

SEVENTH MEDITATION COURSE

Day One

Wednesday, 6th November

6:30 am

Today is a special day, it is the day that the Buddha descended from Tushita where he had made summer retreat for two months. Also, it is the beginning of the one month course. In order to create the most supreme happiness and enlightenment within our mind—there are so many hindrances existing in our minds that causes us to not receive most sublime happiness and enlightenment. So therefore in order to achieve this most perfect enlightenment within our minds, it is necessary to purify the hindrances. The main hindrance is the impurity of the mind, therefore it is necessary to clean the impurities of the mind. That is why we are going to do the Guru Yoga puja this morning.

At the moment there are all kinds of people here, there isn't that much that you can do during the puja. Those who understand about puja can meditate according to puja and those who are new people, who don't have any idea of Dharma, even just concentrating on the sound of the prayers, sound of the chanting has great value, a different meaning to fertilize the mind. Until the puja finishes we try to concentrate on the chanting, on the prayers.

PUJA

There is not much time to talk about the introduction to the meditations so I think just in a few minutes, just watch your sensations, the feelings, and just concentrate on this.

BRIEF MEDITATION

9 am

I know that you people came from very far places to take this one month meditation course and of course all the people may not have the same reason for taking it. They may have different ideas, different plans, they may have different purpose for taking the meditation course. Some people may expect to attain certain powers like magic powers, like they can find from lots of lamas' books, during this course. But anyway as in, "The Book of the Dead," to see different kinds of light, things like that. I am not sure, some people may expect that—to receive magic powers, to be able to fly, to go to the end of the earth. No surprise, nothing new. Flying is no surprise, even birds can fly, and animals can fly in space, so nothing is surprising. Even though we achieve certain powers to fly with the body, no surprises, nothing special. However, those animals flying in space cannot always exist in space, they have to come down on land. Nothing special. So going to the end of the earth, nothing special. Lots of animals go underneath the earth with the physical body; this is also nothing special. Nothing special, all those subjects are old, nothing new.

Also, attaining the power of healing is nothing new. We have had that kind of power many times. I think yesterday you may have heard some talk about previous rebirths, reincarnation. Because of reincarnation, the continuity of reincarnation, those kind of experiences are nothing new for us. Some people expect to attain certain powers and to have an aura around their body which many people have interest in—that is also nothing new. Many times in other previous lifetimes we had a light around our body, many times we had this. We were born as certain beings who have light like

the sun, rays all over body that don't depend on the sun. We were born like those beings countless times, no surprises. For instance, some flies in nighttime have light around their bodies, which is our experience. Some flies have like an electric light, their body is a blue color, so much so that it clears the darkness, but at the moment our body doesn't have light. We have to rely on another light to be able to see clearly. So having light around the body—even the animals, the tiny flies, have this, so no surprises, nothing special.

Some people may expect during this month to have some peace of mind. Maybe they are attending this course thinking, "Maybe I will have peace in my mind, I am going to go there to receive a little peace in the mind for a short time." Anyway, our thoughts and ideas do not matter, however it is definite that in the depth of mind, if we check up, we all desire happiness. That is the same thing for everyone. It is the same thing for the tiniest creature, the small ant, the animal ant, exactly the same thing—desiring happiness, not desiring suffering. Even in the dream, it is the same thing between them and us, the same thing, exactly the same thing. But why, so far, no matter whether we believe in reincarnation or not ... let's say on the basis of not having reincarnation, since we were born until now, why we have not attained yet the everlasting happiness, the happiness that lasts forever? Why? Even talking on the basis of reincarnation not existing, why are there always problems arising, continuously arising one after another one? Why? What is the reason. Even though we try to stop that problem, another problem comes—always our lives have been like that, finishing suffering like that. This is not even talking about the existence of reincarnation. Just generally talking, this present life experience as you know, as you remember. Then even on the basis of talking about reincarnation, the existence of reincarnation is not something that was begun from such a time, we have not achieved yet the everlasting happiness—even though our reincarnation has no such beginning, and there is no such period in which reincarnation began. In this way, the question is deeper. Also, in this way it is easy to discover why and to discover the answer in this way. Why haven't we achieved everlasting happiness. On the basis of talking about beginningless reincarnation it is easy to think of the question and easy to give the answer. Through continual beginningless reincarnation, we can prove why we have not yet achieved everlasting happiness. There is a logical answer. If the question is given to a person who just believes in one rebirth, just one life, because that person doesn't have the fundamental understanding of the evolution of life, he can't really give the logical reason. He can't really give the real answer. That person cannot see the actual reason we have not yet achieved everlasting happiness, as much as we have been trying to make our life comfortable and peaceful. Also, because in his mind he is missing the knowledge understanding the evolution of life, therefore it is extremely difficult for the person to recognize the actual cause of everlasting happiness. For the person it is difficult to see the possibility of achieving everlasting happiness.

Anyway, normally whether we believe in just one life or in beginningless reincarnation, the reason we have not achieved everlasting happiness is because of not realizing true happiness and not realizing the actual cause of true happiness. That is because of not realizing the actual suffering and also not realizing the actual cause of suffering. Therefore we always create the cause of suffering expecting the result of happiness—the peace that we don't receive from that actual cause, from that work. So you see, in our action, in our work, in our method there is a mistake. Why are there mistakes in our work, in our method? That is because there is a mistake in our understanding. We have a wrong understanding of happiness, of peace, we have the wrong recognition of peace. Therefore it is important to find out the wrong understanding.

First of all, in order to establish the right understanding, the right knowledge, knowing the actual suffering, knowing the actual peace, it is necessary to recognize the wrong understanding. So therefore then, there is the possibility to clean.

If you smell something dirty around you, if you smell something dirty, if you smell kaka, then it is necessary to first of all check up where is it. To check up where is it. If you want to be clean, if you don't want to smell that, to suffer from that, it is necessary first of all to check up where it is. Then after, you recognize whether it is outside or within you, then you clean it. Then you don't get the smell, then you are comfortable. Otherwise if you don't see it, then as much as you want to stop it, if you don't see it, as much as you try to clean the place, telling other people to leave, trying to clean some other place, it doesn't help. Whatever he is doing is useless, he is just wasting his energy. As much as he works in that way, he doesn't stop the suffering, the dirty smell. Therefore the most simple thing is to first recognize the dirty thing, where is it, and then after recognizing it, it is possible to clean it. Just like this. It is very important, so important to fully realize all the wrong understanding that produces the wrong methods, the wrong action, that makes the life complicated. This is just a simple example.

Generally, not for only human beings, but even for lower creatures, whenever there is a problem, we always believe that the cause of the problem is outside. This is the biggest problem. The principal cause of the problem is outside, the possible cause of the problem was created by other people—we always believe the principal cause of suffering is in the external things. Like when we suffer with heat, we think the possible cause of suffering is heat, that heat is the principal cause of the problem, and when we walk barefoot and a thorn gets inside we think the principal cause of the problem is the thorn, as it is the principal cause of the suffering, the pain. Sort of like this. For every object that we suffer with, we always believe the principal cause is outside. And when we have some confusion or problem with people, we think the cause of the problem is those other people. So in this way it is difficult to bring peace—extremely difficult, impossible, impossible to bring perfect peace, everlasting peace, without removing this wrong belief. By only doing the method that only checks outside and only cleans outside, trying to stop the outer distractions, the people or the non-living things, this method can never bring true happiness. For instance, put a simple example. I have a problem with one person, and then I think my problem is caused by him and I try to kill him, destroy that person. If I kill him, of course, there is no peace, that person suffers. Perhaps when I finish that action, when I harm him, with my ignorance perhaps I may think, I may feel rejoicfulness that I could harm him, that I could take revenge on him, but that actual rejoicfulness is not really happiness, not actual peace. Then what happens is that it causes problems with the other people who like that person, his friends. The other people also suffer because they don't want him to be killed and I want to kill him. So it is difficult. If I kill him, his other friends get angry, they suffer. So in this way there are more enemies instead of less enemies—this method causes more and more enemies to arise.

For instance, simple. In the modern world there are many examples of so many thousands, thousands of people that were killed believing that countries were the enemy, the principal cause of the problem, but still after that many millions of people were killed, after the enemy was killed, still there was an enemy, still so many enemies rising against the people. This clearly shows how that kind of thing never brings peace, only suffering and more confusion, just like the modern world.

In one way, it is not enough that oneself has peace; it is necessary that other beings should have peace, the same thing. All the same living beings, the same human beings, even without talking

about the animals, the same human beings have mind, feelings, desiring happiness and not suffering, so those who need peace are not just one person.

This kind of method never brings peace—it causes confusion to oneself and other living beings, that's all. Another way of talking—even if we kill, even if we make all the human beings on this earth not exist—all the insects, all the living beings on this earth do not exist; there is yourself only, only myself on this earth, non-one else is existing, no other living being—still there is no peace, no everlasting happiness in my mind. Even though I could try that much, still the body and mind, my body and my mind are living in suffering. So that is not the solution, you see, to stop one's own suffering. And even if this physical body did not exist, this physical body burned, became decayed, not existing, even if this physical body has left, still that doesn't mean that that I am released from the cause of suffering. Still that doesn't mean that I have received freedom. That doesn't mean I have received everlasting peace. If that was the way to receive everlasting peace then it would be silly that all people are trying to exist, trying to take care of this body, have a longer life by having treatments—this would be silly. Better to have the death as quickly as possible. So however, even if there is no other living being physically existing, even if there is only one person, still there is no happiness, still the person's mind is in problems. Sometimes he gets angry with himself—usually this experience happens in our life in certain places even though we are alone, in certain solitary places, sometimes on the mountains away from the city, parents, alone. Sometimes we get angry with ourselves. Still there is suffering, still we feel unhappiness, dissatisfaction, many things, many problems. That means that person is in suffering.

So now even without this body ... first of all, if the solution to stop suffering was to not have this body, then, since when we die we have to leave the body for death to appear, we wouldn't have to practice meditation, to escape from suffering we wouldn't have to follow religion, we wouldn't have to do any special or high action. We wouldn't have to be holy, we wouldn't have to make our mind pure, if suffering was stopped by leaving this body. That is clear—just one way of talking, simply talking.

The reason we are living in the suffering when we are with this body, the reason we are living in suffering mentally and physically is because we were living in suffering before we took this body, therefore even when we have this body, mentally and physically we are living in suffering. If you are not living in suffering before taking this body then there is no reason to live in suffering with this body, no need to experience suffering with this body, like this. However, suffering exists because the principal cause of suffering exists. Even if there is only mind existing, why is there suffering? Because the principal cause of suffering exists within mind. This is important to understand. This is the most profound subject—trying to discover the principal cause of the problem that exists within mind. That is a very profound subject and trying to discover that is the most useful method to solve the problems, to stop the suffering.

Simply talking, the cause of the problem that exists within our mind, what is that? Greed, ignorance, and hatred—these three negative minds existing within the mind—these are the cause of suffering. Therefore, that is why I said this morning that to establish enlightenment, the most sublime happiness within, the mind needs to purify the impurities of mind. What I want to say is this—there is no other external method that can stop, can help that mind of ignorance. This is simple. How do ignorance, greed, and hatred produce problems? Our individual life has been full of examples of this. If we have the wisdom to check up, we don't have to go a round, we can discover

this, each of us—the individual himself can discover it if he checks up his own life experience. He can discover whether he has these three negative minds or not.

How do these three negative minds cause the whole suffering? That is simple. When there is anger it is not so difficult; when we have strong anger rising, it is easy to know that the nature of that is not peaceful. It is a very unpeaceful, unhappy mind, a very rude mind, a very cruel mind.

Then besides the anger destroying, the anger also causes death to oneself. This anger destroys one's own possessions, one's relatives, and it destroys other living beings' happiness. That is easy, quite a simple example of how that doesn't make oneself or other beings happy and only causes suffering. That the mind is ignorant.

Then greed. Greed is one of the disturbances of the true happiness. That is one of the main hindrances of achieving true happiness because true happiness is ... simply talking ... it is something which is well contained, mind which is well contained and satisfied. The satisfied mind. Very gross way talking. At least has to be that, that mind. So that is opposite to the function of the greed. The attachment is something which makes, which always makes to not satisfy with the things what the person has and always produces more craving, wanting more, wanting better and more. This is the worst suffering. This is the worst mind energy. This is the thing which keeps life busy. Also in the world this is the, one of the causes, principal causes of the modern world suffering. Whether it is one person, group of people, society, country, whatever, so this kind of mind which they have is the cause of their problem. Usually desiring more, desiring more and better, so when ... so working for that is another suffering and not receiving that is another suffering which comes from attachment. Like this. So this is the real sickness, real sickness. Many times real sickness. We think sickness sort of physical pain, stomach pain. Actually though, all the physical sicknesses arise from those three negative minds, so therefore those three are the worst sickness.

Also we think that nature is not pain, but it has pain, if you check up it has pain, definite pain. The anger is another pain, the mind which gets attached in the objects which feels unhappiness way inside in depth of mind there is kind of unhappiness, uptight, pain, if you think back, that is pain. That is mind pain. So those two pains, anger and greed, those two pains rise from the ignorance.

(BREAK)

Therefore as these things, this kind illness is not matter, not a physical thing, in the West there are psychologists, and people with many other different titles, titles that mean that this person has the method to cure the life problems, to solve other peoples' life problems, such as Psychiatrist, many different things like this. They try their best according to their understanding but actually it doesn't really make an end, a finish, the complete finish of the mind illness. There is something missing in their method—it is not a full method, not a perfect method. When they themselves have problems in their own life they don't know how to cure it. They don't know how release it. If they cannot cure their own problems how can they cure other peoples' problems? If they don't know themselves how can they know other peoples' minds? Even very simple things, simple things that can be easily solved through simple meditation, they find it hard to cure. These problems can be easily solved by people who don't have such a wide, extensive understanding of the Dharma. Like schizophrenia, like examples such as this. I am sure you people know, but I am just generally talking in the West, generally talking. They don't know how to solve, how to stop this.

Anyway, making the talk short, what can stop the mind illness? What can make the mind illness, the cause of the problem and suffering, not exist? Only the method of Dharma, Dharma. Another meaning of Dharma is protection, or holding up from falling down in danger. Like if a person is in danger of falling down then Dharma is the method to save the person from the danger of falling down. The actual danger is the mind illness. So in this way we can understand the actual peace or the true happiness that is the cessation of mind illness—of greed, ignorance, and hatred. That is the true happiness, that is the real freedom. That is the real freedom that never changes, the real freedom that doesn't go up and down. Not like some peoples' freedom—many people say they have freedom: "I am free," "I have received freedom;" many times they say, "I am free." Even though they have problems they say they are free because they think they have everything, they have a husband or wife or children, many possessions, a car, a television, anything—they have all the temporal material things and they think they have freedom. However, it is foolish talk without checking. It is not talk that comes from wisdom, from understanding.

Now we understand that Dharma is the only method that can stop the mind in this, so Dharma is the only method that can bring actual freedom or happiness. So now the meditation has to be oneness with Dharma—we have to make the meditation Dharma. If we don't make the meditation Dharma then it doesn't help, it doesn't cure the mind problems. The most important thing that we have to know this time and we have to act on is to understand what Dharma is and make the meditation oneness with Dharma. Then, no doubt, no doubt, that can solve the life problem and become the cause of true happiness.

This is Dharma or the meditation subject that we are going to talk about during this month. This is not my Dharma, my own meditations, not something I created by myself, my own idea--not like this. This meditation subject of Dharma, the Dharma subject that we are going to talk and listen about and try to actualize is the profound, holy teaching shown by the perfect being, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. The perfect teaching is the holy teaching—another way of saying it is that it is the holy meditation shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha as he has completely experienced the whole method. That was also shown to the sentient beings, shown to his followers. By following this profound method, he released himself from all suffering, from the whole suffering, and achieved the whole knowledge—no knowledge is missing. He doesn't have even a tiny, subtle mind illness such as dualistic mind, such as the delusions. This method, these profound meditations and teachings were shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the true founder—why is he the true founder? Because his teachings are the true teachings. The teachings shown by him are also the true teachings. Why are they true? Another way of saying it is that following that teaching definitely works. If we fully practice and actualize them, it definitely works, it helps to solve and cease all suffering and receive everlasting happiness, the most sublime happiness of enlightenment. Therefore Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is the true founder, because he has shown the true teachings.

Who discovered this, who checked up that he is the true founder and that the teachings are true? We don't know but who checked that up? The followers, the previous pandits, were great numbers, just like the galaxies and great numbers of holy learned beings and pandits. Usually pandit is an Indian term but it means having all the great knowledge. Besides having Dharma knowledge, besides having the understanding of all Dharma, it also means having other knowledge, such as astrology, hygiene, and so many other things. Besides that, they themselves are living in the realizations, having mind control.

As these teachings were passed down by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and his followers, great numbers of pandits have checked up whether they are true or not; and whether they help or not was also checked up. Just like gold. Before you buy gold you have to check up whether it is pure gold or false gold—whether it is real gold that can function as its value. Just like this. Before buying gold, as the person has to check up as the gold, whether it is false or not, those great numbers of pandits checked up with their wisdom. Then they proved it and many other highly realized meditators and yogis, as they followed the path and the teachings achieved all the realizations, and complete mind control and freedom. Like this also many great numbers of Tibetan meditators and yogis also experienced.

The whole subject that was shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is included in the 84,000 teachings to destroy the 84,000 delusions. All these teachings are included in two paths, in two divisions—extensive and profound. Extensive means method, the teaching that explains more about method, and profound means the teaching that explains more about wisdom.

The extensive teaching that explains more about method was handed down by Guru Shakyamuni to Maitreya Buddha. From there it was handed down to his disciple called Asanga, the Indian pandit. From Asanga the extensive teachings that explain the method were handed down to the highly realized being, the Guru Serlingpa.

The teaching that explains more about wisdom was handed down by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to Manjushri. Manjushri is the Buddha of Wisdom. From Manjushri the teaching on wisdom was handed down to Nagarjuna. Nagarjuna is one of the great Mahayana philosophers who has fully realized the right shunyata, the absolute nature of existence, the absolute nature of the mind. Then from Nagarjuna the teaching on wisdom was handed down to Shantideva. Shantideva is one of the well-known pandits and a great bodhisattva. From Shantideva it was handed down to Guru Serlingpa ... not Serlingpa ...

Then from Guru Serlingpa, the great pandit Atisha received both methods, both teachings—the teaching on wisdom and the extensive which means the method. The great pandit Atisha received both from these two gurus, so the great Atisha, the yogi, brought the teaching to Tibet and established Buddhism there. As he was invited from India by the King of Tibet, who was a bodhisattva in this time where there was a lot of degeneration and corruption in Tibet, when people were suffering greatly from the degenerating Dharma, the great pandit Atisha came and purified all wrong realizations and beliefs and wrong actions of the people and established Buddhism. He was also asked by the Tibetan King to give a simple teaching that explains more about karma and refuge. He asked for a simple teaching because most of the people in Tibet during that time were very ignorant. So the great Atisha wrote this teaching called *The Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment*, which includes sutra and tantra, and all 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. But the *Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment* by the great pandit Atisha is only a few pages written in a very simple way so that other people, especially the Tibetans whose minds are low and ignorant, can find it easy to understand. Because they cannot understand those other teachings, they find it difficult to get the right meaning. This was also translated in Australia. One of the scholars who does research, who spent time in Dharamsala and speaks quite a lot of Tibetan language which was quite big surprise—we met all of a sudden, and I never expected someone who can speak fluent Tibetan in Australia—he translated this text, *The Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment* written by Atisha, into English.

After Atisha wrote the teaching then the name became the graduated path to enlightenment, name happened. The subject and the explanation existed before but was not called the graduated path to enlightenment, the title of the book that happened starting from the period after Atisha wrote this teaching. So Atisha passed down this teaching to his other followers. I am not going to explain details because it takes so much time to talk.

Then afterwards, Guru Tsong Khapa, one of the highly realized Tibetan ascetic yogis who is the founder of one of the sects in Tibet, a manifestation of the Buddha of Wisdom called Manjushri—this lama had received all the techniques and teachings that were shown by Atisha, and passed on by Atisha to his other followers. Guru Tsong Khapa spent some time in one of the caves in the shape of a lion called Reting. He stayed some time in that cave with a piece of Atisha, from the holy body. After Atisha passed away, Guru Tsong Khapa had preserved part of Atisha's head, maybe a bone, something, and he kept it in the cave and wrote the teaching on the graduated path to enlightenment. He wrote this teaching in the form of prayer in verses. This was after some time Atisha had passed away, but when Guru Tsong Khapa was writing this prayer on the graduated path to enlightenment, Atisha appeared in the cave. Guru Tsong Khapa saw Atisha and Atisha's closest disciple called Drom.ton.pa who is also a manifestation of the Compassionate Buddha. Drom.ton.pa was the one who offered service to Atisha while in Tibet. So while in the cave Guru Tsong Khapa saw Atisha and two other Tibetan yogis who were disciples of Atisha. He saw all the three other disciples in one month in the cave talking about Dharma and afterwards those three other followers absorbed into Atisha and Atisha put his hand on Guru Tsong Khapa's head and said, "If you work well for the teaching of Buddha I will help you. You must make extensive work in Dharma, I will help you." Then Guru Tsong Khapa wrote the teaching, the great commentary on the teaching written by Atisha, the great commentary that is called the *Gradual Path to Enlightenment*. Guru Tsong Khapa wrote the commentary from the beginning up to the samadhi meditation section. Guru Tsong Khapa was sort of persuaded by Atisha to write this commentary.

Afterwards, Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom predicted that Guru Tsong Khapa should write the teaching on the absolute nature, shunyata, on penetrating insight and that it would be beneficial to other sentient beings. Before he hadn't written any commentary on that so afterwards he was predicted by Atisha, who was his main guru, and he wrote the teaching on shunyata, on penetrating insight. This is the teaching that we are trying to practice, what modern Tibetan lamas are trying to practice and actualize, trying to explain to disciples with experience, themselves living in the practice.

This is the teaching we are going to talk about. So simply talking, the graduated path is divided in three—the gradual path of the lower, middle, and higher being. Just to have a little idea. Now what are the benefits of following this? The benefits of practicing, actualizing the gradual path of the lower being are that one can have always happiness, a better future life, one can always have perfect life in the future as one wishes. And practicing, actualizing the gradual path of the middle being—what are the benefits of that? The benefit of that are that one can achieve everlasting happiness by releasing oneself from the boundaries of suffering and the boundaries of delusion and karma. This is just to give you a rough idea before explaining the details. Then what are the benefits of practicing, actualizing the gradual path of the higher being? Through this, besides one receiving everlasting happiness by release from suffering, one can receive enlightenment, the most sublime happiness of enlightenment, which has every single knowledge and perfect power. It has all the knowledge to fully see every single existence, know every living beings' mind, their nature, the level of their mind, their personality and, besides that, knowing every single method to lead sentient beings into enlightenment—the different methods that fit the different living beings. And complete

perfect power. Besides that being himself being released from all suffering, he has the perfect power to release every other sentient being from suffering and the perfect power to be able to show all different methods of release from suffering with numberless different manifestations as it fits to other living beings, and with great infinite compassion.

So therefore the main aim, the principal aim of our talking, of yourselves trying to listen, and of from my side a little bit talking about this teaching, the whole aim, the essential aim, the principal aim is to receive enlightenment. The principal aim is receiving enlightenment—oneself is not so important, but to enlighten other sentient beings, to release other sentient beings from suffering and enlighten them is so important. Therefore the only way possible to do that is trying to receive enlightenment oneself first. So the main aim of that is to release other sentient beings from suffering and enlighten them. The final aim is that. As I mentioned those different expectations we people may have, and should not have, if you have them, forget it, it is necessary to change it. You should have the right motivation, the perfect, pure aim that definitely benefits for other sentient beings, not only for oneself. This is the highest aim. Practicing meditation, whatever we are doing, if we do it with this aim, with this expectation, it has the greatest meaning, and there is no doubt that not benefiting other sentient beings by our actions or meditations, no matter what meditation we practice, does too. Like this. So the meditation we are going to do is on the gradual path. This is a very profound teaching.

Actually myself, one thing I am sure of is that this meditation course can really not benefit you because I am the person. I don't have any experience, no understanding of the teachings—I am pretending, just pretending like children act, children sometimes play. When I was small we used to play like this, acting like the King sometimes. Really there is not much hope. But perhaps maybe there is a little hope I am sure, because you people have such intelligence and wisdom, so maybe perhaps from my side there is so much knowledge of Dharma and no practice, no experience, but maybe the few words we are going to talk about is Guru Shakyamuni's experience and also the teaching I received from the experienced gurus that they received gradually from other experienced gurus—Guru Tsong Khapa, Atisha, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—so maybe the blessings of this generation of teachings and your intelligence may work a little bit, may benefit. Like this.

First of all you sit cross legged. I am just explaining because there is not much time. First you sit cross legged; even if you can't do exactly like this, it doesn't matter. You can keep the right leg loose and maybe lift the left one up—keep it very loose—you don't have to give much suffering, just keep it very loose. It is not necessary to make things very difficult because that is not the main thing to control the mind. Keep the back straight, like the spine straight, like the wall, straight. Then the two arms not like this; keep them loose. Also sometimes if they are like this it also doesn't cause the sweat to come out; you will keep cool. I think if you do like this also it may cause you to fall asleep and keep warm. There are many other reasons. Then the neck is not so straight—if you keep it very up like this it is difficult to control the mind, to keep the mind away from agitation, sketching thoughts. If you throw a grain from the top of nose it would drop at the place of the navel. Then if you close the eyes, sometimes it is possible to fall asleep. Also the eyes should not peer like this, not look like this. If you keep the eyes on something that you only see on the front side, toward the top of the nose then it is easy to concentrate inside, it gives sense. If you keep the eyes like this you think of an object which makes such a distraction to the mind. Then the teeth should not be so tight, not open, just keep them natural. The top of the tongue touches the upper ceiling of the mouth; that helps to stop spit from coming out. If you don't take care, so much spit comes out and distracts the meditation. The mouth should not be open, but loose as usual, natural. The shoulders are straight.

Also, if you don't keep the back straight it can cause sluggishness—somehow it is easy for the darkness in the heart to rise and then the concentration is not so clear, and it is easy to fall asleep. Keep your back straight like this. Generally all these positions help, as the body is the vehicle of mind and the blood circulation is the vehicle of the mind. If we arrange the vehicle well then also the mind becomes more comfortable and there is less distraction and it is easy to concentrate. It helps the concentration, makes the blood circulation that goes through the nerves easier. Also each of these things, for physical meditation, each has many benefits and doing meditation in this position causes you to receive enlightenment. One of the Buddhas called Vairocana, one of the five Dhyani Buddhas, sits in this position. So the benefits of taking this meditation position are that it causes you to receive enlightenment in the essence of that buddha. (See pages 34 and 35 for notes on posture during meditation.)

After you arrange everything, then you check up your impulse and motivation—what you are thinking. Then after that you cultivate the pure motivation that makes the action and the meditation pure. This not only becomes a cause to have a better future life, to have happy lives in the future, and not only becomes the cause of receiving everlasting happiness, but the action and meditation become the cause of receiving enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings. So therefore the small action, the small work should become the cause of enlightenment for other sentient beings; it is necessary to cultivate that pure motivation that makes the action the cause of enlightenment. Therefore it is necessary to think like this. So this is important—even though you forget other parts it doesn't matter, because whether your action is positive or negative does not depend on the body, on the position of your body, on how your legs or body are sitting, on how the hands are kept. It depends on mind, whether the action is negative, whether it becomes a cause of suffering or happiness or enlightenment. This depends on the creator, the mind. Therefore, taking care of the mind is the most important thing.

Therefore think that from the beginningless samsaric lifetimes—samsaric lifetime means as long as the life is living in ignorance, born in ignorance, the boundaries of suffering, from beginningless samsaric lifetimes until now I have had attachment to the happiness of this life, the wrong conception of the self “I.” It is important to know these negative minds. Attachment to the happiness of this life, the wrong conception of the self “I,” self cherishing thought—this negative mind has been always causing me suffering until now and this negative mind causes me suffering in the present and this negative mind continuously causes me to suffer in the future. Therefore, I must release from these three wrong conceptions, greed, ignorance, and hatred, which we talked about before. I must release from them and achieve everlasting happiness. This is not enough; I must achieve enlightenment to enlighten all sentient beings. Therefore I am going to purify greed, ignorance, hatred, and attachment to the happiness of this life, to the wrong conception of the self “I” and self cherishing thought.

Then visualize all these negative minds in the form of fog coming through the right nostril and going out, running out and crossing even the oceans, the Pacific, going beyond this earth. Then think that the fog completely disappears. The fog is the essence of all this wrong conception and negative mind. If you have physical troubles always, you can think also that all this negative karma, all this sickness, has gone out in the form of smoke. The important thing is to think of wrong conception in the negative mind in the form of smoke and going out. Like this. When you start, first of all you breathe out to do this purification. In order to breathe out, you have to store the breath, so first you breathe in very slowly, not quickly, very slowly by taking time. If you breathe so strongly then it doesn't feel healthy, it can hurt. So breathe in very slowly by taking time—this way your mind

concentrates on the breath and does not get distracted. You breathe so slowly and the more you breathe in, you receive more air until your stomach bends, gets thinner inside. Sometimes many people have problems here in the heart, so they should not keep it that long inside. You breathe in by taking time slowly. Then if you keep it a little bit it is okay; it is good but if it becomes a problem then it is better to start to breathe out. When you breathe out, breathe out very slowly, taking time. In this way the mind concentrates without being distracted. Breathe out being conscious very slowly. Then, as you breathe out, make this visualization very slowly. When you breathe in you breathe in very slowly and think of all the enlightened beings, the holy beings, who are living in all the directions. With their infinite compassion they are sending all their knowledge—with infinite compassion, and their complete, perfect powers, they are sending their compassion to me. Visualize that you are receiving all these enlightened beings' infinite knowledge and compassion and perfect power in the form of white light and the white light comes through the left nostril and your entire body fills with light, just like a light switch in a room. All of a sudden the darkness is gone, completely disappeared. Just as light comes from inside, you feel infinite bliss all over the body and also you can think that all the suffering and all wrong conceptions and negative mind are completely lost, nowhere existing, and that you have received all the enlightened beings' great infinite compassion, knowledge, and perfect powers. Try to feel infinite bliss, and concentrate for some time.

This is one time. The second time you receive knowledge when you breathe in. The second time when breathing out, you purify wrong conceptions of negative mind as you breathe out through the left nostril. Then when you breathe in, all knowledge comes in the form of light, knowledge and perfect power in the form of light through the right nostril. Think, concentrate, and feel the same thing. The third time when you breathe out, do purification from both nostrils, and all wrong conceptions of negative mind are in the form of fog, and when you breathe in think that you have received all enlightened beings compassion, powers, and knowledge in the form of light. Try to feel the same thing. Do this, taking time. Then if you don't understand you discuss with Dr. Nick, or anyone who understands, who did this meditation before. This is the meditation—perhaps you can do it after the discussion.

Day Two

Thursday, 7th November

9 am

The principal aim and final goal of listening to the Dharma and doing meditation is enlightenment, which can be achieved by completing the practice of the graduated path of the higher being—including the tantric path and the general paramita path. The general path is called the paramita path and the tantric path. The tantric path is the shortcut to achieving enlightenment. The paramita path includes the ten grounds and the six paramitas, or the six deeds of the great bodhisattvas. All of these realizations and practices are based on the realization called bodhicitta. This is the fundamental realization of the graduated path.

To actualize the higher graduated path, one needs the practice and understanding of the graduated path of the middle being—such as the realization and understanding of the four noble truths and the practice and realization of the three higher trainings, which are the higher trainings of conduct, concentration, and wisdom, or penetrating insight. These are the paths that bring the achievement of the everlasting happiness that is called nirvana. Actualizing these realizations and practices and

understanding these subjects depends on understanding the teachings of the graduated path of the lower being, and the practice realization of these teachings. That will be explained afterwards.

Before the practice of actualizing the graduated path of the lower being, first of all it is necessary to understand the evolution of the mind. Without understanding the evolution of the mind there is no way to understand karma. Without understanding karma, there is no way to understand actual suffering. There is no way to fully discover one's own suffering nature. If one does not realize one's own suffering nature there is no way to fully discover other beings' suffering nature. Without realizing other living beings' suffering nature, there is no way to receive great compassion for all living beings, and no way to receive great love for all living beings. Without receiving great compassion and great love for other living beings, there is no way to receive the realization of bodhicitta, which is the principal cause of enlightenment. Bodhicitta the pure thought that makes us receive enlightenment—it is the main seed, like the seed of the flower. There are many other things that act as conditions to bring the sprout, stem, leaves, and flowers, but there is only one main cause, and that is the seed. Just like this, bodhicitta is the main cause that brings enlightenment. That pure thought is the thing that makes us work for other sentient beings, which persuades us to enlighten and release other sentient beings from suffering. This is the pure thought that makes us lead all sentient beings to happiness, besides enlightening oneself, besides leading oneself to happiness.

Therefore, in our discussion about the mind, the evolution of the mind, what I am trying to say is that our discussion on the mind is not just—perhaps some people may think, “What is the point of talking? Why doesn't he give instant methods like drugs? All of a sudden you get visions, you can see things, flying, and you become oneness with everything.” If that could really be true, that is nice! If it really could last—anyway I am joking. By taking certain drugs you can see everyone as a monk with yellow robes on. This is due mainly to the individual mind, but because of the condition of that chemical, the plant—there is a certain plant that grows on the mountains, and if that is mixed with different things like animal blood, and you take it, you get different visions. There is plant called *datura* that grows on the mountains and if it is mixed with the blood of different animals and you take it, you get different visions. It can cause you to see everything as a monk with robes on. Anyway, that is not important.

Some people may think this—why doesn't he give the instant method to feel bliss all of a sudden, and have astral trips. However, as I told you yesterday, those things are not an actual method to solve the problems, to solve the minds' enemies. We have had many astral trips before ... after each death there is astral trip. We have had astral trips numberless times, as we have had numberless deaths and rebirths; this is nothing new. There are free astral trips and suffering astral trips, and we never had the free astral trip—the astral trips we have been experiencing have been uncontrolled, under the control of ignorance and karma, forced by delusions, ignorance, and karma. All our astral trips are made in the suffering realm. So it is all actually a suffering trip.

The purpose of talking about the evolution of the mind is to achieve enlightenment. How? Because understanding this helps us to achieve the pure thought, bodhicitta. Understanding this helps us to receive real compassion and great love for other sentient beings, and by understanding that it makes us realize other living beings' suffering nature and by understanding that it makes us realize our own suffering nature. Understanding that makes us want to escape from our own suffering nature. Understanding that makes us understand about karma, and without that understanding that there is no way, it is impossible to understand about the evolution of karma. Karma is the action of mind. It

is the function of thought. To really understand karma it is necessary to understand the evolution of the mind.

First of all, the title of the book, “The Wish-fulfilling Golden Sun of The Mahayana Thought Training.” Actually that is talking simply. Talking about the title doesn’t make much sense because all the subjects, all these three paths that I have briefly mentioned all these are included in this. If I am going to explain the title, all the subjects will have to come up to enlightenment. So there is not much point in explaining why it is called, “Wish-fulfilling” or why it is called “ Golden Sun.” However, in the present this time, whatever wishes we had before, this time as we have met the Dharma and started to listen to the Dharma subject shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, our principal wish is to achieve enlightenment. How? By what method? By thought training, by training our thoughts in the gradual path to enlightenment. So this is the simple meaning.

Rinpoche read Page 1, “The Mind is Beginningless.”

Paragraph 1

The first paragraph looks kind of abstract, kind of like throwing a stone in the ocean, the Pacific. Actually as you read the following subjects it will become clear.

Paragraph 4

Sentence 2 - I think afterwards we will clear up.

Page 2.

Paragraph 3

So first of all usually in the West most people have the idea, philosophy, or doctrine of believing in one life. This is a belief which they have decided on according to their understanding, according to their knowledge. It doesn’t mean that there is complete knowledge of the evolution of mind. The person believes and found this answer by checking, by thinking, by checking with wisdom, and what that person found he based his decision on so that it become his philosophy. This doesn’t mean it is correct. This doesn’t mean that it is a complete understanding of the mind.

Just like the unclean glasses, with dust all over them. With these glasses you can’t see the object completely clearly—you may see some part of it the object, but not completely clearly. How much of the object you see is up to the glasses. A person seeing with dirty glasses sees the object as sort of unclean, a little bit rough and not correct because the glasses through which he sees are not clean. This doesn’t mean that the object or the way the person sees it is correct. Sometimes the person believes that the object he sees and the way he sees it with those glasses is true. However generally whether it is Eastern philosophy, Western philosophy, Eastern belief, or Western belief, whether it is a teaching explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or a subject explained by scientists, whatever it is—before we believe in it, it is necessary to check up. That is the most important thing. If by using wisdom, checking the object in the correct way the object, we then discover the actual subject, the actual object, that is the benefit and knowledge of wisdom—fully discovering what is the right subject and what is the wrong subject, what is the right explanation and what is the wrong explanation. Anyway, I am not going to talk much about this because you have already discussed it.

Usually it is sort of recognized that the child’s mind is born from the parents’ blood, from the egg, the combination of the egg and the combination of genes. However, first of all, the mind and those physical things which are the objects of the eye, which can be seen by the eye, those two are

different phenomena. The mind is not the object of the eye. If it is form, if it is matter it should be the object of the eye, but it is not so because it is not matter, not a physical thing. Just like the nature of space cannot become the nature of earth, and the nature of earth which is form cannot become the nature of space, just like this. Also it works the nature for the formless—the mind cannot become the nature of the form, the physical things. That cannot become the nature of the mind, which is formless. For instance, let's say at death time, you see, the brain is left there and the body is left there but there is no mind existing. At death time the sensations are absorbed, all the gross feelings and sensations gradually decay and go away. So just as these things gradually disappear, just like this, the consciousness which is called mind also leaves from body. The person doesn't have any more feelings, any more sensations, but at that time brain doesn't leave. The physical body is there. Nothing—no atoms, brains, atoms of the body that have continued from the parents' blood—the physical continuity is there, but nothing is left, nothing of the physical atoms from the brain leave with the mind. The mind leaves. Everything that is an object of eye it is left and without choice, without freedom, at that time the mind has no choice even to take one atom of brain. If there was the choice to take an atom of brain there would be the choice to take the whole body and also to bring all the friends and parents wherever the person has to go, to travel round in the world. But there is no choice, however much at that time the person wishes so strongly to not separate from the parents, relatives, wives, or children, from possessions, from any object, however much the person wishes, he feels somehow he is leaving, due to his karma, even though during his lifetime he thought that there is only one life, that at death time when the body finishes the mind finishes, that there is not any continuity of mind after that, as much as the person believes, it doesn't matter. At the death time just about at the time when the life begins to end, somehow the person, due to karma, has fear that he has to leave, separate from them. Great fear.

If there was choice then, you know, first of all—the mind is not an atom, not a physical thing, absolutely not a physical thing. In those critical times, the whole physical thing has to be left by the mind without choice. The person who is living in ignorance, under the control of ignorance, has no choice even to take one atom from his body with his mind. So also this is one thing that will make you understand a little bit how they are different.

(BREAK)

So as at death time the mind leaves the body without taking even one atom from the brain, just like this also at rebirth time when the mind begins to be conceived in the mother's womb, there is not one physical atom that the mind has brought with it from another physical life. The mind alone is in the mother's womb. The parents body—the egg—that is not the principal cause of the mind—that is the cause of baby's physical body, but not the principal cause of the baby's mind.

For instance, the baby who has a missing leg born from specific parents—if we go and check back with the egg, in the atoms there is something defective, perhaps the person may say—the person who checks that may say there is something defective, something missing—maybe the atom that forms the leg is missing. Anyway I am just figuring out the Western idea. Perhaps some people may think like this.

However the thing is this. That perhaps can be possible, physically. But the way we should check up is this. Not just believing, not just keeping the mind in ignorance, thinking that there is something wrong in the physical egg, an atom is missing or something, not just believing in the point—but checking. The other children have both legs, but this baby has one leg missing? Why did this happen

to specifically this baby? Why not to others? The question is this. And this is nothing to do with the parents—they always want to have a beautiful baby. It is nothing to do with the parents' desire; it happens without choice. It happened without the choice of the baby, without the choice of the parents—but why does this specific baby have a specific body, a different shape. That is easy, a very simple question. That is because, in that baby's turn, the atom is a missing leg, an imperfect body. The subject that we do not understand is the reason that this specific boy has met such an egg, where there is a missing atom, a defect. This is the question that we have to find an answer to, that we have to seek the answer to. Then someone may think—it is time. For the reason it has happened many people give the answer of time. But then zero! That is the last answer, time. But who creates the time, the question is this. Somebody has to—where there is such a condition that has to be created by someone, that child, the baby having that condition in such a time, that has to be created by someone. Is that time created by the parents or by the baby? It is necessary to check up. If that time is created by the parents, was created knowingly or unknowingly? If it was created unknowingly, why did they create it? Why it is created unknowingly? Anyway, what we should think is ... why there is such specific a baby who has met such conditions, such time and conditions. This is one thing to check up, to discuss. If the whole thing about the baby, the body and mind, come from the parents' blood and egg, then all the problems that baby experiences from his rebirth time until death, even the suffering that he will experience in other lifetimes, especially the suffering, all the life problems that experiences, that should be caused by the parents. The parents should be the creator of the baby's problems, the baby's suffering.

For instance, the baby was born with ignorance wasn't it? That is quite simple. We have been babies, perhaps still babies! This is quite easy. We were born intuitively with ignorance, with greed, with hatred, with pride, with many other negative minds. So all these negative minds which are the cause of problems and suffering should come from the parents, so now the parents become the cause of suffering. In this way our parents become the cause of suffering. The parents become the cause of our ignorance. Then everything, every problem, whatever we experience in life should be blamed on the parents because they are the cause.

So this is talking as if the mind comes from the parents as the physical body comes from the parents, as the physical body is caused by the parents, the blood relationship—but this is completely wrong. Parents are not the cause of our suffering, not the cause of our problems. Parents are the field from which we receive our happiness. The other way, the parents become unkind. It is not like this; it is completely opposite. Our suffering, our negative mind has nothing to do with the parents, it is not created by our parents. Same thing—if the mind is part of the parents' mind, then the baby's shape or body should look like the mother, exactly like the father, but this is not possible. If the baby's mind is part of the father and mother, the baby's shape or body should be exactly like the father and mother. But this does not happen. And also as we talked about before, whatever the father experiences the baby should experience at the same time because the baby has part of his mind. And the same for the mother. One is angry, one is happy, and the baby should be both, but that does not happen. Then in that case the baby becomes the father and mother. The baby himself is the mother, the baby himself is the father, because he has the part of the mind of the mother, and he has part of the mind of the father. So as he has the father's mind he becomes the father, he is the father, so it becomes very funny. Also thinking like this, if you have some idea that it came from the parents minds, if you are thinking that way, check like this.

