to arise instead of helping. So anyway, when there is such change in the personality, the person becomes more and more subdued, trying to control himself, conscious of karma, that is the real, successful Dharma practice, the actual situation. This meditation is much more powerful than that which you do in the schedule, when there’s no problem. Because the meditation that you do at such an important time protects you from creating negative karma, from creating confusion and fighting with people, making other people unhappy.

Also this is helpful, changing the object, because different objects, being cooperative causes, cause different problems of negative mind. So “changing the object” means you are changing your view; you don’t have to make it a different shape, but change your view of it. If you see it as beautiful and attachment arises, then change your view, see it as ugly; so the view changes, attachment loosens. When, there is a person in relation to whom the mind is attached or uptight, try to change the view, the person, the object, try to see him as a terrible old man, in the form of a terrible old man. Think like this, “The whole evolution, I see like this as he or she is existing by himself; something in beauty. But it was not always like this. This is only seeing the body, not the mind, so the body I see as beautiful was not always like this, what I see is temporal. At the beginning, it was like kaka; at the very beginning it came from the sperm and kaka place, just the combination of the blood which has

no beauty, which is like the kaka. Then the shape slowly changed to become this. And it will change again, become ugly and very old.” Try to see it like this, from the beginning to the end, then it helps to lose the uptight feeling, the attachment. It helps, it helps.

Sometimes, another method is thinking about the inside, the skin—seeing separately the bone, flesh, blood—in this way you cannot find the object of the greed—this way is also helpful.

This means thinking of yourself as wood or a rock—the very last method, thinking of something like this that has no anger or greed. Visualize yourself as a huge rock. While you visualize, the mind is occupied, so it doesn’t allow the active mind to arise.

So now, we make another kind of meditation. (The six divisions of samsaric suffering—these are not shown in the textbook).

Do the checking meditation on the sufferings of the samsaric happiness, such as the relationship between enemy, parents, relatives, and stranger—none of this is definite, nothing ever becomes definite, everything changes. Do checking meditation on this; how even in the upper samsaric realms where there is more chance to believe in pleasure, to have a happy life, still it is temporal samsaric pleasure; the pleasant life, the relationships between people are not definite. As it has been changing, it will continually change. Try to do the checking meditation with examples, try remembering your past experiences; try to see them as indefinite, the offering of indefinite, samsaric relationships and samsaric temporal pleasures. Check the changing relationships this life and the changes with friends, also parents becoming the enemy, even in this life, many things, changes in this life. As this happened in the past and will continually happen in the future, cycling round, becoming different. Then check like this—if there’s attachment arising for your friend, whoever you’re attached to, think what feelings you have. Also check with the enemy, what feelings you have for the enemy whom you dislike. The friend is helping you, as you need, desire, the enemy is harming you—check your feelings with each one.

Still there’s attachment to the friend, so think that, “This person will definitely, even if he is helping me now, will definitely become my enemy, and harm me in many different ways, and will kill me in numberless times in the future. Therefore, this temporal friend, the samsaric temporal friend is not definite, is not definite. Therefore, there is nothing to be attached to now just because he is helping me.” Think also, “This samsaric relation, this is like a person who is going to kill me tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, soon, but today pleases me by giving things, saying nice words as I desire. So this person who is going to kill me soon, however much he tries to please me today, tries to make me comfortable, says nice things as in this example, we know the person will soon kill, harm, cause life-danger, soon, today, tomorrow, one month, a year; so there is nothing to be attached, no interest just because he is doing nice things now.” As the person who sees this knows what he is going to do, he has no interest, no attachment in the actions trying to please in the present. So just as this, same thing, this friend who is pleasing me now is definitely going to kill me in the future, it is just a matter of perceiving this clearly; so what he is doing to me now, giving things, there is nothing to be attached to.

For the enemy, if after checking there is still anger, “This is like an example, a person whom I know will be helping me numberless times in the future, even though he is giving me trouble today there is nothing to react to, to hate—this enemy will become my friend numberless times in the future, so there is nothing to react to. So as the friend is not definite, the enemy is not definite.”

(2) Then secondly, do checking meditation on the dissatisfaction for samsaric enjoyments, such as samsaric pleasures, enjoyments, the pleasure derived from food and clothes, not having satisfaction in the possessions. Besides thinking of your own problems with these things, think of the general sentient beings' suffering. Besides the fact that their relationship is indefinite, they have the suffering of dissatisfaction; other human beings, other sentient beings. For example, many rich people, how much they have. First of all, however many friends they have this is always changing, the enemy is always changing—not definite, not for sure. And however much they have, they have no satisfaction; however much satisfaction, apartment, place, however many of those samsaric enjoyments they have, they do not find satisfaction; just as the beggar does not find satisfaction. Also there is the suffering of our rebirth not being definite, as we always keep on leaving the body. This present human body we have, we think we are going to have for a long time—but think, this is for some time but again it has to be left for other realm, such as the sura, asura; then left again, and born as an animal, a chicken; then that has to be left, and born as dog; then that has to be left, and born as tiger; and again that has to be left. Also, we have to be born in the preta and narak stages. Mainly should think of the higher rebirth, the more pleasant rebirth—however much we take rebirth always it has to be left. Even if at the moment we are like this, doing everything we wish, food, clothes, where to go, many things as we wish, this has to be left. Then we are born in such narak suffering which is the opposite. Even though the higher samsaric gods who have greater enjoyments, such extreme great pleasure, the pleasure of the senses, only enjoying nectars, great bliss, bodies full of light, having much, living on grounds of diamond, jewel grounds, jewel places, having enjoyment with many thousands of goddesses, having many surroundings, great numbers of surroundings. Anyway, even those, even if we are born as those, again we have to be born in such a place where there's darkness, where we cannot see our own body, cannot even see our own hands and legs, such as the worst suffering stages, the body becoming one with fire, just like wood burnt by fire. Even if our previous lives have such enjoyment, they have to be left for an opposite place where we are burnt like firewood. That kind of body we experienced countless times—where there's no darkness as the body had light—numberless times, but nothing happened, we didn't make it meaningful.

Rinpoche Question: Is there mind in the brain? Is the mind inside the body or outside the body? When you get angry, do you get angry from the feet?

Answer: From the heart.

Rinpoche: From inside the heart or outside the heart?

Answer: Not the organ, the heart.

Rinpoche: So anger is in the heart. When the heart is transplanted, do you get the other person's anger?

Answer: It isn't the physical—how could the physical be the mind—like not in the brain.

Rinpoche: So anger and greed are not in the brain. Isn't their energy in the brain? What about "the energy of the brain is mind." So greed and anger and so forth are in the heart?

Answer: Not the physical heart, but from that area, it's a physical center—I don't know.

Day 27

Wednesday, December 12th

5 a.m.

Before taking the ordination the motive should be devoid of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. Besides being a pure thought that is opposite to the evil thought, it should be a Mahayana thought in order to take ordination in the Mahayana way. Therefore, think briefly like this, “There’s nothing to be attached to in this temporal life; however much it is pleasant, however much we can make it happy, there’s nothing to be attached to. Even the situation that we have now never lasts, it is very temporal, it’s like for a few minutes; this situation, this freedom having many choices, this time is just for a few minutes, there is nothing to trust, there will continually this situation—there is nothing to think about, this is just only for a few minutes. Even just before the death many things can happen, many horrible situations can happen. We are not sure if these situations will carry on until death time. Since we cannot stop the dangers of being born in the suffering realms that come after death, it doesn’t make any difference—even if this present life is surrounded by so many friends, the body living in jewel palaces with many surroundings, many relatives, many desirable possessions, whatever we need; even if we make our body light and we don’t have to depend on material food and those things; even if we have high psychic powers and can fly—however the present situation is pleasant, is rich, is powerful, however much it is, since we cannot close the door of the suffering realm before the death... Now something like this, after death if the person is definitely going to be born for the second time in those horrible suffering narak stages, all of a sudden down there, suffering on red-hot burning iron ground and besides that suffering with different things, sometimes becoming oneness with fire, like firewood—if this is what is going to happen after death, then nothing makes any difference. If we are going to suffer that, for a long time, the length of which is nothing compared with the present life, which is so short it can’t be compared with the narak life, making this life rich and pleasant makes no difference—this is just a few minutes compared to the length of that suffering, and thinking this gives us a very upset feeling. At present the only thing that keeps our mind happy is that we don’t realize, don’t know where our mind will take place after the death. If we could perceive that, there is no way to arise, to want—since it is something we can perceive—attachment to the pleasant life or to things, it is an impossible thing to do. Besides creating negative actions, negative minds arising in the day, even in the dream it is something we are unable to do, if we perceive the suffering realms where we are going to suffer.

“It is not enough that we are to be born in the upper realms and not in the lower suffering realm after death; it is not enough because life in the upper realms is very temporal, just as the present example; and it is only in the suffering nature. Wherever we are in the six samsaric realms, no matter what rebirth we take, it is in the nature of suffering, like being on red-hot iron ground, wherever the person steps it burns. So, it is necessary to release from this suffering. This arrangement should be done following the method in order to release oneself from the bondage of suffering, it should be done when we are human beings. If we can’t do something better, stronger when we are human beings, then when we are born in the lower realms or even in the other upper realms, it is extremely difficult to make arrangements to be released from samsara. So now, while having the perfect human body, it is the right time to work in order to release from suffering the bondage of death and rebirth.

“Releasing myself from suffering is not enough. We are equal—as I desire happiness, all sentient beings desire happiness, as I do not desire suffering, all sentient beings do not desire suffering. Therefore, there is no reason that I am more important than other sentient beings. Also, there is no reason to retaliate with friends, enemies, strangers, because none of this is definite, none of this is true, it always keeps on changing. Therefore, there is no reason to be attached to those who help, to have hatred, to have ignorance toward the stranger. Beside this, all sentient beings have been one’s own mother countless times and therefore have also been kind in numberless times. It is necessary to repay them. The best way to repay them, as they are suffering incredibly—most of the sentient beings, however much they desire peace they always run to destroy the cause of peace—no matter how much they do not desire suffering, they always run to create the cause of suffering, due to the lack of wisdom which fully distinguishes between positive and negative actions, not having a leader leading them in the path to enlightenment, not having received teachings, not having perfect human rebirth; many things missing. At the moment I have received perfect human rebirth and have many chances, having met teachings, many things. Also having a little wisdom that can distinguish between positive action and negative action, the wisdom that recognizes some difference. All the suffering sentient beings in the narak, preta, animal, human, sura, and asura realms should be devoid of suffering, they should develop happiness. Since there is no ability for them, no wisdom, many things missing, while I have chance, capability, as I am their son—just as in the example, when the mother is suffering, blind, eyes blind, suffering by falling from the precipice, not knowing where to go, so the son is responsible to look after her, so mother sentient beings are suffering like that, running to the sufferings. So I am responsible to rescue them from suffering. So, I myself should release them from suffering and lead them into enlightenment. At the moment I have no power, but who has the perfect knowledge, power, and great compassion? Only Buddha has it. So I must achieve enlightenment.

To achieve enlightenment I must achieve the graduated path. So it is necessary, the basic thing is to subdue the three doors of body, speech, and mind.