This specific subject that I am talking about can be a little bit difficult to understand. Perhaps new people who haven't heard about karma will find this difficult because this talk is based on karma. So

if one understands karma one can understand very easily if the baby's mind is part of the parents, the father and mother, why the baby should have everything the parents have. In this way if you check up on karma and think about karma, you can understand. However simply talking like this, why this has to happen like this is because whatever the experience the father has, the shape of the body, the life, and the same for the mother, all these are the creation of the parents mind. Whatever the mother's experience, life, different shaped body—that is the creation of the mother's mind. Whatever the father has, that is the creation of the father's mind. Therefore if the baby has part of the mind of the parents he should have the same thing, but that is an impossible thing, impossible. Then the baby could stay without eating anything, because the parents eat, and they can help the baby's stomach to fill up. This should happen, but it doesn't happen. For the baby to enjoy the happiness filling the stomach, the baby has to eat food.

Anyway, so just like this. The suffering, the problems that we experience today are created by the individual, by ourselves, by our minds. The mind that was born this morning, the mind that we have today, the continuity of mind that we have today from dawn time, from the first second of this day, is already born with suffering and ignorance. Why is this early morning mind born with ignorance, with suffering, why? Because the mind of yesterday which continued into this was living in ignorance and suffering. It is the same thing with yesterday's mind living in suffering and ignorance. Why was it living in ignorance and suffering? Because that continuity the suffering ignorant mind continued from the day before yesterday's mind. Just like this, this present month's ignorant suffering mind continued from the other previous months' and that continued from the other previous months'. Same thing with the year. So why is this present life's mind born with ignorance and suffering? There is a definite reason. The example is just like this. Today's suffering mind continues from yesterday. Why is today's mind ignorant? Why was today's mind begun with ignorance, why? Why does it exist in suffering ignorant mind? Because it continued. Just like this, same thing. At the rebirth time why was my mind born already with greed, ignorance, hatred, pride, and many other negative minds, why? Not because the parents created it. Why does the mind have to be born with ignorance and suffering? Just like this example—today and yesterday it continued—that mind continued from the previous life's mind which is ignorant and living in suffering.

So that ignorant suffering mind continued from the previous life like this. If the mind of the life before this present life wasn't ignorant, not suffering, then there is no reason for the present mind to be born with ignorance or suffering, no reason. Why is there no reason? It has no creator. Why is there no reason? There is no purpose. If the mind born with ignorance or suffering, if the previous life's mind was enlightened, out of suffering, not ignorant the suffering ignorance of present life's mind has no creator. Without a creator how can there be creation? Creation has to depend on a creator. Same thing. Maybe no other people have created it but I may have created this present mind living in ignorance, suffering. I may have created it even though my previous life wasn't living in ignorance and suffering. But the question is why did I create this knowing or without knowing? Why should I create this without knowing. That is completely silly. By knowing you create it. Also by unknowing. But then why unknowing? Why is there ignorance? Anyway, it is necessary to check up like this.

In this case, in just this specific present there is no unknowing ignorant mind. The creator that creates the present life's mind is ignorant. There is no unknowing mind. Why? Because, just before this life, the mind wasn't living in ignorance. Therefore there is no way to create the present life's ignorant mind. Other people can't create my ignorant mind. Once my mind is out of ignorance, suffering, other people cannot make my mind ignorant again—this is an impossible thing. Other

people are not the creator of my ignorance. This is one way—by checking the continuity of suffering, the ignorant mind, today's suffering ignorant mind coming from yesterday's, by taking this example of the present life's ignorant, suffering mind, which continued. Why is it suffering? Because it continued from the previous life. With this example you check like this. In this way like today and yesterday, how the mind works—the mind works the same with the present and previous lives. In this way we can understand the continuity of mind. In the same way we understand that the present life's mind continued from the previous life's mind. In this way we check, we see the present life continuing from previous life's mind. It is easy to understand how the present life's ignorance continues from the previous life's ignorance, easy to understand. Then we have the answer. Why were we born this time with ignorant suffering? There is an answer. There is no doubt, a logical answer without one single mistake. Otherwise whatever answer, without this understanding of the continuity of the previous life's mind, whatever other answer we give nothing cannot be logical, it becomes false. If checked up more deeply, it cannot be proven.

In this way you can understand also who creates the time and condition for the present baby. If you think like that then you can find the answer also in this point.

Also, animals, for instance. When the baby animals are born they drink milk from their mother. They don't have to be taught by the animal parent how to drink milk, they don't have to it point out, even the animal baby doesn't have to be shown—this is the breast to drink milk. It might happen many times that right after the animal is born from its mother, all of a sudden they lick the milk. We saw that many times. This is some kind of understanding. The parent doesn't teach it so how does the animal baby understand that? How would he learn while in his mother's womb? What do you think? I am sure somebody has a mind-blowing answer!

Student: It learned from a previous life.

Rinpoche: But how did that continue? That understanding came from a previous life, isn't it?

Student: Yes.

Rinpoche: All people agree. Do all people agree?

Student: You can get that without assuming previous lives. Certain things don't need to be done by mind—flowers turn to the sun but we say plants don't have mind. Certain things on a lower instinctive level—for instance sucking milk, flowers turning to the sun.

Rinpoche: I see. You are correct that they don't have mind. These two are not exactly the same. I don't mean that every single thing that has movement has to have mind, but the question is, such as in the example of drinking milk and such as animals, even puppies know how to have sexual intercourse—even the babies try, act instinctively.

So anyway, also there are babies who, without being taught by the parents, have such a compassionate mind not wanting to kill insects, not wanting to harm anyone, and even seeing other animals killing each other, fighting, the baby embraces all, feels upset, and cries because of his personality, the compassionate mind not wanting other being to suffer. He is born with such a mind. Also there are babies that are born with such a cruel mind that whatever insect they see they want to kill; they are very impatient. These two babies have different personalities, but could be born from one family, the same family. There are families who have different children with different personalities and interests like this. Afterwards, each has different experiences of life, different lives and different experiences, different levels of wisdom. All this is not merely to do with the parents. The reason they have different experiences and interests relates to their previous lives, and is not coming from the parents but principally comes from their previous lives. It is habitual—why the

baby's mind is so compassionate—because in the life just before the baby used to live in the precepts, the disciplines, not harming other beings, trying to live in compassion—things like that are previous habit. The baby's previous continuity tried to lead a good, pure life, so later on when he was born as a baby, his mind was already kind of subdued, already controlled like this. It is the same thing with the cruel negative mind; the baby is born with that mind because of his previous life. Before his present life he used to live a very evil life, always creating negative actions, harming other beings, doing cruel actions, like this.

So this one reason to see that there is the existence of previous lives. However you check is like this. Thinking like this. If you remember the subject that I explained, the examples, and you check, and if you have doubts, if things are not clear, then discuss. Actually, checking in this way, how much you understand the subject depends on how you check up, how skillful you are in checking. It depends much on your skill. In the West you study science and you study psychiatry, methods recognized as something to do with the mind, something to learn about the mind, spending many years in the University or schools making lot of expenses—you spend so many years but still you have no understanding about mind. So if there is no understanding about mind, there is no method. The understanding of the mind's problems is blocked, so there is no way to understand the method that helps to solve the mind's problem. So by checking in this way, by studying the teaching, by doing meditation, by studying teachings even for one week or one month, you can understand a lot. A subject that takes many years, almost the whole lifetime in the West you can understand by studying the teaching and doing meditation. You can understand it in such a short time, because the method is different. This is not only my experience, it is experience of other Western students.

DEDICATION

Then you do the breathing meditation after the discussion. If you cannot concentrate even on the breathing meditation—the breathing meditation is actually very simple, such a simple meditation. First of all it is necessary to train, to try to control the mind with this most simple method of meditation. If you concentrate on the natural breath perhaps it can be difficult for the concentration—for that reason I was trying to tell you yesterday to have strong action in the breath, put more energy so that your mind concentrates on that. You breathe in slowly, taking time, and if it is possible try to breathe in more breath, as much as possible, but don't keep it for a long time otherwise it may cause pains in the chest, it may cause a heart attack! Anyway you try to get as much as possible then you breathe out very slowly, almost sort of you don't feel it. Usually when you breathe strongly you feel it go out, but if you do this very slowly, almost you don't feel it. Then as you put the energy like this, your mind concentrates, you take care of the mind, you make the mind concentrate on that by keeping it out of the distractions.

This is not the whole month meditation but it is a method. Since our minds recently came back from the West, it is a simple method just to make the mind relax so that it can be ready for other meditations.

7 pm

I was planning to come to meditate together with you before, but I was late. One of our gurus has arrived in Nepal recently from India. He is going to leave tomorrow for India so today I went to see him, so it got a little late.

I think it is good to meditate together so we can receive enlightenment together. So anyway, first of all you may have understood quite clearly the way of doing meditation on breathing, not just the physical thing of breathing, but the mental action and the visualization to think about. Perhaps some people may not feel comfortable because it is not just the physical thing breathing but it involves something. The physical breathing that we usually have is used for something which is beneficial. Usually we breathe so much—since we are born until now we have been breathing. But most of the time our breathing action is used in a negative way with attachment, with anger, with ignorance—we often breathe in and out like this. This specific time when we breathe, we use this action that we have, which we don't have to buy, making it beneficial with wisdom, with understanding, with the understanding mind, the Dharma wisdom. We make it beneficial, we make the action pure—nothing is difficult, nothing is difficult, nothing is difficult. You don't have to sacrifice anything. Nothing is difficult, but if you can do as I explained, if you can use the breathing meditation, the action of breathing in and out with that meditation, with the visualization, then it can really become beneficial. The action becomes pure, a real Dharma action, a Dharma action which is the cause of happiness, the cause of real peace. It is quite difficult, it is not a physical thing. It is an inner subject—the understanding of that evolution of how the Dharma brings happiness and peace from such a Dharma action. The understanding of this inner knowledge also involves the mind evolution, this inner subject, so it is quite difficult to fully understand right away.

Just like you see the flower coming from the stem, it is not easy to understand as we easily understand physical things. What I mean—perhaps you may find this difficult—is this—it is kind of quite a heavy thing because our minds have not been trained in such practice before. This is a new thing. What is a new thing? The new thing is this—from this time, from beginningless previous lifetimes, since we were born until now, we have been always taking care of the attachment that is only concerned for the happiness of this life and the wrong conception of the self “I” and the self cherishing thought. We have always been taking care of this so far. But now as we meet the Dharma we have a new action, a new work, which makes a new life, which makes the birth of a new life. That is an opposite action, the opposite thing to the previous action, the old works, the old behavior. It is a new thing. Instead of taking care of these negative minds which are the cause of suffering problems of life, this time we are destroying and purifying the cause of the suffering problems—these negative minds that exist within our minds. So even with this little action breathing in and out, we are making it practical, useful, very beneficial. We are making even a little thing—breathing in and out—which is usually there, we are trying to make this small action the cause of true happiness. Totally we are trying to make it the cause of enlightenment. Totally talking.

So therefore what I mean is that some people may find difficulty in purifying. This is kind of trying to renounce the wrong conception, the negative mind. This is kind of trying to renounce, to remove it. This is something which is strongly rooted in our minds. We have always been following it, preserving it, trying to build it. This is a big change, a new work for the mind. Because this is a different thing, and we have an old habit, some people may find it difficult. But finding it difficult at the beginning is natural, isn't it. This we should understand, it is very important to understand—it is natural, it is natural. At the beginning finding difficulty is natural and as we carry on, finding it easier and easier, that is also natural. All those are actions of mind. There are always changes, nothing is permanent that cannot be changed, it is always changing. So you should not trust if you find it difficult at the beginning. You should not believe that it is always difficult, that it will always be difficult. This is a wrong belief that only betrays you, only causes your mind to close your wisdom.

Why do we find it difficult? Because we have a mind that makes it difficult, makes it difficult to find the cause of that suffering within it. So as we train in this meditation, as we do more and more, as we gain a gross understanding of the Dharma, it will get easier and easier. As your understanding of Dharma grows through meditation, through practice, at the same time also you are training, and this meditation becomes easier and easier. It is natural, it is natural, it is the knowledge of the mind.

First of all, if you begin the meditation with a pure motivation as I explained, then the rest of the meditation, however long you meditate, however long you do the breathing meditation, two hours or ten minutes, however much you can do becomes a beneficial action, the Dharma, and a beneficial action that benefits you. As you motivated to receive enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings, therefore this action can definitely benefit other sentient beings' enlightenment and for other sentient beings to receive the highest happiness. So you check whether you began the meditation with pure motivation. The total is this—it is not enough that only oneself receive peace by releasing from these negative minds of greed, ignorance, and hatred. It is also necessary to achieve enlightenment in order to enlighten other sentient beings, by removing the attachment to the happiness of this life and the wrong conception of the self “I” and the self cherishing thought. Then you do the breathing meditation, visualizing the negative mind, the wrong conception in the form of fog, and receiving the enlightened beings' knowledge in the form of light. Then after you finish this one set of breathing meditation, if you still cannot concentrate on the breath, if still the mind gets distracted, if even for a simple meditation you cannot control the mind, perhaps if you do like this it is also good. After doing one set of breathing meditation, first of all bring the air from down below the body up. After that then you breathe in slowly, very slowly then at the same time your stomach sort of goes away, sort of bends. Then there are two airs in the stomach, so concentrate between the two airs that your mind manifests in white light and bliss there, and then concentrate as long as possible. But don't keep the breath in for a long time until you get pain in the chest or heart. Just keep it in for some time, then before you start to feel the pain, sort of an uncomfortable feeling in the heart, then you breathe out slowly just like you did before during the breathing meditation time.

Then some people who have problems in the body, in the heart, pains, that kind of problem—maybe better not to do this is there is a problem inside the heart, physical things.

MEDITATION

DEDICATION

Then, as you began the meditation with a pure motivation, also it is necessary at the end to dedicate the merits. Because we began the meditation with a pure motivation, so it becomes merit, we create merit. In order to preserve the merit, for it not to get lost, it is necessary to dedicate. Actually the prayer—anyway, it is not necessary to explain the whole meaning of the prayer, but generally it is necessary that every time after the schedule of meditation you remember the necessity and the importance of the dedication, as you began the meditation with a pure motivation. Because you began the meditation with a pure motivation, because you want the action itself to be perfect and pure, a virtuous action, so therefore it is necessary to put effort, trying hard to create a little merit. It is necessary to preserve, try to keep, take care—otherwise it gets lost, and there is no cause of enlightenment, no cause of everlasting happiness, no cause of happiness left if the merits are lost. Therefore, if you can think of this it is very good, excellent—it makes this action perfect, rich, and even though you worked hard for a few minutes, you began with a pure motivation and dedicated the merits afterwards, so it becomes rich and perfect because this dedication doesn't get lost even

though anger and heresy, these negative minds. Anger is like fire that destroys things. Fire destroys things, burns things, just as this anger destroys merits. There is terrible negative mind—these negative minds are something that completely destroy one's peace, happiness, and the cause of happiness. Therefore, after you dedicate, even though anger arises, it doesn't disturb the merits much, it doesn't cause the result of the merits, the fruit, to be completely lost.

The way of dedicating—if you can remember this, it is very good. It is very effective for the mind. “Due to these merits may I receive the cause of enlightenment, the mind fully renouncing samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute nature, and may I receive enlightenment quickly in order to enlighten all other sentient beings.”

Due to these merits may I receive the cause of enlightenment, the mind fully renouncing samsara, bodhicitta, the full realization of the absolute nature, and receive enlightenment quickly in order to enlighten all other sentient beings. In this way your merits are dedicated to the achievement of enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings. It looks sort of like the merits are used for your enlightenment, but actually your merits are completely dedicated for the enlightenment of other sentient beings in this way.

(Rinpoche began speaking in Tibetan)

I am speaking Tibetan! Totally, yes. Thank you so much.

Day Three

Friday, 8th November

9 am

The essence of the subject that we talked about yesterday was that the principal cause of the baby's mind is not the parents' egg or genes. If the baby's mind was principally caused by the combination of the egg then all the baby's suffering and problems should be caused by the parents. That is one thing to check up. Even if someone accepts that the parents are the cause of the suffering, then the parents of the parents, going back, then where did the original parents come from, rock or trees? I am joking! The original parents, as it is described in the science book, came from animals. And if they took the parents' mind, then the original human being's mind originally came from an animal. If speak of first being an animal an then being a human being mentally, they can be correct. But physically the original human being didn't come from animals. Their parents were not animals. Mentally this can be correct, just like the person who goes around in the different rooms, different houses. The person is the same but the house in which the person goes is different—it is different each time as the person goes from another house to another house. Just like this, the mind always goes around, the mind makes a trip around by taking different bodies. In that case, mentally, this can be correct. However, the animals have to come from something—whatever the original thing was that produced the living beings, all the earth, all the different planets. Some people say that there was a globe that was created by atoms and in the atoms there were waves so the whole thing came from atoms. This then became a planet, however, it was all rooted in waves of atoms. However, this should not satisfy us, even if there is such a description—just believing in that and being satisfied with that answer is not skillful, not wise, because we are not sure whether it is correct or not. It is necessary to check up more deeply how that happened, how that came into existence, the very original thing that produced the different planets, the living beings, the non-living things such as earth, rocks, and plants—it is necessary to check up.

Before existence, which thing started first? Did existence of the living being come first or did the non-living thing come into existence first? What came into existence first? If there was no living being, non-living thing, non-living existence, if this existence started first, then the question is, what is the purpose of coming into existence? Why should it exist? Because there is no other living being during that time who created it? If there was no living being there was no reason for the planets, the earth, the atoms to begin to exist. Then if those exist without purpose, without a creator, without a cause, then all the evolution that come afterward, all the planets, all the living beings, the planets' end, each of these changes doesn't have a purpose, wouldn't have any cause. If the original thing has no cause then the rest of the things wouldn't have a purpose. If there was no purpose to come into existence there wouldn't be a purpose to end all the planets—for all these planets to end or become empty. Even the scientists explain this in the books, and this wouldn't have any purpose, it is the opposite. The beginning not having purpose and the rest of evolution having purpose—that is an impossible, illogical thing. Of course even the scientists describe what makes the world end, they describe it as being due to the elements, things like that.

Anyway, as there is a reason, a cause that makes it end, a cause that makes it exist at the beginning. The original existence, the atom or whatever the source was that existed, cannot exist without depending on a name. It exists by depending on name so the name has to have a creator. So by creating a name then that exists, comes into existence. Therefore the mind has to be creator. So there has to be a living being. If that is God, if that creator is God, then God becomes the creator of all living beings and the whole earth, all the planets. If that is the answer then why does God have to create it, what is the purpose? Whether God has created with purpose or without purpose, with reason or without reason. However whether God has created with reason or without reason as God has created all these things so we came in existence, all living beings came into existence. As they exist in suffering, as they exist with delusions and with negative mind, so they always suffer. There is always complicated life, confusion, and unhappiness. If there is no suffering there is something else. If living being do not have suffering that is something else. But each ignorant living being is living in suffering.

In this case it looks like the principal cause of the problem of the countries, fighting each other, with no peace. In present times even society, two groups of people, two animals, the source of all these problems and suffering is God. Because if God didn't create all these things, all living beings wouldn't have suffering, there wouldn't be all living beings and all these problems, there would be no such thing as killing each other, getting angry at each other—all these problems would not happen. The question is this ... whether the God created these things without knowing, with ignorance. It would become like this.

First of all, without purpose God has created, and secondly God has created all these things with ignorance, not knowing that all these problems would come. In this way God becomes the source of our unhappiness. God becomes the creator of our unhappiness. In this way God is the object that we should blame. So it becomes very funny in this way. In this way God wouldn't make any sense, there is no meaning for God. And in this way it is the same as calling our ignorance God. In that sense we can call our ignorance God, and it wouldn't make any difference because ignorance is also the cause.

Student: What is your idea of God?

Rinpoche: I am talking according to your idea, what you mean by God. I know what I mean, what do you think?

Student: It would take too long.

Rinpoche: Oh I see, one of the special days.

Student: You refer to the Christ concept of God, the Western concept of God.

Rinpoche: Yes, the Western concept of God, right. I think it is a kind of God that people don't know what God means, I am using that kind of God. Anyway, this is just to check up. The reason I bring these things up is to check up. By checking we prove what is right and wrong understanding and by checking we receive more right understanding, perfect understanding, and less wrong understanding, and that much our individual problems become less, because the source of the problems is in the mind. Like this it is necessary to check up. You discuss.

[Dog barked at Rinpoche's feet]

I think he wants to discuss his own happiness. He is not concerned for other people's happiness. This thing you should check up and discuss. If existence comes without purpose then also the rest of evolution wouldn't have any purpose. This talk comes because of the belief that the parents are the cause of suffering, and then goes back like this. Why has the present life's mind continued from the previous life's mind, why do different children have different interests and different wishes and different levels of mind, and different personalities, and also why are the children's mind not part of the parents' mind? During the meditation time even though the person didn't hear exactly that subject, through the continual practice of meditation the person's wisdom, as the person's wisdom develops, the person receives certain understandings, understandings of certain new subjects without having doubt. This just intuitively comes in the mind through the person's continual practice of meditation. This easily happens, a new subject that person didn't hear, that wasn't explained to that person by other people. This is experience, this is experience. That person doesn't find in the text such things that are explained but somehow through the meditation practice, as wisdom grows, the person receives the realization, the understanding of the new subject. These things also prove that if the mind began with this life and did not exist before then there is no answer to this question.

Through meditation practice such realizations and understanding of a new subject intuitively arises, comes. This question wouldn't have an answer. Why does such experience, such understanding come? If it there is one life then this happens without purpose. If the mind began with this life. However, the purpose of coming to these experiences, understanding the new subjects, without having them explained or seeing books but through meditation practice is that somehow the person receives it, it easily comes. Then afterwards when the person receives the explanation from other teachers or reads other texts he finds exactly these things, because in the person's previous lifetime, the person's mind was trained in such meditation and so the mind is ready to receive the realization of the meditation. Because of the previous training, the habit of the training in that meditation, in this life, when that person again practices the similar meditations, then the experience of that meditation comes very easily, the realization of that meditation comes easily. Even just a few words, a short explanation, but the person practices a few words and through continual practice as the mind meditated before on that subject in a previous lifetime, because of that habit and training in this lifetime, even though he receives few words or detailed explanations he receives the wider understanding through the continual practice of meditation. He understands by himself. There are certain experiences like this that happens to meditators. Some persons, even though they spend their whole lifetime, find it difficult to achieve or experience the meditation. It depends on how much the mind has been trained in the subject, in that meditation.

Then generally talking even in the West and East, so many children remember their previous lives. In many different countries many children remember previous lives as well as in Tibet. But in the West it has happened many times there are those who remember their previous lives but other people in that village, or in their families just ignore the subject, don't try to check up how it happened, whether it is true or not, and ignore it as a fantasy. Even though no matter how much from the children's side they try to prove that it is a true story, just like the parents explaining about the story of their own early life. Just like this. It is true like that from the children's side, but because of the parent's limited wisdom wouldn't accept, ignorant.

Recently in New York one day I went by the subway train. I chose to go by subway. Many people thought it was very dirty but somehow I went. The train was a little bit crowded, it was four o'clock, and one lady came carrying a newspaper and sat down near me. She was reading a newspaper and I looked at the title. In the beginning was a funny title but afterwards as I went down, the title was called fantasy and the story explained about one boy who whose previous life was in Japan. It talked about that child who was talking about his previous life in Japan. I tried to read the whole thing and I asked the student who was with me if I could ask the lady to give me that page. I think she finished reading it so she showed it to me while I was reading it and I asked her if I could have just a little bit. Later on she gave it to me, and I was planning to read the whole thing, but somehow I didn't have time and I left the paper somewhere at the Institute, with the Chinese man who invited us. I left it there.

Anyway, this is just how people think of reincarnation. Some people think like this. Those who remember their previous lives have a mind continuity of the previous life, but we who don't remember, don't have a previous life, many people who think like this—it's a little bit interesting. Even they wouldn't believe in their own life continuity they believe in other people's life continuity. That is quite interesting. Then, completely ignorant, somehow accepting that other people have life continuity, even that little understanding, even that little wisdom, that somehow gives them a chance to check up on their minds and their mind phenomena. If they check up it is easy because it is the same, the minds of those who remember their previous lives and those who don't remember their previous lives. The mind is the same. Maybe the knowledge of mind is different.

And there is one group, sorry, there is one scholar I think who has been checking a round, doing research on reincarnation. They checked around in the East, in India. In Asia they checked by going to different villages and countries where there are families whose children have stories remembering their previous lives. They also checked in the West. Now they came to check around Tibetan lamas. One day in Wisconsin I was taking teachings from one of my gurus, when all of a sudden someone rang on the telephone. The telephone was right in front of the teacher, and he tried to talk but it was for me. I didn't know the person who was ringing and all of a sudden the person asked, "Do you remember your previous life?" He explained that he was doing research. Then I tried to tell him I was so pleased that he was doing research on reincarnation; it is worthwhile work to do. Somehow it is a very useful thing, and also interesting. And then I told him that I don't remember clearly my previous life but there are these experiences that can prove it so he said he would come to Nepal. Also they checked with the Dalai lama and many other Tibetan lamas. Some Tibetan lamas tell, some don't tell. This is according to the way they find the person, how they find the person. However, they said that the funny thing is that the Tibetan lamas always said their previous lives were very happy. All the Tibetan lamas who tell about their previous lives always enjoyed, had happy lives. Maybe not hippy life but happy and peaceful, and always peaceful deaths. But all the children that they found who remembered their previous lives, the other ordinary children in the West, also

in Asia, and other countries, the ordinary children who remember their previous lives were always sort of killed by another person, in a war—always a violent death. That’s what they said.

Also in previous times there was much examining of reincarnation. In previous time they put pandits as witnesses to tell about their lifetimes and to prove reincarnation. They put certain people as witnesses and then they died and afterwards were born in the same country, in the same place to prove to others who didn’t believe, like this. Certain pandits tried to prove it like this. This happened many but there was one pandit called Chandragomin. He discussed this with one person who was of the opposite religion and had opposite beliefs, wrong beliefs, who did not believe in the existence of karma, or of past previous lives and many things. The pandit said that there are previous lives and many things. The pandit said that there are previous lives, there are past previous lives, and the other person who became a pigeon due to wrong realizations said there is no such thing. So the pandit asked the King of that country to be the witness, and the pandit told the other person that he would be born to another pandit called Vishisaga in the generation of the King. Then he asked them to put a deep red mark of red powder on his forehead, and the other person put this deep red mark on his forehead with his fingers. Also he put a white jewel, a pearl, in his mouth, then he passed away. Afterwards he was born to this pandit Vishisaga born with a red mark on his forehead and a pearl in mouth and then it was proven to the who had the wrong realizations.

The corpse was preserved in box, in order to check up afterwards when the baby was born. However, the baby was born with the red mark and the pearl in the mouth. Then it was proven and also he believed in the existence of reincarnation, and after this pandit was born from his parents he told his mother, “Mother, didn’t you get tired during nine months?” Since he spent nine months in his mother’s stomach. The mother thought that a baby speaking right after birth was quite inauspicious, sort of ridiculous, so the mother said, “Keep quiet.” Then he kept quiet for seven years, not saying anything. His parents though he was dumb, incapable of speaking or communicating.

Then in that country one of the founders of another religion who has wrong realizations wrote a book in the form of a poem, in verses, contradicting Buddhism and such ideas as reincarnation, karma, many things. It was written in such a deep way. In that country, people found this hard to understand and hard to contradict, hard to answer. One day this book came to this pandit’s home and the father got the book and tried to read it in order to understand. Besides giving the answer he didn’t understand even the meaning of the subject. So one day the father went out, and this pandit Chandragomin who was over seven read the book and he completely understood the whole meaning of the subject and gave an answer, wrote an answer to dispel the other person’s wrong understanding. Later on the father came back home and asked the mother, “Who did this?” The mother said “Oh, our dumb boy.” Then the father got a shock, a big surprise. Later on, because the king wanted to have an answer to that book, he gave many gifts, and afterwards this pandit became very famous.

Also, he heard the Abhidharma and the Tripitaka, the three divisions of teachings that explain about natures, about the path to enlightenment, the evolution of beings, universal beings, and all non-living beings and evolution of earth and different planets, and hearing them only once he completely understood. Then afterwards he took tantric Vajrayana teachings from different Gurus and he completely saw the Compassionate Buddha Avalokiteshvara and the deity who is the manifestation of all the buddhas holy actions, called Tara. Afterwards in that country of Bishikara, he married the king’s daughter. One day he spent some time with his wife and their servant girl called his wife Tara.

All of a sudden he realized that Tara is the name of his deity. He thought, “How can I keep her as my wife?” so he thought to leave. The King said, “If you don’t leave with her I will put you in a box and throw you in the river.” He accepted—he was put in a box and thrown in the water. The river took him to the Pacific, and when he got very far he reached one of the islands. He was saved by the Compassionate Buddha Avalokiteshvara and Avalokiteshvara persuaded him to take the eight precepts.

Then also he came in Sengali, Ceylon. At that time there was much disease there, much infection that spreads from one person to another, infection caused by naga spirits, a big epidemic. He went there and built a special temple, inside of which was a specific Deity, a different manifestation of Buddha to dispel that epidemic. This means that the buddhas took that specific manifestation in order to dispel other sentient beings’ specific suffering. After he built the statue of this manifestation, the epidemic disease disappeared. Also in previous times, many times it happened like this. It was proven like this.

(BREAK)

Student: In the story of the pandit’s reincarnation in the coffin, was the pearl still there after the child was born? In the corpse, was his pearl also still in the coffin?

Rinpoche: That’s possible, that it was still there. Besides that, many Tibetan lamas in their previous lives had certain marks on their bodies, and when they were born as babies in their future lives they had similar marks in the same place. But that doesn’t mean that the person took the previous life’s body’s mark onto this body. It doesn’t mean this. If that were possible then he could take the old body besides that mark.

Student: How is it possible for a physical mark to be repeated?

Rinpoche: It can be two things, two ways. Sometimes it can be karma without a person’s choice—still that result, that experience not finished yet. This can be possible. Sometimes it doesn’t have to depend on karma. For a person with freedom, it can be for a special purpose, in order to prove to others it can be possible to carry on a similar mark. It can be two things like this.

Student: When you mentioned people doing research on reincarnation in America, children dying violently would have marks in the next life’s body in the same place.

Rinpoche: That I didn’t see, possible, yes. Those are karmic marks.

Student: It would be good karma?

Rinpoche: Maybe you can try. Experience and you will know whether it is good or bad Karma. Those things are due to Karma. Sometimes if the person was killed in a previous life by an animal or by a certain person, in this life when the person sees that type of animal he gets fear, shock. Even if other people don’t have that fear of this animal, the person whose previous life was killed by the animal, because of karma, will have shock or fear when killed. Due to that karma when he sees animals, he gets shock, fear. It is similar with people. This is also due to previous life habit and karma.

Student: Earlier you were talking about if there were no living beings at the start of evolution and no purpose or cause to evolution, and you said both were illogical and impossible. There had to be living beings before non-living beings, had to be mind. I don’t understand why it must have a purpose, why it can’t be random chance, why it can’t be hazard.

Rinpoche: Why does there have to be chance. You said chance. Why does there have to be chance. My question is why there has to be chance, this is my question I offer to you. Because of chance, check up you know. You need a little bit of time. Anyway you discuss.

First of all you spend the time thinking deeper between the first second of existence and the second existence. You check up like this, dividing the time. The second second of existence and the rest of things have purpose, have changes, become decayed, many things happen, and those have purpose. Just like the flower, it becomes decayed each time and becomes new each time, it changes. At this second the flower happened because of the previous second of flower, due to the change of that the flower rises right? This first second that rises.

For instance, simple way of talking. Just a similar subject. If you think and you believe that there is a source of the planets, a very original thing that began, that dividing time, the period of existence, dividing the time, the second second and third and fourth, the second, third second, fourth second, the rest, they all have a purpose to change. Because the second second causes the third second's existence. The third second's existence causes the fourth second's existence. As each of those things existence, each of those seconds, depends on the cause, they don't last, they decay in each second. It is the same thing with the second second of existence and the rest of those—they change because the first second of existence changes. The reason the rest change, become decayed, is because the first second of existence changes and becomes decayed, so the rest of those things change. So the way to check up is this, thinking like this. If the existence during the first second of existence doesn't change, doesn't become decayed, you see, there is no reason and no purpose for the rest of the things to change because there is no way for that evolution to happen. It has to start from the first second of existence. The rest of those things cannot change without reason, without purpose, without cause. If all things happen without cause then any of those matters can become decayed, it doesn't have to depend on the element.

It is the same thing just like checking with one example, a flower. First of all there is a seed afterwards due to the elements the continuity of the seed changes, and afterwards it manifests in the sprout and stems, as it brings flowers and leaves like this. First of all it is sort of new, fresh, and afterwards the flower becomes old, no longer giving a green color. Each of these changes has a reason. Even the scientists also describe the reasons for each of the changes. So just like this, it is the same thing with the evolution of the earth. It is the same thing, same thing like this, you can check up with the mind, with the continuity of mind, like this. As we briefly talked about yesterday, today's mind is the continuity from yesterday. Today's body is continued from yesterday's body, and yesterday's body from the day before yesterday. But today's mind continued from yesterday's mind ... just like this going back to the mother's womb continued from the parents and the egg. The body continued from that. From the parents' blood, and the mind which was conceived in the mother's womb, that is not continued from the parents' body and mind. That first second of mind that was conceived in the mother's womb has a cause. The first second of mind that took place in the mother's womb is changeable; it is not permanent, it is changeable, it is causative. As it is causative it has to have a cause. The first second of mind that took place in the mother's womb is changeable and causative so it has to have a cause. If it doesn't have a cause how can it be changeable and causative. Why is the second second of the continuity of the mind changeable and causative. Because that cause causes the first second of mind, the mind that exists in the first second mind. So therefore if the mind exists during the first second, if it is causative and changeable, it has to have cause. That cause cannot be a physical body so that cause has to be mind. Where is that mind that doesn't take place in the mother's womb, the mind that was existing before, before the mind that took place in the mother's womb. That previous mind is the cause. That previous mind is the cause that makes the mind take place in the mother's womb. The first second of mind. Changeable and causative. So think like this. This is also useful, to check in order to discover. This way of checking is useful in order to discover the continuity of the mind.

I think we meditate little bit. You think like this. Today meditate like this. First thing—where does today's mind come from? It came from yesterday's mind and that mind came from the day before yesterday—like this you try to remember, try to remember thinking back on the continuity of the mind. Like last year, wherever you were and then before that, last year's mind continued from the previous year—go back like this. Through all of your earlier life, then go back to the baby time. Then from there also go back to the mother's womb. Try to go back like this. Then from the mother's womb the mind before that mind continued from other previous lives, from other different realms with different bodies. Also that, the mind that had a different body before this life, that mind continued from another body, another mind, which had another different body like this. Try to go back like this.

MEDITATION

After the discussion you start the meditation with breathing meditation. First do breathing meditation, then concentrate on the sensations, gradually the sensations of the body—how you feel, the sensations of the ears, you gradually check up, concentrate. Afterward, then you check the continuity of the mind as you tried to meditate now, going back to beginningless lives. Then after that, you just watch your thoughts, thinking, checking your life, going back to previous lives, many other lives, checking like this, being an observer of your lives. After that you just concentrate on observing the mind. Another way of saying, watch the thought, just completely concentrate on it without allowing the mind to be distracted by other things, objects. First of all if you just right away start it is difficult. You see, first of all the mind is checking, observing, checking the life, so who checks the life? The mind checks the life, the continuity of the mind, continuity of life—on that subject you just concentrate and watch all the time. Try to hold that object, not letting other objects appear to the mind and also at the same time if you are not conscious, one method to keep the concentration longer, the actual method, the actual process for the concentration to last, consciousness and remembrance. If those three are missing your concentration can't last. If there is no consciousness there is no way to concentrate on the subject, because there is no consciousness that recognizes the mind is thinking of something else. If there is no consciousness this can happen, distraction. Therefore consciousness very important, consciousness is the one that forces the mind to meditate, to continuously concentrate. And from the consciousness then remembering comes, remembering the object of meditation. Those two are very necessary. At the same time also you are conscious. Your mind is watching the thought but is also conscious that you are watching your thoughts, like this. If you are not conscious of what you are doing, first of all you start meditation, afterwards it disappears, afterwards it is lost in the darkness, afterwards sleeping comes. Like this. You try to meditate, then see what comes, see what happens.

Day Four
Saturday, 9th November
9 am

The present action that we are doing here is listening to the teaching, and the purpose of listening the teaching is to benefit the life. We are listening with the expectation that it can be beneficial for the life and mind. To relieve the mind from confusion and suffering—this is the expectation, this our hope when doing meditation, even fifteen minutes of doing meditation. For the individual action to become beneficial to one's life and mind, it depends on the individual himself. It depends on the creator, the individual's mind. That is like the key. The individual mind which is the creator is

like the key. So therefore it is necessary that the action of listening to Dharma become Dharma. It is not enough just that the action of listening to Dharma should become the cause of enlightenment; it should become the cause of receiving enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings. Besides the individual action of listening to the teachings just becoming beneficial for oneself, that is not enough, therefore think—I am going to listen to the teaching that is explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in order to receive enlightenment only for the sake of all other sentient beings. It is necessary that the action of listening Dharma be possessed by the pure thought of bodhicitta.

This is another way of saying the pure impulse of bodhicitta.

Yesterday we briefly talked about the beginningless mind. Actually there is much to talk about. What we talked about yesterday was not enough, not enough. However, whether it is explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or whether it is explained by scientists, it is necessary to check up, necessary to check up. The way of checking is whether the subject, the different explanations of the different evolutions of mind described by different people is explained by them with their full experience, with their full understanding. That is the most important thing, the way to check up.

However, the explanation of the evolution of the mind that is explained by one who has full understanding of evolution of the mind, who has the perfect or the full understanding of the nature of the mind, the nature of all existence, not only who explains the present but who can fully see the past evolution and the future evolutions, that explanation done by that living being can be correct. That explanation is pure, perfect. Perfect means without mistakes, a perfect explanation, the explanation given according to the actual evolution of the mind. The way any object exists is not only up to the peoples' belief—it is not that easy. The object changes according to the peoples' belief, not like that. If that were so then whenever we have pain or sickness, if we think there is no pain, it would stop right away. But it doesn't stop. When we think, "I don't have a headache," that doesn't stop the headache. The way the object exists is not up to the person's belief, not only up to the person's belief, even though it is a creation of the person's mind.

However, also check like this. The explanations that prove about one life as are explained in the books, also check up whether these explanations are given with their full understanding of the evolution of rebirth. Check whether these explanations of the mind were given by them with the full understanding of the evolution of death. Whether they have complete understanding of the evolution of mind, how it started from rebirth time. The experiences of mind that has taken rebirth. The experiences of the mind in the mother's womb. The experiences of the mind. The process, the mind evolution at death time. Whether the scientists or anyone who gives those explanations of one life know about these evolutions, the beginning of this life and the end.

If they don't have the experience with their own minds of rebirth time and death time, if they don't know the evolution of their own minds and they don't see other beings' evolution of mind, rebirth time, and death time, how can their explanation of mind be correct? Explaining about their present existing mind—there is no way for it to really become a perfect explanation without understanding the beginning evolution, such as where the mind came from before this life. Most of the time it can be possible that they do not have really full understanding of the evolution of mind, but are just trying to guess through the physical body, through other people's physical body, trying to guess their mind. That way of checking cannot give the perfect solution, the perfect understanding of the mind. This blocks the right understanding of the mind. In this way the person doesn't realize the existence

of past and future lives or the mental continuity. Not understanding this becomes the cause of suffering.

Because of this ignorance and not having the wisdom to see this, all the methods, whatever the person does to solve the life problems, arise from ignorance. So all the methods become a mistake, and don't give the perfect solution. That method doesn't cease the whole suffering, whole mental illness.

I think about the mind beginningless, I think that much worry is enough. It is necessary from your side to check up, check up. Your studying, your meditation, this is the best research—your studying, your trying to learn your mind. Your trying to understand your own mind. In this way the understanding of the mental continuity of the evolution of mind is the first door, the gate, opening the wisdom of the Dharma. This is the first method, the first thing, the first foundation to stop the suffering, the mind illness, the delusions. By stopping this, by ceasing this, the rest of the problems and suffering automatically stop. Just like this. By destroying the root of the tree under the ground, the leaves and the tree, the rest of the things that come from the root, do not happen.

The second subject ... this subject has a relationship with the above subject, beginningless mind. For instance, if the mind is beginningless, if there is always continuity, then why we don't remember? We remember only when we were babies, small children, but we don't remember beyond that. If the mind always has been continuing even before that, why don't we remember? Like we remember yesterday, the day before yesterday—we remember what we were doing but we don't remember what we did in our previous lives, what we were, what rebirth we had. Just like that, we don't remember any of those other previous lives. Why? One reason that we don't remember all those previous lives, all those previous experiences, is mainly due to ignorance. This ignorance is not something that began with this life, it is not something that began with this present life's mind. This ignorance blocks us from seeing and remembering all the beginningless previous lifetimes. This ignorance has been dwelling in the mind from numberless previous lifetimes. As the mind has been beginningless also the ignorance has been beginningless. As at the present time ignorance is dwelling in our minds, in our consciousnesses, so the ignorance has been always rooted, living within our minds from beginningless previous lifetimes. Therefore the beginningless mind that has continued until now has been always ignorant. Just like this.

Sometimes when we tremble, when we become unconscious, we don't remember things. Sometimes when we go into shock we don't remember things. Just like this example, due to the break in life, death happening, the breaks of death and rebirth, due to the intermediate stage, due to the changes and mainly because of ignorance, we forget, we don't remember our previous lives. Even besides that we don't remember how we came from our mother's womb, how we lived in our mother's womb—we don't remember even this. But our not remembering this does not mean we didn't exist in that time. This cannot be a logical reason that proves we don't exist, we don't have mind or consciousness while in the mother's womb. Even things we did in this life we sometimes forget, don't remember—that does not mean we don't have mind.

However then if the mind always has been ignorant and ignorance is beginningless and if ignorance is the cause of all suffering, then is there the possibility to remove suffering by removing ignorance? There is the possibility. There is the possibility to achieve enlightenment by removing suffering and the cause of ignorance, by removing all the mental defects that prevent us from receiving enlightenment. Why is there the possibility to make the mind exist without ignorance, without being

ignorant? First of all the mind itself, the nature of the mind itself, is not oneness with ignorance. Not oneness with ignorance. Only the mind is temporarily obscured, temporarily obscured by ignorance. The nature of the mind is not oneness with ignorance.

Just like the white cloth is temporarily dirty, is obscured by dirt so it no longer looks clean, white, it looks black. If the color is oneness with the dirt then there is no way to make color clean—it is foolish to try and clean that because there is no possibility. Because the color itself is the dirt. For instance let's say, how can we clean the dirt from the dirt. Just like this. So it is not easy. Because the white color is not oneness with the dirt, it is temporarily obscured, therefore there is the possibility, therefore it is clever to wash it. There is the possibility for it to become clean by removing the dirt. Just like this, the same thing with the mind. The nature of the mind is clear light but it is temporarily obscured by delusion. If the mind is oneness with ignorance just like the white cloth is oneness with the dirt, then there is no way to achieve enlightenment, to get freedom, to remove suffering—no possibility. In this sense, in this case, if the mind is oneness with ignorance and delusion then what it becomes is like this. We have to stop the mind, we have to remove the mind; the only method that is left is to remove the mind, destroy the mind, no other method.

First of all, it is an impossible thing to stop the mind, to cease the mind. It is a foolish thing to try to cease the mind. As the mind has no beginning it has no end, no period in which it ends—this is quite important to understand because many people think the mind will cease. Many people have the idea that when they receive freedom, when they receive everlasting happiness, that means ceasing your mind, which is completely the wrong idea. Even though it is possible to cease the mind, if that is the solution, if that is the freedom, if that is enlightenment, everlasting happiness, then who achieves that? Because there is no person that time, the mind is finished. There is no physical body of that person because there is no mind. The person is not existing at that time; whenever the mind ceases, the person ceases, the person does not exist—so who gets freedom, enlightenment? Maybe the sky. It is necessary to think like this. There is no possessor of that realization. Usually enlightenment, nirvana, and everlasting happiness are mental states. They are mental states; they are not zero. Not like in space, not like becoming sky. Otherwise it doesn't make sense or peace. As suffering is a feeling, peace and happiness is also a feeling, so they have to have existence of mind. Also there is one reason—the object of the delusion, the object of anger and greed, is indefinite. Also the anger and the attachment to that object is also indefinite, not permanent. For instance, the object, the person towards whom we get angry in previous times doesn't become always the object of anger. He doesn't always exist in the object of anger. After some time he becomes an object of attachment as the condition changes, as his personality or condition changes. When the other person becomes violent, when he does something we don't like, anger arises, and he is an object of anger. Afterwards he changes that action, trying to please us, trying to act as something we like, and attachment arises. He is then an object of attachment. You see, these negative minds always change, don't last. As your negative mind toward him changes, the object changes, because the negative mind that looks at him also changes. Therefore the object of the anger, the object of attachment, the way we feel is not true, the way we feel and see is not true. If it were a true object then that person should be always the object of the anger. It could never change to become an object of attachment. If that were true that person should always exist as the object of anger. Then even after anger and greed and ignorance cease, the object of greed and anger would exist for that person who has purified greed, ignorance, and anger. But the person who has purified these negative minds doesn't have objects of anger, greed and ignorance, he doesn't have any of these objects. Because this person doesn't have the creator, the negative mind that gets angry and attached to the person, and is ignorant of the object.

(BREAK)

Student: Is the mind experiencing emotions and sensations the same mind experiencing enlightenment? It is still separate between subject and object?

Rinpoche: The mind that sees object and subject, is that the mind receiving enlightenment? Yes, the same mind receives enlightenment.

Student: Does feeling have to have existence? I experience feeling without existence of the mind.

Rinpoche: What do you mean by mind?

Student: That is not the body, something else.

Rinpoche: Is the feeling body. Feeling is in the body, isn't it?

Student: No.

Rinpoche: So, is the feeling mind?

Student: It should be.

Rinpoche: Just simple, feeling, what did you feel at that time when you felt there was no mind?

Student: I was not aware of my mind and I felt, but it must have been there.

Rinpoche: You experienced the emptiness of mind. You had the experience of a certain feeling without mind.

Student: Yes, exactly. I wasn't aware of the mind.

Rinpoche: Do you believe?

Student: I changed my mind now.

Student: You said mind cannot cease because it must be the possessor of the realization of nirvana.

Would you say that you believe each person is the vessel of an individual entity, and they will continue to exist as an individual entity after the realization of enlightenment?

Rinpoche: Yes. If the self doesn't continue, there is no person. Isn't that the same?

Student: Do you distinguish between self and ego.

Rinpoche: I don't use much ego, because people have different understandings of ego. Modern people believe ego to be a delusion but according to the dictionary and books, the ego is the self. I think young people in modern times, those who take drugs, they believe it is a delusion or something. I have a different understanding of ego. I myself don't use ego much. According to the dictionary explanation as long as there is a person there is a self, but the self, the selfless ... anyway, I am not in a hurry to talk about this subject. It is a term used so much in the teachings, and it is used also in other religious teachings. It is used so much, it is emphasized so much and recognized as a very important thing to realize in the Buddhadharma, but selfless does not mean as it is written and as you hear, selfless does not mean just that word. Selfless does not mean just that as you hear, as it is written there. It has another meaning. You have to understand beyond that. Anyway, it is like this. As I talked about during the breathing meditation, if you understand, I have already mentioned the wrong conception of the self "I," not just the conception of the self, the conception of the person himself, that is nothing wrong. The conception of the "I" is nothing wrong. But what is wrong is the conception of the self "I," that conception is a mistake. In order to receive nirvana, even before receiving enlightenment, even just to receive the cessation of the ignorance, nirvana, even just to receive this, the person has to completely remove the wrong conception of the self "I," the wrong conception of the self "I," that which is wrong, that which is illusive, that which is fallible.

So this is the thing. Usually when it talks about selfless, this does not mean that to achieve enlightenment or nirvana you have to cease yourself, finish yourself, cease your "I." It does not mean this. The problem is this. In many books selflessness, egolessness are written about, and sometimes authors have also written soullessness—however many people get wrong understandings

just by reading books. Actually, this is not caused by the book but by their own ignorance, not understanding exactly what it means. So if “selfless” is written there, then the person think that to achieve enlightenment, nirvana, one must cease the “I,” the person himself. He should make himself to not exist. He should make himself non-existent, which is an impossible thing. However, as long as the mind continues, as much as you try to follow the method, as much you try to cease the “I,” it is hopeless. It is a meaningless and hopeless thing, something that has no result, an action that has no result. So many people get wrong understandings from books like this, by just reading books without having a perfect teacher or guru. Without receiving the explanation of the teaching from a perfect teacher who is experienced, who has a correct or perfect understanding of the Dharma, so they just read a lot of books and believe in that as they understand, and they think the whole meditation, the whole process of the practice is to destroy the “I,” stop the “I.” The person believes this is the whole goal, the total aim, which is impossible thing to happen. Anyway, this is a big subject.

In order to fully realize the wrong conception that sees the self “I” and in order to realize and discover the self “I” and destroy the wrong conception and avoid the wrong view of the self “I,” we have to go through the graduated meditations as they are set up in this teaching. First of all we have to go through all these meditations. By doing meditation on each of these subjects, understanding each of these subjects, we understand our own nature better. In this way our minds become much more powerful; there is more wisdom to quickly destroy the wrong conceptions that make us see in the wrong way. So there is a whole process; there are levels to go through in order to realize that point. Also, by going through the levels of the gradual meditations and doing the meditation trying to realize the nature of the “I,” the nature of oneself, there is less danger and more skill. However, the wrong conception of the self “I,” the same conception of the self “I” and the wrong conception of the self “I” are different, you cannot make them one, you cannot mix them up. The conception of the self is not the wrong conception of the self “I.” This is the difference. In regards to the conception of the self, there are wrong conceptions of self and wrong conceptions self “I.” That’s what I mean—all conception of self is not the wrong conception of the self “I.”

What we were talking of before is another way of saying the possibility of receiving enlightenment—because the object of greed or attachment is not permanent. It is indefinite, as is the negative mind. Attachment and anger in the object are also indefinite, not permanent. Even without depending on such profound methods, meditations, teachings, even for a person who is usually in the world who never meditates, the object of anger changes and becomes an object of attachment. That object of attachment sometimes becomes an object of ignorance and sometimes becomes indifferent, becomes a danger. It always changes, it does not last, even without depending on the meditations. So therefore the object of the negative mind is not true. If the object of anger was true then the object of anger should always last. If the person anger for one person, that person who is the true object of anger should be an object of anger for all the rest of the people. It is the same thing with attachment and ignorance.

One thing, the attachment and anger came from ignorance, which is the wrong conception. It came from ignorance, which is a wrong conception, which is temporal and false mind, which always projects a wrong view, a false object, which does not exist. So ignorance, the cause of the greed and anger, can be removed by realizing the absolute nature of the object. Therefore, the ignorance is not permanent. This is one reason that proves that there is the possibility of achieving enlightenment or nirvana. So in order to remove the ignorance and all the delusions, such as the 84,000 delusions, in order to remove all these delusions Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has shown 84,000 teachings for the

remedies of the 84,000 delusions. All these teachings, all the 84,000 teachings are included in the three vehicles—the lesser vehicle, the Mahayana, and the Vajrayana. So this time the teaching that we are going to talk about and the meditation that we are going to practice is the Mahayana teaching.

It is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it was well expounded by the two great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching as it is the essence of Guru Tsongkhapa's and the great pandit Atisha's understanding of the teachings. This teaching includes 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment. There are four topics in the outline. The first is showing the knowledge of the authors. The author is the great pandit, the great realized yogi Atisha. He wrote the teaching titled *The Graduated Path* in order to inspire devotion in the teaching, the knowledge of the teaching, and the way of listening to the teaching and explaining the teaching, and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment.

First, a brief history of the great yogi Atisha, who established Buddhism in Tibet, and how he brought the teachings from India to Tibet. By understanding the knowledge that the great pandit Atisha has achieved, and by feeling devotion for him, also there is a way the teaching can benefit. The teaching can benefit by understanding his knowledge, by hearing about his knowledge and the realizations that he has achieved. The great Atisha is one of the highly realized pandits among the thousands of pandits in the great school, Nalanda. During that time there was Buddhism in Tibet but no teachings. [Earlier,] Padmasambhava was invited to Tibet to destroy the evil beings, the mischievous evil beings, and to purify the place. First Padmasambhava, the great yogi, came to Tibet and then afterwards Buddhism was established—sutra teachings and more tantric, Vajrayana teachings. Then after a long time there was some degeneration. There was a different leader who didn't like certain teachings, and while he had power in Tibet the leader—his name was Langtan. One who has horns on his head, like an ox. At that time there was much degeneration in the teaching and people had much wrong understanding about the teaching. There was always confusion between the tantra and sutra. There were different people such as pandits wearing blue robes who came from India and corrupted the teachings in Tibet, saying that they were practicing Vajrayana but acting in a different way.

However, at that time Lha Lama Yeshe Oe, who was actually a bodhisattva, couldn't stand the corruption of the teachings in Tibet. He wished to invite a pandit from India to make the teachings perfect. So he checked up—who would make the teachings in Tibet perfect and be able to remove the people's wrong understanding and wrong actions? After checking for long time, he finally heard of the Venerable Atisha, and thought that this pandit could do it. At this time when he heard Atisha's name he received such an incredible, wonderful feeling, such an attractive feeling. So he sent another Tibetan pandit Gatsosin with many gold presents to invite Atisha from India. This Tibetan pandit went to invite Atisha with gold presents, but he couldn't invite Atisha. Afterwards Lha Lama Yeshe Oe himself went. Before that he went to find more gold. As he went to find more gold, the king of Tibet at that time called Kalag Gyalwa put Lha Lama Yeshe Oe away in prison. The king was scared, he didn't want the pandit to come to Tibet. The king knew that if he invited the pandit, the teachings would spread in Tibet. The king didn't like that plan, so he put Lha Lama Yeshe Oe away in the prison and told him, "If you cannot give up refuge in Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, you should give me gold the size of your body. If you cannot give me that much gold you should give up refuge." So the king gave him a choice. Lha Lama Yeshe Oe, this Bodhisattva who wanted to invite the pandit Atisha to Tibet, said he wouldn't give up refuge, so he had to be in prison for a long time. His son called Jangchub Oe went to find gold to give to this evil king.

Jangchub Oe found gold up to his shoulder but still not enough. After he found that much gold he went to see the king to ask if he could take Lha Lama Yeshe Oe out of prison. But the king said there is gold missing the size of his head. The king wouldn't accept it, so the son Jangchub Oe, who was also a bodhisattva, went to the prison to explain to his father Lha Lama Yeshe Oe that the king wasn't satisfied. He said, "Don't worry, I will try to find some gold the size of the head, to give the king." But Lha Lama Yeshe Oe told his son Jangchub Oe, "Even if you find that much gold and the king lets me out, what is the benefit? I cannot benefit the teachings, therefore it is better I give up my life. On behalf of me please invite the great pandit Atisha from India. This is necessary to spread the pure Dharma in Tibet." So this was the will that he left, and afterwards he passed away in prison.

Jangchub Oe, the son of Lha Lama Yeshe Oe, sent another Tibetan pandit Nagtso Lotsawa with some other helpers and many gold presents. When they arrived in India they met Atisha and explained the whole thing—how the teaching was corrupted in Tibet, how it prevailed before, how it was cut later on by a certain person, and how people are suffering and ignorant and about the king of Tibet. They explained how Lha Lama Yeshe Oe sacrificed his life in prison to spread the teachings in Tibet. When Atisha heard this, he found it a little bit difficult to accept right away. Then afterwards the deity Tara, the female aspect of Buddha who communicated with Atisha regularly, predicted that if he went to Tibet he could benefit the teachings and the people so much, especially through one of the followers who lives in the five precepts. She told him that through this specific follower who is living in the Five Precepts, you can benefit the people and the teachings in Tibet so much. Atisha didn't accept this right away and he said he would check up. Then he checked up with Tara who predicted this and also told him if he didn't go to Tibet, he would live much longer, but that if he did go he would benefit so much for the people, but his life would be short, twelve years or something, I don't remember. Atisha said, "If I can benefit the teaching and the people, I don't care about my life short, it doesn't matter." So Atisha finally accepted to come to Tibet.

At time he was living in the monastery and had to have permission from the abbot of the monastery to leave. The abbot was called Runa Agara. At that time it was extremely difficult to invite Atisha to Tibet because everyone in India, the other pandits, wanted Atisha to be there. They said they needed Atisha there, that generally the whole teaching depended on him, spreading the Dharma depended on him. It was quite difficult to receive the permission right away from the abbot. But finally the Abbot gave permission to Atisha to be in Tibet for three years. So the Tibetan pandits who came to invite Atisha made the vow to bring him back to India after three years. Then Atisha and the other followers who came to invite went around to make pilgrimage in India and Nepal, keeping the secret of not letting other people know he was going to Tibet.

Afterwards Atisha came into upper Tibet, and gave much Dharma around that area. Then afterwards he wrote the teaching that I think I mentioned before, *The Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment*. This was a very condensed teaching, very simply written, including all the teachings of sutra and tantra, all the essence of the teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

After three years Atisha and the other pandits who came to invite him tried to return to India as they had promised, but there was war, fighting at the border so they couldn't cross that area. So they sent a letter, sort of a petition to the abbot about the situation. They also sent the simple teaching written that Atisha had written in Tibet to the abbot. After they received the information, the letter and the text written by Atisha, the abbot invited all other pandits, and they all lined up and he explained the benefits of Atisha, how beneficial he had been in Tibet and about the teaching written by him. Then he passed away. Also there was a king invited. Then they passed the teaching written by Atisha to

each pandit to examine and check up whether it was correctly written—not just only words, but especially the meaning, the way subject is set up, whether there was a mistake in the meaning or the way the words were written. There were many ways to check up. So when the pages were passed to each pandit, besides the words being perfect, even though they were pandits, learned in the Dharma and the different aspects of the teachings, somehow by seeing one page of that text they got a deeper understanding of the Dharma. They got such a good feeling, a deeper understanding of the Dharma. So all the pandits who checked the text got a big surprise—they really admired Atisha's knowledge and the beneficial actions that he did in Tibet, writing such a precious text that includes all the subjects, the essence of the Dharma and the path simply for the beings who have lower intelligence of mind.

So then the abbot said that if he was of such great benefit in Tibet, he stay be longer in Tibet. So finally Atisha and the other Tibetan pandits received permission from the abbot to stay. The other pandits were extremely pleased to have Atisha longer. From Upper Tibet they went into the center of Tibet, and then also they took Atisha to Lower Tibet to spread the Dharma. I think he spent about twelve years in Tibet destroying all the wrong conceptions the people had of the teaching, stopping all the people's wrong behavior. He spread much pure Dharma which was not corrupted, and that which was corrupted he purified, removed.

Also as Tara predicted, he met the follower living in the five precepts. This follower was also a bodhisattva, a transformation of the Compassionate Buddha Avalokiteshvara. He is called Dromtonpa. Atisha benefited the people and the teaching of the Buddha through his closest disciple Dromtonpa so much.

This is just a very short history about how the great pandit Atisha benefited in Tibet and helped the teachings. Atisha was born in part of Bengal, India—I don't remember the specific place but he was born as a prince. They had many possessions—palaces with golden banners, and in their apartments in the palaces they had many thousands of swimming pools. His family was extremely rich, having so many, hundreds, thousands of people in the population.

Usually, for poor people who don't have much possessions, who have a simple life, generally talking, it is easy somehow to practice Dharma, somehow it is easy. Generally for one who has so many possessions so many things like this king, involved in such things, it is difficult to live an ascetic life. It is difficult to develop the mind renouncing samsaric existence. Generally it is difficult. Atisha had everything—possessions, palaces relatives, and he could have had wives, princesses, whoever he wanted, whatever in life, whatever possession or enjoyment he wanted, he could have. When he was a prince his parents tried to keep him in the family and train him to take the place of the king. They tried to invite many girls from different places to dance and show things to him to make his mind feel attraction, and life that life. The parents tried many ways. But in early times, even though he was a child around nine years old, he went into the forest to seek a guru and receives so many teachings, even when he was a child, very young, nine or ten. He received so many teachings, refuge, and initiations from different gurus. The gurus sent him home several times. Once the gurus sent him back home to see the suffering nature of the worldly home. For different purposes they sent him home. One guru sent him back home, and he spent time there listening to his parents, and again left home for another guru. Then again that guru sent him home for a different purpose. The last one was to get the permission from his parents to make the complete decision, that it was okay for him not to live in the family and that he could live an ascetic life as he wished. The last time Atisha was sent by his guru, he performed as a deity like you see in the tangkas, naked without clothes on,

wearing a costume like the deities with other dakinis outside looking fearful. He sent Atisha back to home with eight dakinis. When they reached the home, his parents recognized Atisha but they were shocked, because his appearance completely changed, it was nothing like before. They saw and recognized him but had fear and crying and many things. Atisha and the other eight dakinis tried to act crazy and the people really believed that they were. Afterwards his parents gave him permission to do whatever Atisha wanted, to leave the family.

Anyway, this is just a very short history of this great highly realized bodhisattva Atisha. Actually there is a whole book explaining the whole history of the way he benefited the teachings in India and Tibet—about the amazing, incredible beneficial actions he did, and the knowledge that he achieved and his realizations. The graduated path of the teaching that we are going to talk about is originally from Atisha's teachings, from the precious *Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment*. So there is communication between what we are going to learn and Atisha. Atisha is in the lineage of the teaching so therefore usually it is like this. It benefits the mind very much to know about these holy beings, their holy actions and knowledge. As the devotion in them arises, in their knowledge, in their holy actions, at the same time as we practice the meditations, they become much more effective and beneficial for our minds. The meditations and practice become more successful because the devotion makes us stop the hindrances of the meditations and makes the practice of meditation successful, quicker to realize. Anyway, that is also another big subject, later on we can talk about it. Really actualizing the meditations, receiving the realization of meditations does not only depend on the practice of meditation. It does not only depend on knowing the subject of meditation. There is another need to receive the realization of the meditations—there are many other needs—equipment such as devotion, many other things—prayers, purification, many other needs. Just only knowing the how to meditate doesn't bring realization.

So also in the afternoon you meditate just like yesterday, spending more time watching the thoughts. First you do the breathing meditation and after that if you feel comfortable, if it doesn't cause harm, then to keep the mind away from distraction, if your mind is so much distracted, uncontrolled, after the breathing meditation, keep the mind between the two airs, the air that you bring up from down below the body and the air that you bring in. Keep it in the stomach and the mind between, the mind manifested feeling much bliss and just concentrate there. If you can't do it, it doesn't matter. If it causes harm or you cannot do it, you find it difficult, it doesn't matter. After that, try to be conscious of sensations like sound—what you feel or hear. Starting from the head to the feet, concentrate, try to be conscious, and then try to go back to yesterday, try to remember yesterday and the day before yesterday, like this, to the baby time in the mother's womb. Then the previous life, and the previous life before that. Then afterwards try to see beginningless life. Then just concentrate on the mind that is checking the life, you just concentrate on that. You watch that. In this way the mind is watching the mind, the mind is concentrating on the mind and watching. Also, it is not completely unconscious but be conscious, concentrating, "I am watching the mind," knowing what you are doing. In this way while your mind is concentrating on your mind, you are conscious of this action. In this way there is less distraction, and it is harder for other thoughts to arise, because your mind is spying, your mind is aware. So while it is aware, it is difficult for other thought to arise. Like police spying—while the police are looking at the materials at the same time they are also watching the thief—whether the thief is coming or not, what person is coming. Also part of the mind is working on that, sort of like this. It is easy to recognize other thoughts arising, easy to reject them, stop them from rising. They start to arise slowly so you can reject them. Spend most of your time here. It is very useful to realize the nature of mind.

Day Five
Sunday, 10th November
9 am

From the holy speech of great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen, “Even with the goddess called Yangchen situated at the throat, it would be extremely difficult to bring all the success of the bodhicitta tree, which grows where there is the water of love in the earth of compassion that brings about all wishes.”

Anyway, the meaning is this. Usually this goddess is called Yangchen, and one who achieves this goddess achieves incredible wisdom. For one who achieves this goddess, any subject that they have to express or explain is not difficult, it is all easy, everything just flows out without much effort. This is the special knowledge of this goddess. But even for one who has achieved this, who has this goddess living at the throat, still it is extremely difficult to bring about the wishes that the wish-fulfilling tree brings. The wish-fulfilling tree, the great tree that brings all the wishes, is the example, like the example of bodhicitta. As the wish-fulfilling tree grows from the earth and from conditions such as water, so the wish-fulfilling bodhicitta also grows from the earth, from compassion, and from water such as great love. The wish-fulfilling tree is just to give an example of how the bodhicitta brings about all the wishes, but actually this example cannot compare to bodhicitta—to all the wishes bodhicitta brings, because a wish-fulfilling tree cannot bring all the wishes as bodhicitta can bring. Any sentient being who wishes enlightenment, who wishes the cessation of ignorance, of perfect peace and any enjoyment, happiness in future lifetimes, any happiness, enjoyment in this life—anything can be received through bodhicitta. If bodhicitta brings the highest wishes and the goal of enlightenment, why not temporal happiness and peace? It is natural.

Just like a person who goes to New York. He doesn't have to purposely plan to land at different places such as the airport in London on the way to India. He doesn't have to purposely plan to land there, but he aimed to reach at New York and landing at those different places happened by the way. So just like this, as the bodhicitta brings the most sublime happiness of enlightenment, so any temporal happiness and enjoyment, any happiness of the future life, can be received through bodhicitta. Therefore it is a most skillful method, trying to understand about bodhicitta and trying to practice and meditate on bodhicitta. In this way, without causing harm or suffering to oneself and other beings, one can always be in happiness and achieve all those higher goals, the sublime happiness.

Therefore, it is necessary to train our minds in this pure thought even in this moment. Cultivating this pure thought for the action of listening to the teachings also becomes the cause of enlightenment. So therefore it is necessary to cultivate the pure impulse of bodhicitta, thinking, “I must release all sentient beings from all suffering and the cause of suffering and lead them to happiness and the cause of happiness. In order to do this I must achieve enlightenment. Therefore I am going to listen the teaching on the gradual path to enlightenment.”

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. This was well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding of the teaching. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

There are four topics in the outline. First, for reference, the knowledge of the authors. Yesterday we briefly talked about Atisha—his great works that were done in Tibet and his early life, where he was born, how he lived at his home. Anyway, there wasn't much talk about his history, finding different gurus in different times and receiving realizations, but it's okay.

The second one, in order to cause devotion to arise, the knowledge of the teaching.

I think page 5, paragraph 3. *Kadampa*—there is one sect that started after Atisha came to Tibet. “Kadampa” literally means those who—the followers of Atisha who were Kadampa took as the path to enlightenment any orders of the Buddha, any teaching, any piece, any word, any letters that they saw. And also besides that Kadampa refers to those meditators who take any situation, any words, whatever changes, whatever becomes wrong, whatever situation—whether it is pleasant or suffering—always they take it as the path to enlightenment, always they use the condition to receive enlightenment. They have such profound skills. However, the fundamental practice of the gradual path is mainly training the mind in the gradual path.

Paragraph 4, 1 (e)

Under the names of those sounds, besides animals, even non-living sounds such as streams, the sound of wind, even the sound produced by non-living things.

Paragraph 4, 3

This is the way that Atisha, this great author, this highly realized being, wrote the teaching of the *Lam drun*. He had all the knowledge to work to write that text. All these five knowledges. Besides having these five knowledges which include Dharma knowledge, inner knowledge, he had the continuous line of experience, not only just receiving the words but having the experience. The third one is having permission from a deity or guru. In previous times if the author didn't have those knowledges they didn't write books on Dharma.

Page 6, 1 Paragraph 1

This is the general explanation. It is also important ... this contains certain important things that help later on to not confuse our minds. Because there are such things—Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana teachings, different vehicles like this. So if you understand this the knowledge of these teachings written by Atisha, by studying these texts what knowledge we can receive, what confusion, what wrong conceptions can be removed. By understanding this then later on our mind doesn't get confused with the different teachings. In each of these teachings—Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana—there is little bit different way of practicing. The main thing is that there is a different way of thinking. Hinayana and Mahayana, there is a different way of thinking.

Actually all these three methods were shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to destroy the ignorance, greed, and attachment—mainly to destroy the negative mind and all the obscurations and to receive enlightenment. The purpose of showing these three methods is mainly to receive enlightenment. Guru Shakyamuni's purpose in showing three methods is to bring sentient beings gradually to the main goal, the final goal, enlightenment. Just like this. When parents want children, mainly they aim to send the children to University to learn higher subjects, to get a higher degree, but they cannot send the student right away to University to learn higher subjects, such as philosophy or whatever. Those deeper, more complicated subjects. So in order to get a higher teaching, first of all they send them to a small school, and after that send them to college, like this. Then to University. As they

gradually do this, the purpose of the different methods is to lead the followers to the final goal, enlightenment.

But even though he first of all he was following the Hinayana teaching, later on he had to follow the Mahayana teaching and then receive enlightenment. So all these three teachings—Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana—are something that can be practiced by one person, not opposite. If I am practicing the Mahayana teaching, I can never practice the Vajrayana teaching—it is not like this, they not opposite to each other.

In previous times Guru Shakyamuni Buddha showed the three methods, the three teachings, for different disciples who have different level of understanding and intelligence. For those with lower intelligence, Guru Shakyamuni showed the method of the four noble truths, the lesser vehicle path, and then for those who had higher intelligence Guru Shakyamuni showed the Mahayana teaching. Then for the beings who had the highest intelligence Guru Shakyamuni Buddha showed the Vajrayana teachings. These teachings were shown with different aspects, in different places. They were in India but in different places such as Sarnath—which is the place where Guru Shakyamuni showed the four noble truths, the subject of the lesser vehicle, the path for beings who have lower intelligence. The Mahayana teachings, in which are the explanations of shunyata, absolute nature, were shown in a holy place near Bodhgaya. Also, the Vajrayana teachings were shown in another place in India called Hochog Palgyeri. Those teachings were shown to the disciples at the same time—different teachings were shown in different places for different disciples but at the same time with different aspects.

Paragraph 4

Actually it means that by understanding the Mahayana teaching there is no other teaching that you cannot understand. By understanding the Mahayana teaching you can understand the Hinayana and also the other teachings, as by practicing these teachings any obscurations, any defects to the mind can be completely purified. There are delusions that can be purified by practicing the Hinayana teachings, and those delusions can be purified by practicing the Mahayana teachings. There is no such other teaching that you cannot understand by understanding the complete Mahayana teaching. Also generally by understanding the Buddhadharma, the more you understand, the deeper and wider your understanding of the Buddhadharma—those who can do this understand much better than those who study other religious books and teachings. You can understand much better and you can check better because you have a certain wisdom understanding the right meanings and knowing the way of checking, so it is easy. Also you understand easier, you can understand much better, you can easily understand what is right and wrong.

Paragraph 2

Such as the 84,000 teachings and the many other teachings written by the Indian pandits with so much detail. By studying the *Lam.drun* teaching, the teaching on the gradual path to enlightenment, by understanding this you can understand all others--the wide teachings, where there are many hundreds and thousands of volumes explaining different subjects. So by studying the gradual path, this simple teaching, you can understand the other teachings much more easily, with less confusion. If you don't study this, without depending on texts such as the *Lam.drun* and the gradual path to enlightenment, without depending on studying these texts and teachings, studying other teachings which have so many details and explanations, if a person's intelligence is low, he becomes confused. The teaching doesn't confuse him but due to his lower intelligence he becomes confused, he doesn't

the understand essence, he cannot bring it in, in totally, he doesn't know how to practice, how to cooperate with life.

First of all, starting with the gradual path to enlightenment is the best way of studying the Buddhadharma, the most practical thing. By studying this the person receives the understanding of the essence of the whole Dharma. Then after that as the person studies other big wide subjects that have so much detailed explanation, then it is very easy and quicker to understand, and it is very easy to bring the whole different understanding in one. It is very easy for that person who knows, who studied the *Lam.drun* teaching. Studying other subjects is not confusing; he finds it very easy. For him the subject is so small because he can bring it into one, he can make it one totally. So it is easy to incorporate into his life, his life is lived in that. Also in this way, one thing, this time also the reason we explain about the gradual path, the reason we choose this subject and also usually study this first without choosing one specific subject from the available subjects is because this way it is very effective for the mind. It is very effective for the mind, it is easy to have experiences. In the other case, the other way of studying is more intellectual, not so much related with the feeling, the experience. The way the subject, the meditations here are set up is mainly to clean the mind, to subdue the mind—mainly for the practice of subduing the mind, to clean the mind, to control the mind. So it is very, very useful.

Page 7, 4 Paragraph 2

Some people say the Mahayana teaching was not shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, that it was shown later on by someone, Nagarjuna or some follower, and that it is not the real teaching in the Buddhadharma, not for us. Also, same thing, saying the Hinayana teaching was not shown by Buddha, or the Hinayana teaching is not for us, no need for me. This is avoiding Dharma, the action of avoiding Dharma. This is one of the worst negative karmas. It is the same thing complaining about the Vajrayana teaching, that this mysterious practice was not shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, it was shown by some other yogis, and that it is not Buddhadharma—avoiding Dharma like this with ignorance, no understanding. However, we don't think of any of these things. but generally if you understand it is useful. So afterwards, such ideas, such thoughts rising can be possible, and at that time the understanding of this will be useful. Such thinking is avoiding the Buddhadharma, and is the worst negative karma. Especially for those who took bodhisattva vows, there are eighteen root faults, and doing this, a person commits a root fault.

Student: You tell us to check on what you say. The process of checking in a way is determining whether what you say is right or wrong. If we are not supposed to have wrong thoughts about Dharma, surely it is heresy to check.

Student Answered: You should prove for yourself if what is said is valid for you.

Rinpoche: I accept that as true too. It is necessary of course, right, you have to prove it, he is right. What I am saying is, generally if there is a logical reason that can be definitely proved, then you can say it is wrong because it has a logical reason to prove it, but without any logical reasons, just complaining without really knowing, just complaining like this, or just because you heard some other people saying the same complaints, and you just imitate what your friend says without having any logical reason within your mind, without having deep understanding how it is wrong—check up. Check up. I don't mean if you don't understand the complaint, that it is wrong. I don't mean that. What I mean is to check up in order to understand, in order to fully understand whether it is right or not correct. The subject, for instance, you have to check up. For instance, mind beginningless as we recently discussed, check up until you fully see with the logic, until you fully see whether it has beginning or whether it is beginningless. I don't mean that you should judge that it is wrong because

you are not understanding, that is not right. Then nothing can be good, in that case nothing can be good, nothing good is left, nothing right is left, if it is up to people not understanding. Just like this. One example. Like if there is a thief who steals things from your house, in order to stop those things getting stolen from your house, not understanding who the thief is and thinking there is no thief is not right, is not the skillful method. That doesn't help the situation. You also cannot think that things are getting stolen here from my house so all people must be thieves, not understanding. So you check up who is the person who is really stealing my things. Then you find a definite reason, that he came at such a time, the way he stole, and stole such things. There is the whole reason, the story that proves that person is a thief, that makes the person receive the name "thief" just like this. If by checking you find he is the thief, then there is a way you can stop him from stealing. That way also you understand other people didn't steal, but that it was that specific person. It is necessary to check up until you really understand. So usually it means this.

Paragraph 3

Ganges is river. Ganges doesn't mean only the river in India but it means the Pacific—not only the river in India, the holy water where you bathe like Western people bathe ... I am joking! This Ganges doesn't mean only that.

Student: Who is Losang Tubwang Dorje Chang?

Rinpoche: When our mind ... oh yes (laughing) ... through the practice of the gradual path to enlightenment our mind becomes completely purified of all the different delusions, all the different levels of the obscurations, heavy obscurations and subtle obscurations, such as dualistic mind. When the mind is completely purified of all this our mind becomes omniscient mind. At that time it becomes Losang Tubwang Dorje Chang.

(BREAK)

Student: Will the Hinayana path take someone all the way to enlightenment?

Rinpoche: It is a path to enlightenment. The Hinayana path is a path to enlightenment, yes. It is a path to enlightenment. Otherwise what is the purpose of showing the path; there would be no purpose if it doesn't lead the disciple to enlightenment.

Student: The purpose of the path might be to take the person to the Mahayana path.

Rinpoche: This means the same thing. Just like the example that I told you about the trip to New York, where you have to land at different airports on the way. Like this the person when is sick, has fever, or has disease, at the beginning the doctor gives the method, certain disciplines that he should not eat a certain diet to stop his disease. When his disease goes away he becomes less, better and better, then the doctor gives another method for him to get stronger, well. The doctor allows him to have another diet that he could not have before, like eating meat or another strong diet. Before his sickness is cured the doctor tells him he shouldn't have that diet, then afterwards his sickness goes away, becomes less, and gets better, and then the doctor tells him he can have another strong diet. But those two methods look different, what the doctor told the patient the first and second time look different, but both are methods to make the person healthy. The main aim is making the person completely cured or healthy. Just like this, different teachings were shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and the whole point is to bring the disciple into enlightenment, showing the Mahayana teaching, the Hinayana teaching—the whole thing is to bring them to enlightenment, like this. You are right, you are right, the purpose of showing the Hinayana teaching is to lead the disciple to the Mahayana teaching. It is method because the person is not ready to receive the Mahayana method, his mind not ready, but the mind is ready to receive Hinayana teaching, it is

necessary to show that. Afterward, as his mind becomes ready, then the Mahayana teaching can be shown. That way he can receive enlightenment; you are correct.

Student: Is it wrong thinking to be confused to think that the doctor changes. That creates confusion for me. Is that wrong thinking?

Rinpoche: How do you find confusion? Like this, you don't understand what the doctor means or what the doctor said, different things at different times. Anyway, it doesn't matter. Afterwards we can understand and talk. There is a different way of thinking in the Hinayana teaching and the Mahayana teaching. Guru Shakyamuni explained a different way of thinking. But the way of thinking that was explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to the followers of the Hinayana path was different than for those who would receive enlightenment by following the Mahayana Path. Afterward, when their minds become ready, then Guru Shakyamuni gives the method, shows the Mahayana teachings. In that way Guru Shakyamuni leads the disciples to enlightenment, like this. It will be cleared up as we carry on, these different ways of thinking. If you talk too much now there can be a little confusion.

Then the way of listening and explaining the teaching, a little bit about that, a little emphasis. Also, even when explaining the Dharma there are certain disciplines from the teacher's side. There are certain needs, equipment in his mind. There are disciplines, there are many things that are necessary to make the teaching beneficial. Also, from the disciple's side there are disciplines, there are ways of listening, things necessary to make the teaching beneficial or effective for the mind. Such as not being like this example, the pot. If the pot is upside down, if the cup is upside down, as much tea as we put it doesn't go inside. Just like this, if the person is not listening to the teaching, it doesn't go in the mind, just like the upside down cup. If it is up, if it has a hole, as much delicious tea is put inside, it doesn't stay, it runs out. That is listening, but at the same time forgetting. Just like when the person is there remembering but after the schedule the person is not thinking anymore about that subject of forgetting. That way the teaching doesn't become useful.

Then even though he is listening, just like the filthy cup with the bad smell, even though the cup is not upside down, or doesn't have a hole, it is dirty. Even if you tea put inside, it doesn't become worthwhile to drink, it is dirty. One of the most important things—we don't have so many problems of those other two, not so much for Westerners, but the third one is the biggest problem, the filthy cup. This is the most difficult thing, and that is listening to the teachings with a negative mind, with an impure motivation. So in that way listening to the teaching with an impure motivation, with a negative mind, in that way the teaching doesn't benefit the person that much. It cannot benefit the person's mind, cannot change the person's mind that much. The person is listening to the teaching with pride. Thinking, whatever else that he has to say, I know this subject, this just example—what new things does he have to say besides this subject which I know already, like this. Having strong pride and listening with pride. Even though he is listening, understanding the words, the teaching doesn't become beneficial to his mind because of pride. It does not become beneficial because the person is not listening to stop his life problems. The person is not listening to subdue his mind, to subdue his negative mind. He is sort of checking the person who explains, but he is not checking himself, his own mind, not concerned with trying to subdue his mind. Therefore the teaching doesn't become beneficial.

In the following subjects there will be many teachings that some people may have heard, which you already know. There will be all kinds of different subjects. However, even though you understand the words, the subject, this is not sufficient, you need the experience within your mind. Check up whether you have the experience. If not, then there is need of the understanding, the practice. The

reason there is no practice is because of not having the deeper understanding of that subject. This is one thing. Listening to the teaching is not just understanding the words but realizing the subject through understanding. Because the whole thing, the whole purpose of the teaching is to realize, experience, clean the mind. Also, repetition, similar words and subject will come for the mental practice. Otherwise just for understanding the words we don't need repetition.

Listening to the teachings with the idea, with the mind checking the person explaining, instead of checking one's own mind, instead changing the mind by listening to that subject, sort of watching how many mistakes he makes, how many incorrect words ... listening to the teaching in the mind, checking just other people, not checking oneself, not concerned with cleaning one's own mind. Listening to teachings with such a mind doesn't help that much. It is necessary to think that the listener himself is the patient and the teacher explaining is his doctor and the Dharma the listener is receiving is the medicine to cure the disease, the delusions, the ignorance. There are other things but these three are very important to think about. By thinking like this you know you are really a patient, needing a doctor, needing medicine to cure the disease. In this way you know the purpose that you are listening for. Thinking like this makes the mind conscious of the reason you are listening to the Dharma, which is the medicine to correct the disease, the delusions. I am listening to the Dharma to correct my mental disease. So in this way the person's mind is conscious of the purpose for which he is listening to the teaching. In this way he knows that he is listening to the teaching with such a mind, for himself not for other people, for himself to clean his own mind. However, when you listen to the teachings think that what he is explaining is for me, to clean my mind. In this way the teaching can be much more beneficial and also you can understand, as the person is trying to explain, you can understand much better, with less wrong conceptions, you can understand much better, and also your own mind will be in this way. However, especially in these fundamental teachings it mainly talks about your own life, the positive and negative life. It talks about the Dharma, the fundamental subject it introduces is our own life, which we are not conscious of usually, which we don't know. What is positive and negative, what is right and wrong, and how to make life perfect and pure by introducing the right thought and the wrong thought. So in this way we understand our own life, we understand how we are, how we live. Also besides showing what is right and wrong, the life and the mind, the thoughts, also the Dharma shows where the life problems arise and also it gives the solution how to stop it, how to make the life happy, also this is the method.

So anyway, the Dharma is like a mirror. The fundamental subject that we are going to talk about is like a mirror, a mirror to check up our own mind, our own life. Just like the mirror we often use to check up whether our body is clean or not, or dirty, just like this, the mirror reflects or shows what shape we have, whether it is clean or dirty, like this. Dharma exactly shows this. Besides the physical body, Dharma shows about the mind, how our mind is. So in this way Dharma is like the mirror of the mind, the mirror of our mind. In this way we understand the nature of our mind, we understand the evolution of our mind, the nature of our mind. Therefore many times we will talk about negative things, many subjects that you hear will be negative things, many subjects will be negative things that we have been doing and not been conscious of, that we now know. That is the first thing that the Dharma explains before you make yourself correct, perfect, before giving the method to make you perfect. For that, to make the life perfect, and the mind pure, the Dharma shows first of all what is the problem, what is wrong. You see the problem here in the modern world is that we don't know what is really wrong. The main problem is that we don't know what is wrong with us, wrong with our mind. The reason that we don't know what is wrong with us, the reason why we don't know

what is wrong with ourselves, what is really wrong, is because we do not recognize ourselves. Totally. So understanding Dharma makes us recognize and know ourselves.

The way of explaining and listening to the teaching is briefly like this. What you think from the mind. Then usually it is necessary always just before listening to the teaching, always necessary to have a pure motivation. Therefore because of that reason even though I will repeat all the time how to cultivate bodhicitta, from my side just explaining is not enough, that doesn't mean all your actions of listening teaching become Dharma, become the cause of enlightenment. Because for your action to become the cause of enlightenment, Dharma, depends on your mind, it doesn't depend on my repeating. Repeating is just to help, to emphasize, if you didn't motivate in the pure way. Like this. However, if I talk totally, to make your action of listening to Dharma or doing meditation the cause of receiving perfect peace, the cessation of your negative mind of ignorance, the action of listening to the teaching should become the method, the remedy of the delusions which are within our mind. The action of listening to the teaching should become the remedy of the delusions. So what should make the action the remedy of the delusions—the motivation, the pure thought, that has to be made by the pure thought, pure motivation.

So example. There are four people listening to the Dharma. This person, one person listens to the Dharma with the reason just to make the temporal life happy, just to have an enjoyable life. For that reason the person is listening to the Dharma. He thinks that by listening to the Dharma maybe he will understand certain methods to make this present life happy and comfortable, but has no concern for future enlightenment, receiving everlasting peace. Then the second person listens to the Dharma concerned with having a better future rebirth. Just only that—concerned with future happiness, a happy rebirth, but not concerned with getting out of the boundaries of suffering, samsara, not concerned with receiving enlightenment. The second person listens for such a reason. The third person listens to Dharma to release from samsara, the boundaries of suffering. That means delusion and karma, and to receive everlasting happiness. The fourth person is listening to Dharma with bodhicitta, with the pure thought, the motivation, the wish to receive enlightenment only for the benefit of other sentient beings. So now we check up—these four people have different ways of thinking, different motivations. So who's action becomes the method of receiving perfect peace? Who's action becomes the remedy of the delusions?