First of all, subduing the body’s activities and the actions of speech, and then one must subdue the mind—even if the mouth is covered and the body is fastened by ropes and irons, if the mind is not subdued, the body and speech cannot be subdued in that way, even if for the whole life the mouth is covered by something and the arms are subdued. The change in body and speech has to come through the change of mind—if the mind is subdued, the nature of the body and speech is subdued, in the nature of happiness. It works just like, whenever the king goes, also the surroundings, the guards and many things naturally come—if the king is invited, all those other people come without being specifically invited. So it works, by subduing the mind, the speech and body become subdued. The best way of subduing the mind is by following the precepts. “Therefore, for this reason I am going to take the Mahayana ordination.”

(Ordination Ceremony)

Also it helps a great deal, the greater the number of people that take it, the greater the profit to the country. This is the best cause of world peace—it helps stop wars and quarrels, and also helps stop famines and epidemics. There are many stories about how it benefits in that way, in many ancient countries this was proven. Some kings made it law for the people to take them on special days, such as the 8th and 15th, the full moon and the 30th. There were certain kings that made it law for all the population to take it. Where there were no crops, there were crops; where there was famine, there was less famine; when rain came at wrong times, it came at the right times. Also there were less

quarrels and wars. This is the best method for world peace. These precepts are also taken for these reasons, which are all mentioned in the first prayer that is repeated three times. But totally it is to receive enlightenment for the sake of the sentient beings.

And also, in ancient times, those who were led by the kings to take precepts like that, even after their deaths they were guided from rebirth in the suffering lower realms, reborn in the upper realm, such as in the sura and also in the human realm, with the chance to practice Dharma.

9 a.m.

This is from the same teaching, the holy speech of the great guru, bodhisattva Tenzin Gyatso, “One cannot be enlightened without bodhicitta, even there are other realizations of the Dharma.”

Just like the example, if there’s no organ of life then the other organs cannot work, cannot fulfill their purpose. So as having the organ of the life is that important, bodhicitta is also that important to receive enlightenment. Even for instance, if there is realization of the absolute nature, without bodhicitta there is no way to receive enlightenment. Of course, without depending on bodhicitta, other realizations besides the realization of absolute nature—how can these make one receive enlightenment? It’s impossible. Therefore, understanding the importance of bodhicitta, it is greatly worthwhile to always do the practice of bodhicitta, to always take care of bodhicitta, as one always takes care of one’s life wherever one goes. Wherever one goes, travels, whatever one does, he always takes care of his life. Just like this, wherever one goes, whatever one does, one should take care to practice and develop bodhicitta.

We are fortunate to have the time, to have met the Mahayana teachings on bodhicitta, and to have the time to study, listen, and meditate. For instance, if you are born as a slave, as an army man, many things, your whole life is completely occupied by something, and you don’t have time, besides not having met the teachings. So not being like those who have no freedom, who haven’t found the precious chances, not being born as those, using this human body or human rebirth only to create more negative karma in place of creating more positive karma, such as the leader of the armies—creating negative karma even in one day, one hour, half an hour, many thousands people being killed by his by giving orders to the army, one person, however much reputation he has, one person creates incredible negative karma. At the moment we are fortunate not to be a person like that, in such a situation, being in such a place, where we have to create so many negative karmas—if even taking one human life is the worst thing, why not taking thousands of human lives? Anyway, therefore it is necessary to practice, to start even from this moment, to try to habituate the mind in bodhicitta. Therefore, thinking this, try to cultivate the pure thought of bodhicitta even in one day, it helps that much.

So therefore, before listening to the teachings, think: “I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path in order to receive enlightenment only for the sake of the sentient beings.” The listening subject on the graduated path, and if it is divided into three, the part of the lower being’s teachings is briefly finished; now we are talking about the graduated path of the middle being. That includes the meditations on the sufferings of the human realm, and on the sura and asura realms, and on the general sufferings of samsara, the six divisions, and also meditation on the suffering of the three divisions concentration.

The first of the sufferings of samsara that wasn't completed last night; the six divisions of samsaric suffering are as follows.

(1) The first is the suffering of indefinite—what? Indefinite samsaric relationships with beings, the samsaric relationships with living beings, mainly the indefinite relationships of the friend, the person to whom one is attached, and indefinite samsaric pleasure, the suffering of indefinite samsaric pleasure, that which does not last. Just as we worked with the friend, also the samsaric pleasure is indefinite, does not last. So as there's nothing to trust in the samsaric relationship with the friend, there is nothing to trust with the samsaric pleasures.

(2) Second, the suffering of dissatisfaction. For instance, in previous times, during Guru Shakyamuni's existence one person threw him an offering, I think of beans, and one or two stayed on Guru Shakyamuni's head. As Guru Shakyamuni was coming along, the person, as an offering, threw beans, one or two thrown as an offering to Guru Shakyamuni, and they stayed on his head. Due to that karma, merits, afterwards he was born as a god—a samsaric god who controls all the four continents, even the realms, even the place of the gods—he had much power and control; but still he didn't have satisfaction. He wanted to possess the throne of the king of the god realms that were not under his control. Anyway, he never received satisfaction; even though he had that much high enjoyment and materialistic power, he didn't create merits in that life, only enjoyed the karma created in the previous life, created by the small karma of throwing beans to Guru Shakyamuni. So that good result, having power and enjoyment, that fortune, that luck finished; and again he was born in the lower realms, because his result, his time to enjoy in that realm finished.

Same thing, if you think like this, in the modern countries satisfaction is the biggest problem. One trying to control in another place, another trying to control another, not having satisfaction even if one has one's own country. This is the same thing. It is not something special, such dissatisfaction, even an animal has, a lower creature has such nature, there is nothing special in trying to control each other—it is very clear, if you watch the dogs, that even the animals know this. It is nothing special for human beings.

So totally, among all the samsaric possessions in any of these realms, nothing is new; even though we don't possess them here, now—those possessions which are in the sura or asura realm, that which other rich people have—however, it is nothing new. Tibetan people think, usually Eastern people think, that they never enjoyed the Western possessions. Western people think they never had Eastern things—anyway, it is nothing new. Anyway, whoever has the satisfaction, a beggar or a rich man, if the beggar is satisfied with the few things he has, actually he is the rich person. Because by having satisfaction, confusion doesn't arise, complication, worries, trying to get better, trying to receive more, obtain more, this worry, continually. This person has peace, so he is rich, internally rich. Just as those yogis—there is nothing to look at, their mind is always in great satisfaction, not in confusion like ordinary samsaric beings have. Even though they have only one simple cloth, living in the cave in such a natural place, even though there are not many good things, the mind is always in place. Even if they don't have gardens, many other things, even they don't have heaters, air conditioning—if you compare, they have so many things missing on the material level. But their mind is nothing to compare with other people's mind. The whole reason, what makes those ascetic yogis' minds happy, not worrying about these things? That is caused by satisfaction.

(3) The suffering of giving up the body frequently, the third suffering—this suffering of giving up the body again and again, the samsaric body. Whatever beautiful body is taken in the samsaric realm,

nothing is definite, nothing can be trusted, there is nothing to trust in one's own body, and nothing to trust in others' bodies—beauty, having a beautiful shape—even in this life it changes and besides this, after death, we had this body for a very short time, like a few minutes, then another suffering body has to be taken. So therefore, there's nothing to be attached to in any beautiful looking rebirth with the samsaric body. Even in the bodies of those samsaric gods' rebirths, there is nothing to be attached to. Because again it has to be left, it is only temporal. Even though one was born as a god, on the planet, moon, and sun, having light all in the body; such, only living, walking in the jewel palace, spontaneous light shining; even though it can give light to many other continents, different earths, even though this can be done, even that doesn't last. Even if we are born as those samsaric gods who have power like that, whose light can dispel the darkness of the four continents, in a time that has to be left. So, there's nothing to trust, nothing is definite. All this, besides earth, all these planets have to be destroyed, finished, the whole thing finishes in a time. Where there's light now in space, it becomes dark. Even if it is like this, again we have to be born, even though we take a rebirth of the gods, after that death we have to be reborn in the lower realms, or take rebirth on the earth, which is completely the opposite to the enjoyment before, very ordinary. So even in such a rebirth of those samsaric gods there is nothing to be attached to, no peace, not definite.

Meditation on these sufferings is very helpful because usually in the world, on earth, people are attached to where they are going, but not to enlightenment and wisdom. They are so much involved in this, this goes with the attachment. What causes the enjoyment, seeing the same thing, having the same power—why is one person trying like that, one family trying like that, one society trying like that, one country trying like that? One thing is, actually, this attachment causes the person to copy and make himself busy trying to obtain same possessions, power—all this is caused by attachment, and this continually keeps the living being in samsara.

Now we are talking about the realms of the gods. Compared the realm of the gods, the possessions and material powers on earth is nothing—like a beggar, compared to them. Therefore, we can't have interest or attachment to those higher possessions of the gods, their bodies, their beautiful-looking rebirths, possessions, enjoyment, or power. We can't have attachment to that because it is not permanent, it doesn't last; even that is in suffering, even that has to be left. So, if we can't even be attached to that, how can we have attachment to these lower, simple things—the materialistic powers, the different shapes of the human body—to many of these things, how can we be attached, how can we have interest?

Meditating on this helps a great deal to recognize that those who are trying to create suffering by themselves. But those people think they are trying to create peace, doing something good, trying to make the life happy—when what they are really trying to do is trying to have problems, for their life and for the future. Because of the habitual actions, if they are born in the upper realms, again they are attached to other things, to other people, powers, pleasures, possessions, and body, again having habit, trying to have it, again it circles round and round—in the sura realm, in the realm of the gods, even those, even if we are born in those realms, surrounded by thousands of goddesses, enjoying with them, almost inseparable from them, enjoying always together with their bodies. But again there is nothing to trust, it has to be left; after that life the being is born in the lower realm, where there is the opposite. Before, it was a jewel ground, flexible like a soft cushioned bed, very shiny, existing due to their karma like the earth exists due to our karma. It doesn't exist by someone making it with a hammer, as our earth doesn't exist that way—so in previous life we were like this, and after that enjoyment, we were reborn on red-hot iron ground. First, the body was enjoying with goddesses, next, the body was suffering and being cut by weapons. So there is nothing to be

attached to in those higher pleasures, nothing to trust. Even if those beings enjoy only nectars, receiving higher pleasure, after that rebirth the person is reborn in the lower realm and has to drink coals, extremely hot water, without choice, burning stomach, much suffering, eating coal, hot coal, burning stomach, experiencing much suffering without choice, controlled by those karmically created narak protectors. This is not something we never did; we enjoyed those realms numberless times. So, if there is nothing to look to in those higher pleasures and possessions, how can we be attached to the poor things on earth in the human realm?

(4) The fourth suffering, the suffering of joining frequently. For instance, like this—the continuity of our mother's mother—the present mother's mother, the grandmother—then the grandmother's mother ... counting like this, even if we make small pills, even a whole mountain, such a huge mountain, with its dust we make small pills tiny sized, like beans, from the whole mountain of earth, we make pills from the dust and then count the number of mothers with those pills, still the earth doesn't cover the number of mothers. As the past is like this, it will carry on in the future.

For instance, talking about our experience of the sufferings ... in these narak stages, there was uncontrollable suffering by drinking those extremely hot drinks and waters—there is a term but it is difficult to translate—our experience of that, suffering from eating the hot coals going through the mouth and stomach. If you collect all of those extremely hot waters or coals or many things, if you collect them, they are much bigger than the Atlantic because we did this again and again and again. So if these sufferings are collected, they are bigger than the Atlantic, infinite. The Atlantic has an end but for the others the beginning is infinite because the experience of the suffering has no beginning. Also in the future as in the past as long as we don't do something with karma and are in samsara, we may have to go through the experience of drinking those coals more than that.