For the first person who is only concerned with making the temporal life happy by listening to the Dharma, his action of listening to the Dharma doesn't become even a virtuous action, because that action is possessed by attachment, negative mind, attachment to temporal comfort, only the temporal life's comfort, therefore it is a negative action. Even if it is not a virtuous action and that action is not the remedy of delusions, it is a helper, a method of delusion, it is a helper, becomes a helper to the delusions by not being the remedy of the delusions. The second person who is only concerned for the future rebirth, not concerned with releasing from samsara, boundaries of suffering and receiving enlightenment, his action is a little bit better, this action is a virtuous action because the action is not possessed by attachment attached to only the comfort of this life. He is concerned with his future life, the action is done with that motivation concerned with the future life, so the second person's action of listening to the Dharma is virtuous, while the other person, the first person's action is not virtuous, is a negative action that only brings a suffering result, a suffering rebirth, such as an animal rebirth. Also other suffering rebirths besides animals, creatures. There are other suffering rebirths such as pretas, narak beings. So the first person's action doesn't ... anyway the result caused by the action possessed by a negative mind is a suffering result. The second person's action is a virtuous action but still the second person's action of listening to the Dharma is

still not the remedy of the delusions. It still doesn't become the remedy of the delusions. So because the second person doesn't motivate the action to release from samsara, to release from the delusions, he doesn't do the action with this motivation, so even though he takes another rebirth, he is still living in the boundaries of suffering, living in delusion.

So now, the third person who listens to the Dharma for the purpose to escape from samsara, the boundaries of suffering. His action becomes the remedy of his delusions because his motivation is to escape from delusion, remove the delusion, therefore the action of listening to the Dharma is the remedy to the delusions, becomes the remedy of the delusions. That action becomes the cause, that action is the actual cause of bringing everlasting happiness. And the fourth person who listens to the Dharma with the pure motivation of bodhicitta—then there is no question, no doubt whether that action is the remedy of his delusions, no question. Because the fourth person's goal is the final goal, much higher than the third person's goal and the fourth person's goal; that is the highest goal. He has the greatest project, aim, wanting to receive enlightenment for each of the suffering sentient beings. So that is the most pure motivation, that action is the actual cause that brings enlightenment. Just like the seed that brings the fruit.

So therefore the action done with such motivation, bodhicitta, that action is the most beneficial action for oneself and other sentient beings. With this motivation, listening to teachings becomes a very helpful and quick cure for the mental diseases and to control the mind and in that way your action never gets involved in self, doesn't become an egocentric action. Motivating, thinking like this, repeating the motivation and thinking like this doesn't let the self-cherishing thought rise. So the understanding of the different types of motivation is very important. Because this is not something that you are going to do after one year, two years, next life, these actions are something we have to know right away, act on right away to benefit the life, our life and other beings' lives.

I think maybe now you don't need to do the breathing meditation so it is much better to spend more time watching the thoughts, the last meditation. If you start watching the thoughts, all of a sudden like this, you don't find the object to concentrate on, sort of like your mind is lost in space. Watch your own thoughts, the words. It looks quite simple because we often have thoughts often thinking on different objects. All the time we are thinking. So there is no problem of not having thoughts. Sometimes we think too much. Anyway, there is no problem of not having thoughts. The thinker, the object, not the person but the mind, on that you concentrate, and that is the object you watch. So the method is, first of all, you check, go through the life, then after going back through many previous lives, then after some time you ... first of all you only concentrate on the life then afterwards going back and back like this. Afterwards be conscious of what your mind is doing, thinking, what it is checking, the life. So the thinker of the life, the mind—then you just concentrate on that, be thoughtful of that. That it is there watching. Be thoughtful of your thoughts watching the life, try to be conscious of that thought, that itself is watching thought. So it is more important now that you spend more time like this, watching the thoughts, but however, trying hard, trying hard. It is natural to have difficulty at the beginning so you don't need energy to try it, to continue to bring back the mind from distraction, try to be conscious of the thought. Just like another example. If you are walking with a friend along path, then you are watching the road but also you are watching your friend, what he is doing, whether he is going to hit you. With one of the eyes you are watching the road, but on one side you are watching the other person who is walking with you. Like this, be very careful, conscious, mainly you are concentrating on the mind, but also a little bit, also being conscious of what things start to come, like this. If you concentrate on the thought, this way there are less distractions because usually there is the distraction of thinking of many different objects, the

mind thinking of different objects. Now we concentrate our mind on different objects, so concentrating on the thought it doesn't get the chance to think of other objects. More thinking of just the thought.

Student: Just looking at some event past in my life, guiding the thought, at a certain point I would lose the guidance and thought becomes—

Rinpoche: Same thing, similar. First of all you are checking the life—your mind is somewhere in America, round your home, wherever, your friend there, where there is an island, a swimming place. Then when the mind is thinking like this all of a sudden you know that the mind is thinking of such an object like this. Then just concentrate on that thought that thinks of America, your friends, just on that thought you concentrate, take care of that thought, concentrate on that, so that it stops to continuously think, to wander around. Again if the mind gets distracted thinking like this, if you do it again and again like this, somehow the energy of our effort makes the concentration last longer. If you use the skill of being conscious of the mind, the thought on which you concentrate, at the same time what things start to rise, what other thoughts start to rise?

Student: Shall I let one thought rise after the other and watch or go back to the guidance—usually one or two just going along. Guiding my mind to see a particular year, twelve months, at a certain point if I let go of the guide, a thought arises which is nothing to do with the subject, I can watch that thought. After that arises another one nothing to do with the twelve months—do I watch?

Rinpoche: Don't go back to the subject. First you go through even though the mind gets distracted on something else. The main thing is to try to recognize and hold the thought. The main thing is, it doesn't matter whatever the thought, the mind thinking of different subjects, it doesn't matter, the subject is not so important.

Student: Hold the thought?

Rinpoche: Hold the thought and watch it. Not like this—there is one method but not like this. You are thinking of some plans to do in the West, your mind is thinking but at the same time you are conscious of what your mind is thinking, planning. This is one method to stop the intense agitation, one method. In this way it stops after some time but it doesn't stop arising and because you are still letting the mind think of other subjects, you are not really concentrating on one point. The most important thing for a short time is to concentrate mainly on the mind.

6 pm

First you motivated the pure thought of bodhicitta thinking, “I must lead all the sentient beings to the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightened stage by myself achieving Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightened stage. Therefore I am going to practice the Guru Shakyamuni Yoga.”

Usually there is so much benefit even just visualizing any aspect of enlightened beings. We don't realize, we don't have the wisdom to realize the effect by seeing the statue or by seeing even a painting of the enlightened beings. The effect of that and how much it purifies the negativities, we don't realize. But actually any figure of the enlightened beings, just by seeing it, it is very beneficial to the mind. Just by seeing it, it can purify much negativities, much obscurations of the mind. One thing is visualizing the aspect of the enlightened beings never causes attachment, the effect is completely different than visualizing ordinary person, visualizing your friends to whom you are attached—it is different, the effect is completely different. Visualizing the ordinary people that we are attached to causes attachment to rise, only causes the mind to become more ignorant instead of lessening the obscurations. As it causes ignorance to rise, attachment to rise, it causes our mind to not realize its nature. It causes us to not realize the nature of that object. Also it causes us to not

realize the nature of our mind. It is natural, for instance, that attachment never makes us realize the nature of attachment, the faults of attachment. What attachment does is obscure the understanding or fault of the attachment, the nature of the attachment. As attachment obscures the understanding of the faults or nature of attachment, the attachment obscures the understanding of the nature of ignorance. That's how the attachment causes is to not realize the nature of mind. However, again there is a big subject around there to explain.

However, there is a big difference between the effect or benefit of visualizing an aspect of the enlightened beings and an ordinary person who is not enlightened. When there is a visualization of ordinary people, it comes sometimes in anger, sometimes in attachment, in different feelings, and sometimes ignorance rises. But any time the person sees those figures such as paintings, statues, even visual aspects of enlightened being, there is always benefit, it always becomes a purification of the delusions. One thing is, as we look at, as we visualize the figure of the enlightened beings each time when we look at it, it leaves an impression on the consciousness to receive the teaching of that buddha or in the future lifetime to be the disciple of that buddha, to live close to that Buddha. Also by visualizing or by seeing even a simple figure of an enlightened being, it gives interest, gives the wish to attain enlightenment, to be like that enlightened being, who has such knowledge of holy body, extremely beautiful, never causing negative mind to arise. It only causes faith and devotion to arise. Also, to receive the knowledge of that enlightened being's holy speech and the knowledge of that enlightened being's holy mind. So in this way as there is interest or such wish in the person's mind, the person because of that energy, that wish, the person follows the path to enlightenment and the person achieves that buddha for the benefit of sentient beings. So there is that much great purpose, benefit. Also any time we see each figure, each different aspect of an enlightened being, it leaves an impression to see many hundreds, millions of buddhas in future lifetimes.

For instance, one example, one history. One of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's disciples called Shariputra—there are two of his closest disciples, arhats called Shariputra and Maudgalyayana. So Shariputra in one of his previous lifetimes was a messenger, and he spent one night in the temple and he was fixing his torn shoes and there was a light in front of him so first of all, he was fixing his shoes, then afterwards he got tired and he sort of took a rest. Then in front of him there was a painting on the wall of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. So he saw this figure. Before he didn't see it because of fixing his shoes, and later on he took a rest and with the light he saw the figure there, this beautiful painting. And he looked again and again while he was sewing his shoes because it was very interesting there, very attractive, a very interesting figure that caused devotion to arise, and the wish to become like that. So he thought it was very attractive, wonderful, he thought there is such person like that having such beautiful body and he thought, "I wish to become like that." He had the strong wish to become like that enlightened being, as he saw the figure. So because of this karma, this impression left by seeing this figure in his other lifetime, he was always with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, very close, always very close and receiving teachings from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and seeing many thousands of other buddhas. Seeing these objects leaves an impression in the mind and causes us in future lifetime to meet the teachings again and also to really see those different aspects of buddhas.

So visualizing has great purpose, so much benefit, even when there are bad dreams, when there is something offensive that was caused by human beings and non-human being, spirits, such as people who try to give offense with the black magic method. However, especially when there is any kind of this offense or danger, things like this happening, especially in those times, on those occasions, visualizing the aspect of enlightened beings, whether you visualize outside of you or in oneness with

you, it becomes protection. It protects you from those dangers, offenses, from the mental danger and physical danger; it is very powerful. Why does it become protection, and when we visualize certain ordinary persons that we are attached to, why doesn't that become protection and why does visualizing certain aspects of enlightened beings become protection, why does that have power? This method, this visualization becomes protection by the power of that enlightened being, it is the knowledge of the enlightened being's omniscient mind. That enlightened being who is completely released from all fears and sufferings and has infinite great compassion for all sentient beings to lead them from suffering. So the visualization of this aspect, protecting, helping like this, is because of the knowledge power, the knowledge of the omniscient mind, especially the infinite compassion that he has achieved. Also with each aspect of the deity there are all kinds of different methods according to different dangers, different sicknesses, different dangers—there are all kinds of different methods that one can do, practice, use, even with one aspect of a deity. Why is it that even the non-living things and the living beings cannot give harm when the person is practicing such a method? That is because of this power and knowledge of the enlightened beings. However these are the experiences, anyway, there is no need to talk much. Even though it is not our experience, it is the experience of many other meditators, many other people, holy beings who followed the method, who did the practice. So it is definite that also if you visualize, if you practice in a similar way, it can become also protection for you.

The main point, the main purpose of visualizing the aspect of the enlightened beings, is for purification, purifying the delusions and receiving enlightenment. So as I explained, you make the visualization. First of all before we become oneness, because our mind is so deluded and dirty, so in order to become oneness first of all we have to purify ourselves. Therefore first of all we visualize outside. So the visualization of the enlightened being should be in a specific place—with maybe one arm that much distance between you and the object and then above the ground, at the same level as the height of your forehead, then visualize the large golden throne, the large square golden throne, adorned by many jewels. So as I explain it is better to visualize.

First of all you make the position correct. Straight from your forehead at that level, that height, visualize a large square golden throne adorned by many jewels and erected by eight snow lions, white lions. There are two lions at each side, one lion at each corner. The lions are holding up the golden throne, thinking of it as a real living animal, breathing. Above the throne is a lotus, a big lotus. On the lotus is a sun and moon seat. The sun and moon both are flat, like round cushions, both are flat, very bright, and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha ... first of all think like this. All the enlightened beings' omniscient mind manifests in Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, in the manifestation of a monk wearing robes. As you see, try to remember the thangka, the paintings, adorned with beautiful robes, legs crossed. The color of his holy body is golden, all transparent not just like the statue, not just like made of cement, but like a water bubble, very transparent, just like that. Golden color but very transparent, indestructible, glorious looking. The right hand's palm is on the right knee, the left hand is holding a bowl, and the bowl is in his palm. The bowl is held at the navel. The bowl is filled up with nectar; nectar means sort of medicine. As the term of the nectar called *dutsi*—*du* means hindrance, *tsi* means medicine. So medicine to stop hindrances. So that nectar in Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's bowl is nectar to stop the evil of the *skandhas*, or aggregates. The nectar is to stop the suffering of the aggregates. For instance, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha doesn't have any suffering of the aggregates, he is released from that, but the nectar stops our suffering of the aggregates. For instance, we have bodily suffering and mental suffering—these are the suffering of the aggregates. So that is the nectar to control the evil of our aggregates. That is the nectar to stop the evil of the

death—not Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's death but our death, the suffering of death. And this is the nectar to stop delusion—not Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's, but our delusion.

His right palm on his knee signifies controlling the evil hindrances of certain sentient beings, suras and asuras. Those other sentient beings cause harm to the meditators, those who practice Dharma. And the robes, the beautiful adorned robes do not touch his holy body, there is one inch of space between the holy body and the robe, but he looks well adorned, decorated. And he has such a beautiful smiling face that gives incredible bliss within our mind and tiny eyes, compassionate looking eyes, and red lips, and long ears and a hair knot on the top. All the hairs are dark blue and curved, not mixed with each other but curved to the right and radiating, his whole holy body radiates and sends rays all over, all directions, up and down, on all sides, sends rays to all sentient beings who are in different universes, planets, and different realms. So many rays come from each of the pores of his holy body, so many rays, and a great number of small buddhas come from his holy body to different sentient beings' realms to work for sentient beings. Some Buddhas come back through the rays and absorb into the pores of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body after finishing the work for sentient beings.

Think that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is the embodiment of all the enlightened beings. Now make requests from your heart, “Please grant me blessings in order to quickly receive the beginning of the gradual path, the realization of the guru and up to the realization of enlightenment, for the benefit of other sentient beings.” Think that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has accepted and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is sending white purifying light with his infinite compassion wanting you to release from all suffering and attain enlightenment. So as you are receiving the light it is just like the light coming in the dark room—as the light comes in the room the darkness completely disappears, nowhere existing, just like this think that the light has gone into all the parts of your body. All of a sudden all the delusions, all the subtle obscurations, all the negative karmas, all are completely purified, all are completely lost in the form of darkness, nowhere existing in and out.

So while you are concentrating on the purifying white light coming from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body, from the heart and absorbing into your body, going all over inside the body—while you are concentrating on the purifying white light coming, you repeat the prayer.

La-ma Dron-pa Chom-dan-da
D'e-zhin Sheg-pa Dra-chom-pa
Yang-d'ag-pa Dzog-pa Sang-gya
Pal-gyal-wa Shak-ya T'ub-pa-la
Ch'ag-tsal-ching Kyab-su-ch'i-wo
Ch'o-do J'in-gy'i Lab-tu-sol

Guru Founder Lord Buddha, the Fully Realized Destroyer of all Defilements;
Fully Completed Buddha, having fully realized the Absolute Truth as it is in objects.
Magnificent King Buddha, to you I prostrate and go for Refuge, to you I make offerings; please,
bestow your blessing.

Then repeat also the mantra of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

Ta Ya T'a Om Mu Ne Mu Ne Ma Ha Mu Ne Ye So Ha

Now think, “By absorbing the white light which is the essence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind, all my negative karmas that have been collected from beginningless previous lifetimes, all the delusions, every single subtle obscuration, is completely purified.” Feel complete emptiness of all the delusions, negative karmas, try to feel the body very light and blissful. Now visualize yellow light coming from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's heart, the knowledge yellow light. This means the yellow light, the essence of yellow light is the infinite knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body, holy speech, holy mind. The holy body which has not one ugly part, the holy body that can transform into numberless different manifestations to work for other sentient beings according to the sentient beings' different minds and knowledge of holy speech. It can give the teachings on different subjects according to the sentient beings' different levels of mind and those teachings in different languages according to the different sentient beings languages. All those teachings are given by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in different languages on different subjects at the same time, as he has such knowledge of speech and knowledge of holy mind, the omniscient mind that fully sees all past existence and all present existence, and all future existence, and has the complete power to read all the numberless sentient beings' different thoughts at the same time. There is not one single atom or existence that his omniscient mind doesn't fully see. Every existence that is existing is fully seen all the time by the omniscient mind. There is such infinite knowledge of the omniscient mind. So this yellow light is received from Guru Shakyamuni's heart, the essence of that is the infinite knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy speech, body, mind. Think, “I am receiving it, all of my body is filled up by that knowledge light.” And try to think, “I have received the infinite knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body, speech, and mind,” and try to feel infinite bliss, all the parts of the body besides the mind, feeling bliss even in all the parts of the body. So while you are concentrating on this yellow light receiving, recite the mantra.

Mantra

Now do the visualization of the absorption of the eight lions absorbing into throne—then the throne absorbs into the lotus, that into the sun and moon, and they absorb into Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha comes to sit on your head and melts into light and becomes oneness. The light absorbs into you and you instantly think that you become completely oneness with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. As you do the visualization absorbing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha into oneness with you, think at the same time that all the ordinary view, the way you see yourself and all the wrong conceptions, are completely empty and your mind is oneness, completely oneness with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's blissful omniscient mind in the form of space. While the mind is being oneness with blissful Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind in the form of emptiness like the nature of the sky, all of a sudden the large throne and lotus and sun and moon seat and oneself who is in the manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha appear, exactly as you have visualized before in front of you, with a very transparent radiating glorious looking holy body, feeling infinite bliss. At the heart visualize again the lotus, sun, moon, and in the center of the moon visualize the seed syllable letter that is the essence is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind, letter MUM. On the edge is the MUM mantra standing clockwise. So while you are reciting the mantra visualize you are sending rays from the mantra and from each pore of your body to all the sentient beings up and down in all directions. You send purifying rays to all sentient beings and purify all sentient beings, all their negative karmas, all their delusions, all their subtle obscurations. Again recite the mantra while you are concentrating on this, sending the purifying rays to all sentient beings. This includes your enemies, sentient beings you like, don't like, that you hate—it includes everything. So while the visualization is done recite the mantra as you are concentrating on sending rays from the mantra.

MANTRA AND MEDITATION

Think, “All the sentient beings are completely purified of all their negative karmas and all delusions and even the subtle obscurations.” Think, “I have enlightened all the sentient beings in the nature of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.” Visualize all sentient beings in the aspect of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Think, “I have attained my work as I motivated in the beginning with bodhicitta.” This is not nonsense thinking. “I am not enlightened, I didn't enlighten even one sentient being, why should I think this?” This method is a profound Mahayana method. This has great importance that causes one to quickly achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment and lead other sentient beings in his enlightened stage. This is thinking about the future but even though it is future thinking, imagining, thinking, and meditating like this at the present time, taking the future result in the present, this has great importance. But anyway, it is not necessary to explain this now.

The meaning of the mantra briefly, to have some idea what it means.

La-ma Dron-pa: *La-ma* means Guru. *La-ma* means ... in this case, this specific subject it means guru. Usually *La* literally means sort of high, having higher knowledge. But here in this specific subject *La-ma* means guru. *Dron-pa* means founder of the path.

Chom-dan-da: *Chom* means destroyer, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has destroyed all his delusions and dualistic mind, so *Chom*. *Dan* means—there is a deeper detailed explanation—however, *Dan* means having the realization of enlightenment, totally. *Da* means passed away in enlightenment. Simply talking *Da* means passed away in enlightenment through the path.

D'e-zhin Sheg-pa: *D'e-zhin* means suchness. *Sheg-pa* means passed away. Actually *Chom-dan-da* and *D'e-zhin Sheg-pa* have a similar meaning. Another meaning of that *D'e-zhin Sheg-pa* is realizing whatever the nature that existence has, the absolute nature that existence has. This is also one meaning of *D'e-zhin Sheg-pa*. Suchness means the absolute nature of existence as Shakyamuni Buddha realized it. It means Guru Shakyamuni Buddha doesn't see the nature of the object that is not there, which doesn't exist. He sees what is actually existing there. Anyway, *D'e-zhin Sheg-pa*.

Dra-chom-pa: *Dra* means enemy. In this case enemy means delusions. *Chom* means the same thing—destroyer because he has destroyed all enemies, delusions. This means also arhat.

Yang-d'ag-pa Dzog-pa Sang-gya: means fully enlightened. *Yang-d'ag-pa* means fully, *Sang-gya* means enlightenment. Usually Buddha is Sanskrit, and the Tibetan term is *Sang-gya*. *Sang-gya* means completely purified of all the delusions, all the subtle obscurations, not having one single defect of the mind. *Gya* means having all the knowledge, *gya* means perfect in all the knowledge. *Sang* means complete purity of all the delusions, obscurations. So each word has great meaning. Actually just even two words *Sang-gya* includes the whole realization of the Buddha and includes also each path that Buddha has achieved and each purification of negative mind and delusions that Buddha purified—so it includes so many incredible subjects.

Pal-gya-wa: *Pal* means magnificent. *Gyal* means King, Buddha.

Shak-ya T'ub-pa-la: *Shak* means of caste, the Indian caste called, *Shak-ya*, one of the noble castes Buddha was born into, a pure caste. I think there is still a generation of this. *T'ub-pa* means control.

Ch'ag-tsal-ching: means prostrate. So prostrate to whom? To Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

But all this, *La-ma Dron-pa* ... to *Ch'ag-tsal-ching*, each of them are different names but each of them mean one thing. Just one thing. Just one essence. That is what comes at the beginning, *La-ma*, the essence, whom we call Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. So that essence, that *La-ma* who manifested in the aspect of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, to that enlightened being, we prostrate. *Ch'ag-tsal-ching* means prostrate.

Ch'o-do: means offering.

Kyab-su-ch'i-wo: taking refuge.

J'in-gy'i: asking to grant blessings to purify the mind, to receive realizations.

I think we stop there. Actually, the meaning of this dedication, what is going to be said now, actually the dedication is this. So you can think at the same time even though you can't say the Tibetan prayer, you can think of the meaning, so its same thing. Due to the merits may I quickly achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and lead every and all sentient beings to your enlightened stage.

(See Appendix I for amplified version of Guru Shakyamuni Yoga Practice.)

Day Six

Monday, 11th November

9 am

From the holy speech of great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen—first just a little history about Tenzin Gyaltzen. He was born in India, in Khunu, and he spent his early life in Tibet in different monasteries where he completed all his practice, listening to Dharma, checking, and doing meditation. He perfectly completely these in Tibet, taking teaching from different gurus. Not only did he take the teachings on the paramita, not only general the Mahayana teachings, but also the Vajrayana teachings. After that he spent much time in India living an ascetic life. Actually, he is a great yogi, a great yogi who does the practice very secretly and spends his life mainly in the practice of bodhicitta, taking care of other beings more than oneself. Even though there are thousands of other Dharma practices, different practices such as Vajrayana, many other practices, he spent his life mostly in the practice of bodhicitta, keeping the pure thought of bodhicitta, taking care others more than oneself, keeping this pure thought as his heart.

There are many people who may have seen this bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen. Before, the Tibetans did not know anything about him. He was just wandering around in India like a sadhu, with a naked body without clothes on. At that time the Tibetan people didn't know anything about him. He wandered around and spent much time at the Ganges in Varanasi, where many sadhus lived. He lived around there for a long time, but people did not know any difference from the outside—they just believed that he was the ordinary person that they saw in their view. He lived like the sadhus. Sometimes he used to come to the Tibetan monasteries, such as Bodhgaya, at certain festival times and he asked the monks to give him a place to stay. The monks didn't know him at that time and they thought he was an ordinary person. He spent some time there and left, and people didn't know when he left, and then he came back. Afterwards, somehow His Holiness the Dalai Lama took

teachings from him especially on bodhicitta. The teachings on bodhicitta were on the text written by the great pandit Shantideva, “Following the Bodhisattva’s Actions.” His Holiness took teachings from him on that text. Also His Holiness’ tutors took teachings from him. Many other high lamas took teachings from him as well. So gradually many other people recognized that he had the perfect understanding of the whole Dharma—besides the intellectual understanding, he had completed the experience of the Dharma. He himself was living in the experience of the Dharma, the realization of the meditations. So later on, as people recognized and heard about him, they began to take teachings from him. His life history is so amazing, something that we can’t imitate. Just even understanding of his life, how he lived, even just understanding this it is something that generates incredible devotion. He was a yogi who didn’t have even one single atom of attachment, who didn’t have any smell of attachment. Whatever action he did—speaking, talking to people—whatever he did never involved even a small action of attachment.

Usually he took one meal—he didn’t have any kitchen or proper things. Usually he lived at Bodhgaya, and there were no proper things and people around there offered lunch. He took one meal and I think he went peepee once in the day, and any material things, anything people gave him—he usually didn’t like other people giving him things. He usually didn’t accept. For him there was no difference between giving him garbage and giving him gold and silver. There was no difference for his mind, no change in his mind. In his room people offered things, so he put everything under his bed, just left it there around, just like it had no owner.

He knew Sanskrit very well and the Indian language. I think he knew a few words of the American language! He knew the three states of America—California, Washington, and New York!

Also I took teachings from him twice. I wished to take teachings from him more but there wasn’t time for him because usually there were a lot of people. Usually in the teachings he emphasized bodhicitta. Usually when he gave teachings he gave them the practice of bodhicitta and the bodhisattva’s deeds. He had the complete, entire understanding of the Dharma when he explained. Just like he really sees everything.

Before, he wished to come to make pilgrimage in Nepal but he couldn’t come for long time—I think for several years. He has recently arrived in Nepal. We went to see him. However, this teaching that he wrote on bodhicitta is explained with his experience, with his realization, so it has so much taste, and even hearing it is very effective for our mind. Therefore, because of that, as much as I can, I am thinking to explain one verse from that teaching that explains about the benefits of the bodhicitta.

“How is it possible that the thought of bodhicitta of a mother, father, and Brahma, and Tshangba have cover all beings like bodhicitta?” Tshangba is one of the Hindu gods that is riding on the swan, I think it is called Vishnu, I don’t remember,

This means how can be possible that parents and Brahma and the god Tshangba have this wish—wanting to benefit, enlighten sentient beings by generating bodhicitta. The benefits of this bodhicitta, as it is generated for all sentient beings, is infinite, is numberless, as the number of sentient beings is infinite. Such bodhicitta wanting to benefit to each of the sentient beings—even parents, Brahma, even the god Tshangba don’t have. There are different types of Brahmas. Usually one type of Brahma doesn’t tell lies, and because of the power of not telling lies, any prayers they say are quickly successful, and definitely bring results because of the power of speech, keeping the

morality of not telling lies. In previous times the Brahmas used to have physic powers, such as the power to foretell, things like that. So even the god Tshangba who has much power, possessions, and enjoyments, having so much, surrounding other gods, however even they don't have this precious, pure thought of bodhicitta, wanting to benefit all sentient beings.

What this means is that we are fortunate that we have such chance to hear the teachings on bodhicitta and the chance to train the mind in bodhicitta. We are fortunate to get to try to generate such a pure thought wanting to benefit all sentient beings. However, it is necessary to train the thought in bodhicitta even in this moment. Without training the mind in that pure thought, it cannot drop into our mind, it cannot be received. So therefore, to train the mind in bodhicitta and also for this action of listening to the Dharma to become the cause of enlightenment it is necessary to think, "I must enlighten all the sentient beings, therefore I must achieve enlightenment. In order to achieve enlightenment, I must complete the realization of the whole gradual path to enlightenment. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the gradual path."

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person into enlightenment. It is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

This teaching on the gradual path has four outlines. In order to have reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to receive devotion, the knowledge of the teaching, which we briefly explained yesterday. The way of listening and explaining the teaching. The way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment.

Before the explanation on the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment, a little information about, a little talk on the general form of the meditations.

(Page 36)

Paragraph 2

Three suffering realms means ... it will come afterwards but these are such as the suffering beings, the animals. There are also other suffering beings called *pretas* and *narakas*.

Paragraph 7

In regard to benefits, there is a great difference between offering a world full of jewels to each of the sentient beings and giving just one handful of food to one single sentient being, to one dog. But the benefits of making charity of one handful of food to one sentient being with the motivation of bodhicitta are infinite like space, like infinite space, incredible. The benefits of this action motivated by bodhicitta can never compare to the benefits of making charity of a world full of jewels to each sentient being without the impulse of bodhicitta. It has benefits, but the benefits of that action are so limited—they are almost nothing compared to the benefits of the small action of giving one handful of food with a pure motivation bodhicitta. So how much merit you create, how beneficial the action is, does not depend on how much material you give—it mainly depends on the giver, the mind. It mainly depends on the motivation.

For instance, even though the person is giving one small handful of food to the dog, even just one bowl of food, but giving it with bodhicitta, thinking, "I am going to make this charity in order to

receive enlightenment for the benefit of sentient beings.” Being motivated like this, making charity like this. Even though it is small, one handful, the benefits of that action cover each sentient being because you do not make the charity you. You don’t make the charity only for you. The purpose of making this charity to that animal is to enlighten all sentient beings. With this motivation, even this small work becomes work for other sentient beings.

The purpose of explaining this is that if you understand this important point, this important vital point of makes the action more beneficial, then even with a small action you can gain such great benefit. Such great benefit. There is such a chance. But without understanding there is no way to do the action, no way even if you have a world full of jewels to offer to each sentient being—there is no way if there is no understanding of bodhicitta, how to make the action beneficial to sentient beings. Therefore, understanding the importance of this practice is very important.

(Page 37)

Checking Meditation - Paragraph 2

... is wrong, many people also have the idea that to attain the path to enlightenment one doesn’t have to depend on the guru, not knowing the purpose of having a guru. If there are doubts like this, afterwards they can be discussed.

(BREAK)

Student: Does karma imply that everything is fixed?

Rinpoche: It is fixed but you can break it, you can change it.

Student: If you understand karma you can break it.

Rinpoche: Right, yes.

Student: Otherwise one’s life is pre-ordained, fixed, if you don’t understand karma.

Rinpoche: Right, it is sort of fixed by the cause but it can be always changed, always stopped through methods.

Student: Is the text written by Tenzin Gyaltzen an ancient text?

Rinpoche: No, the text wasn’t written a long time ago.

Student: Do you think it is possible to receive enlightenment also by following other Dharma? Such as Christian, Hindu, without ever hearing about Buddhadharma?

Rinpoche: If you can make the path to enlightenment, if you can make your practice, if you are practicing what you are realizing, if what you are practicing can become the path to enlightenment, no matter what it is called, it can be possible. But it depends on the individual realization, the way he practices.

Student: Is there another understanding of ignorance besides ignorance, hatred, and greed, and not following Dharma—is ignorance a collective word for all of these things or is it something deeper?

Rinpoche: Ignorance is very deep, yes.

Student: Can you give us another understanding of understanding?

Rinpoche: Collective—what do you mean?

Answer: I think we use—we may use the word ignorance for them but is ignorance something else? Is there another meaning we may have missed and don’t fully understand?

Rinpoche: Right. There are different types of ignorance but they are different ignorance as you said. Different ignorance. Ignorances that are easy to understand, ignorances that are very profound to realize, to recognize.

Student: Are we capable of understanding now if you were to explain it to us.

Rinpoche: I think I am starting!

Quotation

The main form of meditation on the graduated path is analytical meditation, checking meditation. There is also one-pointed meditation, but the main form of meditation of the graduated path is analytical meditation. The way of actualizing the meditation is through checking, such as the realization of the impermanence of oneself, such as the realization of the absolute true nature of oneself. This is just an example. This realization has to be achieved through analytical meditation. Besides this realization, there are many other realizations that have to be received through checking. Without depending on analytical meditation, checking, first of all we cannot recognize things such as impermanence, we cannot recognize the wrong conception that thinks and feels that oneself as permanent. Also, we cannot realize the wrong conception that sees oneself opposite to the absolute nature of oneself. As long as we don't realize these wrong conceptions, there is no way to dispel or to stop these wrong conceptions, such as thinking or conceiving of oneself as permanent, as a self entity. If you don't realize them, you cannot dispel this wrong conception. If you cannot dispel this wrong conception, there is no way to realize the absolute nature of oneself. Same thing, there is no way to realize the impermanence of your own "I." It is the same thing with the other exterior objects, just like this. Of course, checking meditation is so important in Dharma, this is something that we have to spend whole our life doing, the way we put our life will depend on it, and it will be something that we are going to believe, so it is necessary first of all to go through analytical meditation in order to discover the meditation or the actual object. Even when worldly people buy ordinary things in business, material things, they have to check up first—they depend on checking. First of all, they check up where it is made, what it is made of, whether the material is pure. They check up many ways before they buy, before they make the decision to buy, and before they give that much money to pay for it. The problem is they don't want to give up that much money for the material. So for that reason they want to check up, so they aren't cheated and they don't lose. They want to have profit, they don't want to make themselves lose. First of all they check up the object. Even when they want to buy food from the store, they check up whether it is rotten or fresh—many ways they check up, and then they buy those temporal things. Even food, something that lasts for one day or two days, one hour or two hours, even that has to be checked up. Even that thing that you have only for a short period, even that is important to check up, so why not the meditations? Why not the Dharma? It is silly not to check the method that we are going to use in our lifetime. It is silly that checking is recognized as sort of a hindrance to wisdom, a hindrance to meditation. That is an extremely foolish way of thinking, a foolish method. This is much more important, checking the meditation, the method that we are going to practice, in which we are going to live. Checking this method is the most important thing, more than checking those temporal things.

For instance, even if, without checking, we get false, wrong material that is not of pure quality, if it is food it may cause us to get sick for some days, and if it is material we may pay some extra money—but that's all. It doesn't make you create negative karma. It doesn't built wrong conception. Without checking, without knowing how the meditation is beneficial, without knowing how it is beneficial to your mind, whether it is the method to diminish your negative mind, without checking these things, just believing in a certain method and easily accepting and doing it, it can be possible to receive a wrong conception and with that wrong conception create negative actions, wrong actions. Creating wrong actions also builds ignorance. In that way, building ignorance causes all the future lives, besides this present life, to be in the suffering. Therefore, one shouldn't think that the checking method is a hindrance for meditation. Thinking like this will only cheat oneself. Instead of developing the wisdom, it will cause you to close the wisdom.

Also there are many people who believe that any thought that appears is all distraction. Checking is not a good method, checking is a hindrance because any thought that arises is a hindrance to meditation. Believing that nothing exists, believing oneself doesn't exist as well as others—this belief, this meditation can never solve the problems, can never stop the suffering. Just like this example—the person falls down into the fireplace, into the hole where there is a fire. But then believing there is no fire, how much he suffers feeling hot, trying to believe there is no fire doesn't help, doesn't stop the pain while he is burning. It doesn't help that by thinking like this it may burn the whole body. Just believing this doesn't change the object; believing that it doesn't exist doesn't make the fire not exist. It is better to recognize the fire, to think the fire is there, and how to get out of it. That kind of way of thinking is the biggest wrong conception, the biggest hindrance to actualize reality. There is no way to realize even other existence as reality.

(Page 38)

Paragraph 3, Quote

The one who doesn't have broad understanding ... I think first I finish this. (Read rest of page down to end of 1.)

Samadhi. This is not the practice of the higher intelligent beings, but in this specific teaching the subject of the samadhi meditation comes in the path of the higher intelligent being. That is, I think, usual even in other religions, for instance, Hindus also have samadhi meditation. Samadhi meditation is just general, it is not a particular meditation—the general samadhi method is not a particular meditation in the Buddhadharma because it is practiced also by other religious people. But the process of practice, the way of practicing samadhi meditation, the way of completing samadhi meditation can be different. The purpose of putting the samadhi meditation here in the path of the higher intelligent beings is to practice samadhi meditation with bodhicitta. If it is not practiced with bodhicitta, it doesn't become the cause of enlightenment, therefore the subject of samadhi meditation is put on that graduated path.

2. Such as the main path that is explained in the path of the middle being, that is, the higher trainings of conduct, concentration, and wisdom. By completing these three practices, we can escape from samsara, escape ignorance.

3. Three evil destinies. The first part of the meditation is the graduated path of the lower being. The first part we are going to do is the graduated path of the lower intelligent being. Then afterwards comes the graduated path of the middle being and the graduated path of higher intelligent being. So one who has a broad understanding, a wide understanding of all these methods and subjects has that much wider wisdom. That much wider wisdom eye. Also, that person does not have so much difficulty in the practice of meditation because he has so many methods to use, so many understandings to use, to actualize each specific meditation. How that helps the understanding of even the higher subjects, the higher meditation—there is always a relationship between the meditations, so understanding all the different meditations helps us to understand even better the first meditation, like perfect human rebirth. The first meditation. If the person has the understanding of other meditations, those higher meditations, it makes it much easier to actualize even the first meditation. Somehow the person has more methods, so as the person finds different problems in his mind, he can use different methods right away. He has skill. The person who knows only one type of meditation doesn't have the understanding of other different types of meditation, and no understanding of the gradual meditations. He has that much less methods, less skill, and no

method to actualize the meditation quicker, to make the practice successful. Also there is no chance to train his mind gradually in those different levels of paths. Just like an armless person cannot climb the rocky mountain.

So first of all one emphasizes that there are many different types of meditations here as we roughly mentioned. Here are some of the titles. At the beginning it is necessary to have an understanding of all those different meditations. Once you know how to practice, how to do each specific different meditation, each specific different method, then you can spend more time actualizing the first meditation that you have not realized. You spend more time there, put more effort there, until you receive the realization of this meditation. Then after you receive realization of the first meditation, train your mind in the second meditation until you actualize it. Then you do the third meditation, just like this. This is the way to complete realizing the gradual path to enlightenment. However, trying to understand the different types of meditation at one time is the wise skill. That is the quickest way of understanding the Dharma, the quickest way of training to realize the nature of mind. So therefore one should not think, should not expect only one type of meditation and not to have many other different types of meditation. We should expect to develop the wisdom in the different subjects by knowing the different subjects, and we should expect to know the different meditations to solve the different problems. Many times we expect just knowing one meditation is enough, that it is a sufficient method to solve all of life's problems, which never works. This never solves all the problems. So if you have certain expectations like this, certain wishes like this, it is better to make yourself understandable and try to recognize that what you are expecting is not skillful. Try to know the necessity of knowing and understanding the different subjects, otherwise this expectation will cause you suffering, and will cause you to not understand the other subjects. So this is emphasized before the meditation.

Just one example. For instance, there are all kinds of different sicknesses, such as the 424 different sicknesses. However, there are many different medicines to cure the different sickness. Just like this, there are all kinds of different mental problems; therefore, we need different meditations. Even thinking in this way, you can make yourself understand.

(Page 39)

This part of the meditation includes the way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment, which has two topics in the outline: the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the gradual path to enlightenment. The way of training the mind in the gradual path to enlightenment has two topics: persuading the mind in order to take the essence of the human rebirth and the way of taking the essence of the human rebirth. So part of this meditation is on the perfect human rebirth, the great usefulness of perfect human rebirth. The second meditation is the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth. These three are the methods persuading the mind to take the essence of the human rebirth.

You close your eyes, think, try to feel this.

“From beginningless previous lifetimes I have been dying and reborn, dying and reborn in the six realms of suffering, such as the animal realm, the human realm, and other realms.” First of all try to feel the beginningless of your previous lives, then think of the circle of rebirth and death that has been going round and round by taking different bodies.

MEDITATION

Now I have received a perfect human rebirth that has eighteen attributes: eight freedoms and ten opportunities.

(Page 39)

What Is The Perfect Human Rebirth?

The Eight Freedoms

D'al.wa means usually sort of rest. *D'al.wa* means rest or chance. *Gya* is the number eight. I think the eight freedoms and ten opportunities or ten richnesses; anyway, we can talk about that later on.

1. The English term, *hells*. Tibetan *yal.wa*, Sanskrit *narak*. There are beings experiencing narak suffering under the earth, on the earth, in space; it is not really a definite place.

For instance, for example. Even on the earth there are human beings experiencing suffering in many different ways. Some people suffered from explosions, atomic bombs. There are certain human beings who have such awful karma that they have to experience such incredible suffering. There are certain persons whose life has no chance to enjoy happiness, the life passes away by suffering. Sometimes a person has to spend whole his life in prison, so much suffering, worrying, without having the chance to be free, to enjoy, to do things as he wishes. Those are simple narak sufferings. There are many other examples, but just to have an idea. Also there are narak beings, there are human beings suffering, and animals suffering—there are many different types of beings suffering. There are narak suffering beings that we see and that we don't see—some which ordinary people don't have the karma to see. Many of the ordinary narak suffering beings we see. Anyway, on this part you can discuss during the discussion time with other students. Also if you read the following subjects you will have a clear idea of the suffering.

There are also different types of narak sufferings like this. Once, there was a monk called Pagpa Gyatso who came from the Pacific to a desert place. In that desert place there was no country, just empty land, and somehow he had the karma to see certain suffering narak beings. All of a sudden he saw an extremely beautiful house. He went there and he saw one man and two women who were enjoying themselves very much in that house. But then as the sun set, as dusk appeared, the whole house that was beautiful in the day changed and began to burn. The whole house was burning and the two women turned into dogs and began to eat the man's flesh, taking pieces from his body and eating them. Then again when the sun rose, the whole house completely changed again and became very beautiful and the two dogs became women and they enjoyed themselves with the man. Then when night came again, the suffering started over.

This monk came from the Pacific to find jewels, and he asked those beings why they were suffering like this. These beings had the karma to see their previous lives—not because they had realizations of meditation or control of their lives, but because they karmically remembered—they had no chance to escape from that suffering until the period finished. The man told the monk that in their previous lives in India he had been a disciple of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha called Noble Pagpa Khata Yana, an arhat. He had made vows to keep precepts during the day, but not at night. Because of that karma he was together with the women who were women in the daytime and dogs at night.