Our being an animal, always eating dirty things, eating dirty things, putting such dirty things in the mouth, we also went through that experience numberless time. If you are going to pile up all these dirty things we ate, it is bigger than Mt. Meru, the greatest mountain, because the experience is beginningless; there is no such time that it began. So we don't know how much we will have to go through this in the future, maybe more.

So, joining and joining with those sufferings, again and again. Also, because of these samsaric problems, the tears, however much we cried in countless times, if collected in the ocean, even this couldn't compare with all the waters in all of the oceans and lakes on the earth; the waters of the Atlantic are nothing compared with the quantity of the tears, the drops of tears from crying in samsara. So in this life, as we cry for each different problems, so the drops of tears for each problem is much bigger than the Atlantic. When we cried we experienced this numberless times, so with each problem we cried. So therefore, even drops of tears with one problem, if they are collected they can never be compared with all the waters that are on the earth. So, this is the suffering of joining again and again—always keep on doing it, experiencing the problem again and again.

Also, killing each other—however much we killed other beings and however much other beings killed us—if all the corpses, the dead bodies are collected, they are bigger than earth, earth is nothing compared with this. It is the same thing in terms of our drinking milk from other living beings; this is also not a new experience, like the tears that cannot compare with all the water on earth, the Atlantic. So we keep on creating karma and keep on taking rebirth, and keep on drinking milk like this.

(5) Samsaric action is like this, the suffering of becoming higher and lower again, frequently like this.

For instance, collection of possessions—first of all we collect, then the end is that they finish. Money, whatever it is, always it is ended by finishing. However high this time is, however the person has a high relative or is in a high position, or is a kind, high leader, there is nothing to trust—the end of that is to become lower. So there is no reason to have attachment and interest to become a high leader, to have high rank, even to be the king of the realm of the gods—it does not last, the end is to be lower, always to fall down. It is of samsaric nature, the end of the collection is finishing and the end of being higher is being lower.

Always joining or meeting samsaric nature—the end of the meeting is separation, always like this. So, because of this samsaric nature, there is no reason to be attached to meeting friends, possessions, anything. Thinking of the separation that will definitely come, there is nothing to be attached to. Meeting is ended by separation. This is samsaric nature. To be alive is always ended by death so there is nothing to be attached to, no way you are going to exist without going through death, no way to be alive without going through death. This is the nature of the samsaric suffering, samsaric nature. For instance, before we met, for instance just the example here—first of all we met, then after one or two days separated, a simple example. Same thing with parents, couples, with any other thing. The whole thing is to fight the attachment, to fight in order to lose the attachment. For instance, before Tibet was independent, there were so many rich people who had so many servants around, servants of servants, many who only enjoyed the best rooms, best food, everything best, clothes, vehicles, they were served, wherever they walk they ride on something, famous, rich, many things, not easy to invite even, requiring much preparation. But after Tibet was taken by the Chinese, many rich families like this became poor, like beggars, wearing torn clothes, working, eating simple things. And the people who used to be beggars became rich in other countries, in India. So the whole thing changes according to time, like this. In many countries, like this, even in one lifetime the family was rich but after ten or twenty years they became poor. This is also samsaric suffering nature, so there is nothing to trust in life. If it is samsaric nature, the end is suffering.

(6) The suffering without helper. For instance, when we are born in samsara from the mother's womb, we are born by ourselves, each individual. That suffering, even in the mother's womb, that has to be experienced only by oneself, there is nothing to share with the mother. Even in life, however many troubles and sufferings there are, the person has to suffer himself, there is nothing to share, it has to be experienced by oneself. As the karma was created by oneself, the result has to be experienced by oneself. When there is trouble like this there is no helper who can take it away—"I have diarrhea, please share it with me." Therefore, there is no reason to be attached to the helper, to the attached friends. Also, when we die there is no helper, as we were born without a friend alone, we die alone. When we die there is no friend coming with us, each of us has to die alone; even the body that has accompanied the mind that whole life is to be left, the mind has to make the trip alone.

So just as the great pandit Shantideva said in his teaching, *Following the Bodhisattva's Actions*, "At birth, born one single, only oneself; also at the death time, dying oneself. There is nothing to share the suffering to others, therefore there is no reason to be attached to the relative or the temporal helpers."

Thinking of these six different ways of experiencing suffering causes one to feel tired, more and more bored of being in samsara and not having trust or interest in attachment. However the situation is happy, even if the situation changes, you are good, comfortable, there is no attachment,

no interest in it. This not having attachment is not suffering—many people think not having attachment, not having greed, is suffering. That is lack of wisdom, not realizing the nature, not seeing the karma. I met some people who think like this—that not having attachment to things is unhappiness, that it is necessary to have attachment and greed. Of course, for them it is their commentary, for them they see attachment as a comfortable mind. When the attachment is working it is kind of, the person has a wrong conception seeing as a pleasure, which is completely opposite to the factual evolution, the factual thing.

By thinking this, by meditating on the suffering more and more, there is less attachment. As we discover more suffering of samsara, there is the stronger desire to achieve liberation and the cessation of samsara. As the person gets more and more bored more and more in samsara, the person wants to finish it quicker. Like a person who is having surgery without a pain-killing injection—just like his feeling, he is tired of that, all he thinks is how it can be ended—same thing. This feeling with samsara is necessary in order to receive the fully renounced mind and nirvana.

In break times read on the sufferings of samsara, the third meditation.

Summarizing the six sufferings.

1. The suffering of indefinite samsaric existence.
2. The suffering of dissatisfaction in samsaric existence.
3. The suffering of leaving the body again and again.
4. The suffering of joining (joining the suffering, the different samsaric sufferings; finishing one thing but creating the karma and again joining with suffering, but creating the karma and again coming to that suffering, so joining) again and again.
5. The suffering of the four ends: the end of being high is to go lower, the end of a collection is when it finishes, the end of life is death, and the end of meeting is separation.
6. The suffering of being without a helper.

Read the meditation on samsaric suffering three times; at the same time also check in your mind, so perhaps you may get out of samsara tomorrow.

3 p.m.

The Three Upper Realms of Suffering (Page 101)

1. Human

We briefly talked about the sufferings of the human realm. Generally, poor people, those who are limited in material possessions have more material problems, and those who are not limited in material possessions have mental problems. Both those limited in material possessions and those not limited in material possessions are suffering.

For instance, the high leaders always have much worry even if there are no material problems. However, same thing, as the poor people limited in material possessions are in suffering, the high leaders with much reputation are suffering, same thing, they are worrying about things. For instance, kings, presidents—the mind is not happy, not always well; there are so many things to think of, so many things to be concerned about—worry that they are not able to control the enemies, that they

will disturb the country or family and have to undertake the responsibility of the suffering of that country or that village. According to the person, like this; finding it hard to control the population, the people, so many disagreeable things happening, much complication, confusion in the mind, and much worry; also much worry about losing the job and also much fear of losing job and making mistakes, losing the job and losing the reputation; if there's a mistake, they lose their reputation. For the beggar, the way of suffering is different, but it's still suffering—worrying to lose the reputation is suffering, mental suffering; so many things, not happy, no real place to lose power; many things, finding it very hard even to relax for a few hours, very hard, so many things. And also as he receives all kinds of information, this is also much worry. And the general shape of the job is based on something that is done rooted in greed or hatred, like this, mostly an action like this. No matter how great the job, how much it is famous, no matter, it is mostly done with negative mind, is an action of the negative mind.

So totally, on this earth, some people are poor-looking, some people have heavy jobs, do different works, heavy works, some people are rich, so there are many different aspects and many different looking people, but it is the same. However they look different, all of them are suffering, same thing. Spending suffering life is the same thing. However the customs look different, the peoples' way of living, however the people's way of talking is different, the clothes and place they live is different—it is equal. It is also equal to the lower creatures, it is the same thing.

As we see the outside example, the way that different people live, as we see, we shouldn't have the conception that we have never experienced, never lived that life, we shouldn't have this conception—this conception gives wrong interest, and is a disturbance. This conception makes you involved in the same life, involved in the same conditions. So it is useful to think, whenever one sees people having a miserable life, or having a life that is rich-looking, many different things, think that it's my old experience, I went through this countless times. This is very useful, as you see other examples outside thinking this, remembering your own experience, your experience of your lives, so there is no conception that it is new, the way the people live.

For instance, some people are making big business; some making a boat, some making a truck, something happening—so you see that as a happy life, you get attached to that life, thinking with the conception that it is not your experience. Then, because of that conception you get involved in that, and then thinking that it is new to you only keeps you in samsara because it is only following attachment, and it only keeps you in the bondage of suffering. Most of the people are doing this; they look at other people and do this. There are two ways of looking at other people. However, it should be checked, even though you want to do that, your own motive, check the basic mind, whether it is positive or negative, to protect your life. Otherwise you ruin your life. Many people waste time, life like this, as if the experience is new to you, then generating attachment for that. So anyway, it is useful to think, “It is not new, that life is not new, I have gone through this numberless times; there is no such samsaric karma that I never created, no such negative karma that I never experienced, never created.” Thinking like this proves, makes you conscious of your past experience, and in this way stops the interest in that, because it's old. So not having interest, you don't get involved, and this way you always protect your life.

These things are not for Dharma reason. You may think, “I am doing this for Dharma,” everything you are doing, from the mouth saying, “Doing for Dharma, doing for the sentient being.” But you are just saying that, and that does not protect your life from suffering. The actual thing that protects your life from suffering is checking your own motive before, then doing things—this is helpful. In

that way, that kind of thing does not mean making the life meaningful. Usually, ordinary people's connotation, commentary on the meaning of the life is this—if the person is physically doing something, it is meaningful; if not doing something physical, is not meaningful. That is the way, their understanding of the meaning of life. Even the insects, the lower creatures can do fantastic things, physical work that we cannot do. Spiders can make fantastic webs that we can't; one spider can make fantastic things like this—he does not have any machines, factories, or anything to build those things. Anyway, there are many other animals that can do many things. As people make war, also animals can make wars, for example ants make war with other ants. Birds are also like this, birds also have laws—some cannot come to certain places—there are certain places in Tibet where birds cannot come, it is not a law made by people, and birds get killed by each other. Many things—not surprising—any kind of physical work, making physical things. It is good, but it is not surprising, not a new thing—not complaining, not saying it is bad, but it's not a new thing.

The example of those animals, the spider. To take care of his life and body he makes a web and hides and lets the insects, the flies go through and then he comes down and eats them—very wise method, so wise, very wise. Many times I checked up when I was small, he always gets it like this—the fly gets stuck and it moves and then he comes; he doesn't know if it is an animal or something, just because it moves, he runs and checks up. If it is not something he can eat he drops it, or leaves it there, if it is an animal he eats it from the bottom first and leaves the head until last. Totally, that is to take care of his life, for the temporal life. Same thing, people making fantastic physical things to take care of the physical body, same thing with animals. Animals can't make machines, but people cannot make webs.

Also look at the bees who collect honey—they also collect this for their life, they collect this to have it at a different time. Our enjoyment, pleasure from the honey depends on the bees' work, collecting the tiny sweet drop from each flower. This depends on the bees' hard work. We never think of the hard work of the bees collecting and going to each flower, that they can carry each time is nothing—it is something that when we enjoy it we feel competent, something done by oneself, not the bees' hard work. What I am saying is this—even for honey we have to depend on bees, we do not make it by ourselves, not dependent on the bees. So also there are animals that collect such sweet things, so even if they are animals, like this, there is no surprise that the physical works are done for the temporal life, the work of the bees is done for temporal life. Many things, there are stories, lives of the insects, what they can do that we human beings cannot do.

Also, there is one insect that is flying around here, which has quite a tall body and long wings—anyway he also does that, he has some skill to take care of his life. At some corner place he lays foundations with mud—he takes mud and transports the tiny drops of mud and lays a foundation. After he has done this he goes to find the worm in the grass and leaves it there, and it doesn't move. Then as he transports each drop of mud he covers it; then he brings another insect and then brings mud; the insect and the mud. Like this he piles it up—then what happened was one monk touched the top and took off the mud, but the animal wasn't dead when the insect came back he found the hole and ate the worm. Then the rest became like him, with wings. He collected for it food, but unfortunately it became an animal.

So any work that is done for temporal life is no surprise—there is nothing to be attached and no surprise.

2. Asura

They always fight with suras. The asuras are jealous of the suras, of the perfection of their power, their higher power, they are jealous. “Asura”—“A” is a negative word, means generally “non-god.” They are like gods, the way they look, but they cannot compare their powers to the suras. The suras have usually many beautiful women, and the asuras have usually miserliness, covetousness, and attachment, and when they come to take them from the suras they lose. When they fight the asuras, usually the suras are more powerful in the materialistic sense, they have more control, more powers. They have also much suffering—for both sides there is much suffering, but usually the suras have higher pleasures, they have nectars of long life, they have the power of the enjoyment, more perfect, higher. If a sura’s neck is cut it dies, but if the body is cut it grows back.

There are four main cities, places for the asuras. Mt. Meru contains different categories of gods. It is not like an ordinary mountain, there are different categories of gods on different levels. There are four levels under the ocean on the side of Mount Meru. On top are the samsaric gods, situated in the different categories. So they always fight.

The asuras’ main suffering is jealousy, not liking others’ perfection, power. Always this is one of the main, great sufferings. When we do meditation on these things, try to think—when there’s a person who has more knowledge, something, and you feel very strongly jealous, sometimes wishing that the person didn’t exist, the person who has that knowledge, or has that friend, wishing he didn’t exist; when you have mental problem, jealous people, having different friends, having people, knowledge, power, many things, wanting to kill him, such uncomfortable feeling. Try to remember this, if there’s a past experience, then try to remember how it is uncomfortable to you. As they are greater than the usual, ordinary people’s jealousy, they have strong jealous suffering, and always the life finishes in suffering, being jealous. So by remembering our past experience of this and trying to make it bigger, try to visualize this much greater suffering of jealousy.

When they fight each other, the sura are much more powerful. How much the asuras have powerful weapons, all kinds of things, just one powerful elephant of the suras by blowing his trunk destroys many of them, and their powerful weapons. Usually, when on the earth, when more human beings create good karma, the suras win; when the human beings create negative karma, less Dharma practice, less merits, the asuras win. Their fighting is much more scary, much more fearful than human beings’ fighting. As scared as we are when there is a fight, war in the country, why not in those realms, when they fight with much more power, much more fear? Even if the asuras win, there is a special lake in which they look in and see everything like a mirror, a special sea, and in that lake they see their companions killed and they experience much fear and suffering. They see everything from this special sea, like a mirror, much suffering.

However intelligent the asuras are, there is no chance to discover the absolute nature. They are like human beings who do things beyond the usual human actions, usual human behavior, such as very evil persons, evildoers. These beings do things that the usual human being don’t do—as they are recognized as not being human beings, recognized as lower than usual human beings because of their lower actions, so the asuras are recognized like this, but even much more so—they are unsubdued and more evil than suras, more cruel, unapacified. So they are called “asura.”

3. Also there are many sufferings for the suras.

a) These seven days are their seven days, not seven human days. Usually these beings bodies have no smell, no dirt, but at death time they become dirty; usually water doesn't stay on the body, but at that time everything changes, there is a big difference. Even the flowers they have put on decay and become rotten. These are the signs of death. Not desiring to sit on the bed. They usually don't blink their eyes, but at that time they blink their eyes. They become ugly and the usual attached friends they enjoyed with in their lifetime since they were born don't want to look at them, so that being has much suffering because he remembers all his beauties, pleasures, and enjoyments. Now everything has changed, decayed, even the usual friend doesn't want to look at him—so his feels much upset and worry. Also, remembering what his present life was before, and karmically seeing that he will be reborn where there is much suffering, where there is no perfect enjoyment as in the god realm. So as they see the sufferings of the naraks, animals, and pretas and compare them with what they have there, it is completely the opposite, and there is great worry. Their seven days are 350 years for human life, and they see so much suffering, especially the horrible suffering of the lower realms; greater suffering than those narak sufferings, greater even than the lighter narak sufferings. Generally, we forget about seeing our future lives, and even when the usual people are looking at us and caring for us, we experience suffering, an upset feeling. Our enjoyment is not like what they have. Anyway, this is one of the greatest sufferings that they have at the death time. During the seven days, all these things happen.

(b) Also, they experience the suffering such as embarrassment. Also the suras, who have more power and perfection, control the asuras so they experience much worry as a result of being under this control.

Gods of Form and Formlessness

The gods of form don't use the sense of the tongue and the ear. There are other senses.

Gods of formlessness—they only live on consciousness, they have no other senses.

In regards to these there are sixteen categories, and in the formless realm there are four categories. Being born in those shapes comes about because of the different desires, different ways of thinking causes one be born in those categories. There is much to talk about in these evolutions.

If one is born as a formless god, the being is only conscious at birth and death, but between that, as long as the living being exists in that realm, it is like sleeping, like a person who is completely unconscious the whole night until its time to get up. So anyway, they are completely distracted, and do not have any other chance to develop wisdom or to practice Dharma—it is useless, however long they exist, it is extremely difficult to receive, to realize the absolute nature and to practice Dharma—that is also in the nature of suffering, not out of ignorance. From that stage, also it is possible to be born in the narak, animal, and preta stages. There is no such definite place like those sura and asura beings.

The cause to be born in the world of form is not desiring and feeling hatred and having renounced mind towards the objects of the senses, the greater pleasures such as the raptures and ecstasies of attachment that are received through samadhi meditation, and feeling hatred for the common objects of the senses.

What causes one to be born in the world of formlessness? First of all, getting bored by the pleasures of the senses after being born in the world of form, hating them, and developing the mind renouncing them, wishing to develop indifferent feelings, not suffering, not happy feelings, but different feelings. That desire causes them to be born in the world of formlessness. So, for them there's no changeable suffering during that life, while they are unconscious for long periods. However, they are totally in the bondage of suffering, in the circle of death and rebirth, not cut out of it.

The future rebirth depends very much on the death time, the karmic desire at death time. This way we can realize, as the whole rebirth is only forced by the ignorance, by attachment, each of our individual rebirths, taking continually like this, caused by one's individual mind—different karma and desire.

6 p.m.

After karma, we usually meditate on the human realms, then the asura and sura realms. Then after this, on the specifics of the eight sufferings. First of all is this meditation on the lower realm sufferings, those of the animal, preta, and naraks; then the meditation on the suffering of the human, asura, and sura realms; then on the general sufferings, the eight sufferings—the suffering of rebirth, old age, sickness, death, the suffering of not finding the desirable object, the suffering of encountering the ugly object, the suffering of separation from the desirable object, and the suffering of the deluded body. These eight are more related to the human and sura realms. Also meditate on the six divisions of samsaric sufferings and then last, the three sufferings—the suffering of suffering, changeable suffering, and pervading suffering—the suffering which is all over the body, from the head down to the feet. So the whole thing is meditating on suffering, and by making divisions like this you see the whole, the total thing, like trying to see all of an animal like a sheep—trying to see inside the body, the intestines and so on. Meditating in this way is very helpful and useful for the mind and causes you to recognize samsaric suffering. Then also, there is a way to do the meditation—if, after meditating on this suffering, if one can remember those six root delusions (Page 92), it is helpful. Also, it is useful to recognize the twenty secondary delusions (Page 93), and meditate on samsaric suffering through checking the twelve links (Page 96).

The Six Principal Delusions (Page 92)

(2) Greed

Chag—attached, *do*—desirable object. So just this term makes much sense.

“Self-nature beauty”—the wrong view, the wrong conception. This is one thing I was talking about yesterday, so if you look at it, at the void of self-nature, there is nothing to be attached to. If you look at it with self-nature, the attachment comes.

(4) Pride.

(a) Generally feeling higher than others, feeling important.

(d) This is difficult to recognize, the wrong view. Besides recognizing right view, the wrong view—how we are perceiving it—is difficult to recognize and becomes a subtle subject to understand. Meditation and understanding of the teachings on the absolute nature, the meditation to recognize this wrong view, how you are perceiving it, depends on understanding of the truth. Ordinary people

cannot explain it well; the wrong view is not an easy subject. Even knowing this clearly depends on the teaching.

(e) Sometimes people make trips through drugs, and think they really have gained some realization—there are things like this, but they do not really know; many things like this.

(g) Sexual intercourse, which many people think of in modern times.

“Great pure love stops pride.” This is remembering sentient beings’ happiness and then having pure, great love, the bodhisattva’s love, the Mahayana love—this can help us to lose pride. Also, meditating on the absolute nature of oneself can help.

(5) Doubt

“Maybe it exists, maybe it doesn’t exist,” “Maybe it’s true, maybe it isn’t.” We are always on two points, and because of this it takes much time to receive the realization. “Maybe the ‘I’ exists, maybe the ‘I’ doesn’t exist,” thinking like this. So it takes time to recognize the absolute nature.

Nagarjuna’s quotation. As there is doubt, if one tries to dispel it soon, it becomes helpful to realize the absolute nature. If one doesn’t try to dispel doubt, it takes much time to receive the realization.

(6) The Doctrine of Delusion, a kind of theory.

(b) Such as, “At the death time, ‘I’ ceases.” Such as, “When receiving Nirvana, ‘I’ ceases.”

Twenty Secondary Delusions (Page 93-94)

There are different types of negative minds that it is important to recognize—much of the problem is not recognizing the negative mind.

When we don’t recognize we always think it is good, just as people think attachment is good, not knowing exactly what is good. To clean yourself you must recognize the negative mind, otherwise there is no way to clean.

2. Spiteful.

10. If you create negative karma, then don’t confess, and the negative mind hides it.

12. Keeping the body looking good, not something that is healthy for Dharma practice but in order to look good; things like this.

17. *She.shin*—consciousness.

18. Like sometimes when you meditate, the visualization doesn’t come in your mind, and you feel very heavy, drowned, in complete darkness, easy to fall asleep.

19. *Go.pa*—scattering mind. This negative mind is mainly caused by greed. Usually this negative mind arises in relation to the object that one is attached to.

20. Mental distraction, general; being away from the object of meditation.

Four Changeable Mental Actions (Page 95)

1. Sleep can be virtuous or non-virtuous—we can sleep in a positive way or in a negative way, or in an indifferent way, without any motive, just falling asleep. Sometimes you can sleep with greed or anger—before you go to sleep you have greed or anger, and then the sleep becomes either virtuous, non-virtuous, or indifferent, depending on the motive. So, if one makes the nighttime valuable, there is a way to sleep positively with meditation and visualization.