Because of that karma of keeping precepts in the daytime, they were together in that place enjoying a very happy life, but at night they suffered.

This man sent a message through the monk—he said, “I have a brother, tell him the history of the karma, the suffering, so that he will be careful.”

However, there are different ways of experiencing narak sufferings.

So read the part of this meditation and discuss it with the other students.

Then after the discussion, do meditation, and if your mind is so much distracted again do breathing meditation. If your mind is easy, first of all watch your thoughts, then later on in the second hour if the meditation of watching the thoughts doesn't work well, read the part of meditation by thinking, checking—not just reading and trying to finish the paper, but trying to understand the subject with feelings. If there is something you don't understand, if you have doubt, you can discuss—you can ask me or discuss it with the other students.

Day Seven

Tuesday, 12th November

9 am

From the holy speech of great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen, “As the fully knowing enlightened stage arises only from bodhicitta, so it is greatly worthwhile for those who desire the boundless state to precisely practice this.”

As the fully knowing enlightened stage arises from only bodhicitta, this means the fully knowing enlightened stage can be received only from bodhicitta, because bodhicitta is the principal cause, the main thing that brings enlightenment. Therefore, those who desire the boundless state, nirvana, is same—the opposite of Nirvana is the boundaries of suffering in which we are involved now. Therefore for those who desire the boundless state it is worthwhile to purify, practice this. This means bodhicitta. Since, besides the boundless state, we desire enlightenment, the highest goal, and since its principal cause is bodhicitta, while we have the chance and have met the teaching of bodhicitta, not trying to understand, not practicing it is a great loss. That is a greater loss than any other loss that we have in this life. By losing this great chance we lose the result of the most sublime happiness. The mind that has reached that level is the mind that has all the knowledge, which is perfect in all the knowledge, with not one single knowledge missing. That result can be received through bodhicitta. So while we have the chance to develop bodhicitta, to train the mind in bodhicitta, not trying to understand, not practicing, is a great loss. In this way also we lose achieving that perfect knowledge.

Therefore, it is necessary to train the mind even from this moment, and also to make the action of listening to Dharma the cause of enlightenment. So therefore think, “I must lead all sentient beings to enlightenment by releasing them from all the sufferings. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment. In order to achieve enlightenment I must complete the realization of the whole gradual path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the gradual path.”

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga and it is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. It is set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

This gradual path has four topics in the outline. In order to have reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order for devotion in the teaching to arise, the knowledge of the teaching. The way of listening and explaining the teaching, and the way of leading disciple on the path to enlightenment. The way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path, that is the first subject, but it is not necessary to discuss it first. The second, the way of training the mind in the gradual path to enlightenment, has two: persuading the mind to take the essence of the human rebirth, and the way of taking the essence with this present human rebirth.

Generally as bodhicitta is the principal cause of enlightenment, then how to practice bodhicitta? To practice bodhicitta one has to train the mind in the gradual path of the higher intelligent beings. By training the mind in that path, one can achieve bodhicitta. To receive bodhicitta by training the mind in the gradual path of the higher being, it is necessary to follow the gradual path of the middle being. In order to train the mind in the gradual path of the middle being, it is necessary to train the mind in the gradual path of the lower being, the first part of the meditation which comes. Therefore, starting from the perfect human rebirth, all these are methods to achieve bodhicitta. Also starting from the mind beginningless, the possibility of enlightenment, all these are methods in order to achieve the cause of enlightenment, bodhicitta. Otherwise, without understanding the mind beginningless and those subjects, there is no way to train the mind in the gradual path of the higher being. There is no way to achieve bodhicitta, no way to train the mind in the gradual path of the middle and lower being. Therefore this is one thing we should understand.

Just like this you see, in order to plant crops in the field, if you want to have a farm where crops grow, where you can receive continual food from the farm and you can have a comfortable life, for all this enjoyment and food to be received from the farm first of all you have to make the farm. Therefore, before planting the crop, the seed, that you have to make the ground level—trees, rocks, all kinds of things growing there. So if you just throw seeds in space without making any proper field, then you don't get what you want, you don't get continual food from that, it is a resultless action, an action that doesn't bring a result. Anyway, in order to receive these enjoyments, continual food from the field, first of all we have to make it level, clean, destroy all the rocks that disturb, and all the bushes growing there, and fertilize it well. Then put the manure to make it possible to grow. So a lot of work has to be done. Just like this, to achieve the pure thought of bodhicitta from where we can receive all the happiness, good results, there is lot of work, things to be done.

The graduated meditations that come before the actual explanation of bodhicitta, all these are methods to make the mind ready, to plant the seed of bodhicitta. This is an example, but still fertilizing the outside field is easy, but fertilizing the mind in order to cultivate bodhicitta, the mind that we don't see, that doesn't have shape, this is much more difficult to fertilize than the outside land. To fertilize or make the outside field level, you can use the machines, but here however many machines you have, you can't use them. Perhaps you can try but it cannot work. In that case everybody would receive enlightenment within three days, one day.

(Page 39)

Freedom from birth.

1. Freedom of not being born as a narak being.

2. Freedom of not being born as a hungry spirit. Tibetan term is *yi.dag* in Sanskrit, *preta*. In many translations they are called hungry ghosts. Also among these suffering beings, pretas, there are all kinds of this suffering being, pretas. Also even on the earth there are certain ... even though there are beings born as human beings having such a body, they pass their lives always hungry, starving, things like that—the simple suffering of pretas. Also there are beings like this, many times it happened, a person who is so attached to the family, the family's possessions, the field—who has so much miserliness for the possessions. After the person dies, he is born as a hungry ghost situated around that place. Sometimes they give harm like this. If anyone takes possessions or steals crops from that field or that family, the person who steals things gets sick, offended by that spirit. That life is spent in the suffering of feeling hungry and thirsty. No matter whether they have possessions or not, even if they have food they can't enjoy. Somehow due to their karma they dare not eat or drink, just keep their whole life in suffering. Similarly, also there are many people whose life is just passed away in suffering, having so much miserliness, unable to enjoy the possessions, the food. Somehow those beings have a certain karma like that. It doesn't mean that they don't have food and possessions, this is due to miserliness. There are many stories in the West, in Tibet—many places, many stories. Many times they can be seen by certain people, and also there are many hungry ghosts who live on the smell of food. Guru Shakyamuni has shown a method to make charity to those suffering beings. The Tibetan Lamas also do this—certain pujas, certain techniques to say and make charity of food, smell, food in fire, giving prayers. Somehow this gives them the chance to enjoy it. Also Guru Shakyamuni has given many different types of methods to make food charity to the hungry ghosts, the pretas. After the Tibetan Lamas have food, they give a little bit from what is left over and keep it in the hand, pressed like this. Try to get the picture of the hand, many things like this. Also, there are certain mantras for the spirits, the human beings who disturb; just saying mantras and special prayers it allows them to enjoy it.

First of all I will just explain the description of the meaning of each of these new titles. The freedom of not being born as an animal. The Tibetan term is *du'dro*. The main suffering of the animal is being dumb and foolish, with a mind incapable of understanding the meaning. There are many other sufferings besides.

Then the freedom of not being born as long life god. The Tibetan term is *lha.tse.ring.po*. “God” is the direct translation from the Tibetan, but this doesn't mean Buddha. It doesn't mean one who doesn't have ignorance. These beings still lives in ignorance, delusions, the boundaries of samsara, the boundaries of suffering. But why are they called god? Because they have higher enjoyments, they have better possessions, higher quality possessions, and even their place is much better than a human beings' place. Even their houses and enjoyments are of a higher quality. Even the food they enjoy is always nectar. Even their bodies are much more beautiful than human beings' bodies, much more beautiful, with light. So because they have higher, better possessions and enjoyments, they are titled god. Just because of that. Also there are different gods who are in different categories. Some of the gods have bodies, and some don't have bodies, but only consciousness.

The whole point is mainly to discover not having the chance to practice Dharma. If you are born as a narak being, there is no chance to practice Dharma. If you are born as a hungry ghost, or a preta, there is no chance to practice Dharma. If you are born as an animal, there is no chance to practice Dharma. If you are born as a long life god—why is it difficult to have the chance to practice Dharma if you are born as a long life god? Because in those realms it is difficult to discover the nature of suffering, it is difficult to see suffering.

Student: Don't they remember where they came from, their previous lives?

Rinpoche: In certain periods when they are close to death they remember. At that time they remember; they see karmically where they are going to be reborn and what previous life they had before. But at that time there is no chance, that time is close to death. They can only experience the extremely great suffering of death, knowing that death is going to happen, so much suffering.

Anyway, it is difficult to realize the nature of suffering. One thing, the mind is always distracted by the object of the senses. The mind is always occupied by objects of the senses. This is mainly due to the attachment. So there is no time to practice Dharma. Even if there is someone who explains Dharma, from their side they don't allow, they don't give time. Their life is always spent in distraction, enjoying the objects of the senses and their friends, wives—their whole life is spent in that way enjoying the objects and the relatives, their surrounding beings.

Student: What is the karma causing rebirth into this realm?

Rinpoche: What is the karmic cause? The karmic cause, that karma is positive karma. Same thing, the reason we are born as human beings now is due to positive karma.

Student: Can they realize suffering?

Rinpoche: It is extremely difficult. Difficult to have the chance to practice Dharma, extremely difficult. This will come later on ... even though themselves are suffering.

So the example is like this. For instance, when we have more possessions, more things, the mind is always thinking of those objects—what to do with those things and always distracted by them and always occupied by them. The mind spends most of the time with the possessions, with the things around you. Mainly this is caused by attachment. For instance, sometimes some students say they find it very difficult to practice Dharma in the West. This is because of their mind, the power of the object that they see is stronger than their mind. Therefore always the mind gets distracted by the object, things around them. So it doesn't give much time to them. That's why they find it difficult to practice Dharma as some say. Just like this example. This is nothing compared to the possessions, the enjoyments of the long life gods. What is on the earth is nothing. No matter how much the possessions and enjoyments are recognized as best in the human realm, they are very poor compared. So the main thing is, if you are born as a long life god, then it is difficult to have the chance to practice Dharma.

Barbarian. Tibetan term *la.lo*. If you are born as a barbarian in an irreligious country where there is no Dharma then there is no chance to practice Dharma.

Deaf. Tibetan term *won.ba*. Also if you are born deaf there is no chance to completely practice Dharma, to communicate Dharma, to understand the complete meaning of the Dharma. If you cannot hear, and also if you are mentally a fool with no capability to understand the meaning of Dharma that is explained.

Heretic. Tibetan term *log.ta.chan*. *Log* is the opposite, wrong, opposite. *Ta* means view. If you are born as a heretic there is no chance to practice Dharma because a heretic has a wrong understanding, a wrong view, such as believing there is no existence of karma and believing in just one continuity of mind, like the mind comes with this life and finishes when the body finishes. Sort of like this. Then believing that there is no existence of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, that there is no existence of absolute nature. Also believing that nothing exists. Why there is no chance to

practice Dharma? Because these wrong conceptions don't allow the person to understand Dharma, to have the chance to practice Dharma, so in that way there is no way to understand Dharma.

Freedom of not being born during a time when there is no order of Buddha or when Buddha has not descended. So in such a time where there is no order of Buddha, or where no Buddha descended, there is no chance to practice Dharma because no one explains Dharma, and there is no way to receive teachings.

(Rinpoche read following four paragraphs.)

So the process, the way ... first of all, it is important to understand each thing. Why each doesn't have the chance to practice Dharma.

(BREAK)

Student: I am having trouble practicing the last part of the meditation concentrating on thought. I am not completely sure how to do it. Sometimes a visual thought starts to move a round, and I look at it from one side—should I see from one side—then it goes out and my eyes turn after it. I don't know if this is right or not.

Rinpoche: What do you see?

Answer: I see a shoe, and it turns and I see the bottom and sides and my eyes start to turn in my head to look.

Rinpoche: When you recognize that, if you concentrate on the thought that projects that shoe, then that view doesn't ... it gets stopped if you concentrate on the projector, the thought that projects the shoe, whatever you see. That way it gets stopped. Even if you recognize what you are seeing, if you are not trying to concentrate on the projector then it is difficult to stop. In that way it is easy if you concentrate on the projector. There is more energy in the projector; not on the object, but the subject, your thought.

Student: When I concentrate on the projector, the minute I focus it becomes the object and I'm back to where I started.

Rinpoche: When you concentrate on that it becomes the object then?

Student: I have the thought and then watch the projector, but when I do that I become aware of the projector; the projector becomes subject, not object.

Rinpoche: That has to happen, it doesn't matter, that has to happen. Because you who meditate are the owner of your mind. That is not a mistake, that is good. Then once you start like this, then what you are supposed to do is carry on concentrating. First of all, concentrate maybe for a second, then try two seconds—try to make the energy longer, two seconds, slowly if you can concentrate for two seconds, for three seconds—like this you try. Good. Usually it is one way of playing tricky for the mind. Little by little, trying to keep the concentration lasting like this. Then afterwards one can concentrate for a minute, for two minutes, then longer, for one hour. This is one of the meditations to use during the practice of the samadhi meditation.

The last part, number eight of the eight freedoms—the Tibetan term is *yul.t'a.k'ob*. This is a little bit of a mistake. The Tibetan term is *sang.gya me.b'i.na*. *Yul.t'a.k'ob* means a country where there is no Dharma.

If you can think in this way the meditation will be very effective, beneficial for the mind. The whole purpose is this. The purpose of doing this meditation on eight freedoms, on the different beings, the

different realms, the different suffering realms of beings, is to discover that there is no chance to practice Dharma in those realms. By realizing this, we realize how much freedom to practice Dharma we have. By realizing the freedom we have, the mind becomes very happy, rejoicing, happy to practice Dharma. Usually even though we have received such freedom, because of not realizing, we don't enjoy or feel happy. Also, the thought of practicing Dharma doesn't arise because of not realizing the freedom, not realizing the suffering realms, the different suffering beings' existence. So however, this meditation becomes the method to make the life happy mentally without any danger. Usually we try to make the life happy externally by going outside, by traveling around, by swimming in the sea, under the sun, lying down under the sun. Anyway, there is always danger, always danger, always suffering. Somehow something is not right, in the person's mind it is not completely right, not completely perfect—something is missing all the time. I don't have the experience to do like that but there is something missing in the mind, not really happy, whether you are in the water or out of the water, on that piece of plank, the boat [Rinpoche is referring to surfboards]. Anyway, there is danger. But in this cause mentally we are trying to make the life happy, so there is no danger, no danger to hurt the mind or body. Think like this.

For instance, the flame of a stick incense. Even if it touched our body we couldn't practice Dharma, we couldn't meditate, we couldn't watch the thoughts, we couldn't concentrate. For instance, when we are nearby the fire, surrounded by the fire, it is so hot we can't concentrate, we can't meditate. Just an example. So imagine if I was born as a narak being for a long time, eons, experiencing the suffering of being born in the red-hot burning iron house with no doors or windows, no way to get out. Imagine if I was experiencing suffering in such a suffering place for a long time in that karmically created burning iron house. In such a suffering place how can it be possible to meditate, how can it be possible to practice Dharma in order to get out of suffering? There is no chance even for a minute to release the mind to concentrate without suffering. So first of all think of the example of being surrounded by fire, feeling so hot. For instance, here right now, if we are surrounded by fire feeling very hot, we cannot concentrate. So just like this if I am born as a narak being, then such suffering has to be experienced. If there is no chance to practice Dharma even with some fire around, how can it be possible to meditate there in the burning house, with much suffering?

Imagine oneself being born in a large pot in hot water, boiling liquid, like this. In such a time if I am born like this in the narak realms, how can it be possible to practice Dharma? If I put my finger in hot water for a few seconds I can't stand it, I can't concentrate. If some person put my hand in the boiling hot water and asked, "Meditate, you meditate, please you meditate, you will get enlightened right away, please you meditate," It is impossible, it is not a possible thing.

Like this, if I am born in the narak realms, suffering like this, there is no chance at all. After thinking of the examples like this, then think, "From beginningless previous lifetimes I have been born numberless times in those narak realms, numberless times. Even when I wasn't born in the narak realms I was born numberless times as a preta..." then you come down like this. First of all you think of the example, then you think of the narak suffering, "If I were born like that, what to do, no chance at all." After that, you think, "Numberless times in previous lifetimes, even when I was not born as a narak, numberless times I was born as a preta."

For instance, when we don't get food even one day, breakfast, lunch, or supper, sometimes even we don't get tea at teatime, and we cannot meditate because we are thinking, "Oh, I didn't get tea." Even though you are the meditator you create the meditation. Even one day not getting food, you cannot concentrate. So imagine three, four, or five days not eating or drinking anything—how can

we practice Dharma? If I were born as a hungry ghost for many hundreds of years, I would have to experience living in the suffering of hunger and thirst without getting any food, any drop of water, so there would be absolutely no chance to practice Dharma. First of all think of the example, then think of the suffering of the pretas, many hundreds of years without food, even a drop of water, much suffering, not having the chance to practice Dharma. Think, “In numberless times I have been born as a preta, and even when I wasn't born as a preta I was born numberless times as an animal.” Then think of the example.

For instance, even if there is such a profound method to receive enlightenment in one day, if you try to explain to an animal there is no way for the animal to understand and practice it. Even if you tell the animal, the cows, the dogs, “Reciting this mantra is very powerful and helps very much to bring peace in the mind,” they cannot recite the mantra, or understand the meaning. Besides doing meditation, or explaining deep profound teachings, they cannot even recite the mantra. So it is extremely difficult to have the chance to practice Dharma.

Think, “Even when I wasn't born as an animal, numberless times I was born as a long life god.” Then thinking, when there is so much attachment to the possessions, to the things, relatives, surrounding people, and so forth, the mind is always occupied by other objects of the senses, other things, and it is extremely difficult to practice Dharma. If you had certain experiences, try to remember the experiences you had before, like being in certain places and even though you wanted to meditate, never getting time. So if I am born as a long life god, it is not possible.

Just one story that happened in previous times. One day a disciple named Membegawo, who was a doctor, was riding on an elephant and he met his teacher Shariputra. Without taking the time to come down slowly from the backside of the elephant, all of a sudden he jumped down when he saw his teacher Shariputra. Like that, with so much devotion and respect. But afterwards the disciple was born as a god in the sura realm. Shariputra checked up after his disciple passed away with his psychic powers, to find out which realm his disciple was born into. With his power he realized this disciple was born in the sura realm, so with his psychic power Shariputra went to give him Dharma. He found Memebegawo, but the disciple had a very different character than he had in his previous life. When he saw Shariputra this time, he ran away to enjoy life with his friends and relatives. He had no energy or time to listen to Dharma—he just left to play with his friends and relatives. So Shariputra didn't get the chance to explain Dharma to him. When he was a human being in his previous life it was easy, because the mind was not distracted by so many objects, and it was easy for the mind to understand the nature of suffering, and for the mind renouncing suffering to arise.

Think, “Even when I wasn't born as a long life god, I was born as a barbarian numberless times.” Also think of the places where there is no Dharma, people who have no understanding of Dharma at all, who have a completely wrong idea, whose understanding is completely opposite to Dharma, where there is no chance to receive explanations, no chance to practice. For those people who are in such a country where there is no Dharma, it is difficult to have the chance to practice Dharma. So try to remember if you have, if you know, try to remember certain places and people. Think, “If I am like that, what to do? If I am born like those people, got stuck in that place, always life finishing, passing just in that place, doing the same thing; if I am like that there is no chance for the wisdom to grow, to practice Dharma, or work for enlightenment.”

Think, “Even when I wasn't born as a barbarian, I was born numberless times deaf. For those with foolish minds, it is extremely difficult to completely understand the deep meaning of the Dharma,

the deep subject of the Dharma. For those who are deaf, they cannot hear, cannot receive the Dharma explanations. There is no way to communicate orally. Think, “Besides mentally being a fool, if I were now a deaf person who can't hear even the ordinary talk or communication, there would be much suffering. That much the life would be difficult, not to mention practicing Dharma.” So also think like this.

Think, “Even when I wasn't born as a deaf person I was born as a heretic numberless times.” Also thinking that a heretic is a person who has wrong beliefs, wrong understanding. Because of the wrong beliefs, they never try to understand—the wrong belief, wrong understanding stops them from seeking whether there are past lives existing, from understanding the continuity of life. Those who believe there is no absolute nature don't seek it because of wrong understanding. They don't try to realize the absolute nature. So in that case they also don't know the actual purpose of practicing Dharma, and therefore they don't practice Dharma, so there is no chance to practice Dharma. Also think, “If I were like that, all these chances would be blocked. With wrong understanding, wrong realization, there is always wrong actions, always creating the cause of suffering.”

Think, “Even though I wasn't born as a heretic numberless times, I was born as a human being in the time when there is no Buddha and no teaching of Buddha.” In this period the teaching of Buddha exists. Even though Guru Shakyamuni passed away, still there is the representative, the highly realized gurus who have the experience of the teaching. Those are the representatives of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. So also there is the existence of teachings, and we are not born in a place and time where there is no existence of Buddha or Buddha's teaching. There are certain periods in which all the teachings of the Buddha have finished, ended, and there is just complete darkness, without the existence of the Dharma, without the light of the Dharma, in which not even the future Buddha has descended. Those are called dark periods. So even though we are born as human beings, sometimes, due to our karma, we get born in those dark periods where there is no light of the Dharma. So if you are born in those times there is no chance; even though you are a human being, it doesn't make much sense because there is no chance to practice Dharma.

Then think, “Now I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I was not born in the narak realms. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I was not born as a preta. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I was not born as an animal. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I was not born as a long life god. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I was not born as a barbarian. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I was not born as a deaf person. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I was not born as a heretic. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I was not born during a time in which there was no order of Buddha, when Buddha had not descended.”

First of all, check like this, and second, think like this. First of all we may not discover much the freedom that we have received—we may not feel it that strong, but then as we do this meditation once, twice, three times, four times, more and more, as we get a stronger feeling of the freedom, as we discover the freedom that we have and see the more suffering that those realms and those beings have, the joyfulness, the happiness in the mind grows, and one can feel extremely happy. Think, “How fortunate I am, how lucky I am, how fortunate I am this time to be released from the eight realms of unrest. This means the realms where there is no freedom to practice Dharma. It is extremely difficult to be out of these, the eight realms of unrest, of unfreedom. It is extremely difficult to receive such a rebirth that is out, that is released from all these eight realms of unfreedom—it is extremely difficult, so this time, after such a long time, a long eon, a long time, this

one rebirth we have received, this one fortunate rebirth with the freedom to practice Dharma. However, as you gradually meditate like this, as you gradually check up like this with each title, that you are not born like this, that you are released from the eight realms, that you are released from more of these unfreedom realms, even though you are not completely released—by checking like this you discover you have the freedom to practice Dharma, and as you discover that much freedom you have by releasing from the unfreedom realms, it is necessary to feel happiness and joyfulness. Again, this is just a brief explanation on that, a short repetition so that it will be clear for those who still don't understand how to do the meditation.

Think first of all that I have been born in the narak realms numberless times in previous lifetimes. First of all think like this. Then remember the example, “If I am surrounded by fire, feeling so hot, I cannot meditate. If the incense flame is put on the body, I cannot meditate. So if I am born in the narak realm, where there is the suffering of experiencing the body burning in the hot red burning iron house for a long period, or born in a large pot, cooking in hot boiling liquid, how can be it possible to have the chance to practice Dharma?” Think like this.

Even when I wasn't born as a narak being, I was born numberless times as a preta. Even one day, two days without getting food, I cannot practice Dharma, cannot meditate. So if I am born as a suffering being, as a preta who suffers for many hundreds of years, not getting any food to eat, not getting even a drop of water, how can it be possible to practice Dharma?

Even when I wasn't born as a hungry ghost I was born numberless times as an animal. If I was born as an animal—a cow, or dog—even if I am taught a mantra or a prayer I can't say it. So if the meaning of the Dharma was explained, how could I understand? There is no way to understand, there is no chance, no chance to communicate. So if I am born like this animal, this dumb animal, what to do, there is no chance to practice Dharma.

Even when wasn't born as an animal I was born as a long life god numberless times. When I have so many friends around, so many possessions, so many things, because of attachment my mind is always occupied by them, and I find it difficult to meditate. So if I was born as a long life god, how can it be possible to practice Dharma?

Even when I wasn't born as a long life god I was born in a human realm as a barbarian in numberless times—like those people who are born in irreligious countries where there is no Dharma existing, no way to receive Dharma, no chance to practice Dharma. If I was born as one of those people, what to do? There is no chance to practice Dharma. Life just finishes without understanding Dharma or practicing Dharma—life finishes only with old habit, old action.

Even though I wasn't born as a barbarian I was born numberless times as deaf a person, or a person with a foolish mind, not understanding the deep meaning of the Dharma, not having the chance to do the profound practice of the Dharma and also deaf, not hearing. Even if there is an explanation given, there is no way to communicate, no way to listen, no way to hear, so no way to understand. Even just communicating with speech is difficult, with many problems. So if I was like that, what to do? If I was born like that, what to do? I would not have the chance to practice Dharma, no chance to completely understand the Dharma and practice it.

Even when I wasn't born as a deaf person, many times I was born as a heretic. Heretics have wrong beliefs, wrong understanding, not believing in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, or believing that there

is no existence of past and future life, or karma. Those wrong beliefs stop them from understanding and practicing Dharma. Besides that, these wrong beliefs, wrong conceptions always produce wrong actions, which is the cause of problems. If I was born like that, what to do? I would not have the chance to practice Dharma.

Even when I wasn't born as a heretic, numberless times I was born in a place and period where there was no Buddha or teaching of the Buddha. Think of those beings who are born in those times, with no chance to practice Dharma, no way to receive explanation, no one explaining—so no chance to practice Dharma. If I was born in such dark period where there was no order of the Buddha, what to do? There would be no chance to practice Dharma.

At this time I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I am not born in the narak realms. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I am not born as a hungry ghost. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I am not born as an animal in this time. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because this time I am not born as a long life god. I have the freedom to practice Dharma because I am not born as a barbarian. I have the freedom to practice Dharma this time because I am not born as a deaf person. I have the freedom to practice Dharma this time because I am not born as a heretic. I have the freedom to practice Dharma this time because I am not born in a dark period where there is no teaching of the Buddha.

Try to feel joyfulness in your mind by thinking of the freedom, thinking of having the freedom of practicing Dharma, the Dharma which brings the most sublime happiness of enlightenment and causes the release of all suffering.

Question: How does one ever have the chance to escape these realms into the perfect human rebirth if he never has the chance to meet and practice the Dharma?

Rinpoche: I see. For those beings who are there, who are in those eight realms it is not easy, not easy to be born with a perfect human rebirth—it is extremely difficult, extremely difficult. Actually the answer comes ... in the third meditation on the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth, there is the answer. It is possible because the reason we think of the past in this type of meditation, why we think that numberless times that I have been born as this being, is to feel or to make the mind conscious of the previous rebirth, how many times we have been born as those beings who don't have the freedom to practice Dharma. We also have gone through this just as we have been thinking, we have been also going around like this, continuously taking rebirth like this. It is possible that the karma of this present perfect human rebirth, for some of the people here, was created before billions of eons ago, many billions of lifetimes ago. It is possible that before we were born as human beings and created good karma, so little by little it can be possible that we received a perfect human rebirth this time. Creating the cause, the karma, the cause of this perfect human rebirth in many different previous lifetimes little by little, like this, and this time we received the result. It is possible, but there is not so much creating good karma by being born in those evil destinies, these suffering realms such as the animals and pretas, not so much. Mostly the good karma we created was being born as human beings in previous lifetimes. So it is possible that some karma of the present human rebirth was created before this present lifetime or it is possible that it was created before, many billions of lifetimes ago. Like this. Nothing is definite as regards time.

Question: Does that mean Buddha existed billions of eons ago?

Rinpoche: Exist?

Question: Number eight says born during the time ... etc.

Rinpoche: That means that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha took the form of taking the human rebirth, and was born as a prince, and went through the twelve events. First he lived in the family, then afterwards he married, renounced worldly life, and then he saw the suffering nature just by external examples and signs, and then he spent six years in retreat six years in austerity practices such as realizing the absolute nature and receiving enlightenment. He took the form of receiving enlightenment under the bodhi tree at Bodhgaya. “Buddha descended” means this, taking the human body like this, but it doesn't mean there was a period where the Buddha didn't exist. Actually Buddha is just a general name, just like human being, sentient being, is just a general name. Omniscient mind always exists, the fully knowing omniscient mind always exists, so Buddha always exists.

After the discussion I think first you do the breathing ... if the mind is so much distracted, cannot concentrate, first you start with breathing meditation, then three times, then do meditation on the perfect human rebirth checking like this, as you have understood. It doesn't have to be exactly as I said, but as you remember from the explanation. And you can use your wisdom; you can the subject clear with your own wisdom. If you can understand, if you have a better way to think, a deeper way to think, that is excellent—that means in that way you will receive the realization of this meditation more quickly. You will experience this meditation more quickly. However, first do breathing meditation if the mind is distracted, then do perfect human rebirth checking like this. Actually it is checking on yourself. Then, if the mind is not so much distracted, maybe first of all you spend maybe half an hour in concentration watching the thoughts, then you do meditation on perfect human rebirth. Then afterwards, after the meditation, try to feel the great joyfulness, happiness in your mind by realizing the freedom we have received.

Day Eight

Wednesday, 13th November

9 am

From the holy speech of great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen, “When it is checked up—what is the best method to fulfill one's own purpose and others' purposes? Realizing bodhicitta is the only best method, and generate it with happiness.”

When it is checked up what is the best method to complete one's own and others' purpose? Realizing bodhicitta is only the best method, and generate it with happiness. So what this means is that the best method that brings all success for oneself and for all other beings, which brings all happiness for oneself and other beings, the best method to work for oneself and other living beings is bodhicitta. As much as we try to seek the best method that can benefit oneself and other living beings, without harming anything, without giving one single harm, as much as we try to seek the method, we cannot find a more beneficial method than bodhicitta.

Also Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, who has fully knowing enlightened mind, who has been concerned and checking for many eons the best method to benefit other sentient beings and oneself, has found that the most beneficial method is bodhicitta. Even the enlightened beings they found that this is the most beneficial method, so therefore, because of this reason, it is greatly worthwhile for us to follow this method, to practice this pure thought of bodhicitta. Even though we don't know with our own wisdom what is the best method that can benefit us and benefit other sentient beings.

For instance, Shakyamuni Buddha who achieved enlightenment and enlightened numberless other sentient beings, who is perfect in all the knowledge, and purified all the suffering and the cause of

suffering, what method did he follow, what method made him enlightened, having perfect knowledge? That is bodhicitta, which he cultivated when he was following the path. So that's how his bodhicitta benefited to him to bring all success. After he was enlightened, he enlightened numberless other sentient beings and led numberless sentient beings to nirvana, to happiness by releasing them from suffering by showing Dharma. His bodhicitta benefited other living beings and brought success for other living beings. Also even now at this time we have the chance to know about ourselves, to study our own minds, to recognize our own minds, and we have the chance to develop wisdom by listening to Dharma. This is also a benefit of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's bodhicitta. If he didn't have the achievement of bodhicitta when he was following the path on which he motivated to benefit for such a length of time for such a number of sentient beings, having so many chances to talk about such a precious subject, the Dharma, to realize our own nature, wouldn't happen. However, as this great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen said in his teaching, by realizing that bodhicitta is the best method, generate it within our minds with happiness—the happiness of understanding, having such a chance, having such a precious method. So this pure thought of bodhicitta cannot be received intuitively without working for it, without training the mind, so therefore it is necessary to train the mind even from this moment. So therefore it is necessary to cultivate the pure motivation, bodhicitta, for the action of listening to the Dharma to become the cause of enlightenment.

Therefore think, “I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the sentient beings, therefore I am going to listen the teachings on the gradual path.”

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding of the teachings. It includes 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and it is set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment. This teaching on the gradual path has four topics in the outline as follows. In order to have reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order for devotion to arise, the knowledge of the teaching. The way of listening to and explaining the teaching and the way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment. The way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the gradual path. The way of training the mind in the gradual path has two outlines—persuading the mind to take the essence of this perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence of the perfect human rebirth. So part of the meditation is persuading the mind to take the essence of the perfect human rebirth.

(Page 39)

The Ten Opportunities

1. Part of the eight freedoms we briefly talked about yesterday, so today the ten opportunities. The Tibetan term is *yor.pa chu*. Ten opportunities or ten richnesses means things that are received. In regards to these ten there are five things that are received from the other side and five things that are received from one's own side.

2. Birth in the center of a religious country. This means places where there are generations of ordinations, different levels of ordinations that can be taken by male and female. So this is a place where there are generations of ordinations. That is recognized as the center of a religious country.

3. If a person doesn't have perfect organs, is blind, unspeakable, sort of dumb, cannot hear, missing legs or hands, has such an imperfect body, that person cannot receive ordination. There is no chance to take ordination.
4. Causing disunity among the Sangha. Sangha means a group of four, a group of ordinary monks. So causing disunity among Sangha can refer to those who don't have full realization of shunyata, the absolute nature. Then four ordinary monks become sangha, but also there are laypeople who are Sangha. Laypeople can be Sangha by having full realization of the absolute nature. Anyone who has full realization of the absolute nature, that person, even though single, is Sangha. So causing disunity among Sangha can refer to a group or even one single person. These five actions are recognized as the worst negative actions, the worst karma.
5. The Vinaya is the teaching that gives the details of all the different level of ordinations and every detail of the precepts. I think it is on Page 12 if you want to know what subject each contains. Vinaya, Sutra and Abhidharma.
6. This means birth where a Buddha has descended, in a period when Buddha has descended.
7. Even if the Buddha has descended, there is a certain period in which the Buddha doesn't give teachings. So this one is, besides being born during the time when the Buddha has descended, being born in a time when the Buddha has shown the teachings.
8. Sometimes there is a period when Buddha has shown the teachings, but it has ended. It no longer exists. So this one is being born when the teachings exist. There are two ways to think. One—the existence of the experience of the teachings, the realizations within the being's mind, the meditator's mind, and two, the existence of the oral teachings, the explanations.
9. It is not sufficient that the teachings just exist there. From one's side one should follow the teaching. If one does not follow the teaching, even though teaching exists in that place, at that period, it doesn't help you.
10. Even if from your side you try to follow the teachings, if there is no compassion, if a guru doesn't have compassion to give you teachings, there is no chance to receive teachings. That's one way of thinking—receiving the kindness and compassion of others—mainly the compassion of the guru. Secondly, the compassion from other people, so that even if you follow the teachings, even if you practice the teachings, you also receive the temporal material needs and help from benefactors and friends, so you don't have to spend your whole life working. In this way the person finds more time to meditate, to spend his time in Dharma practice and Dharma study.

So the last five from six to ten are the richnesses that are the things that have to be received from outside.

Meditating in this way is effective for the mind. First of all think, "In numberless times I have been born in other realms, not born as a human being in previous lifetimes. This time I have received a human rebirth. Even though I have received a human rebirth numberless times in previous lifetimes, I wasn't born in the center of a religious country. Because of that I didn't have the chance to practice Dharma. Even though I was born many times in the center of a religious country, many times I was

evil, creating those extreme negative actions.” It doesn't have to be all five, but it can be one of them such as killing your father or mother, causing disunity among the Sangha—it can be one of them.

Even though in that time I didn't create these extreme negative actions, I was born many times with imperfect organs.

Even though many times I was born with perfect organs I didn't have any devotion to the teachings of the Buddha. Because of these reasons also I didn't have the chance to practice Dharma.

Also in numberless times in previous lifetimes I was born in the period and place that Buddha has not descended.

Even in numberless times I was born in the time where Buddha has descended but born numberless times in the period when Buddha has not shown the teachings.

Even if the Buddha has shown the teachings, numberless times I was born in the period when the teachings ended, no longer existing. Because of this reason also I didn't have the chance to practice Dharma.

Even though the teachings existed, numberless times I was born as a human being not following the teachings. Therefore I didn't receive the chance to practice Dharma.

Even though I tried to follow the teachings, many times not receiving a compassionate Guru and because of that not receiving the teachings, I didn't receive the chance to practice Dharma.

Even if there was a compassionate guru, not having another benefactor or helper helping for the temporal needs, I also didn't have the chance, didn't have the time, to practice Dharma.

This time thinking, “I am born as a human being, and also I was born in a place where different levels of ordination exist. Also I was born with perfect organs, not creating any of these extreme negative actions, I have devotion to the practice of Dharma, the Buddha has descended and has shown the teaching and the teaching exists. From my own side I am trying to follow the path shown by Buddha and receive compassion from others to practice Dharma.” So like this you check up from among these ten how much you have received. According to the individual, check like this, how much you discover that you have received. In relation to that number of riches that you have received try to feel joyfulness, happiness—try to feel that you are fortunate. The process of doing this meditation is similar to that on the eight freedoms, checking each one like this, according to time. Then after finishing the whole thing like this, again come back and try to think that I have received a human rebirth, I exist in the center of a religious country, I have received perfect organs—like this. Each one count as you have received. By training in this meditation, each time as you do the meditation deeper with feeling, you can feel that your present rebirth is that precious. The more you discover your rebirth is that precious, the more the happiness in your mind grows. So by training in these meditations continuously, when there is great happiness, joyfulness, it is just like a beggar finding a treasure, a jewel, a diamond in the garbage. Just like a very poor beggar feeling happiness, joyfulness because of finding the diamond—such a precious jewel from the garbage. Just like that incredible happiness and joy. When there is such great joyfulness and happiness arising within our minds, discovering the preciousness of this present human rebirth, then the person has achieved the realization of this meditation. That is the definition of the realization of this meditation.

At the beginning we don't feel much because we don't know much, but as we do the meditation gradually, frequently, it is natural that it becomes clearer and clearer. Your understanding becomes clearer and at the same time as the understanding grows, the feeling of the preciousness of this perfect human rebirth becomes stronger and stronger. That is the effect of this meditation, the way you meditate.

(BREAK)

Student: Assuming the fact that should there be one day a nuclear war on this earth and it destroys all sentient beings, given that some of the sentient beings have in past lives generated karma for a perfect human rebirth in next life, what would be the consequence of this holocaust to these beings. Where would they have their perfect human rebirth? There would be no earth left.

Rinpoche: I see ... generally, there is not only one world, there are many universes. This is just one continent. This round earth is just one continent, and there are numberless continents.

Student: Life would be in the same form?

Rinpoche: Even the whole earth, the planets, after a certain period, the stars, the sun, everything becomes empty. So at that time the sentient beings who lived here just before this earth ends, according to their individual karma they will be reborn in other universes, in the other continents again as animals, human beings just like as it is here.

Student: So Dharma definitely believes in the existence of planets like earth.

Rinpoche: Numberless other earths, yes.

Student: I wonder why one of the eight freedoms is to be born not deaf when it seems to us in the West a great disability to be born blind.

Rinpoche: (laughing) To receive all the teachings you don't have to receive through the eyes. The main thing is that even though you are blind, if you can hear, if your mind is not foolish, if you can hear there is the chance to understand the profound meaning of Dharma.

Student: But if you are deaf could you not read the guru's lips?

Rinpoche: Just to understand the profound meaning of the Dharma, just being blind cannot disturb. But if the person is blind, the ordination cannot be granted by the abbot. Just to understand, listen to the Dharma, the blind eye doesn't disturb that much, doesn't prevent that much.

Student: Why is the deaf person so much more handicapped? If he doesn't hear couldn't he watch the lips etc.

Rinpoche: You are thinking very simple. The whole Dharma subject is not that simple. Just like talking, the whole Dharma subject is not that simple to understand. (Nick gave further explanation of the question regarding vibration of sound) Oh, I see, yes, yes ... doesn't work, knowledge of sound, for the Dharma practice. Anyway, the greatest hindrance is not hearing, being unable to hear and also mentally foolish.

Student: I mean in the West people lip read, so they don't hear but they still understand the words said, so why is being deaf so important?

Rinpoche: That's what I am saying. Just simple thinking. Certain foolish, dumb people can understand simple things but profound things are difficult to understand. Simple things like coming and going can be understood but when there is a deep explanation, it is difficult to understand. Just the physical things can be easy to teach, but abstract things, the subject of mind to talk about realization, is difficult in such a way to make the other person understand.

(Page 40)

How is this Perfect Human Rebirth Useful

6. I could become the king of many universes through creating good karma—this is mainly through creating much good karma.

(Rinpoche read to the end of Page 40)

The main thing in this meditation is checking on the possibilities that this perfect human rebirth has to attain the high aims. The main purpose of doing the meditation on the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth is checking the different possibilities that the perfect human rebirth has to gain the higher aims.

So I think better to meditate, try to feel it as I explain, as I read it.

“The reason I am still living in suffering, still living in ignorance, is because from numberless previous lifetimes I have been living in the boundaries of suffering, the boundaries of delusion and karma. There wasn't even a minute or an hour that I was out of the boundaries of suffering, delusion, and karma. This perfect human rebirth that I have received now can definitely make me cease the continuous suffering life that has no beginning. This suffering life has been always circling around death and rebirth. The continuous circle of death and rebirth can be stopped by this perfect human rebirth. This perfect human rebirth has the possibility to receive enlightenment by completely purifying all the obscurations and by completing all the realizations. This perfect human rebirth has the possibility to receive enlightenment, the most sublime happiness within the three countless great eons. There is a possibility to receive enlightenment with this perfect human rebirth even within eight great eons. This perfect human rebirth can make me receive enlightenment even after seven lifetimes. Also it has the possibility to receive enlightenment in the second lifetime. This perfect human rebirth can also cause me to achieve enlightenment in one lifetime, within twelve years, even three years. This perfect human rebirth can receive enlightenment that much quicker by perfectly practicing the tantric teachings and receiving bodhicitta and perfectly following the moral disciplines. Also this perfect human rebirth can achieve nirvana, the cessation of suffering, in the future lifetimes or in this lifetime. Besides that, even if I desire to have a better rebirth in the future life, this perfect human rebirth can make me receive a better future life.

For instance, if I want to have a better human rebirth than this life, this present perfect human rebirth can make me receive a better human rebirth in the future, as well as a rebirth of the samsaric gods. How can it be possible that this perfect human rebirth can make me receive a better rebirth in future lifetimes? By purely following morality and charity, creating charity, as I have received this present perfect human rebirth by purely following morality and creating charity in my previous lifetime. And this human rebirth I received in this specific continent is the only rebirth in which ordination can be granted. So therefore this present human rebirth has the possibility to receive enlightenment quicker because it has an easier chance to receive bodhicitta and is the best for generating bodhicitta. In other samsaric realms there is no chance to practice the Vajrayana teaching. Those other living beings who are not human beings cannot practice the Vajrayana teachings, the short cut path to enlightenment. Even the human beings who are in different continents, other continents cannot practice the Vajrayana teachings mainly because of karma and deep ignorance. Also in other human beings' continents it is difficult to realize suffering nature. The one who can practice the Vajrayana teaching and who can receive enlightenment in one lifetime are the human beings born in this continent who have bodies that are constituted of skin, blood, and flesh and made of bone, marrow, the white thing inside the bone, and seed, the liquid. Therefore this present perfect human rebirth is highly useful.

Even if I don't receive enlightenment, nirvana, or the cessation of suffering in this lifetime with this perfect human rebirth, there is the chance to receive the fully renouncing mind of samsara and bodhicitta, the full realization of the absolute nature. There is the chance to realize the absolute nature of all existence. Besides all this, this perfect human rebirth has the chance to create infinite merits like infinite space, even within a short minute, within a second, and the chance to purify infinite negative karma in such a short moment. This perfect human rebirth is extremely useful even in each minute or second, so of course why not in each hour, day, and month. It is a great waste if I don't use this present perfect human rebirth in such a meaningful way.

So when you do meditation on this subject, the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, the total way of checking the possibility of the perfect human rebirth is first of all to divide it in three—very simple. It can be divided in three.

1. Ultimate goal. Attaining the ultimate goal and the
2. Temporal goal. The perfect human rebirth is greatly useful to attain the temporal goal.
3. The perfect human rebirth is extremely useful even in a minute, second.

So the whole thing is divided in three. “Ultimate goal” means enlightenment. “Temporal goal” means attaining nirvana, the cessation of the suffering, such as receiving a better and happy rebirth in the future life. These are included in the temporal goals. So even in a second, a moment, even in a minute the perfect human rebirth is highly useful. When a person makes offerings of incense even in a period of time with the motivation of bodhicitta, that person creates infinite merits like infinite space. At the same time, infinite negative karmas that have been created in other previous lifetimes can be purified. For instance, such heavy negative karma created by doing those extreme negative actions can be purified by bodhicitta in such a short time. These negative actions, negative karmas are extremely difficult to purify by other virtuous actions. So this perfect human rebirth has an easier chance to receive the realization of bodhicitta or to do the practice of bodhicitta. Although there are that many numbers of human beings who have received a perfect human rebirth, they may not have met the Mahayana teaching that explains bodhicitta. So therefore this specific human rebirth that we have received this time, in which we have met the Mahayana teaching, that shows the practice of bodhicitta, is more precious. Generally like this.

On this earth, in this world, there are many human beings, but there are few who have received a perfect human rebirth. The human beings who have received a perfect human rebirth and met the Mahayana teaching are less, much less than the general number of human beings who have received a perfect human rebirth. The greatest number of human beings have not received a perfect human rebirth. Generally it is like this, according to the number. This perfect human rebirth, how does it have the chance to receive the temporal goals, a better rebirth, better future lives, and to attain nirvana, the cessation of suffering? Because this perfect human rebirth has a better chance to follow morality and charity. The human body is the best to keep morality. It has an easier chance. Why does this perfect human rebirth have a quicker chance to receive enlightenment in this lifetime, in seven lifetimes, or after two lifetimes? Because this body that is made of skin, bone, and flesh, the three things, the father's seed, the bone, the liquid, the seed, the marrow, this specific body is used with the Vajrayana techniques, the tantric techniques for the path to enlightenment. It is used for the path to enlightenment with the Vajrayana techniques. So to follow such a shortcut, the Vajrayana technique to reach enlightenment, it is necessary to have this body. There is much explanation, but it is not necessary to explain. Therefore this specific perfect human rebirth is highly useful.

So there are three ways to check up—the ultimate goal and the temporal goal. The ultimate goal is to achieve enlightenment quickly due to Vajrayana practice, which can be practiced only with this perfect human rebirth. The temporal goal is to attain nirvana or a better future rebirth by following morality and charity. And even the perfect human rebirth is highly useful in a short time like a second, a minute, by following bodhicitta through guru yoga practice.

So during the breaktime you read the part of the meditation on Page 41 and 42.

After the discussion if the mind is distracted first you start with breathing meditation. Spend more time in checking meditation on the perfect human rebirth and the ten richnesses and then after that do checking meditation on the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, dividing it in three. While you are doing the checking meditation you should not rush. You should take as much time as possible. If you take time by thinking more deeply with your feelings, in this way you can see the subject more clearly, you can understand better. This is the method to quickly actualize the meditation, so if you just rush in the meditation it doesn't become a quick method to receive deeper understanding or to see clearly the meditation subject.

However, you don't have to remember exactly as I told it, but according to your understanding, how much you have understood by remembering, based on that do checking meditation. Also if you don't remember you can read the book. Then do checking meditation.

The mind that does meditation should not feel tight; you should keep it loose, you should make it happy, keep it loose. If your mind is like this, the mind doing meditation, you can't do a good meditation if it is very uptight like this. Then the meditation doesn't become clear, you don't remember.

Also, breathing meditation also helps to relax the mind. If your mind is well relaxed then even though you start to think of something it is easy to come, to clear. I think that's all.

Day Nine

Thursday, 14th November

9 am

From the holy speech of the great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen, “The bodhicitta virtue does not bring only one result; it increases without finishing until the omniscient mind is received. After reaching the state of the omniscient mind, Dharma rain comes from the water holder of the holy body, and develops sentient beings’ planned virtue.”

“Water holder” means cloud. Another way of saying this is that the Dharma rain develops the plan of the living beings’ virtue. The meaning of this is, first of all, that by cultivating the pure thought of bodhicitta, the benefits of that pure thought continuously increase until the omniscient mind is achieved, because bodhicitta is the thought that plans to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings. Even after omniscient mind, enlightenment is received, still the benefits of bodhicitta have not finished. They still continue, still increase. As it is said in this teaching, after reaching the omniscient mind from the water holder of the holy body—in Sanskrit this is *rupakaya*—the Dharma rain falls. That means after the omniscient mind is achieved then the omniscient mind

manifests in the *sambhogakaya*, the different manifestations of enlightened beings for certain higher bodhisattvas, higher beings. It manifests in *nirmanakaya* for ordinary sentient beings. By taking different manifestations the omniscient mind shows the Dharma to sentient beings. The holy body means *nirmanakaya*, such as *sambhogakaya*.

The rain that comes from the clouds, the water holder, the clouds, the rain falling from the water holder, the clouds, makes the plants grow. By this, the people see happiness, enjoying that. Similarly, showing the Dharma by these holy bodies, the *nirmanakaya* and *sambhogakaya*, develops the sentient beings' virtue. By developing the sentient beings' virtue within their minds, it pacifies the sentient beings' suffering. By correcting or pacifying the sentient beings' suffering, the sentient beings receive happiness. Their happiness is received through Dharma by increasing virtue that always increases until they achieve omniscient mind, the state of the most sublime happiness. So even after they achieve enlightenment, the most sublime happiness, still it does not cease—there is such time that it will cease; it continuously exists. As omniscient mind continuously exists the most sublime happiness, that enlightened stage, always exists, there is no such change. There is no way to go beyond from that, no such thing, no such thing as degenerating again. Why there is no way to go further beyond that? Because there is no reason, not one single subtle obscuration of illusive mind left after omniscient mind is achieved. Therefore there is no higher realization, no higher state than that. So the benefits of *bodhicitta* are really incredible.

Totally thinking, this not only brings one's own enlightenment, not only benefits one's own future enlightenment, but besides this, it benefits numberless other sentient beings and allows them to create virtue, to increase their virtue. By increasing their virtue they receive enlightenment. So actually the benefits of the *bodhicitta* that we are trying to practice now are something that will always continue until numberless sentient beings achieve enlightenment. Of course the time when all numberless sentient beings achieve enlightenment is not such a time that we can guess, not a short time. Therefore, the length of time in which that *bodhicitta* benefits sentient beings is very long. It is something that we cannot imagine. Therefore, since this pure thought of *bodhicitta* has that much benefit, it is foolish that while we have the chance to receive a perfect human rebirth and the chance to train the mind in such a path not to do so. Therefore, as we met the teaching on the method to actualize *bodhicitta* it is wise and clever, to train the mind. Therefore it is necessary to train the mind in that pure thought even in this moment, besides the action of listening to the Dharma becoming the cause of enlightenment.

Therefore think—I must achieve enlightenment in order to enlighten all sentient beings as quickly as possible. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path. It is necessary to completely dedicate the action of listening to the Dharma—instead of feeling that it is for me, for my own purpose, it is necessary to strongly feel that it is work for sentient beings, that you are listening to the Dharma for the sake of other sentient beings as if you were a worker, a servant of other sentient beings, like this.

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding of the teaching. It includes 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and it is set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

The teaching of the graduated path has four topics in the outline. In order to have reference, pure reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to cause devotion to arise, the knowledge of the teaching. The way of listening and explaining, and the way of leading disciple on the path to enlightenment. The way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment. The way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment has two—persuading the mind to take the essence of this perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence of this perfect human rebirth. Essence means this—just like the essence in the ocean, in the Pacific, the essence, the most precious thing. There are all kinds of things, dirty things, all kinds of things, but what is the most precious thing a person can have? That is the jewel that the person can get from underneath the ocean, the most expensive jewel. So just like this, there are different levels of essence. The fully enlightened stage is the most pure or highest essence, then the boundless stage, or nirvana. Then the lowest essence is trying to receive a better future life, a better future rebirth. That is the essence that can be attained with this present perfect human rebirth.

The specific part of the meditation is persuading the mind to take the essence with this present human rebirth, the method persuading the mind in order to take the essence is meditation on the perfect human rebirth, the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, and the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth. So we briefly talked about the first part of the meditation, the perfect human rebirth. If there is still anything you don't understand you should discuss it.

Yesterday we talked about the ten opportunities—just a little talk on how we are fortunate to meet the Buddhadharmā in this time and how rare and how difficult it is to meet the Buddhadharmā. How the Buddhadharmā does not always exist on the earth. For instance, when the earth, the whole universe started to evolve, at that time there was no Buddhadharmā. When the whole universe started to evolve, it was gradual. It took twenty intermediate eons for the whole universe to evolve. At that time there was no Buddhadharmā and when the universe ended, when it decayed gradually, at that time also there was no Buddhadharmā. This took also twenty intermediate eons. Also the universe being completely empty, this physical world being completely empty, also took twenty intermediate eons. So at this time how can it be possible to have Buddhadharmā, there is no question. There are not even any sentient beings in the physical world. So the Buddhadharmā exists only in the period of an existing eon. And even in the period of an existing eon, there is no Buddhadharmā, not all the period of the existing eon. So originally human beings, first of all they have an unimaginable length of life that we cannot imagine, such a long life. Then afterwards the life again degenerates, gets shorter and shorter, comes down, shorter and shorter, comes down to the 80,000 ages. Then again that age gradually degenerates, gradually becomes shorter and shorter, then the Buddha descends and the teaching gradually come and are gradually shown. The Buddhadharmā carries on down to the one hundred ages then after the period of having the one hundred age, when this degenerates, when life gets shorter and shorter from there, then there is no more Buddhadharmā existing after that. Then the life goes down to the ten ages. During that period there is no Buddhadharmā, no teaching; it is just a completely dark period. Then from the ten ages everyone has a small body and they only live ten years. Then after a long period, again the age becomes longer and longer, goes up to eighty, gradually increases. When the lifespan increases up to eighty, there is no Buddhadharmā. Also peoples' enjoyments becomes richer and richer; it increases, gets better. So again from 80,000 the life goes up to 80,000. Then again from there it degenerates, becoming shorter and shorter. So it goes up to the 80,000 age, then again comes down to the ten, then again goes up to the 80,000—again and again like this.

There are about twenty corners, and each of these corners is counted as an intermediate eon. About twenty intermediate eons is a great eon of existing universe. The Buddhadharmas only come when it decreases and degenerates down from the 80,000. Then after it passes the one hundred age, there is no more Buddhadharmas. So the Buddhadharmas only exist for a very, very short period. There is more time where there is no Buddhadharmas. The period of the existence of the Buddhadharmas is so short.

This time is almost the end. Just like the last flame of a light, like the last flame that is ready to finish. So however, we are fortunate that we have met the Buddhadharmas at the very last. By meeting the Buddhadharmas we have the chance to create good karma, the cause of happiness, the cause of enlightenment. We have the possibility to follow the method that cuts off ignorance. So this description is just to give you an idea, a little bit of feeling to help a little bit for the meditation on the perfect human rebirth, the ten opportunities. By understanding this, there is a little feeling. Also by understanding this you feel how this specific time of your rebirth, this present rebirth in which you have met the Dharma, is precious. This gives a deeper understanding, deeper feeling when you do meditation on the perfect human rebirth, the eight freedoms and ten opportunities.

Then just short a repetition on the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth. For instance, there are many yogis in India and Tibet who receive enlightenment in the lifetime. One yogi was renowned in the East and West, very well known to many of the young people who take drugs. Anyway, it is quite interesting taking drugs and reading Milarepa's book together! These yogis achieve enlightenment in such short periods, such short periods, like three years. There are also many other yogis, I don't remember their names, but other yogis who achieved enlightenment in such short periods, one lifetime, by doing such hard, pure practice, and experiencing many difficulties in doing the higher practices of the Dharma, dedicating their lives completely. Also there are many other yogis who achieved enlightenment in this lifetime, who achieved the rainbow body. I think it is called rainbow body in the English translation. It sounds funny, but it has happened that the bodies of many yogis who achieve enlightenment become a spiritual body, become light, oneness with light and completely disappear. There have been many of these yogis, certain yogis who reached such attainments, such realization. They only leave the nails and hairs, but you can't see any body in their cave. The great yogi Ensapa, who achieved enlightenment in that lifetime, attained this realization. Many of the Vajrayana teachings that we practice are explained by those great yogis who achieved enlightenment in that lifetime. There are many other profound methods that have to be practiced on the basis of the meditations. And those great yogis before were like us, ordinary people—they looked uglier than us before. On the outside they looked like the great yogi Milarepa—his name was so famous everywhere and people who went to see him expected to see sort of like an angel, very glorious looking. But when they really saw the actual Milarepa it was a completely big shock, completely different from what they expected, completely opposite. They almost doubted whether this was Milarepa because his body, his skin turned this color blue by living a long time without clothes on. Then also he was skinny—almost easy to be taken by wind. He looked like this outside, but seeing his aspect in such a way doesn't mean he doesn't have realizations, mind control, or bodhicitta; it doesn't mean his mind is not purified. Anyway, one cannot guess the level of his mind just by the way his body looks. He lived an austere life for Dharma practice, not having much, eating nettles, things like this.

However, being human beings, those great yogis who achieved enlightenment in that lifetime, before were also ordinary beings like us. Therefore, even in that case there is no question as to whether we can receive enlightenment in this lifetime. The practice, the teaching, the method that they have used

also exists in this time. Still the Tibetan lamas are trying to actualize them, receiving teachings from their gurus, trying to practice with understanding and experience. They still exist in their experience, not intellectually, not in the books, but still in their experience. So there is a chance, from our side being human beings, receiving perfect human rebirths, that the teachings, such profound methods, exist still. There is a chance, a possibility to receive them. If we try from our side there is the possibility to receive them, to practice them, and to actualize them. So therefore there is the possibility to receive enlightenment, even in one lifetime. Why? By following the profound methods, the Vajrayana teachings, the practices of the graduated path. Beings such as the samsaric gods have no chance—in their realm there is no Vajrayana teaching, no chance to practice the Vajrayana . Even in other different continents they don't have the fortune to practice the Vajrayana teaching. Only beings who are born in this specific continent who have this kind of body made of the parents' combination of egg and so forth, only this specific human being can practice the Vajrayana teachings. This is the only rebirth in which we can practice the Vajrayana teachings, the method to receive enlightenment in one lifetime, because of this body that is made of the combination of the parents, the egg ... by using this body on the path to enlightenment, enlightenment can be received in one lifetime.

So there is no question about receiving enlightenment. With this human rebirth one can receive enlightenment in the second life, the future life, after several eons—no question. The reason is this—as we receive the perfect human rebirth there are also teachings existing that we can practice. Also with this human rebirth we can receive the boundless stage, nirvana, by following the three trainings—the higher trainings of conduct, concentration, and wisdom.

The last thing, whether we want to be born as human beings, samsaric gods, or as kings in the future life, whatever we want to be born as, we have a choice in this life. We have the possibility to be born as we wish. How is there such possibility? Because this future rebirth, this future happy good rebirth is received through the causes of following morality and charity. With this present human rebirth there is the chance to follow morality and charity. Like this if you check up, thinking of the result and the cause, as you think of enlightenment and the cause of enlightenment, the boundless stage of nirvana and think of the cause, the three higher training, that can be practiced in this life and the future good happy rebirth, this has a possibility. Why? Because it is possible to create the causes, morality and charity. However, in this lifetime we received the perfect human rebirth, mostly due to the kindness of our previous life. We have worked very hard for many lifetimes following morality, keeping precepts, giving charity and praying to be born with a perfect human rebirth. So in the present time, receiving this perfect human rebirth depends on many things, many causes. In many of our previous lifetimes we worked for this present result. In many of our previous lifetimes we prayed to be born like this—besides actually working, making charity, observing the morality. So whatever future rebirth we want, whatever our future rebirth will be, is up to our present life's hand. It is in the present life's hand. So if in this present lifetime we are not careful, if we are not wise about how to use this present life, if we are not careful with it, it is also very dangerous. It can be highly useful, and also it can be extremely dangerous. This depends on how we think, how we use our life.

The reason I explain dividing in three like this—the ultimate goal, the temporal goal, and the second, minute—actually this meditation explains how to make the life meaningful, which many Western people do not know and suffer, believing life is meaningless, without purpose. This meditation looks like it is involved in some kind of abstract thing, but actually this meditation explains how to make life meaningful, how this life is precious, and how to make life useful and meaningful. It shows the

possibility, the higher possibility, of what one can do. There are many choices—if I cannot do this, I can do this, if I cannot do this, I can do this—many choices that we can choose, try. However, the whole total thing is for the purpose to soon escape from ignorance and suffering. If you don't understand the meaning of life, the different possibilities and the meaning of life, if you don't understand them, you don't make life meaningful, because you don't have wisdom. Think back to the West, the way people live, think, act in daily life. It is always the same thing, the old thing, the same thing, such a boring life in which they are mostly ignorant of knowing what they are doing. They are doing something but they don't know what they are doing. They think they are doing something wise but actually they don't know whether they are doing wise things, creating the cause of suffering. So many times it happens to also people—nothing makes life better, there is no method, so there is nothing new to experience in life because there is no method, so life gets boring and they commit suicide, many times.

Anyway, during the break times I think if you read the following meditation that comes afterwards, if you continuously read it, it will help a lot to understand when I explain the meditations. It will give a better understanding when I talk.

Then after the discussion do meditation on the ... begin with perfect human rebirth then the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth as I explained this morning. If you can remember by thinking of each of the goals and then thinking each of the causes, how you can do it. Then also read the part of the subject that I didn't finish, the wasting this precious human rebirth.

If you understand Dharma there is nothing to get bored of in life, because there is a method, a definite method that one can experience, one can practice—there is so much experience, so many methods to attain happiness. You will never get bored, you will always be conscious, always happy, always ... less problems, less dissatisfaction, less busy, less busy for worldly life. So in that way there are less problems.

After doing meditation on this you can also read the next part of the subject we didn't read—the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth and think. The main thing is just checking by yourself on that subject and take time to check up with feelings.

Then in the second hour, Lama is going to come to give a lecture on how to make the human life useful.

[Lama Yeshe gave discourse the second hour.]

Day Ten
Friday, 15th November
9 am

From the holy speech of the great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen, “The sun and the moon and the rosary of lightening may illuminate, but how can they dispel the inner darkness? Bodhicitta, however, completely dispels the darkness within sentient beings' minds; therefore holy beings admire bodhicitta.”

That means that external lights such as the sun and moon, the largest lights such as the sun and moon, and momentary lightening dispel the outer darkness and make it clear, but do not have the power to dispel even a small inner darkness, such as ignorance. So on this earth however much light there is to clarify, to see things, to dispel darkness, however much external light there is, it doesn't have even the small power of bodhicitta to dispel the inner darkness. It is nothing to compare to the power of bodhicitta. By achieving the inner light of bodhicitta that dispels the inner darkness, one doesn't have to necessarily depend on external light to dispel the outer darkness. Even though there is outer darkness, the being who has bodhicitta, inner light bodhicitta, for that being the outer darkness cannot obscure the inner light. The outer darkness doesn't prevent that being from being able to see external existence, because the external darkness stopping the person from seeing things is mainly caused by the inner darkness within the person's mind.

Therefore it is greatly worthwhile to try to dispel the inner darkness by depending on bodhicitta, which is always admired by the holy beings who fully realize its infinite benefits. Therefore it is necessary to train the mind in this pure thought of bodhicitta, even in this moment, as we have the chance. While we have the chance if we don't train the mind as much as possible in this pure thought of bodhicitta, it is extremely difficult to get such a precious chance again; this is not definite.

Therefore it is necessary to cultivate the pure thought of bodhicitta in order for the action of listening to the Dharma to become the cause of enlightenment, not to become the cause of samsara, the cause of boundaries of suffering. So therefore think, "I must cause all sentient beings to release from all their sufferings and lead them to the most sublime happiness enlightenment as quickly as possible. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment first. In order to achieve enlightenment I must complete the whole realization of the graduated path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path."

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding of the teaching. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and the whole teaching is set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

The teaching of the graduated path has four outlines. They are: in order to have pure reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to cause devotion in the teaching to arise, the knowledge of the teaching. The way of listening and explaining the teaching. The way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment. The way of training the mind has two—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth.

First of all, persuading the mind in order to take essence with the perfect human rebirth. This involves the three meditations on perfect human rebirth, the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, and the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth. So at the present time the subject is the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth.

For instance, if someone gives diamonds to children who don't know their value, the preciousness of the diamonds, the child who has the diamond and doesn't know the value of the diamond doesn't

think the diamond is that important, he doesn't care for that jewel. Therefore he doesn't have the mind to take care of it, to preserve it, and to make it beneficial or useful for him. There is no thought. There is the danger even that if the child has such a precious diamond, because of lack of understanding of the value, the quality of the diamond, the child becomes careless and there is the danger to lose it.

For instance, animals, horses—we put dust in the ear, he will shake the ear. We put diamonds in the ear, he will shake also the ear. If the animal knew the difference between the dust and the diamond, that one is very precious, it wouldn't do that. But whether it is precious or whether it is a non-valuable thing, whatever is put in the ear, it shakes. That is mainly because of not knowing that it is a jewel and how it is precious and expensive.

Just like this, we have received the perfect human rebirth, such a precious rebirth, a perfect human rebirth that can be highly useful to attain these different aims, different results, with the possibility to gain any level of happiness that we desire. Not understanding the meaning of the perfect human rebirth, the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth and the preciousness of the perfect human rebirth is like the animal shaking out the diamond—not knowing these things and being careless of them and using them in the wrong way, in a meaningless way that doesn't bring the result of happiness. So by knowing the preciousness, the usefulness, the meaning of the perfect human rebirth, by understanding this, we know what different aims and results can be achieved, what level of happiness can be achieved. Also by understanding this then the person uses his perfect human rebirth in a meaningful way. Since he does that all the time his life has meaning, he is taking the essence. That other person who doesn't know the usefulness and preciousness of the perfect human rebirth and who only uses it for meaningless negative actions is like the person who has arrived in the jewel land where he can get jewels but doesn't know it, and goes back empty handed without taking jewels. He goes back carrying garbage. Like this example.

So anyway, therefore this is also the purpose of first doing meditation in these subjects.

(Page 41)

Paragraph 3

(... own experience of such situations) For instance, when you lose certain possessions like gold, diamonds—you make business, and then you lose hundreds of dollars, and you feel greatly upset. You feel a big loss. If you lose hundreds of thousands of dollars you feel great upset, your mind becomes in a terrible situation. That is because you know the value of that, you know how that is useful. Even the beggar who has only ten dollars, when he loses that he feels such great emptiness, great loss—his mind will be unhappy for many days. That is because he knows how the ten dollars is useful, he knows how much he can enjoy that amount of money. But that value is nothing compared to the value of his human rebirth. Even besides this example, even the numberless worlds full of jewels, even if all those jewels are lost, it is nothing compared to the loss of the perfect human rebirth, wasting the life of the perfect human rebirth. The whole total thing, the whole reason is that even though there are that many numbers of jewels, they cannot solve the life's problems, they cannot make us receive enlightenment, receive everlasting happiness. They cannot solve attachment, the mind's problem of attachment. But the perfect human rebirth that is received has the value to bring all these results, to solve all of life's problem, to cut off all the negative mind. So the value of the perfect human rebirth is incredible. In regards possessions, the most precious possession is the perfect human rebirth that is received now. This is something that is worthwhile to take care of, to

be concerned for, rather than to be concerned for external possessions. Actually any possession, jewel, as we have been possessing them in our different previous lifetimes, if someone collected all the materials and jewels, they would fill up all of infinite space. That much we have possessed, but even so, still the mind is living in suffering, not released from the nature of suffering.

In regards part of this meditation, also on Page 41 the part that is numbered 1 - 3 is very useful to think about. In regards usefulness as it is here divided in three, the different aims. Then yesterday, also part of the subject numbered in three, starting from “Wasting this very precious human rebirth ... (top of Page 41)” down to “... because it is of no use in controlling this negative mind.” This is very good to remember during the meditation time. This is just the fundamental subject in order to give you the chance how to think, how to understand the great usefulness of the human rebirth.

The Eight Worldly Dharmas

This Dharma is different. This Dharma is in the sense of all existence being Dharma. There are two meanings for “Dharma”—one is the method that leads to enlightenment, and this Dharma, of the eight worldly Dharma, is the Dharma that keeps ordinary beings in samsara, in the boundaries of suffering. So these two are opposed.

(BREAK)

Student: It seems from what you say about Dharma with a small “d” that it keeps people in samsara and seems to be an implication that there is a reason for samsara, a reason to keep people there purposely.

Rinpoche: I don’t think it is a conscious reason, a reason given by conscious mind, understanding mind, but a reason given by ignorance. It is mainly a reason given by ignorance, by attachment, not by understanding mind. True understanding.

Student: But does that ignorance have purpose?

Rinpoche: There is a wrong reason and a right reason. A reason that helps you and doesn’t help you. A reason doesn’t have to be correct; it depends on the individual mind and understanding. It always doesn’t have to be correct or perfect, there can be silly reasons.

Student: In the West there is often the thought of a negative power, negative force—some people might call it the Devil. Whatever the name, is there such a thing in the Buddhist teachings?

Rinpoche: There is negative force.

Student: Does it have will, purpose?

Rinpoche: It doesn’t have pure purpose. Actually the negative force exists mainly because of the ignorance, mainly because of the inner negative mind, ignorance. It doesn’t have a proper purpose, it exists because of ignorance. The negative force exists because of ignorance; ignorance produces the negative force.

Student: Does that mean negative force can be completely eliminated?

Rinpoche: Yes, right. It is the same thing; whenever the negative mind is purified at the same time negative forces are also controlled. There are no more negative force within your mind. No more negative forces that control you, keep you away from enlightenment, away from Dharma practice.

Student: Is it true that the negative forces only exists in the wheel of life?

Rinpoche: Yes.

Student: Can all sentient beings obtain enlightenment?

Rinpoche: Yes, because each of the sentient beings has the possibility of receiving enlightenment, each sentient being has the clear light nature of mind that makes it possible to receive

enlightenment. But it is difficult to say that this is a time that all sentient beings achieve enlightenment. That is difficult to say.

[Rinpoche reads the eight worldly Dharmas from the book]

Understanding the eight worldly Dharmas is very important. The more we understand this, recognize this, the more we will know the source of our problems, where they come from. When you come to the East there are problems, when go back to the West there are problems—wherever we go there are problems such as dissatisfaction. Wherever we go there are problems, but the more we understand of this, the more clearly and deeply we understand where the life problems come from, what create the life problems, the individual problem, and the problems of society, the country, and the source of the problems, the more we know what method can help. It is easy to know what method can help. Also it is easy to know what should be done in order to stop the problems, and it is easy to stop the problems. The more deeply the person understands this as this is the source of problem, the easier it is to solve the life problems. It is very easy to make the life happy or peaceful. This is very important, because usually this is the source, the main thing that makes the life go up and down all the time. In the morning time we are happy, after some time in the afternoon we are upset, and then at nighttime again another thing. One day is happy, another day is upside-down, the whole face changes, always up and down, life is not equal. Life is also like this ... for instance, other people that we see are also like this. Why is life not equal, always up and down? Because the mind is not equal. The changes of life—suffering, happiness—the whole thing depends on the mind, the whole thing depends on the creator, the mind. It is all created by the mind. So as Nagarjuna, the great philosopher who has the full realization of the absolute nature, the great yogi, said in his teaching, the eight worldly Dharmas are: feeling happy when material things are received, feeling unhappy when there is no material received; feeling happy when there is pleasure, feeling unhappy when there is suffering: feeling happy when there are sweet sounds, but when there are uninteresting sounds feeling unhappy; when someone admires or praises us, feeling happy, and when someone puts us down feeling unhappy, feeling suffering. Nagarjuna emphasized the need to make these eight things equal in order to stop the life problems, to have a pure Dharma practice. Generally it is like this.

Because there is attachment to receiving the material things, because of the attachment when there are no material things the unhappiness and suffering come. Because there is attachment to the material received, there is dislike in not receiving material. There is dislike or hatred, unhappiness in not receiving material. There wouldn't be that problem if there was no attachment to the material received. This makes the life go up and down.

For instance, when we receive material, we feel happiness, as there is attachment to that. Afterwards you expect it, and then you do not receive material things. So first the life is up, and then there is unhappiness, the mind changes, not the same as before. The mind is in suffering and unhappiness, dislike because of not receiving material things. For instance, this we can check up—we usually feel when we receive material things that this is real happiness, due to the attachment attached to the object and the object being close. But actually if you really check up, the mind is not really in happiness—if you really check up the nature of that mind. The nature of that mind is not calm, not peaceful. If you check up, it is kind of uptight, like stone, like iron, very uptight, not relaxed—the mind is never a relaxed mind; it is sort of lifted up, not a comfortable mind. I am just expressing the ordinary way that mind acts, what state that mind is in. Even in such those times, even sometimes when you try to concentrate, you cannot concentrate. Why can't you meditate? Why can't you

concentrate? Because the nature of that mind at that time is not relaxed, not free. You feel as if the mind is sort of sinking into the object when there is such attachment. I am just generally expressing the feeling but you can check up. We don't have the problem of not having attachment. If you didn't have attachment perhaps maybe you have another problem, but there is no question.

So it is necessary to check up the nature of the attachment, and then we know how it is negative, how it causes confusion. If we diminish it that much more, if we lessen the attachment, that much more we stop the attachment in the object from rising, and it helps us that much to not allow dislike and unhappiness at not receiving material things to arise. That's how Dharma practice brings the life into peace, and makes the mind happy, not confused. That is because the Dharma causes attachment to not arise. Even if there is attachment, it causes us to lose the attachment in the object. So when there is no material received, the mind is always in happiness, in peace. There is no life up and down. During those times there are many other techniques, many other way of practicing Dharma in order to lose the attachment.

For instance, checking the shortcomings of attachment. Think, "From numberless previous lifetimes this attachment has kept me in suffering. Still I am suffering from having this attachment. If I follow the attachment, the attachment will continuously exist in my mind in all the future lifetimes. So in this case I will never get out of suffering, never get released from attachment. I will never receive the everlasting happiness that is boundless of attachment. This attachment is my enemy, this has stopped all my past happiness, including enlightenment. This enemy, attachment, stops even my present happiness, such as receiving the most sublime happiness of enlightenment. Also this attachment will be continuously be my enemy, stopping me from receiving my future happiness, including the most sublime happiness of enlightenment." Think like this. As the person continuously thinks like this, the person continuously see more and more, deeper and deeper how attachment is the cause of suffering, how it prevents his peace or happiness, especially the true happiness of everlasting happiness and the most sublime happiness of enlightenment—especially these two happinesses.

Also, it is very good when you are close to the object, that material thing that causes attachment, mind confusion to arise, at the same time mind try to be conscious—not just letting the mind think whatever it feels or wants. Instead of being ignorant of your feelings, the feeling of attachment, the nature of attachment, try to be conscious of how the mind reacts, how the mind thinks of the object, how it feels. Check up the nature of the attachment, and check also whether there is attachment or not. Check the nature of that mind, whether it is calm and peaceful or not. Like this you check up. Then you can really discover how it is confused mind. You will understand more about the nature. Also in this way the person can understand that there is no real true happiness; this is the wrong conception of attachment.

Also, one useful technique is to change the aspect of the object into something that doesn't cause attachment to arise. Attachment arising or not arising depends on the aspect of the object. It is dependent. So change the aspect of the object, your visualization of the object. Change it into an ugly form, another aspect that doesn't cause attachment to arise. This way there are less problems in the mind. You don't have to break the object or throw it out; it isn't necessary to do something like this. Because the main confusion is in the mind. The whole thing depends on changing the creator, the mind that looks at the object in a different way. Usually the object of attachment is kind of on the basis of believing that it is independent, self-existent, and seeing the object in beauty even

though it is not true. Attachment believes in the beauty and also it sees it as self-existent beauty, but the object of attachment is not true. That's how attachment is just a wrong conception.

Also, one technique is to check the nature of the object, and see that it is not self-existent, not self-beauty. If the person can see the emptiness of self-beauty and self-existence, then in that case there is no way for attachment to arise, because that time when the person thinks or concentrates on this, the person's view is changed. The person sees the object as it exists, differently from the view that the person used to believe in before. That was only a projection of attachment, which does not exist anywhere. To check in this way, you need the understanding of how to check up, how to look at the object. Within the person's mind, he needs to think how he sees the object in the wrong way, how he sees the object as having self-beauty even though it doesn't have self-beauty. How he sees the object as self-existent even though object is not self-existent. The person has to have the wisdom of how to check this. So the simple way, the simple method, even though we can't think in this way, is just to change the aspect of the object into a stone, or wood. Just an ordinary thing, an object that doesn't cause attachment.

Sometimes it is also very useful visualizing objects, material things like gifts—if someone brings a gift then all of a sudden the mind gets freaked out, and you cannot hold or control the mind, the mind just flies. Anyway, so at that time if you change the aspect of the object all of a sudden into, something like red hot burning iron, then all of a sudden this incredible attachment that is uptight and makes you not relaxed, not peaceful, all of a sudden it decreases, it goes down. So in this way you control your mind. You make yourself happy and relaxed. In this way you don't create negative karma. This practice itself is the Dharma, pure Dharma practice. Also think, "This red hot burning iron is actual red hot burning iron, and cannot make me be reborn in the suffering realms, such as the evil destinies. It cannot cause me to continuously suffer in samsara. But that object to which I am attached has been causing me suffering in previous lifetimes until now and it will continuously cause me suffering in samsara." If the person thinks like this, meditates, it is easy to lose the attachment, to keep him away from the attachment.

Generally there are many other techniques by which to lose attachment. By using these different techniques the mind doesn't become confused with material objects. The person has the method, even though the person knows just that much, he has the method to handle it, to solve his life problems. In the West there is schizophrenia, which makes the life up and down, and the cause of schizophrenia is craving, attachment, and dislike when there is unhappiness. The main cause is this. Psychiatrists and many people think schizophrenia is very difficult to cure; they think it is an impossible thing. The main thing is that they don't know the source of schizophrenia, they really don't know. Because of not knowing what mind has created the schizophrenia, whether it is created by these schizophrenics, whether it is created by mind, what type of mind has created it, because of not knowing this source, this evolution, they are ignorant in the method, so there is no method.

Those are just very simple things. Just to solve that kind of problem you don't have to have realizations. For just even a small simple thing, the mind problem, there is no method. So actually studying Dharma, doing meditation on this graduated path, studying Dharma, that includes all subjects—this is like studying hundreds and hundreds of different subjects at the same time—psychology, science, physiology, many different things. Different subjects that are given different titles.

This means disliking and feeling unhappiness when there are displeasing words, and uninteresting sounds. Similar techniques can be used also when there are problems such as attachment arising by hearing the interesting sounds. This is also useful—when you hear the sound that causes attachment to rise, if you visualize the sound as a hot red burning wire or needle, a long needle, then check like this, “This hot red burning needle cannot make me be reborn in the suffering realms. This won’t cause me to be continuously reborn in the suffering realms of samsara, but this sound has been causing delusions and attachment to arise in me from numberless previous lifetimes until now and this object will continuously cause delusions to arise, and cause me always to experience suffering even in future lives.” This is a simple way, a simple technique to stop attachment from rising—this also this helps. If you know the real nature, if you can really see the nature of the sound then there is no way for attachment to arise, but that is difficult, you need understanding, you need wisdom, so sometimes if your wisdom is not strong, is not exact, to see the nature of the interesting sound, sometimes it doesn’t work. Not having the deep understanding the nature of the sound, sometimes these simple methods and techniques are more helpful, quicker to stop the attachment. The main problem is not the sound, the main problem is the mind, the attachment—but by using such techniques and methods you can lose the attachment.

Also it is good, as you hear the sound, to check how it exists and how you feel, how you feel with the sound. How do you hear the sound, how do you feel with the sound. As you hear sound, as you feel sound like this, does it really exist or not and how does it exist? Checking like this is also useful. Checking like this, besides losing attachment, helps to realize nature of the sound. The main thing to check up is the feeling that we have with the sound, the way we think of the sound—that is the main thing to check up and recognize, whether it is really existing there. In the case of the person who plays guitar, does it exist on the person who plays, on the guitar, on the strings, or the person or that instrument—the leather, the skin, that helps to bring the sound. Checking like this is useful. Does it exist on the person’s hands or fingers—like this checking each piece.

[Rinpoche read to end of Page 41]

Also one can think that there are many problems. One of the most worst problems that ordinary beings have is attachment to admiration, attachment to reputation. Renouncing the attachment to food and clothing is easy, but renouncing attachment to reputation is more difficult. This is one of the biggest list problems, having attachment to reputation.

For instance, all this is our life experience. When there is praise from people for us saying, “How good you are, how generous, how kind, how wise—” when people say things like this the mind gets into problems. Attachment all of a sudden arises just like balloon, blowing a balloon. All of a sudden attachment comes up. So again the mind gets into problems, so again there is the need of methods because the mind is again suffering in another way. So it is necessary to take care of the mind by using the methods. This is useful—all of a sudden you check up when the person talks, you try to be conscious of your own mind, your own thoughts, how it is reacting. Try to be conscious whether attachment arises or not. Try to be conscious. In this way you are studying, learning your own mind. This is the best way of learning your own mind. Just checking. Then when the mind gets into confusion and attachment because of good words that you believe as good words, then check—“I believe the subject that he is talking about is good.” By believing this attachment arises. Check up like this. For instance, a person says, “You are so wise in talking,” and all of a sudden your mind become crazy. Check like this. Each word, “How wise you are,” you think is a good word—by believing this attachment rises. Whether that object that you believe in or that attachment feels really

exists—you check up with each word: “how” and “you” and “are” and also “wise.” Just hearing “wise” there is no reason for attachment. Just with “wise” there is no reason for attachment, just the word “wise.” For just the word “you” there is no reason for attachment, no reason. After checking on each word you don’t find anything, no interest.

This is just the same as, “You are so bad.” Saying, “You are so bad, terrible,” doesn’t make any difference. When we believe, “You are so wise in talking,” what we believe doesn’t really exist anywhere. What we believe and what causes attachment to arise doesn’t exist. So after this checking like this we don’t find anything that we believed in before. We don’t find the object we believed in before. When we discover the emptiness of the object that we used to believe in before, at the same time our feeling changes. Our feeling is different than the other feeling. There is no problem in the mind, no confusion—the mind is out of confusion. All of a sudden by checking like this the attachment goes down, and at the same time the mind is so relaxed, happy, much happier than before. Before the mind was very uptight, unsubsided and uptight. Like this the same thing, there is no reason to get angry when someone put you down by criticizing or complaining. Also it is similar when we hear someone saying such terrible bad things. All of a sudden the wrong conception that thinks there is something there in each word, that the truth is there, which bothers us, makes anger arise.

Again you check up, try to discover your feeling—what you feel, how you feel it, how to believe his words. After that, check up each word—do you get angry with the word “you?” There is no point in getting angry. “Terrible?” There is no point in getting angry at the word “terrible.” Just hearing “terrible” doesn’t make us get angry, there is no point in getting angry. Checking each word like this, you lose this wrong conception, lose the anger. You don’t find the object that you believe is truly there; anger doesn’t have an object so it is lost. This way you keep your mind in peace, you become the doctor, the physiologist, the psychiatrist, making your own life peaceful. In this way also you don’t create negative karma. Both ways stop the creation of negative karma, getting angry creating negative karma. If you use this method it helps you to not create negative karma so it is a very beneficial method.

After the discussion, do a short meditation on the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, then also think about the part on wasting the perfect human rebirth. Then spend more time checking the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. This is the method, the way of studying our own mind and life, to recognize how we spend the life. This is one way of trying to discover the nature of our own mind. Checking like this.

For instance, today, from this morning until now—think back on part of the schedule meditation from that until morning time and then yesterday and the day before yesterday. Then down to the life, the way to live in the West, checking back. For instance, each action ... today starting from this morning, try to remember each action, like eating, talking, getting up, and then think about with what kind of mind you got up, with what kind of mind you talked, with what kind of mind you sat down and listened to teachings. As you remember each action check up the mind. Was the action, each action, done with one of those evil thoughts? Try to check up whether each action was done with these evil thoughts. Then finish today, check for yesterday, and the day before, down to the life from the time of childhood, and if you can remember the previous life, of course. Like this spend more time—this is very useful. This can help very much to understand the existence of Dharma. I think that’s all.

6 pm

First do the meditation on Guru Shakyamuni yoga practice. The purifying meditation. Then after that do the meditation on the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, mostly checking on the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. As I explained before, try to remember each action that you did today starting from this morning and as you remember each action, try to check up, try to see whether this action was done with the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. Totally, another way of saying this is a thought that is attached to only the happiness of this life. The attachment that clings solely to the happiness of this life. Usually there are many other actions done with the pure thought which are not attached, which are attached only to the happiness of this life. There are different kinds of thoughts, evil thoughts and positive, pure thoughts—all kinds of different thoughts. So this way we can easily discover whether life has been positive or negative. How life has been used—whether it has been beneficial, whether it has been meaningful, whether the perfect human rebirth has been used as it has meaning, as it is useful. We can easily discover by checking like this.

Then checking the actions done today and also checking the actions done yesterday. With what kind of mind was each of the actions done. Like this you check back to childhood as much as you can remember. Then as much as you see your actions were done with the pure thought without the attachment clinging to the happiness of this life, the actions done with the thought that is not attached, then that much more you find and feel happiness and rejoicefulness. This is worthwhile to feel yourself happy, rejoicefulness. Because why it is worthwhile, why feel rejoicefulness? Because actions done with no attachment are meaningful actions—that is the action that gives meaning to life, that brings essence to life and that is the action that brings the result of happiness in this life and other future lifetimes.