2. There is positive repentance, which is feeling upset with creating negative karma, and negative repentance, which is feeling upset with creating positive karma. For example, you came to the meditation course feeling much hunger, thirst, pain, cold, and many things; then you think, “I am foolish, if I hadn’t come I would have been alright, if I had gone trekking it would have been nice, enjoyable,” feeling upset with the positive karma, the virtuous action you did. Also thinking, “I would have gone back to the West and enjoyed it there,” feeling upset with your positive action. This is one of the big disturbances because it destroys the good karma you created before, makes it powerless; so it is important not to have repentance after your good actions, as it makes them powerless.

3 and 4. For instance, thinking like this (4)—if one thinks that by finding many reasons, many details. For instance a person, with many reasons and details, may have a mind that is attached to that object. They will have many reasons, saying that it is because of this person’s way of acting, way of talking, way of looking—going with the details, the mind gets attached to the object.

The other one (3) is when just by remembering the person or just looking, one gets attached. The details—like a possession, a property, “This is nice, good,”—cause the mind to be attached. There is also a positive way to think like this, such as about impermanence and the absolute nature, that the person is impermanent, it is definite that it will get older—in a gross way (3) and with details (4) as the person is changing, decaying in each second, each minute, each split second—checking with details like this.

So everybody do checking meditation on nothingness, everybody do checking meditation on, “How does one perceive the ‘I’?”

(Meditation)

Rinpoche Question: Any information? How do you see your “I”?

Answer: I am unable to locate why I can’t see who I am.

Rinpoche: You don’t see yourself?

Answer: This particular body has senses, but in terms of the “I,” I can’t see. The “I” has been identified with those senses for a long time.

Rinpoche: So you don’t perceive the “I,” you don’t feel “I”?

Answer: No.

Rinpoche: Oh! That's something new. How do you think in your daily life action, how do you think of yourself?

Answer: Myself is observed going through trips in the environment.

Rinpoche: You never think "I"?

Answer: Yes, I get caught in the "I" all the time.

Rinpoche: How do you see that, the old "I"?

Answer: Kind of like an illusion; it's identified with this body, with my preservation of my breathing, my circulation—the thoughts that go through the head are identified with the "I."

Rinpoche: How does the "I" think?

Answer: It thinks it is all there.

Rinpoche: How do you feel it?

Answer:(standing) You feel it when it stands up! (much laughter)

Rinpoche: Where do you feel it?

Answer: I was sitting very still and then I wanted to participate in it all, so I stood up.

Rinpoche: What about you?

Answer: What's the question?

Rinpoche: The meditation.

Answer: I was suffering too much to be meditating.

Rinpoche: You know "I" is suffering?

Answer: Yes—in its deluded thoughts.

Rinpoche: "I" is suffering?

Answer: "I" is me.

Rinpoche: I see—"I" itself is suffering.

Answer: "I" is the—illusion of being itself, is suffering.

Rinpoche: Is the “I” suffering in itself, itself is suffering? How do you perceive the “I”?

Answer: The same as last night.

Rinpoche: It’s living in the heart? But how do you see, how do you feel it? When you think of “Meredith,” how do you feel?

Answer: Self-contained. Not in the positive sense, but as an entity.

Rinpoche: How?

Answer: Through my own personal experiences, my deluded thoughts.

Rinpoche: That’s not asking—how do you see “Meredith” as the “I,” as a self-entity, how do you see?

Answer: The “I” as being separate from other things.

Rinpoche: Is that really how you see?

Answer: Yes.

Rinpoche: Do you see “Meredith” separate from your body?

Answer: I am not the body.

Rinpoche: I’m asking how you feel, not theories. When you think “Meredith,” do you see it as separate from your body? You said you see it as a self-entity and separate from your body.

Answer: Not separately.

Rinpoche: Then not separately from your body?

Answer: If I’m confused or in pain, I’m conscious of “Meredith is suffering.”

Rinpoche: Only in that time there’s a “Meredith”? Usually there’s no “Meredith, only when ...

Answer: I really don’t know, Lama; that’s why I’m sitting here.

Rinpoche: Do you feel “Meredith” separately from your body?

Answer: No.

Rinpoche: So, that is you, that’s “Meredith”? So is that what you see—that’s “Meredith”? How do you feel “Meredith”?

Answer: Then I say, “Me.”

Rinpoche: Then at that time how do you feel?

Answer: I feel I'm my body. I feel many things that make up the "I" as a conscious body.

Rinpoche: So you see "Meredith" and body as oneness? Or do you see "Meredith" separate from your body? So you don't see as a self-entity. Before you said you see it as separately from your body?

Day 28

Thursday December 13th

5 a.m.

Before taking ordination it is necessary to be possessed by the pure thought, the opposite of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. To take ordination in the Mahayana way it is necessary to be possessed by the Mahayana impulse, bodhicitta. Try to think of it briefly, like this, "Myself and all other sentient beings have been continually experiencing the samsaric suffering, such as the suffering of the three lower realms, without beginning. Still it is not definite that I will never be reborn in the three lower suffering realms; still myself and sentient beings are under the control of delusion and karma—conceiving impermanent things as permanent, selfless things as self-existing—such as conceiving of oneself as self-existing and independent; the samsaric impurities as pure, and the impure samsaric body as pure, and also conceiving of the samsaric sufferings as a pleasure, such as the changeable sufferings, the temporal pleasures derived from sexual intercourse, derived from temporal enjoyments—believing this is true happiness. As long as we continue like this, under the control of delusion and karma, having these wrong conceptions, as long as we follow this, our samsara will never end; we will have to experience each problem in samsara—each suffering, each tiny problem, each great suffering has to be experienced again, while circling. Anyway, we will have to experience these things endlessly.

The end of samsara, whether there is an end or not, depends on the individual. Such as the perfected being, Guru Shakyamuni—before, he was like us, an ordinary person, and as he met his guru and received teachings, and also followed the precepts such as these, he received enlightenment. By receiving enlightenment he released infinite sentient beings from suffering and enlightened them, benefiting so many sentient beings, leading so many sentient beings to happiness, just as the teachings shown by enlightenment to escape from sufferings. Therefore, it is definitely possible that if we, if each individual, each person tries to achieve enlightenment as Guru Shakyamuni did, it is definitely possible that we can receive it.

Receiving enlightenment is necessary, not only to release oneself from samsara, but because sentient beings, most sentient beings, are in incredible suffering. They are needy objects for the beginning of our Dharma practice, and also in the middle and the end of Dharma practice we have to depend on sentient beings—enlightenment has to depend on them. All of our past, present, and future happiness and perfection has to be received by depending on the sentient beings, and the sentient beings are much more precious than even all the jewels in the earth put together. The value of one sentient being can never be compared to the all the jewels that are on the earth. The materialistic jewel cannot benefit one in that way, just as one enemy can benefit—one jewel cannot benefit in that way, it doesn't have the value of even one enemy sentient being—its value is priceless, the enemy is priceless. They are extremely kind, they have been our mothers in countless times—and they do not have the wisdom eye to fully distinguish negative and positive actions, do not have a leader leading them on the path to enlightenment, and have not received a perfect human rebirth.

Like this, of course there are mother sentient beings who are in other realms missing their chances. So at the moment we, who are the sons of the mother sentient beings, have received all the chances. So each individual is responsible to guide them from suffering, to try as much as possible, as quickly as possible, to lead them into enlightenment and release them from suffering. Also, it is the best way to repay them. Anyway, at the moment each individual doesn't have the capability—knowledge, powers, or compassion—therefore, it is necessary to be enlightened. To receive, to complete the two accumulations—totally this is done to subdue or clean the body, speech, and mind. Subduing the body, speech and mind, making it clean, making it pure, depends on making the mind pure. The best way to clean the mind is by following the disciplines. Therefore I am going to take the Mahayana ordination.”

Visualize the person granting the ordination in the form of Guru Shakyamuni surrounded by infinite buddhas, bodhisattvas, and arhats, and you are taking the ordination in the presence of them; also, all these holy objects are all are facing you, looking at you with great happiness—just as like when the mother's son, the very naughty child who never listens to the parents, for once does something right, listening to the parents, the parents are very glad—just as the parents look at their son with an aspect of, an appearance of happiness. Just like this, we have been, most of the time, doing the opposite to the teachings, creating negative karma, the opposite of the teachings shown by them. So for once we are doing something right, trying to listen as they explained in the teachings. So because of this, all these holy objects are facing you, looking at you with great happiness.

(Ordination Ceremony)

9 a.m.

This is from the same holy speech of this great guru, bodhicitta Tenzin Gyatso, “The one that is close to the action of the sword, cutting the delusions stems (plants) which is called the bodhicitta, it is the weapon to protect the sentient beings.”

As the sword cuts the stems, plants, the bodhicitta is also very quick, powerful, just as the sword, to cut the delusions. For ordinary people, there are weapons, external things, swords, artillery, guns—many of those external things, ordinary beings' weapons, the weapons of the ordinary worldly beings. But the bodhisattvas, the wise noble beings' weapon is bodhicitta, their weapon is bodhicitta, the full realization of the absolute nature, and the fully renounced mind of samsara. And none of these external weapons, even from all the countries on this earth put together, even the power of that cannot destroy the delusions, even all that power together cannot destroy even one single negative mind. So, as regards the power of those external weapons, there is nothing to compare with the priceless powers of bodhicitta. It cannot cause any danger to oneself, even an atom, it can never give harm to oneself. The external weapon always gives harm to the other beings, usually it is to destroy, to give harm to other people, usually it is used for that, to destroy others' peace, protecting oneself by using these external weapons is done by giving harm to others, killing others for one's own protection. The methods of inner protection and outer protection are completely different, completely opposite. Also, by using the most powerful external weapons, the most powerful existing weapons, as long it they are used, they can never completely cease the enemy, the hindrance; they can never cease them—however long we depend on those external protections, however long we use them, however much we make these weapons powerful—they can never cease the enemy, the hindrances.

For instance, even if a person could kill one enemy, destroy one enemy—again he will find another enemy; and even if that is killed again, there is another enemy. Even in the countries; if one country could overcome another country with machines, again after some time another country becomes the enemy—this proves that external weapons cannot stop the enemy, only producing more. As long as we rely on those external weapons, we will always receive enemies one after one, one after one; this is clear, this is usual—controlling one country does not mean control over all enemies, like this.

Even if one person could kill all the sentient beings on earth, leaving only himself existing, still there would be an enemy because still there is a reason for the enemy to arise, a reason for hindrances. Because the cause for enemy is in his mind—as long as this is not destroyed there will be an enemy arising, either a living being a non-living thing. Even if we forget about the external, non-living things, even the elements of our body, which are non-living, disturb us, harm us. When the person gets sick, that is because of the unbalanced elements.

So it's nonsense relying on external weapons and trying to control others, receiving peace from this is nonsense. It is something that cannot be ended, which will never end; if we continue like this, as this samsaric action has no beginning, as long as it is done, it will never end.

So the big difference, the knowledge that is the noble beings', the bodhisattvas', those wise beings, is that they see the great knowledge of bodhicitta through the achievement of the inner protection, bodhicitta. The more we use this weapon, the more we bring peace, the more the inner enemy is controlled, extinguished, and destroyed. Also, it brings enlightenment more quickly and it guides the living beings, this is extremely worthwhile. Thinking of these things, it is extremely worthwhile to practice them while we have such a chance. So it is necessary to train with our present mind, from this motive, bodhicitta. It is necessary that the action of listening to the teachings to be possessed by the pure motive, bodhicitta. Think, "I am going to listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path in order to receive enlightenment for every and all sentient beings."

The listening subject is the graduated path. If it is divided into three, the graduated path of the lower being is briefly finished. Now we are talking about the graduated path of the middle being. So, the suffering of the human realm—the suffering of the sura and asura, then the eight sufferings, then the six ways of meditating on the samsaric sufferings also in three divisions, and also checking the cause of the suffering, those six root delusions and the twenty secondary delusions and the four other changeable minds.

All the delusions that we talked about last night, even those six root delusions, all these, if the number is amplified it becomes 84,000 delusions. Anyway, all these delusions are rooted in the wrong conception, the "I" conception, the "I" consciousness, which means the wrong conception of the self-existing "I"—the whole thing is rooted in this. Therefore, this is the reason that this whole teaching, this whole Buddhadharma, emphasizes realizing one's nature, one's mind nature as being of the utmost need in order to cut of samsara, that cutting samsara means cutting the ignorance from where all the rest of the delusions start. Because the opposite, the remedy, like the medicine to cure fever, just like that powerful medicine which stops it right away, the remedy of this wrong conception of self-existing "I," is the wisdom of the absolute nature, the wisdom of one's own absolute nature, the wisdom realizing one's own nature, the nature of the "I."

In regards to the realization of the nature of the "I," there is the nature of one's own "I" and of others' self, of one's own self and of their self. First of all, the absolute nature of one's own self has

to be realized. So, because it is oneself who suffers, who suffers in samsara, who creates suffering, the whole thing is the person, the object of the “I. Therefore there are four doctrines in the Buddhadharma. Each doctrine has its own conception of the object, about the object “I,” where it is, this things called “I,” but none see it as permanent. The four doctrines arose because of the different theories, different ways of conceiving of and recognizing the “I.” So, usually, they study gradually all these different doctrines, which have these different theories. Each one helps to understand the higher one, understanding this subject clearly, the highest one, so they study gradually like this. If one starts studying the right way, the right subject, the right theory, the main doubts cannot be solved. It is difficult to understand right away, so they gradually embody those four. The second is more difficult than the first, the third more difficult than the second, the fourth more difficult than the third—but the fourth is the right one, the doctrine which is the right explanation, the fourth is the Madhyamika doctrine, the Middle Way. So the right understanding of the absolute nature of the “I” has to be received by studying this, studying and doing the meditation practice as one studies, like this. This realization of that first wrong conception, the ignorance, is like destroying the root, burning the root by fire, the stem and everything never grows, there is nothing left from which stem and leaves and branches can grow. When this wrong conception, the principal ignorance, the wrong conception of the self-existing “I” is ceased, completely destroyed, all of the rest of the delusions are destroyed—so the realization is powerful like fire and also quick, like destroying the root of the tree.

So now—if you wish to receive this realization of absolute nature, only study that, meditate on that, just doing one thing doesn’t cause one to be released from samsara without purification, without having the renounced mind of samsara—the main thing is this. Meditating only on one thing does not bring a quick escape from samsara. To do this, you need the help of the mind fully renouncing samsara. Some people who don’t know the important way of practicing Dharma, have mind that are so hung up in checking emptiness, without having the understanding, discovering the nature of samsara, of suffering. Without having strong renunciation of samsara, however much we meditate on emptiness, on the nature, on shunyata, the vices, the old thoughts, the old actions do not change—it takes much time to change the mind, takes much time to clean the actions. However much a person can express, explain about shunyata, since there’s no fully renounced mind of samsara, or understanding of samsaric suffering, however much he can explain well about shunyata, there’s no change, there’s always old thoughts and old actions. Then in this way there is no way to escape from samsara. To escape from samsara, the old things, old thoughts, and old actions have to be avoided. So anyway, as the fully renounced mind is necessary, needed for release from samsara with the realization of the absolute nature, to receive the fully renounced mind depends on fully understanding the nature of samsara. To fully perceive the absolute nature (just to receive the realization perceiving the absolute nature doesn’t require the realization of fully renounced mind, but) to have the realization fully perceiving absolute nature, it is necessary to have the achievement of the fully renounced mind of samsara. When there is the wisdom fully perceiving the absolute nature, at that time there is the achievement of the right-seeing path, the first path (there are five paths). But the fully renounced mind of samsara is necessary in order to receive the path. To enter the path it is necessary to have this. So whenever it is received, the person has reached the first path—the path has to be received from the foundation of the fully renounced mind of samsara, from this cause, the fully renounced mind of samsara.

Khor.wa—actually, “Wheel of life” in Tibetan is *sib.pe khor.lo*—*chorwa* just means samsara or the wheel, the circle. But wheel of life in Tibetan is *sib.pe.khor.lo*. *Sib* means life. Also it explains the nature of samsara and the twelve links. *Ten*, dependent; *del* is combined, or joined—*Teh.del*, interdependent. Just like the bell and the material.

Symbolic—why the wheel of life is always held in the mouth. This means the living beings are under the control of death and rebirth; are living in impermanent life and the circle of death and rebirth. The two hands holding the wheel of life represent the true cause of suffering and true suffering that living beings are living in, the true cause of suffering and true suffering.

1. Ignorance. *Rigpa* means understanding or seeing; *ma* is a negative word. There are two divisions—ignorance of absolute nature and ignorance of karma. When the ignorance of the absolute truth is ceased, such as the Four Noble Truths, also the ignorance of the karma ceases. The ignorance of karma arises from the basic ignorance of absolute nature.

2. Karmic Formation. The action of the ignorance. The ignorance creates many kinds of karma, just as the man makes many different kinds of pots.

3. Consciousness. The trip of the consciousness depends on karma. Just as the monkey swings from tree to tree, so the consciousness goes from rebirth to rebirth, from this to the next. The meaning of this consciousness is a mind that joins to the next, from past to present and from present to the next rebirth, with the ability that is left by the actions, the impressions. The mind is the place where the actions leave impressions or ability. This is the meaning of consciousness; this is the mind consciousness—the meaning of the mind consciousness is like this.

4. Name—*ming* from—*sug*. Skandha—*phung.po*.

Fifth, the consciousness that is not the skandha of feeling and not the skandha of cognition and not the skandha of form. In regards to the skandha of compounded phenomena there are two things—the skandha of compounded phenomena, which is mind, and the skandha of compounded phenomena, which is not mind. Then there are secondary minds, which are not feeling, cognition, or consciousness—those can be compounded phenomena. Also, there are compounded phenomena that are not mind, such as the impermanence of that being, which is not mind.

5. Six Sense Organs. There are two things—those for the senses, and which are the six objects of the senses—outer *kye.che.dug* and inner *kye.che.dug*—these are the inner *kye.che.dug*. Also, those six consciousnesses. For instance, the mind that is newly conceived in the mother’s womb and the formless beings do not have the five senses.

6. Contact.

7. Feeling. Also, same thing, many of those previous yogis, pandits, lived life simply in order to give an example to others, to the followers. Also, this is useful at the beginning of practice, when the mind is uncontrolled. Generally, of course, it depends on person’s control, realizations.

- (a) Suffering causes hatred to arise.
- (b) Happiness causes greed to arise.
- (c) Indifference causes ignorance to arise.

8. Craving.

9. Grasping.

(c) Self-“I,” the same as the self-existent “I” concept.

(d) In ancient times in India, there was a Hindu who remembered his previous life, just one previous life, through meditation. His previous life was a dog. He thought, “To be born again as a human, it is necessary to act as dog.” He realized his previous life was a dog, and then he became a human being; so he thought that to be reborn human, he would have to act like a dog again. So in his human life he acted like a dog, crawling on the ground.

10. Becoming. This is the ability to take the next rebirth that is made ready by craving and grasping.

3 p.m.

11. Rebirth. There are human beings who were born in previous times, such as kings and arhats, born by heat and spontaneous rebirth. For example, the original human beings who came onto earth took spontaneous rebirth, without depending on the parents.

The preta realms has all these four rebirths. Also, there are animals born from the womb, egg, heat, like this. There may be also animals taking spontaneous rebirth. Also in the narak realms—there is spontaneous rebirth. There is also spontaneous rebirth in the realms of the formless beings, and the realms of the gods of the world of form.

12. Old age and death are put together. At the same time the rebirth is taken, old age starts. But the appearance of the signs of old age are not certain—there are many beings who die before having the signs of old age. So old age and death are joined together.

(Page 99)

Paragraph 3. Nagarjuna’s quotation.

This quotation is very effective to think about, to know. It shows how the twelve dependent links work, how they go round and round. There are two deluded actions—karmic formation and becoming, three deluded causes—ignorance, craving, and grasping, and seven uncontrolled results that arise from those two deluded actions—consciousness, name and form, the six sense organs, contact, feeling, rebirth, and old age and death.

Ignorance creates negative karmic actions that leave ability on the consciousness. Then, for instance, let’s say we create the karma to be born as a chicken. Ignorance creates such karma, the karmic formation, that makes the cause for us to be born as a chicken. As soon as the ignorance has created the action, the karmic formation, it leaves the ability on the consciousness. So if the craving and grasping of the twelve links arise just before death that find rebirth as a chicken in the next life, karmically desirable, if this arises during the death time, then just before the mind leaves the body, it is definite, it is sure that one will be born a chicken after this life. Then the rest of the seven results have to be experienced in that life of a chicken, the rest of the twelve links of the chicken. Becoming

gets stronger as the craving and grasping arise. The craving and grasping of the twelve links arise before death, so—like a seed planted in the ground, after a time the conditions such as water gather, become perfect—like water, heat cause the seed to get ready to produce the stems, the sprout, just like this—these make the ability, that impression left by karmic formation more strongly take that path, go in that direction, become the chicken, and experience the seven results of the chicken's twelve links.

For instance, simply talking about our consciousness, the consciousness is like a basket. There are all kinds of billion and billions of impressions, abilities, and seeds that cause us to take all kinds of samsaric lives, all kinds of funny things, bodies that maybe we never saw before in our lives, very fearful looking bodies, big and tiny, many things. There are incredible numbers of seeds that make us take those different samsaric rebirths. It is already in our consciousness, our consciousness is like a basket full of different things. So each of these seeds, abilities, that is left, collected in the consciousness, these are gradually experienced. As we talked about during the section on karma—whatever is heavier, closer, more habituated, or done first, that will be experienced first, as we went through. All these billions and billions of seeds that are in the present consciousness, all these gradually come out, are experienced. There are many things already, many seeds of many twelve links of samsaric bodies, karmic formations created by ignorance. We have incredible numbers of seeds in the consciousness, yet even in this life we are creating and planting incredible numbers of seeds, making karmic formations with ignorance in the consciousness. Just as you plant all kinds of different seeds in a big field, such as corn, rice, wheat, and gradually they grow, bringing stems, so already the twelve links, through ignorance, have made karmic formations for incredible numbers of suffering samsaric bodies, which we will experience gradually. We have already created the samsaric bodies of those living beings through ignorance and karmic formation, through the twelve links, in our previous lives. There are so many—the seven results and the three, becoming and craving and grasping. The twelve links of each of the future rebirths will have to be experienced whenever the time of that rebirth appears.