This whole process of meditation is very useful. Actually this meditation is studying our own mind, our own life, to recognize our life, what we are doing, what types of mind we have. Even if you cannot discover these inner subjects, through this meditation also you easily know how to make the life meaningful, what is the correct way and what is the wrong way. It is something that as much as we study in the West, as much time, energy, and materials as we spend, even though we spend so many years, still we cannot understand. Still we cannot understand these subjects—how to make life meaningful and the meaning of the life. So through this meditation even if one checks up, even if one does meditation for one hour, even for a short time, one can easily learn and discover the nature of one's own life.

The pure thought and the actions done with such a pure thought detached from the comfort of this life are the causes of the happiness. The opposite, the attachment that clings only to the happiness of this life is the cause of suffering, the cause of samsara, the cause of all problems and confusion. That is the main cause of schizophrenia. For instance, two parents always fighting, every day fighting, families always fighting each other, sometimes silly things, with no meaning, no actual reasons. So all these life's problem are caused by this evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. For instance, between two persons, sometimes people fight just for breakfast, just a simple example. Just to know how that problem arises from the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. One desires suji, one person wants bread—it is difficult to remember American food! Anyway, the person doesn't make bread or suji as the other person likes. At the actual time there are mind problems; the other person who likes bread but doesn't like suji, his mind is sick. Actually both minds are sick, no one's mind is well. The other one who is attached to the suji doesn't like to have suji but likes to have

bread—both are sick. So what is the method? The other person who doesn't get bread gets angry with the other person, then there is a lot of talk and fighting with words and also physical fighting. That is possible; many times such insignificant things happens, little things become a big fight. From the person's side it looks important—both of them think it is important, very important, each thing, whatever they want. One person thinks his wanting bread it is important. The other person thinks his wanting suji is important. So both of them think it is important. Actually, if some understanding person looks at the situation, it is like children fighting. Children, who don't have much knowledge, who don't study that much, also fight with desires like this. Even if the person who misses the bread, whose mind is angry, receives the bread, his mind is still confused, still sick—sick of attachment. When he receives the bread that morning, it doesn't solve his attachment problem. As much as the person takes, even if he receives bread every morning for breakfast, the problem of attachment doesn't cease. So during whole his life that problem is not solved. Then without solving that problem, life passes, experiencing continual problems of attachment, and then that person dies. Again in the future life whatever rebirth he takes—human rebirth—whatever is taken, still there is the continual problem of attachment.

So that's how as much as we follow attachment, the problem of attachment continually exists, carries on in the future. This person's mind gets angry because of not having bread, and then he makes the other person unhappy by fighting, telling negative words. It is possible also that he breaks things by getting angry—there is also danger that he might harm the bodies. So all these problems, the dissatisfactions of that unhappy life, creating all these negative actions, making the other person unhappy, all these things arise from the evil thought, from the attachment that is attached to that specific food. All of that is the attachment that clings only to the happiness of one life. So all of his problems are creating all kinds of negative karmas, causes of suffering, and all these things, suffering situations, all arise from this attachment. This is the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, that mind. The other person who makes suji doesn't want to listen to the first person's idea. He follows his own desire, making the other person's mind unhappy by following his own desire and self-cherishing thought, by following his own attachment. So that unhappy situation, that problem is also caused by his attachment that clings to the happiness of life. That is his evil thought; the other person's evil thought of worldly Dharmas.

For instance, another reason that shows how that is the source of problems—if the person who misses the bread, instead of making a hassle about the whole thing, just accepting the suji, instead of thinking that his own desire is so important than his desire, thought, "I am thinking my desire is important, but also his desire is important." Just by renouncing this thought, thinking of one's own desire, oneself is more important than the other person. Easily by checking like this, thinking like this, if the person easily accepts that, by not following the attachment that clings only to the happiness of this life, there is no problem, no hassle, no unhappy situation. Also in this case it doesn't make the other person's mind unhappy, so there is no problem. It is just a matter of conception, just changing the way of thinking. Just a matter of conception.

By understanding one's own attachment as the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, as the cause of suffering, then forgetting it, renouncing it, the person easily accepts what the other person offers, no problem, so life is peaceful, both minds are in happiness. Then also there is no way for anger to arise, no fighting, no way to create negative karma by anger arising. Checking like this in this way, by changing, by giving up this attachment, the mind is so relaxed. By renouncing this attachment, as the person's mind accepts the bread, also the mind is relaxed. So the person makes himself happy, and he makes his life happy. By thinking in this way also we can see the attachment that clings to the

happiness of this life as the cause of problems. This is a scientific experience, not something that doesn't work, that doesn't happen, that you have to believe in—this is not something like this. It is evolution of mind, the way it is working is evolution of mind. However this is just an example, so the same thing just like this, the problem between two persons like this. Between two groups also there are problems caused by the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas.

For instance, some people, if they want to build a house, people have different ideas. Also there is disagreement, different ideas. As there are different ideas, it is difficult, each person wants his own ideas, to do things according to his own idea, so that house is not going to be according to all people's ideas. It is going to be in one shape, one thing; it cannot be according to each person's idea. However, each person, those who have different ideas, because of this evil thought, this attachment is rooted in the mind, so any other person doesn't listen to that idea, doesn't follow it, and then gets angry. Then also pride, so many other negative minds come. Again there is life confusion between them, unhappiness. Also with this example we can easily see how life confusion comes from the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. So just like this, also between two countries, the problems are also rooted in the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, and the attachment that exists such as between teachers and students, these problems are also based on this evil thought of the worldly Dharmas.

For instance, even for the meditators who are unable to control the mind, they cannot concentrate on the object even for a minute, a minute is still long.

Student: Very!

You are right. Even for five seconds the mind is so distracted. Many things, objects to which we are attached—friends, places, clothes, things, many times the objects to which we are attached come in the mind. These things appear in the mind many times, and these things disturb the meditation. So mainly we are unable to control the mind, to have one-pointed meditation. That mind cannot concentrate in one-pointedness even for five seconds, even for such a short period. This is also caused mainly by this evil thought. It is also the fault of this evil thought, the worldly Dharma.

For instance, when the person doesn't care, doesn't have that much attachment to those objects, by understanding the shortcomings of the faults of attachment, this evil thought, those objects don't appear in the mind, don't come up so much. In this way there is less distraction to the meditation. This attachment that clings to the happiness of this life this is also one disturbance to the samadhi one-pointed meditation. It disturbs the mind for the meditators. Even if the meditator tries to meditate, when he finds a little problem around his body, maybe feeling hungry, he easily gives up meditation. That is also mainly due to this evil thought, the attachment that clings to the happiness of this life. And also many times even those who are thinking, "I am a religious person, I am a meditator, a yogi, this and that," trying to do many things, saying prayers, meditating, doing all kinds of religious forms of actions, actually none of those actions is serious. If it is checked up nothing is pure. None of those actions become pure Dharma when they are really checked up. Most of those actions are done only for gaining the happiness of this life, with that kind of attachment. So even the meditators, the religious person, the yogi, even they become false by creating false action. Believing that they are doing something pure but it becomes the cause of samsara. He becomes a false yogi, religious person—and that is also due to this evil thought, the fault of this evil thought. And most of the time people are doing things, praising Dharma, giving lectures, teaching, yogis, this and that, but nothing serious. From the student's side, from the teacher's side, nothing is pure, everything

becomes false. All this is due to the evil thought of the worldly Dharma. What makes nothing pure, serious? Is by this evil thought.

So however, as much as those things are done without checking, there is the danger that all these things and actions become the cause of samsara. Just the cause of suffering. This becomes big cheating. Most of the time what makes these works not pure and sincere is the attachment to the reputation. The reputation is the biggest thing for worldly people, for those who think, “I am this and that,” there is danger. It also becomes a problem for those who have big titles.

Anyway, during the meditation, like this it is necessary to check up. So however, I think this time there is no time to do meditation—however the purification is so important. We have this problem, then what to do, what is the best method? It is actualizing, discovering the nature of the negative mind and stopping the negative mind by ceasing the negative mind and receiving the realization of the different levels of meditations. This depends on purification, so therefore, doing this visualization of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and doing purification with Guru Shakyamuni Yoga meditation is so important, very important.

PRAYER MANTRA

Now do the absorption of the throne and the lotus, and the sun and moon gradually absorb into Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha comes down onto your head and melts in light. You become oneness with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. All of a sudden as Guru Shakyamuni is absorbed and you become oneness, all of your wrong conceptions, all the delusions, all your wrong projections, the way you see yourself—all become complete emptiness, like space. Your mind is oneness with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy mind in the form of emptiness and space, feeling infinite bliss. One’s mind that becomes oneness with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s blissful omniscient mind manifests as the throne, lotus, sun, and moon and in the manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. You are in the manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. The whole holy body is just the formation of light, but you feel infinite bliss, very glorious looking, radiating and very transparent, with no resistance. If you feel comfortable, visualize the mantra surrounding and radiating, sending purifying light to all sentient beings. If you feel comfortable, if you are not hurting, if you feel comfortable doing this visualization at the heart then visualize this. If this is not comfortable then send purifying light while your mind which is oneness with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy mind manifests in the form of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, in the form of a monk, in the aspect of a monk, and then you send purifying rays from all the pores of your body, which is visualized as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy body. All sentient beings, without excluding even one sentient being, as there are that many sentient beings, each one receives the purifying rays, the light, purifying all their delusions, subtle obscurations, and all their negative karmas that they have been collecting from numberless previous lifetimes. Then also recite the mantra.

MANTRA

Think that all the sentient beings delusions and even their subtle obscurations and all negative karmas have been completely purified. Think, “Now I have enlightened all sentient beings in the nature of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.” Visualize that all sentient beings as they are in the manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Also think, “ow I have attained as I motivated.”

Just one question. The very last person, that corner one—I don't know his name! Why is there is negative mind existing? The corner person, you. What is your idea?

Student: Do you want me to ask the question I asked this morning?

Rinpoche: You asked me, I don't remember! You, yes, right.

Student: Because of ignorance and because of a lack of consciousness so far. Negative mind exists because of ignorance and ignorance is allowed to exist because of our lack of consciousness. Our actions are reactions.

Rinpoche: What makes the ignorance keep on going? The other side person, is that agreeable? Do you agree with what he says?

Student: I didn't follow what he said.

Rinpoche: I think you are in deep meditation! I meant to ask you, not him, actually before. Does the ignorance keep on going? Does the ignorance keep on going?

Student: What was the question?

Rinpoche: Does the ignorance keep on going as he says.

[General discussion followed—think it was over who was to answer the question.]

Rinpoche: Actually the first question is to you, but that's all right. What do you think? Do you have any idea, suggestion, any advice, what do you think? (Points to someone else)

Question: Could you repeat the question?

Rinpoche: Did you hear what he says?

Student: I couldn't understand it.

Rinpoche: Why is the negative mind existing. Maybe you have a different idea. Did you hear?

Student: Yes.

Rinpoche: Right, okay.

Student: Because of attachment, delusions, and lack of consciousness.

Rinpoche: Good answer.

Question: But why does ignorance persist, go on?

Rinpoche: Somebody answer.

Student: Because we are attached to ourselves.

Rinpoche: That's right, good answer.

Student: We are attached to ourselves because of ignorance.

Rinpoche: His answer is right, but how does the attachment make the person ignorant?

Student: Because it doesn't allow us to see things as they really are.

Rinpoche: Yes, you answer, the other person.

Student: I don't think it exists. I don't think there is negative mind.

Rinpoche: That's really excellent. Very good, you don't have attachment?

Student: I am not saying that. I am saying ignorance would say there is a self-existent negative mind.

Rinpoche: Self-existent negative mind, you're saying this doesn't exist. You mean there is a negative existing, negative mind doesn't exist?

Student: Yes.

Rinpoche: So no ignorance exists?

Student: No negative mind.

Rinpoche: What is your negative mind. What is the connotation of your negative mind?

Student: One side in other words is negative as opposed to positive. Is that how you are using negative?

Rinpoche: I am asking your connotation

Student: To me negative implies duality, that there is a mind that's intrinsically negative and one that is positive. The mind by itself being negative implies a duality.

Rinpoche: The mind that sees duality as negative, is that what you are saying?

Student: Making reference to the negative mind implies a duality.

Rinpoche: I see. So no negative mind exists?

Student: No, only ignorance.

Rinpoche: So no ignorance exists because ignorance and wisdom is duality.

Student: I don't think one implies the other.

Rinpoche: Same thing with ignorance and wisdom. Is that oneness? I am not talking about negative mind, I am saying ignorance and wisdom, is that oneness? Does the ignorant mind exist?

Student: I have to ask what you mean by ignorance.

Rinpoche: No, whether there is ignorance or not, do you have ignorance?

Student: Yes.

Rinpoche: What do you mean by your ignorance?

Student: Things I am not aware of.

Rinpoche: So ignorance exists.

Student: By that meaning now.

Rinpoche: You believe ignorance exists?

Student: Yes, and yet that's my wisdom also.

Rinpoche: Your ignorance is your wisdom.

Student: I could say that.

Rinpoche: Your ignorance is your wisdom.

Student: In understanding my ignorance.

Rinpoche: That's right, that is different, but your ignorance is not wisdom?

Student: Ignorance itself, no.

Rinpoche: Why ... so isn't ignorant mind negative mind?

Student: No.

Rinpoche: What do you mean by negative mind? Isn't impure mind the same thing as negative mind?

Student: I think that's the way you are using it.

Rinpoche: You don't have impure mind?

Student: Only my ignorance would say that it's impure. That's the ignorance that I have that would think of it as impure or as negative or as evil.

Rinpoche: Your ignorance thinks what is impure. What about your ignorance. Is that pure mind or impure mind?

Student: I don't put it in that kind of duality, pure or impure.

Rinpoche: No such word.

Student: No, I hear what you are saying.

Rinpoche: So there is no such thing as pure and impure.

Student: On a relative level I am hearing an expression but an absolute one, no.

Rinpoche: I am talking relatively. Relatively is there pure mind and impure mind?

Student: Yes, on a relative level. In other words it's like muddy water, we can say it's muddy but not good or bad, relative words.

Rinpoche: So there is no such thing as useful and not useful.

Student: There is that too.

Rinpoche: No such thing as beneficial and non-beneficial?

Student: On a relative level all of these things have functions, have uses as words.

Rinpoche: So there is the benefit of things existing, and the non-benefit of things existing. Is the ignorance beneficial or non-beneficial?

Student: I have never heard it used in that way.

Rinpoche: What do you think?

Student: I believe in an absolute way that it is ignorance that talks about it. In a relative way I could talk about my ignorance, my mind not doing what I want it to do, not doing as I will it, but in an absolute way to talk about negative mind, no.

Rinpoche: You don't think ignorance is a disturbance to ... you don't think anger is a disturbance to peace?

Student: Yes.

Rinpoche: So you believe that anger disturbs peace?

Student: Yes.

Rinpoche: That's funny. You believe anger is not useful, not beneficial?

Student: I don't know about the way you are using it but when I get angry I am not doing what I want to do.

Rinpoche: Is anger disturbing you or not? Does it help you?

Student: It helps me to realize my anger but that's not the lifestyle that I want.

Rinpoche: So anger is useful to you?

Student: No.

Rinpoche: It helps to realize the anger?

Student: To understand my anger, to be in touch with my anger, to feel my anger, but that's not the way I like to live.

Rinpoche: Okay.

Day Eleven

Saturday, 16th November

9 am

From the holy speech of the great yogi Guru Tsong Khapa, "This perfect human rebirth is more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel. Receiving this rebirth is almost only at this time, so please grant me the blessings to be able to take the meaningful essence without being distracted by the meaningless action of this life and to realize that this perfect human rebirth is difficult to find and quickly decays."

As Guru Tsong Khapa said in his holy teaching, receiving such a perfect human rebirth is almost only at this time. The actual explanation of that will come afterwards. The reason it is difficult, the reason it is almost impossible to receive again is because to create such a perfect cause to achieve such a perfect human rebirth is extremely difficult. So this time, fortunately just like the beggar finding a jewel in the street, by opportunity somehow we have received this perfect human rebirth at this time. So this is the one time that we have received the perfect human rebirth and if this lasted forever it would be okay, something else. But this doesn't last forever. If it could be found easily again, that's something else. If it could be received again easily. But it is not like this. This perfect human rebirth that we have received now, if it was not that fragile, if it lasted for a long time, many eons, that would be something else. But it is not like this. It does not last for that long of a time period. It starts to become decayed even from birth. Every time, so quickly it becomes decayed.

So even though we have received the perfect human rebirth, we use it in a meaningless way. We use this perfect human rebirth for creating action that don't bring results, don't bring the essence. We often use it for creating meaningless actions, useless actions. Most of the time it is used for creating negative karma. So the perfect human rebirth is taken to create negative karma. As Guru Tsong Khapa said in his holy teaching, just like using the golden pot that is adorned by many precious jewels for vomited food. Just like this, once the perfect human rebirth which is released from those eight unfree states, using it to create negative karma that causes us to be born again in those unfree states is extremely foolish. Once we attain this perfect human rebirth which is released from the eight unfree states, again creating negative karma is extremely foolish. Just as the great, highly realized yogi Guru Tsong Khapa said in his teaching, just like this.

So if you check up, look at our life, in that case the human rebirth is sort of meaningless. When we check up our life, it is like we purposely took this human rebirth to create negative karma. In this case there is no actual meaning—if the human rebirth is used in that way, there is no meaning. Because in regards to creating negative karma, any other suffering sentient beings, even those tiniest creatures that we don't see, they spend all their time continuously creating negative karma, so to create negative karma we don't have to take especially a human rebirth. There is no point. Creating any negative karma, any action that is done, any work of this temporal life that is done with attachment is nothing special. It is not a special human action. Even the animals do this, the animals who are not human beings, the big animals such as elephants, the big sea animals like huge mountains down to the tiniest creatures that we only see through machines. However, only talking about the animals work, concern for their life, their one life, and they also have attachment to the happiness of that life. They also work, try to gain the means of living with attachment. They also try to make their life happy, same thing. Just this one life, they also try to make happy. They have their own methods. By finding many different and various methods, they try to make the temporal life happy. They kill other animals who are their enemy, who disturb their life's happiness, by going round in different places. They also have many kinds of methods. They also try to make their life happy. They also cheat other animals. They have also their own politicians. They are also very clever in knowing how to cheat and kill other animals, very clever. How to control others, how to make oneself win. They are also very wise, even insects are very wise in how to make their life happy in regards to finding various methods. If you look at, if you watch, you know that always they fly around, always going around—their whole purpose is to make their life happy, to find happiness in their life. However they go up and down. Like the insects, the ant, wherever they go around, busy, up and down, going around, whatever this is, their main aim, what they have in their mind, they also know how to steal, they also know many of these actions that human beings do. Anyway, the work that is only done to gain the purpose of this life, to gain the happiness of the life, that is nothing special, not higher than the animals. Not more special than the action of the tiniest creature. That kind of mind we have is nothing higher, nothing special from that tiniest insect, nothing higher than from his mind.

So therefore now it comes to the point—even those non-human beings who haven't received this body, who are not human beings, especially who have not received a perfect human rebirth, they also do similar work to gain the happiness of this life. Then what's the meaning of the human life? What's the meaning, what is the special meaning, the special purpose for which we are born as human beings, different from other sentient beings? So thinking like this—this has reason, this has meaning, receiving this human rebirth has meaning, has reason that the previous life created. So now what is the meaning? This is the most important thing to check up—the meaning, the special meaning of the human rebirth, the human life, what is that? The meaning of receiving the perfect

human rebirth, the purpose for which the perfect human being exists and lives is to act in a higher way than an animal. Then, now check, it is necessary to check what are the actions that are higher than other sentient beings, which those animals cannot do but the human beings can do—what are those higher actions? Guru Tsongkhapa said this teaching in the form of a prayer, “Please grant me blessings to be able to take the meaningful essence by not being distracted by the meaningless works of this life.”

In order to make the present perfect human rebirth meaningful, to be able to take the essence, it is necessary to realize 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, how it is perishable, and how it is impermanent. There are many other methods, many other ways, to make the perfect human rebirth meaningful, to be able to take the essence. But the best way to make the perfect human rebirth meaningful, the best way to be able to take the essence is training the mind in bodhicitta. So by training the mind in bodhicitta, one can definitely receive enlightenment, one can quickly receive enlightenment without experiencing many difficulties. However, training the mind in bodhicitta is the essential method—the best, essential method among all the methods. So therefore it is necessary to train the mind even in this moment as much and as purely as possible.

Therefore, think of this pure motivation in order that the action of listening to the Dharma become the cause of enlightenment, “I must make all sentient beings release from all suffering and lead them to the most sublime happiness of enlightenment. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment. For these reasons I am going to listen to these teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment.”

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga and it is a profound teaching, the essence of the great pandits Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa’s understanding of the teaching. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person’s achievement of enlightenment.

This teaching on the graduated path has four outlines. In order to have pure reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to have devotion for the teachings, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teachings, and the way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment. The last one has two—the of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path. The way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment has two—persuading the mind to take the essence of the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence of the perfect human rebirth. Persuading the mind in order to take the essence involves the perfect human rebirth—that is the part of the subject that we have been talking about. Yesterday we were talking about the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. Yesterday we were talking about the different techniques, a few very simple techniques that can be used right away as the problems arise in our mind. Generally it is like this. As you practice the graduated path, as you practice the meditations, as you practice the graduated meditations which are explained in the teachings of the graduated path, as you practice gradually having wider, deeper understanding of the whole meditation, also at the same time according to the individual mind and individual wisdom, according to his experience, the person would find different meditations and different techniques to stop this mind disease. He finds different methods. As he finds different methods, this becomes very effective, and he can work right away to stop the negative mind arising.

Yesterday we talked about how to stop the mind confusion in situations when another person admires you, saying some nice words, or blames you. Generally it is like this. For instance, blaming, criticizing—if you say the same words to yourself, you don't get angry. But if someone else says them we get angry. But if you repeat what the other person says you don't get angry with what you repeat. If someone said, "You look like a dumb animal," then perhaps you get angry at what you hear from the other person, but if you repeat it to yourself you get angry at what you hear from your voice. We don't get angry with what we repeat, but they are the same words, the same meaning. If the words are what bother us, then think, "I don't get angry if I repeat this to myself and the same words with a similar meaning don't disturb me, don't make me get unhappy and angry, so why should I get angry because they are said by some other person?"

For instance, if the tape recorder complains, if it says that you are a terrible person, it doesn't help to break it. That doesn't end your anger. There is no point in getting angry with that tape recorder, the radio, that machine. It is useless, a childish thing. Perhaps we may get angry with the person who recorded it, not the tape recorder but the person—the tape recorder is nothing. But again check up with the person—the person is also like the tape recorder. There is nothing to get angry with in his body—it is just like a machine, a box, a tape recorder. So there is nothing to get angry with in terms of him. As the tape recorder has no choice to not say, to not complain, the same thing with the person. As the tape recorder is fixed like this by the person, the person too has no choice, the person's mind is controlled by ignorance. Even though he is getting angry, complaining with anger, he is uncontrolled. His body and mind are uncontrolled. So there is nothing to get angry with in terms of him. Just like there is no point, no use in getting angry with the tape recorder. Harming him, killing him, beating him, killing him doesn't stop his ignorance. Even thinking in that way, thinking that is the solution, the method, that doesn't stop the ignorance that controls him. So anger and speaking rude words doesn't stop his ignorance. So just like this check up; this is very useful to check in different situations, when there is a person blaming or causing you to get angry, bothering you. When there is danger of anger arising, think like this.

The actual thing is to stop his ignorance, to make his ignorance, his anger, his attachment non-existent. Even though you burn his body completely, even if there is no part of his body left, that doesn't help, it doesn't stop his negative mind, the negative mind that bothers you. None of this is method. It just makes his mind unhappy, and you unhappy, and creates more negative karma that makes you again experience the suffering results.

(BREAK)

Student: You mentioned that numberless of our previous lives were in the six realms of suffering. Have we had numberless perfect human rebirths, this isn't our first one is it?

Rinpoche: It is possible that we received perfect human rebirths before.

Student: A number of times?

Rinpoche: Possible, depends on individual.

Student: If we live this life following practicing Dharma but do not obtain enlightenment, chances are we don't go down to the suffering realms but get chance to practice Dharma again?

Rinpoche: Everything depends on the individual, what he does in this life, how he lives.

Student: It seems like part of the essence of the perfect human rebirth is virtue and charity. When I think of that I think of ants who sacrifice their bodies in order to build bridges for other ants.

Sacrifice themselves for the good of the ants.

Rinpoche: That can be possible, many other stories, many other animals who do things like this, yes.

Student: But the essence of that action, is that different from the essence that the human being has?
Rinpoche: Yes, many of the human beings—it is similar but the total thing is that by taking human rebirth, this is the highest essence to achieve, which an animal cannot achieve. The highest essence. But there are some animals, very rare, extremely rare, who create virtuous actions. Extremely rare. If there is not one single animal who creates good karma, if you ask precisely this, there are certain animals who practice good karma. But it is extremely difficult, extremely rare—there are only a few fortunate ones. For human beings it is easier to create good karma.

Student: How can I stop the ignorance of the angry person?

Rinpoche: By giving ice-cream! I am joking. Whether you dispel your ignorance, whether you dispel other beings' ignorance, the method is only through the practice of Dharma, only through actualizing Dharma. The essential method is by realizing the mind nature. The nature of oneself. This happens only through actualizing Dharma. Anyway this talk will come later on in the part of the Twelve Links, the second part of the meditation.

So you see, if you check up like this when anger rises in your mind, even if the other person beats you, bothers you, he is completely controlled by his delusion, ignorance. So anything that we the ordinary people do to harm, to react—none of this becomes the method, the solution to stop that problem. Beating his body, cutting off his body in pieces doesn't cease, doesn't stop his ignorance. The ignorance is the main thing that controls him and makes him bother you. So in this way, none of the violent actions you discover are the solution. So it is not enough, not sufficient, as we are one person ceasing from ignorance, releasing from ignorance, there are many other numberless beings who are controlled by ignorance and delusions. Even though he doesn't bother you, some other people bother. Always like this circling around. So it is necessary to release all sentient beings from ignorance. In order to release all sentient beings from suffering, delusions by oneself, then it is first necessary to release oneself from suffering and delusions. Otherwise because the mind is deluded and ignorant, you cannot help all the sentient beings by showing the different methods. Without releasing them from the delusions and ignorance, there is no perfect power, no perfect skill to show the different methods and no perfect understanding to know the different methods and know different sentient beings' level of mind, how to lead each sentient being into enlightenment, or how to release each sentient being from suffering. So it is difficult without having the perfect knowledge and power. Just like this.

For instance, we are doing meditation, we are doing purification, so actually as we are motivated at the beginning to enlighten other sentient beings, our work making this one hour purifying meditation, making meditation on the graduated path, actually this becomes service, work for other sentient beings. Just like the military, when he was in training, studying how to fight, how to use the guns, different weapons, he was not in the actual action of fighting, making war, killing others—the enemies of the country. He did not do the actual actions but he was training at the very beginning. His training at the beginning was recognized as service for the people in that country, even though it was not the right method. It didn't mean he had to be in actual fighting, like this. So starting to do meditation, actualize the Dharma, starting to do purification of our own ignorance and suffering, this becomes work for other sentient beings, because as I said just before, without gaining self-support, which means without first of all receiving freedom oneself, everlasting happiness, the cessation of samsara and ignorance, freedom, without gaining this, we cannot make other sentient beings release from samsara.

This becomes a little bit long, but if you think there is anger, if you think because the body is different, of course I get angry at him, because it was said by a different person, another person, by

another person who has a different body. Then also, in that case, besides thinking that his body has no freedom, is controlled by the delusions—also one can think like this. Also one's own body that we have now that we believe is mine, my body, also this body originally did not continue from the previous body without depending on the parents—so this body originally came from our parents and it was their body. Only believing that it is mind, this is mind. However, thinking like this is very useful, very useful to help stop creating negative karma, to stop the negative mind from arising. In that way one takes care of one's own life easily, not creating negative karma, or creating the cause of suffering. Also even if there is a terrible situation of suffering, sometimes it is also useful to think just like this. Think, "I am living in samsara so this is the nature of samsara, it is the nature." If you think that this is the nature then you kind of expect it, and it doesn't become a shock to you. You accept it, knowing that you are living in samsara, living in the boundaries of suffering. So why not, of course you will experience suffering. It is like you are expecting, sort of accepting it. So it doesn't become a big confusion mentally. Even though you are experiencing or you are in a miserable situation, if you don't think in such a way, if you don't expect it, but only try to reject it without trying to realize the suffering nature or without thinking of the suffering nature, then the suffering becomes double. Whatever the suffering you are experiencing, it becomes double. It becomes heavier for the mind, because the mind creates it, the mind thinks it is so terrible, exaggerates it, and for you the suffering becomes very heavy, even bigger. This just depends on the way you think.

Just like as long as you put your finger in the fire, it is natural that the fire will burn, because burning is nature of the fire, hot is nature of the fire, so the method is trying to get the finger out of the fire. This is the method, trying to take your finger out of the fire. Not trying to put your finger in the fire and trying to make the fire cold, different from its nature, the heat that burns. So the whole method is trying to get oneself out of samsara. Just like this example of spontaneously trying to live in samsara. Then as there are different kinds of problems, meeting the life problems, not expecting, without trying to understand, trying to reject—that is like this example, exactly like this example of putting the finger in the fire then trying to stop it to not be burnt. However, anyway, to think like this is the nature because I am living in samsara. Thinking this is the nature of samsara—of course this will happen because I am living in samsara, and this is the nature of samsara. Just like thinking of course that it will burn because of the nature of the fire. In this way there is no worry.

Also it is useful to think that this is the result of my previous life's karma. Each time you experience or meet different problems, if you think, if you accept, if you are conscious that this is the result of my previous karma, you are taking the fault on yourself, you are not pointing the fault onto the other person's head. In this case he knows that this is his own fault. In this case he doesn't find any reason to complain to others. Thinking like this, it only makes him conscious of not creating such negative actions again because of the shock, the experience of that suffering, that result. By thinking like this, the person becomes more conscious, instead of thinking that some other people gave me this time, caused me problems such as stealing my money, stealing my possessions—these things. By thinking, "In my previous lifetime I stole others' possessions, I caused similar problems to other people, I bugged other people, therefore this is the result coming back. It is my own fault; no one else has fault." The result of that karma that was created before is finishing. Instead of experiencing this suffering result after some time in the future lifetime, it is experienced now, in this time, so something is finished, result of certain karma is finished, is experienced. So in this way it is something that one can feel happiness for, rather than suffering after some time in the future lifetimes. In this way also it makes you more conscious, more careful in your actions.

So the Dharma that we are usually talking about, for instance, according to the story that happened in previous times—through this story we can understand clearly what is the actual Dharma. There was a conversation that happened by the great yogi Atisha's disciple Drom.ton.pa, his closest disciple in Tibet. One there was a man who was trying to practice Dharma. He was going around the temple, and this yogi Drom.ton.pa, this ascetic yogi, met this man and told him, "You should practice Dharma." The other person thought he was practicing Dharma by going around the temple. But afterwards he gave up going around the temple, and he thought practicing Dharma must mean reading texts. Then he sat down and read a text. Then again one day Drom.ton.pa met this man, and told him, "You should practice Dharma." Then he gave up reading the texts. I think the last one was meditating, I am not sure! I think the man thought he might have meant sort of meditating, but then again Drom.ton.pa met him and told him to practice Dharma. So after two or three times like this, his mind was sort of confused, not knowing what to do, so he asked Drom.ton.pa, "What do you mean by practice Dharma?" So Drom.ton.pa told him, "Renounce this life." Then he discovered, really discovered, the actual meaning of Dharma. Then he really discovered the way of practicing actual Dharma. So what he means is this.

The reason why I bring this story to make the eight worldly Dharmas clear. What Drom.ton.pa meant by "renounce this life" was actually "renounce the problems." Another way to understand "renounce this life" is "renounce problems and the cause of problems." The actual meaning is "renounce suffering, renounce this life." Just even hearing the words becomes a big shock, especially to Westerners mind. But the way to understand is "renounce suffering."

Also, Drom.ton.pa asked Atisha, "What result will the actions created with ignorance, greed, and anger bring?" Atisha answered that the result of actions done with ignorance, greed, and anger was that a person would be reborn in the suffering realms, the evil destinies, as a preta, animal, or narak being. So indirectly the actions done without greed, ignorance, or hatred are the cause of all happiness. Other actions are the cause of suffering. Indirectly we can understand the actions done without these three negative minds as good karma and the cause of all happiness. However, this goes together, renouncing suffering, the actual Dharma. This has the same meaning. That action done without those three poisonous minds is the cause of happiness. So same thing, renouncing suffering, the actual Dharma, this becomes a field of all happiness, besides becoming a cause of enlightenment. Besides becoming a cause of receiving the boundless state, nirvana, everlasting happiness, renouncing suffering—this Dharma, this is the cause that brings a happy rebirth, a happy life in the future. So besides bringing happiness in the future lifetime, renouncing the suffering of this lifetime, whatever it is called, this Dharma brings happiness even in this life.

For instance, the great yogis such as Milarepa, many yogis who lead ascetic lives, even though they had no possessions in that life and lived in solitary places in cave, like animals living on the mountains, their lives passed in happiness, their minds always peaceful, happy and having a situation that is well contained. Because of these things they didn't have any mind confusion, life problems, even though they didn't have many possessions. Milarepa didn't even have a sack of *tsampa*. *Tsampa* means wheat flour. This is the most popular food in Tibet, typical Tibetan food. However Milarepa, when he was living an ascetic life, didn't have even one sack of *tsampa*. He only lived on nettles. However his mind was always happy and well contained because of that situation—well contained, makes life happy, no problems of worldly life. Why? That is because of the Dharma. Why no problem of dissatisfaction, not being contained, why didn't he have problems of means of living, food, clothing, and reputation? Not having all these problems, his life was always lived in happiness, and all of that was because of his Dharma practice, the power of his Dharma. His achieving

enlightenment in that lifetime, achieving all the higher realization, all of that was due to the power of his pure Dharma, renouncing suffering, renouncing this life. His mind was happier than that of the king who had much power, who has many bodyguards, many armies, many weapons. There is nothing to compare.

So what I mean is that all this is due to his Dharma. Dharma doesn't mean only bringing happiness in the future, and not in this life. This is completely wrong. Dharma brings happiness and peace in the mind right away at the same time that the person practices and lives in the Dharma. Right away there is peace in his mind; the effect of Dharma comes in his mind right away. As the person knows, the person discovers it is not something that the person has to wait for a long time, not something like this. Also by the mind living in the Dharma, the life problems become much less, just like the example I just talked about of Milarepa, his life story, just like this. The life problems with people like this—the biggest problems in the East and West, life problems with people, relatives, husband, wife, parents, children—anyway the life problems with oneself, everything gets stopped, becomes less. So the life becomes so free. The mind living in the Dharma life becomes so much more free, so peaceful. This is the way that even this present life becomes happy. You enjoy the happiness of the Dharma. Also Dharma is like the medicine to stop the diseases, such as hindrances caused by human beings and non-human beings. All this can be stopped, controlled by Dharma.

In previous time there was one yogi, who was a layperson in a family before he started to practice Dharma. So one day somehow he got some disease, I think leprosy. The wound spread around his body and to other people. He was sick from that disease for a long time. His family became scared of him, and they kept him aside. So his mind was terribly upset—he had no family, no people looking after him, he was out of the family. So he thought since I have to be out of the family I should make this action worthwhile and beneficial. So he made a complete decision in his mind—if I have to be out of the family I will just live in the road and recite mantras and beg for food from people. So he made the complete decision like this. He thought, “Whatever happens I don't care, just reciting mantras and begging food.” He left his family and went near the road and there was a huge rock, a cave in the rock. He slept the first night in that cave. That night he had a dream that a white man or something put him on the rock, and that there was so much rain falling, everything became wet. And when he woke up, all the puss in his wounds had come out, and everything become very wet. From that time his leprosy was completely cured, without depending on any medicine. Then afterwards he become a great yogi. So this is just to explain that because of the power of his mind, his mind living in Dharma, having renounced suffering, that cured him and brought happiness in his life. Even his disease was cured by the power of the Dharma.

There are so many other histories about how the Dharma solves the life's problem. There is so much to talk about, however the point is this—what I am talking about, renouncing this life means renouncing suffering and the cause of suffering. The whole thing is this, renouncing suffering is renouncing this evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, which only bring problems, so these are the main subjects to be renounced.

Renouncing this life or renouncing suffering, the whole thing means renouncing the mind that is the cause of the problems, the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharma. Therefore even these temporal techniques that I mentioned help to stop attachment from rising, so this practice itself is the Dharma. While the person practices this, the person is renouncing attachment, the person's mind is rejecting attachment, the cause of problems. Rejecting attachment also helps anger not to arise. So you see, this is the actual Dharma. Whenever the person practices this, it solves the mind confusion

and the mind illness right away. So it is clear that Dharma brings happiness even in this life. It is the best way of bringing happiness that doesn't make the mind confused. The happiness that arises in dependence upon the worldly actions makes the mind more ignorant, more confused because that happiness is not the actual real happiness. Anyway, afterwards by doing the following meditations and feeling, understanding them clearly—this happiness that is received through Dharma, this happiness that is not received through attachment, all these actions rejecting attachment, renouncing the negative mind—this is the actual Dharma, all this is good karma. All these thoughts are pure thoughts, thoughts rejecting the evil thought. All these thoughts are pure thoughts. So the great ascetics such as Atisha, Guru Tsongkhapa, Milarepa, many of those yogis such as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—how these yogis should be, what type of mind they should have—if pleasure and suffering are not equal to his mind, if uninteresting sounds and interesting sound are not equal to his mind, if praising and belittling are not equal, if receiving and not receiving materials are not equal to his mind, there is no way to become a yogi. They have to be equal. The yogi has to have the foundation of the mind that equalizes these two—receiving materials and not receiving materials, interesting sounds and uninteresting sounds pleasure and suffering, praising and belittling or abusing. The yogi at least has to have this foundation first. Then that yogi or that pure Dharma practitioner doesn't care. If he has equalized these two situations he has no life problems. As long as they are not equalized there are always life problems. This is like the essential talk of the Dharma. This is like if you are going to explain about human beings' bodies, the evolution of the human beings bodies, how they exist there, what is the most important thing, this part of the subject is like cutting the body and showing all the important things which are inside—the heart and those important things, the red heart, showing the essential things.

On the basis of this the yogis then practice many other higher meditations. To enter the path to enlightenment first of all what is necessary? First thing, it is necessary to have the renouncing mind of samsara, the realization of the renouncing mind of samsara. What is the most important thing before the meditation? The most important thing is to cultivate the pure motivation. Just like this, what is the most important thing to practice Dharma? What is the first thing you need? To renounce the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. That is the first thing that is necessary to practice Dharma. It is very useful even just to have the understanding of this important point. Then our mind, our wisdom is open, and knows what is necessary in order to follow the path, what the first thing is that it is necessary to have. In this way the person also knows what they need in order to practice Dharma. Even though we can't do right away, even just having this wisdom, knowing the meaning of the Dharma, what it actually means, how the Dharma benefits life, what the actual form of practicing Dharma is, what one should have in the mind in order to practice Dharma—renouncing this evil thought of the eight worldly Dharma. Even just this understanding is greatly beneficial. Somehow you have wisdom. Somehow the door of wisdom is opened. Whether you practice or not, somehow you have the correct understanding. If you practice and act, then you have the chance to do a correct action without mistake. Like this. However, especially ... my talk is this. Generally it is very good, we cannot become like those yogis within one month, within three or four days, but it is very beneficial to the mind just knowing how they practice Dharma. How they make their life free and peaceful by practicing Dharma. This is very useful, and by knowing this then we receive some wisdom about how to make our own life happy, how to handle our own life. This is very useful. However, even though we can't do the same as those yogis who achieved enlightenment in their lifetime, these meditations, the specific actions in which we think we are doing some special thing, at those times we have to be careful. This is very important. Usually in daily life's action even though the mind cannot spontaneously live in the Dharma, in such specific actions such as listening to Dharma, especially in these times it is very important that the mind not get mixed up with the evil

thought of the eight worldly Dharmas. If it is mixed up then the mind, then the action, whether we meditate or listen to Dharma becomes a worldly action. It becomes the action of this life. So this understanding, my brief explanation on this point, and your understanding is supposed to help to make those actions perfect Dharma.

After the discussion first of all you check like this—in the West, you saw so many problems, societies, countries, families, friends—many times they have different problems. Think, check like this. First of all, starting from your friends who go through many different problems in life, how each of those problems—from what kind of mind it came from, what mind caused those problems. Then as you find that the whole source is attachment, the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, then as you find out all these problems came from the evil thought, you check up how all the friend's problems came from attachment, the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. Then you check with your parents, society, with the different people you saw having problems. How the main thing is this, how this is caused by the eight worldly Dharmas, whether it is true or not. Also you check up whether it is based on this or not, then after you check outside with other people, and then you check with yourself. Think of the different problems you had in your life, as you remember the different problems you had since you were born—whether they were caused by the evil thought or not. Like this you check up. That's very useful. Then also, at the same time as you remember the problems, the people who bothered you, caused attachment, anger to rise in you, as you remember it can be possible that the effect will come in the mind. When the mind starts to become violent, if you remember the techniques and meditations, use them at the same time. So you get trained if you practice like this during the meditations—your mind gets trained so afterwards when you are actually with the person, actually involved in that situation, then you know how to handle that problem, how to keep your mind away from that problem. You become skillful and wise.

Day Twelve

Sunday, 17th November

9 am

Before explaining the quotation, just a brief history of this great pandit Shantideva. He was born in India, I don't remember the period. Even when he was small, in childhood, when he was over seven he attained the Buddha of Wisdom, Manjushri. He was born as a prince. His parents wanted him to take the place of the king. It was about time for him to take the position of the king, the position of his father. So as the parents' land population asked him, he couldn't say no. The night before he was going to sit on the throne and take his father's position, he had a dream. In his dream, Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom sat on the king's throne. Manjushri said, "You cannot sit on the same bed, this is my bed, you cannot sit here as I am your Guru. You cannot sit on the same bed. This is my throne." When he woke up from the dream he understood that what the dream meant was that he was not supposed to take the position of the king, that life. It meant that he should give up. So he left, I think he ran away. Then he went to Nalanda. Nalanda is a famous school where there were thousands of pandits. This is where Atisha was from. Shantideva went there and was ordained by the abbot. He lived there for a long time. Usually in the monastery he didn't do as the other monks did—reading prayers, meditating, working for the monastery, these things. He did not do these things as the other monks did. He slept. This is what the others saw him doing. The other monks saw him sleeping, eating, and making kaka. He did only three things. The other monks didn't see him doing special prayers, teachings, saying prayers, other things. Therefore, many of the monks thought he was useless to the monastery, that he doesn't help, doesn't do anything, only three

things. The other monks really believed that he was a fool monk, knowing nothing. They wanted to kick him out, to expel him from the monastery. But they couldn't expel him without any reasons. So they thought of an idea. Usually in the monasteries the monks have to learn many texts, philosophical texts of sutra teachings, explaining about the precepts and the instructions on the precepts given by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. The monks have to recite this by heart. They have many oral teachings that they have to learn by heart and recite in the prayer hall in groups of monks. The other monks believed that Shantideva had not learned anything by heart. So they thought that they would invite him to recite a sutra teaching. They thought that if they invited him like, when he arrived he wouldn't have anything to say, and they could make him leave the monastery. This was the idea. They requested Shantideva to give teachings, and he accepted. The monks put up a very high throne.