Our previous life's ignorance created karmic formation, left impressions on the consciousness, and just before this human life, the craving, grasping, and becoming arose for the human rebirth. That made the ability, the impressions, the becoming of the human rebirth stronger; so that made us take this body right away, right after whatever our previous life was just before this one. So that's how we are reborn as human beings in this life. Of course, there is no doubt that there are all kinds of things in our consciousness, seeds planted by karmic formations in our consciousnesses—suras, (form and formless) asuras, naraks, animals, and pretas—also seeds to be born in the human realm, created so many times, planted in our consciousnesses in numberless previous lives.

So perhaps, if you don't keep precepts, don't discipline the mind away from negative actions—if you don't create stronger good karma in this life, it is for sure, it is definite that there is already a result, already something arranged. Maybe different types of animals, birds, different types of birds, peacocks, all kinds of animals, birds, different types of birds, peacocks, all kinds of birds and animals. Something is already arranged by ignorance and karma. But until the craving, grasping, and becoming of our future lower rebirth is finished, even though the karma of those rebirths is already created, at the moment, before the becoming, the craving, and the grasping of the twelve links finishes, right this moment now, we have the chance to turn the path, to take the better path. There is a chance. We do that by creating stronger good karma, stronger than the karma that causes us to be born as a dog or a snake or whatever it is—the karma created should be stronger than that karma which causes us to be reborn as an animal in the next life, such as the karma to be reborn as a

human again. So by creating that karma, the craving, grasping, and becoming, the ignorance to be a human being creates a karmic formation that becomes the seed to be reborn human in the next life. So at the time of death, the craving and grasping to be a human makes the ability to be a human stronger. So then there is the chance to again receive the human rebirth.

So like this, circling round. How? Generally, as I said before, in numberless previous lives we have already created great numbers of seeds to take future samsaric rebirths. So as we already created the two, ignorance and karmic formation, of all the future different samsaric rebirths, and we only need craving and grasping, and becoming to arise and then we will experience the seven results, we should therefore think that now we are only in the twelve links of the human being. Of course, we are on the way to finishing the seven results of the twelve links of this present human body. The cause was finished in the previous life, so now we are finishing the result, what is not finished is only death, only this is left. We are not only involved in the twelve links of this human rebirth but we are already involved in the twelve links of so many different samsaric rebirths. It's like this—let's say we are here, but we are surrounded by so many fences that we cannot cross over, many billions and billions of fences. So now, finishing this present human rebirth, finishing the twelve links of this present human body, is like, almost like, being able to release from just one fence. We are inside, almost ready to get out. But still, to really get out there are many billions of fences to get out of, one after one, one after one ... like this it is clear—so it is not easy. If you think clearly about evolution it is like this example—but that example, just talking about what is already there, it is not exactly the same—the example is talking about what is already there, but in life we are creating more, always creating ignorance and karmic formation, that causes us to take many future samsaric rebirths. So it is not the same, the example is easy.

If, for instance, I create a negative karma—for instance, a heretical mind toward the Dharma arises, and I think, for instance, “Why is there the need for all these rules that Guru Shakyamuni said, why? It is just torturing oneself, why is there need for such a thing?,” disbelieving in this Dharma, in his teaching, criticizing like this. This karma, as we talked in the karma part (Page 78) on the result of sinfulness (“fullness of the sin”), the result of similar to the cause, the twelve links of this karma bring the result of being reborn in the narak stages. But that does not mean that we have finished the suffering result of that karma, because due to other karma, the twelve links created by other karma, by creating merits, I am born as a human being. But with this result, the seven results of the twelve links of the human being, it is possible that I am still experiencing the suffering that is the result of the other karmas, criticizing karma, like this, besides experiencing the suffering of the narak stages by taking rebirth. So one should not think that experiencing the result of that sinfulness does not mean finishing the result of criticizing the Dharma, criticizing ordination, or rules.

The other part we finished—here we are talking about the twelve links, the circle of death and rebirth, the karma in the twelve links, so that is how it works. Also, besides not finishing experiencing the suffering of the lower realm, it can be possible to be born as human being, still experiencing part of the result of that karma, but still not finishing it, and again we can be born in narak stages dependent on the karma, how heavy the karma is. By taking one, experiencing one result of sinfulness, being born in the narak stage, it can be possible that the person has to be born in the narak stages many times, even though there is just one karma. Calling the holy objects names, like saying a monk looks like a dog or a monkey can bring this result. For instance, in previous times one man called someone a dog, a monkey—the karma is just one, but he had to be reborn as a dog 500 times, and take a monkey rebirth, but the karma was so simple, easy, created just once.

So by thinking in different ways, as I have briefly talked about, thinking about how many incredible numbers of twelve links we have started already and will have to experience gradually, thinking like this, “So far we did not cease the ignorance, the actions are the same; as in each life, in the whole time, even in years, what other karmas have we created? The negative karma is more, and the positive karma is less.” Anyway, by thinking like this, it is for sure that we have created incredible numbers of the twelve links for the different samsaric rebirths. We have already started—ignorance and karmic formation have already been finished, left an ability on the consciousness, a seed. So actually we, in this way, can clearly see how much we are uncontrolled, bound to suffering, bound by the twelve links. So because of ignorance and karmic formation, the craving and grasping and becoming, then the seven results, are always circling round like that.

So anyway, totally it is like this—we are so bound by suffering, just as in the other example, surrounded by many fences, it is for sure that we will have to experience the seven results of the different future samsaric beings’ twelve links, even if we create more merits in this life. In place of being born, even if we can stop the result of the lower rebirth as the other karma arranged, even if we can stop that in time, it means that the twelve links of that animal rebirth that we were supposed to take have ceased. Still, even if we stop the twelve links of that animal rebirth that our other karma arranged to take after this life by creating merits, still the twelve links of that animal are there, as are the seven results—it is just a matter of stopping the craving and grasping and becoming from arising. The only chance we have of being born as a human being in the next life is by stopping the craving, grasping, and becoming of an animal from arising at the end of this life. By stopping this, by interrupting the conditions, not letting the conditions gather, we are born human. But that doesn’t mean that we have broken the chain to not experience that animal rebirth. It does not mean this. And as long as we have not done this, as long as we still are born as human beings, we still have to try to collect stronger accumulations of merits, to receive the path that breaks the chain, destroys ignorance, and stops karma and its actions and ability, destroying all the seeds. If we don’t continue in the future life, as long as we don’t continue to try and create merits and receive the path, it is definite that we will experience the results of the animal rebirth, which we could stop momentarily by preventing the conditions. So it is not easy; even if we can be born as a human in the next life this does not mean that we escaped from the twelve links of the animal.

Anyway, what should be done to not be reborn in the three lower realms? It is necessary to receive the path. Once one reaches the second path, then the third level, the path of application, only at that time one destroys the ignorance with the realization of the absolute true nature; as the being approaches the higher and higher path, so more ignorance is destroyed. So ignorance is ceased.

So in this way we can understand how much we are uncontrolled, how much we are caught by samsara. It is like a man tightly rolled by flat iron, billions of times, not having any freedom to move, so tight; not only tight, but the hot red iron, tight, the body tight, and also on the red-hot iron. Feeling tight and hot is the nature of samsara.

(Page 99-100)

External and internal nature of samsara. If the cause of samsaric suffering is an external thing, then there’s no need for subduing the mind, no need to practice Dharma to clean the mind. Dharma is to clean the mind, because the cause of suffering is internal. If it were not, then Dharma, the inner method, would not be needed—if the principal cause of suffering were matter, then the best thing to destroy it would be the atomic bomb, that would be the best Dharma. If the creator of all living

beings were God then there is no reason—it is better to not create all whole living beings than create—the total thing is, it would have been better not to create anything than to create all the suffering living beings.

Shantideva quotation.

We can say it is sure, there is a logical reason, there is a relationship, that all happiness and perfection is created by the Enlightened Being. Without their guidance, their help, there is no way even to receive temporal happiness—even the happiness of water when one is thirsty is received by the kindness of the enlightened beings, the omniscient mind. That is called God. There is a reason, there is a relationship. But we cannot say that suffering is created by God, there is no reason. It is logical, there is a connection. While the holy mind knows past, present, and future, knows that living beings would suffer, why he should create the living beings? Anyway, has to be checked up.

6 p.m.

So, in regards to the twelve links, the twelve links finish in either two lives or in the third life. It can be eons between the karmic formation and the craving and grasping, becoming, and the seven results, like this. So, it is very useful to deeply think, to check up deeper and wider in your mind when you meditate on the twelve links, the twelve links that you started in the past lives and this life many times. Try to realize how you are not free, how you are tired of incredible numbers of different samsaric rebirths, the twelve links of different samsaric bodies.

So the first part of the meditation—six different divisions meditating on the six realms, the eight divisions of sufferings, then six divisions of sufferings, three divisions of sufferings; then also meditation on samsaric suffering with the twelve links. Going through the twelve links itself is suffering, going without choice. This way one can discover more and more clearly that whatever body is taken in samsara, whatever happy life it has, it is all in the nature of suffering. Wherever happy life it has, it is all in the nature of suffering. Wherever rebirth is taken, sura or asura, being born in the narak and then reborn as human or sura or asura, it is only like being born, same thing; like trying to escape from one red-hot burning iron house to another. It doesn't make any difference—the place from where the person escapes is the suffering place, and the place to which he escapes is the suffering place; he always finds problems, has to feel all of samsara, the whole samsaric realm and bodies. We should have this strong feeling—as we hate the red-hot burning iron ground, not wanting to be there even for a second, we must have this kind of strong feeling towards samsara, not wanting to exist there a minute on the red-hot burning iron ground, unable to stand even a day, an hour. Besides not having interest, we should not be attached to samsaric pleasures, those greater enjoyments. Until there is such a strong feeling of being unable to stand it, the meditation on samsara has to be done. When there is strong energetic fear like that, the reason there is fear, the person not wanting to be on red-hot iron ground, is because the person recognizes the suffering place and that he is experiencing problems clearly, therefore, he has great fear of the red-hot ground. Through meditation the person sees samsaric suffering more and more clearly and clearly—the person may not believe at first, but through continual meditation one can see clearly—it is the nature of the mind, and as meditation continues it sees clearer and better.

You see, when there is the full understanding of samsaric suffering and full renunciation of samsara, clearly seeing samsaric suffering, there is no place for the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas to arise, there is no mind to be attached to the samsaric pleasure. It is like this. So, check up—we

think we already know the suffering. If we know when the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is coming—when there's attachment, missing pleasure, finding difficulty in obtaining pleasure, having attachment to pleasure, the inability to practice Dharma, the inability to meditate, when there's a tiny problem, being unable stand it—this means there is no full renunciation of samsara. That means there is not the full understanding of samsaric suffering. So don't think that, "I know samsara"—that is following your negative mind, following your guide. If you know samsaric suffering, if there's no change—totally like this—if there is no change in your actions, no change in your mind, you do not have full renunciation of samsara, you do not fully see samsaric suffering—that is the lack of fear of samsaric suffering. The definition of when there is renunciation of samsara is like this, as Guru Tsong Khapa said: "The whole time, day and night, if there is the intuitive mind desiring, wishing, or seeking liberation, whenever there is intuitive desire seeking or wishing for liberation all the day and night, at that time there is the achievement of the renounced mind of samsara." For example, just as in the case of the being who is on hot-red, burning iron ground—always there is the mind, the desire the escape away, always seeking the release of that.

Totally, another way of saying is, however the pleasant life is in samsara, seeing it just as nature of suffering, just as the nature of fire. However great the samsaric pleasure, all the samsaric realms, even those that are seen as a pleasure realm, a happy realm, are seen exactly as a fireplace, a big fireplace—seen just like that and not wanting to enjoy them, not having interest, not having attachment to it—at that time there is the renunciation of samsara, at that time the person fully sees samsaric suffering.

So to be able to achieve enlightenment, bodhicitta is necessary. But bodhicitta has to be achieved through great compassion, Mahayana great compassion. The achievement of great compassion depends on the understanding of other sentient beings' suffering. How quickly one achieves the great Mahayana compassion, the understanding of the other sentient beings' suffering, depends on fully discovering one's own samsaric suffering. The deeper one's own samsaric suffering is discovered, that much stronger one can feel others' samsaric suffering. To receive intuitive bodhicitta, it is necessary to have the achievement of the renounced mind of samsara. So the understanding of samsaric suffering depends on the understanding the understanding of the graduated path of the lower being.

Therefore, before the Mahayana seven techniques to generate bodhicitta, the graduated path of the lower being and the graduated path of the middle being is explained first, set up first.

Just a brief story about the great yogi Atisha—how he led his life renouncing samsara, how he looked at samsara even from the child time, how he discovered that bodhicitta is the most important thing, the essential practice.

He was born in the Eastern part of India, called Bengal, in a big city of 100,000 people. He was born to a king in a place called "The Golden Banner"—there were thirteen gilded roofs and 25,000 golden banners on top of the palace; he had very rich possessions and enjoyments. *Gyal.pal* means father—"King, magnificent of virtue." He was born with many signs. His mother's name means "Magnificent, high."

Eighteen months after he was born, he was invited by his parents to the temple Vimakalapuri. In the road, all the people from the city came to see the prince, and when he saw them Atisha asked, "Who are those people?" The parents said "These are your population," and so he looked with compassion

to those people, and although was only eighteen months old, with his compassion he prayed, “May all these people have perfect fathers and mothers who have materialistic powers and fortunes, and may all live by the holy Dharma.” He made this prayer with great compassion, and all the people were surprised and astonished, hearing this beautiful prayer made with his sweet speech. Then when they arrived at the temple his parents made prayers like this—“For all the people not to get sick, to have enjoyments, and not to be reborn in the lower realms and always be born in the upper realms.” Atisha made prayers like this, “I received a perfect human rebirth and see the Three Jewels, witness the Three Jewels, not having any imperfect organs, and seeing the Three Jewels, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha and having faith permanently, keeping the Three Jewels on the center of my head, with faith, permanently. So therefore, from today, please be my object of the refuge.” This prayer was made asking them to be the object of the refuge and asking them for grant guidance. He also prayed, “May I never be bound by the worldly life, the worldly existence, the family life, and may I be in the Sangha, and make offerings without pride and look at sentient beings with compassion.” Even though he was so small he made prayers—the first one is refuge and second one is bodhicitta.

Then after three years he became very wise, an expert in astrology and in poetry, and in many other kinds of knowledge. When he was over eleven, his parents picked out many women who were worthy to be the wife of the son of the king for Atisha. They made dances, singing, so many things—they tried to make him attached to that life as the parents wanted him to take the place of the king, to lead that life; so they tried to make many arrangements. But however much they tried, it only became the cause of the renounced mind of samsara, only made him more upset with samsara, it became a teaching.

Also he was instructed by one emanation, a woman called Usangmo, an emanation of the female aspect of Buddha, Tara. So she instructed him—“You, brave one, don’t sink, don’t drown in the samsaric quagmire, the quagmire of attachment, just as the elephant gets drowned in the quagmire.” It’s difficult for the elephant to get up because it’s so big. And Atisha was a prince, not an ordinary person. “If an ordinary animal gets stuck in the mud it is not that much of a problem, and if an ordinary person gets drowned, it doesn’t bring much harm to sentient beings, to the teaching. But if you (Atisha) get drowned in the quagmire of attachment, it hinders the sentient beings’ happiness and perfection, the teachings.” Anyway, she gave much instruction. So also, he answered this, being extremely pleased.

Soon he left and joined the army, with 130 people riding on horses, going for war. This was skillful of him, because for him it was difficult to escape from his family. In this way he left and went around the rocky mountain. Actually, he was seeking his guru. At the rocky mountain he met a yogi called Jetari. That yogi gave him refuge and the teachings on bodhicitta. Also, he instructed him to go to a place called Nalanda to see a guru called Changchub Sangpo, who he had a relationship with from a previous life. He met this guru and received the blessings of body, speech, and mind from this guru, made prostrations, and was given many teachings on bodhicitta. Then he sent to see another guru, and also received teachings on bodhicitta from him. Also he saw yet another guru, and that guru sent him to back to king’s palace, to check up on the sufferings and the shortcomings of worldly life.

The family was extremely pleased when he returned, asked where he had been, and they had all these conversations. Atisha said that he had sought refuge and had been to the mountain, and had discovered samsaric suffering. With many people he was always talking and explaining about samsaric suffering. His parents told him, “If you are upset with samsara, take the king’s place and

you can give charity to the poor people and build many monasteries and bring many sangha.” And Atisha said that when he looked at samsara he had not a tiny atom of attachment to the king’s life—“The golden palace is like a prison; there’s no difference between the devil woman and the princess; no difference between food, sweet things, or meat of the dog.” Also, he didn’t see the difference between beautiful, expensive clothes and ornaments, and wearing ugly, dirty clothes. Therefore, he said, he wanted to go in the forest to meditate. He asked the parents to give him a few things, such as milk and honey, these things. And he said that he wanted to see the guru—he said this by singing.

His parents gave him what he wanted and he left to see this guru with thousands of horses into the jungle. This guru gave him teachings on bodhicitta and initiations. This guru also sent him to another guru in a monastery, who was a guru from his previous life. When he went to see that guru, the guru was giving tantric teachings, and with his psychic powers he saw Atisha coming and thought to frighten him. All of a sudden, he dropped a thunder ball on top of Atisha—as it fell it went off to another place where there were stupas of the heretical beings, the pagans. The entourage of this guru asked the guru, “Who is that person coming?” And the guru mentioned—“This is the one who was born as a prince in the eastern country, who always takes the body of a pandit; he has been a pandit 552 times in different lives.” The guru said, “He is not attached to the princely life, and he desires to lead an ascetic, austere life.” So all of the entourage got up and made prostrations to Atisha. When Atisha saw his guru, he said, “How much I desire to achieve Nirvana by giving up the worldly life, but as I was born in the princely life there is the danger of getting caught.” He went to see many gurus, but was still not released from that life, so he asked that guru to definitely release from this bondage by giving him teachings on bodhicitta and initiations. So only for him, for thirteen days, the guru gave these teachings with great joy—all initiations for one tantric deity, and offered him his mystical name.

Again, this guru sent him back to his palace with very eight fearful looking saints, male and female, naked. The guru instructed those eight saints, yogis, to change the father’s mind and take him to the other guru.

At this time Atisha took on another aspect, and took the form of the deity. When they all arrived at the king’s palace they recognized him, but also got scared. For three months they all acted like they were mad, crazy. So all the people completely decided that he really gave up. His father asked, “When you are born I saw many special signs and thought you would live life and I was happy. So what is your mind, that you want to live in the jungle?” Atisha said, “If I live life, we may be together for a short time but in all future lives we won’t recognize each other, who is father or who is son.” He said he wanted to achieve enlightenment and asked permission. The mother said to give him permission. So Atisha left at dawn with all those yogis and yoginis, into the jungle to see the guru. Then the guru showed the teachings on the absolute nature and subtle karma.

Anyway, his life was very rich. The family that he left behind numbered 100,000, and they had twenty-five lakes for bathing, and 720 beautiful parks. They also had many other things, they were very rich. However, Atisha went to practice Dharma and gave all of these up like dust, like spitting on the ground. Same thing, Guru Shakyamuni was also like this, very rich, and gave it all up.

After seven years Atisha had received many teaching on tantra. He thought, “As far as the tantric teachings are concerned, I am the only expert one.” But the other tantric deities showed him many tantric teachings in his dreams that he hadn’t known before, and that caused him to lost his pride. Then he thought to complete the highest tantric teaching, Mahamudra, by living his life in a tantric

way. At this time he thought of his guru, and his guru came through the walls without any resistance with his psychic powers and asked, “What are you doing, giving up sentient beings? You should become a monk and benefit sentient beings by teaching.” And his deity also came and persuaded him to become a monk. Anyway, he spent a great deal of time and received many teachings from many gurus. He was keeping the precepts purely, even a tiny thing, taking care as his heart.

So he had all these teachings, sutra and tantra teachings, and he practiced. He was thinking, “What is the quickest path to receive enlightenment?” Then one of his gurus, due to his power, appeared in his presence and said that seeing many wrathful deities, many mandalas, and having many general realizations cannot help much, but, “You should train in great love and great compassion. Avalokiteshvara is the Compassionate Buddha, therefore, you should keep him always in your mind, to rely on or to pray to for help in order to receive these realizations. You should make a promise to work for sentient beings until samsara ends.”

Also, at one time he went to Bodhgaya, going around the stupa. On the wall there are paintings, and he saw that the figures there were putting questions and giving answers to one another. Atisha thought, “What is the quickest path to enlightenment?,” and another answered, “Bodhicitta.” Also, in the southern direction of the stupa, in the sky, there were two men, larger than human size, one asking questions, the other answering—one asking, “I need to receive enlightenment quickly, but how should I practice?” and the other saying “You should train in bodhicitta.” As he heard these things, he stopped going around the stupa. Then he came to Nagarjuna’s place and there were two ladies asking questions and giving answers as above. This happened several times, and also statues called out to him: “If you want to receive enlightenment quickly, practice great compassion and great love and develop bodhicitta.”

This is just to have some idea—it is useful to remember these examples of how his life was before—it is very useful; it is very useful; it is very useful.

This is also the reason why every time, each time, we always try to talk a little about bodhicitta before the teachings, hoping that anything that we are practicing will help us in the achievement of bodhicitta. So, every day before the meditations, there is always talk of bodhicitta.

Maybe some people get bored. In order to realize the jewel, recognize the real jewel—for the dogs, they may prefer kaka to diamonds; they don’t understand anything about the value of diamonds, they prefer kaka. So in order not to be like this, we, since we are trying to practice Dharma, we need not to be silly, but to recognize the real jewel. And for the whole practice and meditation to become the cause for achieving bodhicitta, the benefits of bodhicitta are repeated. Bodhicitta is something that can be practiced by laypeople, by monks; it is not something thing that depends on outward looks, shape, clothes, straight person, or hippie—whatever it is. Since everyone desires the height, the ultimate peace, enlightenment, it is necessary.

Actually, when I repeat the impulse or motivation, what I don’t go through in the subjects that follow have been covered in the impulse. There are not so many details as have been written here. Even though the explanation wasn’t gone through, you can read and practice and meditate on the seven techniques (Pages 109-146).

The way meditating is the way we do the other meditations—checking, trying to keep the outline, and trying to understand the total meaning of the outlines. Also, as much as you can remember the

outlines and think correctly, it is that much more effective for the mind. The way of meditating is by putting yourself in the situations and checking.

Even if you worry about not finishing these subjects, I am happy that I could spend more time on those basic meditations. The whole taste of the higher meditations depends on having the taste of the basic meditation; and the understanding of the basic meditations gives the understanding of the higher meditations. It depends on the understanding of the basic meditation, and that is why there is commentary like this.

So I think that's all, thank you.