But when Shantideva came, without any difficulty, with his psychic power he sat on the throne and asked the monks, "Should I give teaching that was shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, or should I give the teaching that wasn't shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha?" The monks asked for the teaching that wasn't shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. So he began to give the teaching called "Following the Bodhisattva's Actions." He began to give this teaching by heart. Then, I don't remember, there are certain ... I think it was the sixth chapter—the chapter that explains about shunyata, the absolute nature—when he started to explain this, to give the teaching on the absolute nature, he flew above the throne. He went higher and higher while he was giving the teaching. Afterwards he became very small, like the size of a fly, and then they couldn't see him anymore, even though the teaching was still going on. They could still hear the teaching without any change of sound, as if he was still giving the teaching and sitting on the throne. Afterwards, hearing the fantastic, amazing subject that the teaching contained, all the monks there got a big shock, a big surprise that they didn't expect. The way he looked, the way the people saw him, was as a person not knowing anything—whenever they looked at him he was always lying down. When people looked at him he looked very lazy, but actually he was a great bodhisattva and a holy person with such great attainment of high realizations, and great infinite compassion and bodhicitta for all sentient beings all the time. He was always concerned for other sentient beings, always benefiting other sentient beings. Actually that is his mind action, the main work, which he did day and night in daily life.

So this is one quotation from this teaching that he gave those monks, those disciples. This quotation is from the chapter that explains about the benefits of bodhicitta. "Even just thinking to benefit the sentient beings, the benefits are greater than making offering to all the Buddhas; so why not the benefits of the thought following the bodhisattva's actions?"

Briefly talking like this, for instance, even if the person is not actually following the bodhisattva's path for sentient beings, even the benefits of just bringing up the thought, the wish to receive enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings with hand prostrating like this are as infinite as infinite space. This benefit is much greater than making offerings to buddha realms full of jewels, as many as the grains of sand of the Pacific. Still these benefits cannot compare with bringing up the thought wishing to receive enlightenment for the benefit of sentient beings with hand prostrating like this; they cannot compare. The benefits of this great action of making offerings is still limited. So what this is emphasizing is that even bringing up this thought has incredible benefits—just wishing, just motivating, so why not actually doing the action, actually following the path for the benefit of sentient beings. Following the path, doing the action has much greater benefits than wishing to receive enlightenment for the benefit of sentient beings. However as this great bodhisattva Shantideva said in these teachings with his experience, by having the realization within

his mind with his experience, he is also great bodhisattva who passed through the whole gradual path and received enlightenment. So therefore, as this has that great benefit, that much profit, why not try, train the mind in the pure thought of bodhicitta. So therefore it is wise, while we have the chance, while we have the capability to train the mind in this pure thought as much as possible. Therefore it is necessary to start even in this moment, to try to experience, to gain it perfectly, even in this moment.

Therefore in order for the action of listening to the Dharma to become the cause of enlightenment, it is necessary to cultivate pure motivation. So therefore think, “I must release all sentient beings from all the suffering and have the achievement of the most sublime happiness of enlightenment. In order to do this I must achieve enlightenment. Therefore I must complete the realization of the whole graduated path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path.”

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa’s understanding. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. All these teachings are teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. All these teachings are set up for the practice of one person’s achievement of enlightenment.

The commentary on the graduated path has four outlines. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teaching, and the way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment. The last one, the way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment, has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment. The last one has two—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. So, the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth, part of this meditation is persuading the mind to take essence with the perfect human rebirth.

Yesterday we talked about the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas, so actually it is like this. Any action that is the opposite of the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, any action that is the remedy, any method that becomes the remedy of the delusions is Dharma. Therefore any action or method that becomes Dharma has to be the opposite of the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. It has to be the remedy of the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. Any action that is done with the thought that is not mixed with the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, that is pure Dharma. That thought that is not mixed with the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, devoid of the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, that thought goes in the Dharma. That is the pure thought. So in this way we understand that any action of the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, any action that increases the delusions is not Dharma. In this way, by understanding this important point, we understand what is Dharma and what is not Dharma. In this way we can understand, we can check up—by understanding this important point we have a little wisdom to check up whether our actions of doing meditation become Dharma or not. One can easily check up and recognize.

You see, as the Dharma becomes the remedy to the delusions, how does the Dharma stop suffering, stop problems from arising? The Dharma stops delusions, diminishes the delusions, the cause of suffering. By understanding this we can discover that the only method to stop the suffering problem is through the Dharma, because the only method that stops delusion is Dharma; there is no other

method. So the daily life actions, starting from the morning time, getting up, then cleaning, washing, eating, drinking, wearing clothes, cleaning the room, talking to people, going outside, coming in—any action until night time, every daily action that the person does until nighttime, going to bed, sleeping, each action, each movement of the person's speech, body, and mind, if the person can make all these actions the remedy to the delusions, then each action is Dharma. Dharma is not something that one can only practice in Tibetan monasteries. It is not like this, something that can be only practiced where there are Tibetans or something. It only depends on your mind; it is something to practice anywhere, wherever you are, West, East, in space, under the earth, wherever. It just depends on the capability of the person's mind, on the wisdom of that person. It doesn't necessarily have to mean always sitting with crossed legs and eyes closed, saying prayers; it doesn't necessarily mean giving things away, making charity; doesn't necessarily have to be something like this, a specific form of action. Just generally where you live, if you can, by your wisdom and power of mind, make your daily life actions the remedy to the delusions. If your daily life actions can be done with the pure thought that is not mixed with the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, then each single action and movement becomes Dharma. The person's mind is living purely in the Dharma. No matter whether he is making business, talking, or traveling around, the person—there is a possibility, even if the person doesn't become a monk or nun, something specific with a specific appearance, if the person has wisdom and power, the person can always practice Dharma. But in order to do this, in order to put all the actions in the Dharma, to become Dharma, the person has to have the understanding of what Dharma means and has to recognize the delusions, the cause of suffering. Anyway, the person has to recognize the border of what is Dharma and what is not Dharma—the person should have this understanding. Then if the person understands the deeper nature of the delusions, the faults of the delusions, how the delusion cause him to suffer all the time, how delusions always cause problems to arise, as the person understands this more and more and wider, as the person's wisdom grows, that much more the person can put his life in Dharma, that much more purely, due to that wisdom. In order to put all of daily life purely in the Dharma there is a need for wisdom and capability, for power. The method to build the power and wisdom is trying to recognize the delusions and recognize the deeper nature of the delusions and faults. Also, the faults of the delusions, how the delusions cause problems to arise and suffering. So trying to understand this deeper and wider is the first method, and then through this the person receives wisdom and also builds the power and energy in the mind. So as there is that much energy, the person can make his daily life actions that much more in the Dharma. Even if a person lives in a big family, with twenty children, lots of children, a big family, that person's daily life actions always become the remedy to the delusions. If the person's actions always become Dharma, the remedy to the delusions, actually that person's mind is living in the renunciation of this life, even if he is surrounded by such a big family, with many possessions. So actually, who has renounced this life, who has not—you can't really tell from the outside. You cannot judge, it is not something you can figure out from outside appearances, only the mind's decision. Whether the person has renounced the attachment to this life or not doesn't depend on the person having no possessions or having many possessions. If that were only a question of not having anything, then there are lot of animals and insects who don't have any possessions, living in holes, without any collection of food to eat tomorrow, tonight, the day after tomorrow—then they should be highly renounced beings. Also there are animals living on very high mountains in the caves—many animals, such as yaks. Where we have the center on the mountain, nearby Everest, there are many caves. Before it was used by many meditators; there are many caves. One day I went round to see those different caves and all those caves have been used by yaks, animals—they are all full of kaka. They are very warm so I think at night time they sleep in those caves. I am joking. So it doesn't have to depend on judging from the outside. Even though someone is living in the position of a king, with many surrounding people,

many servants, jewel stores, many rich apartments, many possessions, that does not mean the person's mind is not living in renunciation. We cannot tell if that person has not renounced the attachment to the happiness of this life. Renouncing this life or not is a mental action, not a physical action. Whether the person practices Dharma or not, it is a mental action. Many times the young people in the West read books, such as the great yogi Milarepa's book and others. Somehow they understand renouncing this life, that it has certain knowledge, certain benefits, and they know somehow that it helps the life, to not have problem—that somehow it makes the mind happy and peaceful. In the life stories of the yogis there are so many benefits and realizations that they have experienced. But the readers really don't know the important point—how to do it and the process, the way of doing it. They think renouncing this life just means physically separating, not having any possessions, being away from family and country, that renouncing this life means just that form of action. So by not having the actual understanding of renouncing this life, having the wrong understanding, with such a thought, all of a sudden they break things, give things away, and then they come to the East. Then the mind is continuously in problems. The problem is the mind is not renounced. The mind thing. So the problem gets bigger and bigger because the mind is not renounced, yet physically they tried to give up things. So the situation gets worse and worse. Afterwards they cannot stand not having possessions. They go through many difficulties, with wrong understanding, not really knowing what the main problem is. The main problem is not knowing the actual meaning of the Dharma. The main problem is that. Afterwards the person again seeks material things, he doesn't find any other method to solve his life problems. So if the person doesn't have the exact understanding, there can be problems like this, which that person purposely creates. Also among the students there are some who did this before, when they were coming from the West. I am telling what they experienced.

(BREAK)

Student: Do you think a close relationship between people like friendship, which is generally based on attachment, represents a hindrance to obtaining the renounced mind?

Rinpoche: It makes the mind unpeaceful.

Student: Would you suggest these people cut their communications and live like hermits?

Rinpoche: It depends on individual.

Student: Friends also being problems means you can't dedicate your time to practicing Dharma.

Rinpoche: It depends on the individual. Different methods depend on individuals. Sometimes somehow the person can still have relationships without following attachment, following certain methods that stop attachment from rising, like this can be possible. Different methods depend on individuals.

Student: This makes it difficult in the West for people to practice Dharma; it is a close society with everyone depending on each other.

Rinpoche: Different people, depends ... people have different environments, yes.

Student: Could you explain what you mean by merit and the dedication of merit?

Rinpoche: Merit or virtue—any good karma is a virtue, and by doing that action you create merit. Whether it is a virtuous action or not depends on the result what result it brings. Since any action that brings a white result is recognized as a virtuous action, as merit, a white result means a beneficial result, a result which is not suffering, a result which is happiness. Any of those actions is a virtue. Any action that brings a suffering result, nonvirtuous, that is negative karma, like this.

Dedicating merit means using the merit for something. First of all, you create the merit then you dedicate, renounce it for something. For instance, usually at night time as we say the prayer, the way we should think is that we dedicate in order to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of sentient

beings. So actually we dedicate the merits that we create in the day for sentient beings, like this. We think, “Due to these merits may I achieve enlightenment for the benefit of sentient beings, using the merits as it is the cause.” Making the merit become the cause of enlightenment, like this.

Student: Does everyone have the capacity for development to receive enlightenment?

Rinpoche: Yes.

Knowing the actual meaning of Dharma, one can check up with one’s own daily life actions—what is Dharma, what is not Dharma. This is the most important thing, the essential thing that one has to understand. This is one of the essential things in the course subject. So any person who has this understanding of the actual meaning of Dharma, even just having this understanding, not having the understanding of the other meditations, even just having this understanding, even this wisdom, that makes it worthwhile to attend the course. This is one of the most important things that one should understand at the beginning. This is the first, most important thing to understand in order to not make mistakes. This understanding is the best protection to protect yourself from wrong actions, from the mistakes in the daily life, which means creating negative karma. So many people who think that they are a religious person and are practicing Dharma, but do not know the actual meaning of Dharma, spend their entire life in the wrong way, the entire life feeding the cause of samsara. All of his practice is done with the wrong understanding of the Dharma.

(Page 42)

I think maybe if you close eyes and listen, maybe better.

(Rinpoche read paragraphs 1, 2, 3, quotation)

This quotation is very effective for the mind, very useful to remember, especially in certain times when one’s mind is in danger of creating negative karma.

Paragraph 4

This part of the subject is also very, very useful to use for the meditations, to remember. Usually, when there is temporal physical sickness, we worry so much and we try the best method that we find to stop it right away, but we never seek the inner reasons, the inner cause of these sufferings. Most of the time we think that all these physical problems, temporal sicknesses, are mainly caused by climate, food, a certain diet, the place—many external things, but we don’t check up. One thing that we are missing in our checking is this, the question that is missing—even though these external things such as climate, place, and food are conditions, they become conditions, why I have to suffer, why I have to get this problem? What makes these external things, the climate, place, diet, these external things, become the condition of my suffering problems? This question is missing. We know those things are the condition that causes the problems such as sickness to arise, so what knowledge is missing? What we need in order to completely cease all of the temporal problems, the continual problems, to cease all suffering and the cause of all suffering, to cease the whole thing—this knowledge is missing. As this knowledge is missing, we don’t know, so the wisdom of knowing the actual cause of all suffering is blocked. In this way, every time we try to find the method, to do something, it becomes a mistake, a wrong method. So the deeper we understand, as much as we understand the cause that makes these external things the condition of our suffering, the deeper we understand that, the more skill we will have in our method.

For instance, the trees and stones, these non-living things, don’t have pain. The elements don’t have pain. The nature of fire itself is hot and the nature of ice is cold, but they don’t have pain because

they don't have mind. Nothing causes these things—the elements, trees, rocks—to have pain because they don't have mind. So why does the physical body have problems, why do external things become problems for our physical body? If there were no mind with this body, there would be no pain. When the mind has left the body, the body is just like a stone, a piece of wood, a log, exactly like that—there is sensation, no feeling, however much it is cut into pieces. Mainly the reason that the physical body easily gets problems and sickness, this and that, is mainly because of the mind. It is mainly because of the mind that exists with this body. Also external things become a condition of these physical problems, and that is also because of mind. So actually what makes the experience this is produced by the mind. It came from the mind. Then the question—why can't we have a mind that doesn't produce suffering, that doesn't make the body suffer; why can't we have a mind that doesn't make the mind sick, doesn't make the body sick? In this way we can see that there is something in the mind that makes the mind sick, that makes it suffer, and that makes the body suffer. There is something in the mind, something rooted in the mind. Also instead of having a mind that always causes us to experience suffering, why don't we have a mind that always produces happiness, which always keeps us in bliss?

For instance, it is the experience of other higher beings that even if the body is cut in pieces, there is no suffering, the mind is living in a blissful state. Higher bodhisattvas, when they make charity of the body, even when the body is cut into pieces, the mind is always spontaneously in a peaceful state, with no feeling of pain. Why? Bodhisattvas don't have the mind that makes the body suffer, they don't have the mind that makes the condition of physical suffering.

For instance, how physical suffering and happiness relates to the mind—just a simple way. Sometimes when a person is beaten by a person to whom he is attached, by his close friend, when he gets slapped, when he gets hit, when he gets slapped by a close friend, he doesn't feel that much pain. Perhaps sometimes he feels pleasure—he doesn't care, he doesn't get angry. But if some other person whom he dislikes slaps him, then he feels more pain, and also he gets so angry and feels more pain. But hitting is the same thing, same thing. So this way we can easily discover that it is up to the mind. It is just only a creation of mind. Hitting is the same thing, being slapped by the hand is the same thing. So the experience is changed by this way of thinking, by your mind. This is just an ordinary example of how things are dependent upon the mind. Not mainly on the body, but mainly on the mind. Just like this, the experience of feeling pleasure and not feeling pain being slapped by the friend—so just like this, you can have an equal feeling, an equal mind that produces similar feeling of pleasure, no matter who cheats or hits you, an enemy or stranger. You can have a similar feeling if you have a mind that makes you feel pleasure by being slapped by the friend. You can have a similar mind with every other sentient being and you can feel the pleasure of being beaten by any other sentient being. You can have a similar thought, equal—you can always have this mind which produces pleasure, which makes the experience of hitting a pleasure. So because of this example, just due to a little bit different way of thinking, the person feels pleasure instead of suffering. Same thing, the person who thinks in the same way toward all sentient beings, in this way whatever, even if the body is cut in pieces, whatever is done, the person can always feel bliss or pleasure. Whatever the problem caused by other beings, not getting angry, always feeling kindness, seeing beauty, seeing other sentient beings in beauty. So just like this example, as this can be possible, so the bodhisattvas can make the body not experience suffering even if it is cut in pieces, with the mind always in a peaceful state.

So the whole thing is this, the essence of this talk—if you always worry about the result of temporal problems that are produced by the mind, by the sick mind, why not worry about the sick mind that

produces all these temporal sufferings? The sick mind is the root of the whole problem, so why don't we worry about that as much as we worry about physical sickness? Why don't we worry about the root of the problem, nothing physical, mind. It is worthwhile to have greater worry and try to work in order to take the root of the problem out of the mind. This is more worthwhile than worrying about the temporal problems and only trying to cure the temporal problems without trying anything to take the root of the problems out of the mind.

(Page 42)

The whole side is very useful to use for the daily meditations.

(Page 43)

Quotation

Chandrakirti, the follower of Nagarjuna, the great philosopher, is also one very well known Indian pandit who wrote profound teachings explaining absolute nature, shunyata. This quotation is also from the Madhyamaka teaching.

Paragraph 7

For instance like this. Why do samsaric gods, suras, asuras, have such higher enjoyments and possessions of a higher quality than human beings? That is not because they created so much good karma in their lifetimes. In their previous lifetimes they created much good karma, so they are experiencing the result in that period. Whenever that finishes, the period of experiencing that enjoyment, the result of that good karma is finished, and so again those beings have to experience the suffering results that were caused by other previous karmas or karmas created in their lifetime.

Similarly, there are other suffering beings in the animal realm such as nagas. They also have many possessions, many stores of jewels, and much enjoyment, but that doesn't mean they have created good karma in their lifetime. They are finishing experiencing the result caused by previous good karma of charity. Why do they have such enjoyments, possessions? This is the result of previously creating good karma, making charity. The person makes charity and does not observe morality. Morality mainly means discipline of speech, body, and mind—there are certain things like keeping one precept, two precepts, all kinds of numbers of precepts like this. So not keeping any precepts or if the precepts are broken, not confessed, not purified, sometimes it is possible that due to that negative karma the person is born as an animal such as a naga, but because of previous karma and charity they have many possessions. Also the way of explaining karma is like this.

(Page 44)

No. 3 Paragraph 1

This example is to explain how difficult and how rare it is to receive the perfect human rebirth, trying to show this through examples.

There are three ways to check up how the perfect human rebirth is difficult to receive. The first one is checking through the cause of the perfect human rebirth—what is the cause of the perfect human rebirth. Whether it is easy, like a question to yourself—whether you desire a perfect human rebirth or not, whether it is possible to receive it again or not. It is not received intuitively, it is received with

reasons, with cause. It doesn't happen without reason, without cause, so what is the cause that brings the perfect human rebirth? Morality. Mainly morality and charity. Then you check up whether it is easy to observe morality and create charity. First of all check up morality, whether it is easy or not. There are five precepts, or thirty-six precepts, or two hundred and fifty precepts—eight different levels of precepts like this. The two hundred and fifty-three, the bigger number of precepts is difficult, of course, extremely difficult. Generally check like this.

Generally among the worldly people, those who keep the greater number of precepts such as the two hundred and fifty, or three hundred or something, are very rare, so few. Those who keep the thirty-six precepts are very few compared to the number of people who keep eight. The people keeping eight precepts is still rare compared to the number of people who keep five precepts. The people who keep five precepts are still fewer than those who are keeping two or three precepts. However, even just to keep one precept such as not telling lies is difficult, difficult. Check like this. Even just to keep one precept is difficult. Check just outside generally like this. Then after you check generally like this, then you check up on yourself. Whether you find it easy or difficult. Then by checking like this, first of all generally, then secondly on yourself—how it is for me, whether I find it difficult or easy, or not. Check like this. Checking like this, you get the experience, you see clearly your feeling of the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth, and the feeling becomes stronger, greater, and your understanding is better in that way. Then check through cause.

Then secondly, check through numbers, the numbers of higher beings, the numbers of the beings in the upper rebirth. The number of rebirths of gods and general human beings. The number of upper rebirths is much less, less than the number of the suffering rebirths, the rebirths of the evil destiny. The number of the rebirths of evil destiny is like the earth, while the number of upper rebirths is like the dust—if you scratch your finger on the ground in the dust you can pick it up in the nail—so little, so few, like this. In numbers you check up like this, and also this is what Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained. The number of rebirths of evil destiny is like the earth and the number of upper rebirths is like the dust that gets in the nail.

Then check the third time, check through examples. First of all think of the example of the tortoise, how difficult. First of all think of the tortoise after each one hundred years, how fortunate it would be to put its neck in the golden ring that floats around on the Pacific. First of all try to understand this example, although receiving the perfect human rebirth is more difficult than the example.

Day Thirteen

Monday, 18th November

9 am

From the holy speech of the great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen, “The thought desiring to dispel each sentient beings’ mistakes and bring about knowledge in each of them is bodhicitta. This is the most wonderful thing among wonderful things.”

So what he is saying is that among all the thoughts, what is the best thought, among all the wonderful thoughts, what is the best thought? The most wonderful among all other wonderful thoughts is bodhicitta. Why is it the most wonderful thought? Because it has incredible benefits for oneself and for the sake of others. It is a thought wanting to dispel each of the sentient beings’ mistakes. “Mistake” means their wrong actions, wrong understandings, and their wrong conceptions that produce all other delusions and prevent enlightenment and the cessation of samsara, even the

temporal samsaric happiness. Besides wanting to dispel all the sentient beings' physical problems, their physical sickness and mind disease, besides that, also wishing that each sentient being attain infinite knowledge.

Just as the great bodhisattva Shantideva said in his teaching, "There are infinite benefits that cannot be imagined by the mind—even just by thinking to cure the sentient beings who have brain disease, there is no question how great the benefit is, the thought wanting to dispel all the sentient beings' unhappiness."

These have the same meaning. What it is emphasizing is that even just wishing to cure only one problem such as brain disease has infinite benefits that cannot be imagined, guessed, or measured by the mind. Since this has that much benefit, there is no need to talk about the benefits of the thought wishing to release each sentient being from suffering. How can those benefits be imagined? Therefore, as this precious thought of bodhicitta has that much unimaginable benefit, it is foolish not to practice this while we have the chance to train the mind in such a pure thought, especially at this time, having met the Mahayana teaching that explains the practice of bodhicitta. Therefore, it is necessary to train the mind even in this moment as much as possible—this also makes the present, the momentarily existing perfect human life meaningful. So motivate like this, and also that the action of listening to the Dharma become the cause of enlightenment, "I must release all sentient beings from all suffering and the cause of suffering and lead them to the most sublime happiness of enlightenment and the cause of happiness. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment. In order to achieve enlightenment I must complete the whole realization of the whole graduated path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path."

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of Atisha and great Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. It is set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

This graduated path has four outlines. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to cause devotion to arise, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teachings, and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one, the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment, has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment. The last one has two also—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth.

Part of this subject, the meditation on persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth, the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, and the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth—we reached the subject of the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth.

By training the mind in meditation on the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth continuously, when the meditator, the person's mind, feels great loss even spending a few seconds doing meaningless actions, when the person has an unbearable feeling, and cannot stand to spend even two or three seconds doing some meaningless action, and when the person has such incredible great energy, at that time the person has the achievement of this meditation. That is the definition of

having the achievement of this second meditation on the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth. So meditators, those who want the complete experience of this meditation, continue practicing this meditation until they achieve that experience. Why does the person get such great energy and fear spending even just two or three minutes or seconds wasting this perfect human rebirth? This is caused by understanding. The energy that person receives is through understanding the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth to attain the ultimate and temporal goals, and especially that this perfect human rebirth is highly useful in each minute and second. This perfect human rebirth can do incredible things, can create such incredible causes of happiness, which other sentient beings in other realms cannot do even in eons. Even if they live in those realms for eons, they cannot do this. So briefly like this, the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth. In terms of talking about the cause of the perfect human rebirth, I explained yesterday how difficult it is in regards cause, how difficult it is to create. So it is easy if you check the cause well. Then with this experience, our own experience finding out how difficult it is, in this way we can figure out how difficult it is to receive the perfect human rebirth. In this way we can guess whether we will receive a perfect human rebirth in a future life or not. We can guess from this present life's experience. By knowing how one lives life, by knowing this, we can easily guess whether one can receive a perfect human rebirth next time or not. This is not something that you cannot guess or understand by yourself. It is something that doesn't have to depend on someone to check up, or depend on someone predicting. It is already predicted in the teaching explained by the enlightened being Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. It is already predicted and explained.

For instance, besides practicing and following the karma or cause that brings the perfect human rebirth, even just listening to the explanation we can't stand listening to it. Talking about karma, talking about discipline, we can't stand it. We feel in our minds that it is a very heavy thing—even if we ourselves are not doing the actual action, we don't even want to hear about discipline, things to not allow attachment. Also many people think, "Without attachment how can the person have a life? How can the life exist without attachment? How can the person enjoy happiness without attachment?" Many people believe that. Those who don't really understand about mind think that mind is oneness with attachment, mind is in the nature of attachment, something that cannot be separated from attachment. It is not true—those kinds of wrong conceptions, talk, coming without checking. These kind of people think that renouncing attachment or not allowing the attachment to arise means sort of completely stopping happiness, completely stopping all peace, which is the completely wrong idea. Also many people think that if there is no attachment to food, how can the person enjoy food? However, mainly these are due to not really knowing the cause of suffering, and the cause of actual happiness. Due to this ignorance, the wrong conceptions, then the person's methods are all wrong. Just like this. When the person is feeling cold, they think the warmth, feeling warm is the real pleasure. That is received from the fire, so then the person try to get in the fire, closer and closer to the fire. Like this example. He burns himself because of this wrong conception. However, this is simple, as I have already discussed.

For instance, even though there is attachment to one person, attachment to that specific person doesn't always exist—it changes after some time. There is anger rising for that person, or sometimes the indifferent thought arises for that person. As it changes like this to one object, in the same way we can make it change for all the objects, not having attachment for all objects. We can make the mind not have anger for all objects. All these things, these different types of negative mind can be purified by achieving realization, as it is a creation of mind, same thing, the negative mind is a creation of our mind.

In Australia, I think in Melbourne, in of the Universities, I don't remember, Lama Yeshe gave a lecture on how problems are caused by attachment. So after that, I think there were many students from the University who asked all kinds of different questions like this—how can a person live without attachment, how can the person have pleasure without attachment, things like that. They were very brilliant. They understood whatever subject there was in the lecture, they were very clever. Of course the questions they were asking were coming from what they usually think, how their mind is, what they usually think.

So briefly like this on the cause of the perfect human rebirth. In relation to charity, charity doesn't have to be always physical things. There are different ways to make charity. There are maybe different explanations on the different ways of making charity, on the part of the six paramitas, the bodhisattvas deeds (Page 138)—if you look there maybe you can find different ways of making charity.

For instance, in just the present time we are making charity to all sentient beings. For instance, in the last few days, as we have been doing meditation, each person has dedicated his merits for the benefit of all sentient beings. That is charity, that is increasable charity. That is the best way of making charity, the best charity. Why do I say the best way of doing it? Because merit is something that is not a physical thing, not a material thing, it is not something that you physically give or share with other people. Usually when ordinary people make physical charity of material things like this, it is difficult for it to become it real charity, a pure action. It is difficult because you are giving some physical thing to other people, so most of the time it is easy to get involved with self-cherishing thought. It is easy to get involved—the worst thing is this—what makes the charity impure is the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas. This makes the action not become a virtuous action, not pure, again it disturbs the action from becoming pure. The attachment that is attached to the reputation, that is attached to the happiness of this one life. Most of the time this attachment is attached to the reputation, thinking “If I do this, give this,” thinking, “If surrounding people see me making charity to these people they will think I am a very generous person. They will admire me and I will gain reputation.” With expectations like this in the depth of the mind, the person who makes charity is not really showing sincere compassion for that person, the beggar or whoever it is. That action is a cause of samsara because it is done with attachment. If I help someone expecting something back in the future, thinking, “If I give this to him afterwards when he comes rich I can take things from him,” expecting to receive something back from him, this is charity, however, it is not sincere charity, not pure action. It is more concerned with himself. The person's thought that makes the charity is more concerned with himself than with the other person. So it is like for his purpose that he is making charity. That kind of charity, that thought is not the renounced thought. That action is not Dharma, because that action is the work of the delusions, the work of the attachment. People have different expectations like this that make the action of charity not sincere.

(BREAK)

Student: Could you explain in more detail the mental techniques for equalizing pleasure and pain?
Rinpoche: It is not so simple. This needs more explanation and understanding. The first thing one should understand is the nature of pleasure, and with this understanding, as there is a deeper understanding, the person has power to make them equal, to not care whatever happens, whatever suffering or pleasure comes. So the first important thing is knowing about suffering nature and knowing the nature of pleasure. This explanation will come afterwards.

Student: How is it possible for us to use the dream state?

Rinpoche: To use the dream state there are many different techniques, many ways, but however now perhaps it is good, this is just my idea, perhaps it is good just before going to bed to think, “Whatever dream I get at night, may all sentient beings see all phenomenal existence as a dream.” Like this you dedicate the dream for other sentient beings. I think this is what I can say now. But there are many other techniques to become conscious of what you do in the dream and, in the dream, practicing Dharma or whatever meditation you are doing in the day you can do at night in the dream. This is by having a little bit of control, and to be able to do this you have to have much more training during your daily life’s practice. There are specific techniques. By training the mind for a long time, whenever the person has a dream he has the choice or control to continuously do the practice.

Student: Does that mean we are creating karma while we sleep even though it may be indifferent karma?

Rinpoche: We can create karma in the dream.

Student: Do you say ultimately we can control thoughts while asleep?

Rinpoche: Possible yes, possible.

Student: If there are unlimited buddhas, what is the point of ourselves obtaining enlightenment?

Buddha has all this knowledge, but how can we help by obtaining enlightenment ourselves, how can we help?

Rinpoche: Good question. Just simple way, for instance—now we are starting to recognize our own life, our own nature, our knowledge, just even knowing what the Dharma is, what good karma is, what negative karma is—just even this single small knowledge, this understanding, receiving this knowledge, even this small knowledge is the help of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. We receive this due to the kindness of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s teaching, and this is the way we receive help from all the buddhas. So similarly, receiving knowledge depends on many things—by receiving explanations, reading the holy texts, sometimes even in reading if the person’s mind has been trained in the Dharma before in previous lifetimes and there are many impressions sometimes it is possible that when the person’s mind is ready, the person can just remember, he receives the certain knowledge of the Dharma. Like this. There are many different ways that enlightened beings help, not only by giving teachings. Explaining teachings is one of the main things, the essential way, the highest way to do it, but there are many other ways to help according to sentient beings.

So just now, our knowledge, understanding, this new subject, our life—many things come from the teaching of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. As we receive this help from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, we receive help from all the infinite Buddhas, as when we receive enlightenment we benefit other sentient beings. Buddha’s help is not like bringing a lot of food by helicopter and dropping it. When the Tibetan refugees escaped from Tibet, on the border as they were coming to India there were a lot of airplanes bringing food—many sacks of rice, dahl, different types of food. But Buddha’s help for sentient beings is not like this. There are numerous ways, so many different ways to help, to benefit. As there are different realms, different living beings who have different karma, different levels of mind, like this there are so many different types of methods, ways to help, to guide sentient beings from suffering. Anyway, this talk will come afterwards in the refuge part.

However, I think the example may be better than talking, the actual thing. If a person fell down a hole, a precipice, and there is no way to come up without someone’s help, a compassionate person who is concerned for the person who is suffering down there sends down a rope to pull him up. So the person who is down there, if he doesn’t recognize the rope that is sent to him, shown to him by the compassionate person, if he doesn’t recognize, touch, or hold the rope, there is no way to get

out of the hole. This is the case even though the compassionate person sent a rope, and tried help. But if the person doesn't recognize it and hold it, there is no method—this depends on both people. For the person down in the hole to find that pleasure or peace getting out of there depends on both sides. It depends on him and on the compassionate person who is helping. Although that person was given help by the compassionate person, if he doesn't follow that help or guidance, there is no way to get out. Just like this. Why even if there are infinite enlightened beings are we still in suffering? I think this is the doubt. It is like this. Anyway, the meaning of that, the deeper, further explanation will come afterwards in the section on refuge, and karma.

There is that much for the cause of the perfect human rebirth. Regarding number, most numbers of sentient beings in samsara are those who are experiencing suffering in the narak realms. There are more beings who are animals and pretas than those who take and find upper rebirth, happy rebirth. Happy rebirth means the rebirth that is taken in the human realms and the sura and asura realms. The numbers of sentient beings suffering in the narak realms are just like the numbers of dust. The number of the animals is like the number of grains of sand in the Pacific. The number of pretas is an incredible number, just like the raindrops or snowflakes that cannot be counted, which is unimaginable.

For instance, one thing, logically it can be checked up like this. Besides Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's explanation about karma, we can easily check up like this. For instance, how difficult the rebirth of the human being is to find. For instance like this. Just here on this flat, round ground, just here, check whether there are more animals or people here, just on this place. Just check up. Just on the round ground. It is so easy to see that there are less human beings than insects, non-human beings on the ground. There are all kinds of different insects crawling on the ground, inside the ground, so many tiny insects going round, things we see, things we don't see. Even one flower, one stem, leaves—of course why not this big ground. Even on the surface there are insects crawling around, even if we dig up one handful of dust there are different kinds of insects, tiny ones. However, even on a plant or a small place, or in one or two handfuls of dust taken out of the ground, there are more insects than people who are sitting here. There are so many insects, so many non-human beings also underneath this ground. Like this. So just like this example. Human beings are so few, so few. Just like this example.

It is the same thing in one country if you compare how many people and how many insects and animals are on the ground, under the ground, in the water—if you check up the bushes, the plants. Even in one tree, there are all kinds of insects, many tiny insects, so many, it is extremely difficult to count each one. So really if you check up with one country's people and animals, and the insects in the field, on the ground, under the ground, there is nothing to compare, the human beings are so few.

For instance, even in a house we see insects, and of course outside. Wherever we look we easily find insects, not only on the ground. So just like this, like this example here, in one country, on all this earth, the number of the human beings is nothing, nothing compared to the number of creatures. We forget about checking outside, even on our body, crawling around, also those who have warm hairs ... anyway! This is also easy. Sometimes there are so many bugs on one person, on his body, clothing, in the hair, it is easy to find out. But the person is just one. Like this. It is really incredible if you think like this. Also in the stomach, I am not showing the brains. Maybe the doctors know, I am joking! Anyway, look at the oceans—there are so many, all kinds of different insects under the ocean, in the water—all kinds of different insects, tiny ones and big ones, all kinds of different types.

Especially in the water, especially in the oceans. In the Pacific, the sea. There are piles like mountains, piles of different creatures. Even fish, as you know very well, all kinds of different types of fish and different types of shellfish. Sounds like “selfish” or something. It is incredible because ... also we saw, in this time just physically traveling, the place where we the five-day meditation course was nearby the sea—seventeen or eighteen steps below building was the sea. This was the first time seeing the sea that has the shellfish, those living beings. Just around there on the edge it was full of the smell of the flesh, rotten flesh, meat. On the edge of sea because the sea waves came every morning time and nighttime, the waves brought many sea animals, and on the edge there were piles and piles, just like stones, like that. They were full of seashells and some have bodies, some don't have bodies, many were eaten by birds, just shells.

First of all as I was walking I saw the big shells, then afterwards I checked the stones, and on each stone there were so many tiny sea animals. There were so many eggs laid on the stones, it is impossible almost to step over them. It is just like growing grass, many birds come, and the birds eat the water animals—as they come I think they eat the animals on the edge of the sea. I think they don't leave any meat there. Again, besides that, there are all kinds of very, very small insects like ants, going so fast, very fast—eating the meat left in the shells. So it is incredible. Anyway, what was I talking about!

Also in the ocean, like in the mountains, there are piles of insects, creatures like this, not knowing where they were born, not knowing their parents, nothing, being born then being eaten by another one. This is the nature of samsaric beings. Also, for instance, a simple thing, if you keep fruit, even in the fruit there are animals. Even in the fruit, even in the corn that is grown. Many, many times you find animals. Corn and wheat—maybe my eye is wrong but I find many times. So many. So if you keep fruit one, two, or three days, as it gets rotten, again it gets animals. So easily. If a dog dies, in two or three days, many hundreds of worms get inside the flesh, very easily. If you keep water for some time, it very easily gets more creatures. Very easily. So just like this. Underneath the ground there are incredible, unbearable creatures, and on the surface, of course, as we see. Also in the space. Look at it in the summer time. Especially how many flies, making so much noise. Big flies, small flies, all kinds of insects in different shapes flying, besides birds. Many things. So much in space. Anyway, like this.

Thinking like this we can easily check up why the number of human beings is so little, nothing compared to the number of creatures. So besides this there are so many animals in the intermediate stage, beings passed away, beings from certain samsaric realms, from the narak and the human realms, passed away their life again after death and before rebirth in the intermediate stage, those beings that finished one life and then in the intermediate stage are ready to take an animal rebirth. They are going to be born as animals, creatures; there are so many numberless beings in the intermediate stage who are going to be born as animals, creatures. The proof that there are numberless animal beings in the intermediate stage is, you see, like our body, the example I have just given, if we don't wash frequently—the clothes and hairs—then easily because of the warmth and dirt of the body, as there is the condition, animals are born. Same thing with rotten food, meat, things like this. It is very easy to get animals, even though it doesn't have any holes on the outside. Like food or things. However, why it is so easy to get is because there are so many great numbers of intermediate beings, animals in the intermediate stage finding the place to take rebirth.

This is also a good thing to check up—why are there less people and more creatures, it's a good thing to check up. Why is there such big a difference between the numbers? Because the cause that

brings the human rebirth is extremely difficult, and the cause that brings rebirth in a suffering realm, in evil destinies such as that of animals, creatures, is so easy, so simple—we intuitively create, very easily create, just by talking, even a small movement, we very easily create. While walking, eating, or sleeping, if we don't know the karma, if the mind is not conscious of the action, very easily we create. The answer is like this. Even the sura, asura, and the human rebirths—however, the most difficult thing is the perfect human rebirth, the most rare thing.

Then the third time is trying to discover the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth through example. With details, talking about it takes much time, but this example has great meaning. The turtle underneath the sea for a long time, crawling around, that is the beings who are in the evil destinies, born in the suffering realm. Like this, the suffering narak, after finishing that karma, again is born there, then passes away, then again born as an animal, a narak, or sometimes a preta, always taking rebirth in that suffering realm. One after another like this. The turtle spending more time underneath is like sentient beings who are suffering in the lower suffering realms. Coming up once after each one hundred years is like those suffering beings born in the evil destinies taking the upper rebirth of a happy being. Then the ocean, the infinite Pacific is like the upper realms and the golden ring is the teaching of the Buddha. The golden ring not staying at one place, always moving around, is like the way the teaching of the Buddha doesn't exist all the time at one place, doesn't permanently exist at one time, but is always going around, finishing at one place then again spreading to another place—like this the golden ring moves around on the surface. The blindness of the turtle represents how sentient beings are ignorant, not knowing karma, not knowing the cause of happiness, not knowing suffering and the methods. Even if the tortoise fortunately comes near the golden ring, his neck doesn't go inside. Getting his head inside the golden ring is like receiving the perfect human rebirth. The neck touching, or the head near the golden ring is like the person being born in a religious country where there are teachings, but from the person's side not following them. Simply like this, how the examples help the understanding of the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth.

(Page 45)

Impermanence and Death

The outline is this. Now part of this is the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth, the actual method of how to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth, explaining how to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth. According to the outline, there are two—bringing up the thought of seeking a better future life and following the method of happiness for the future life. Then bringing up the thought of seeking a better future life has two—the shortage of life and remembering death and thinking of the happiness or suffering which comes after death, the happiness or suffering of the future rebirth. Part of this subject is remembering the shortage of life and death, which is extremely useful. So I just read first.

(Page 46)

(Rinpoche reads paragraphs 1 and 2)

During the meditation time it is useful to remember the first, “How long is the lifespan” down to the second paragraph, Page 46, “Even if the duration of my life ...”. That's very useful to think about. Then the last part is useful to think about, which has outlines. I think I will read this.

(Rinpoche read “Is Death Definite”, “Is Time of my Death Definite” “Why Should I be Afraid of Death”)

This one of the very highly realized yogis in Tibet, realizing past, present, future, said ... (Rinpoche reads the quote) ...which is true, it is true. If you check the situation in the present time you can discover this by yourself.

(Page 47)

Guru Shakyamuni quotation

Tomorrow means for the individual generally there is tomorrow, no need to worry.

So check up like this. Regarding the shortage of the human life, first of all check up just as it is here, first making the life very long, as if there are 100,000 years to live. First check on that long life, even the person who has that long of a life—it looks very long but one snap of a finger has sixty-five split seconds, shortest seconds, but however also the scientists say they count many thousands of seconds, I think according to the camera.

Comment: They said 1.22 zeros to one second.

Anyway, that's very useful for the meditation. If you can use this for meditation it is very useful for our mind. That number of seconds is called a minute, that many minutes is called an hour, that many hours is called a day, that many days is called a week, that many weeks is called one month, that many months is called a year, that many years is called 100,000 years—like this. So again check, just as we said like this, check from the shortest time, how it finishes. As each of the shortest seconds pass, gets shorter, the minute that is made up of that many seconds gets shorter. As the minute gets shorter, also the hours get shorter, the week gets shorter, and as the week gets shorter the month gets shorter, as the month gets shorter the year gets shorter—so you see, now we can check up. Usually we people believe, make the definition that after finishing each year, each new year, we say now I have reached such and such an age. I have lived that long, only after each new year. It is all dependent like this. 100,000 years finishes so quickly—that length of the life gets very quickly shorter as the shortest second changes, passes away, as it becomes less. Another way of saying that is that even though life is that long, the split second, the shortest second, there are certain numbers of shortest seconds in life that can be counted. So each of those shortest seconds finishes so quickly. The 100,000 years runs, just quickly finishes each time the shortest second continuously finishes. Like this. So fast. If you check up in this way according to how the shortest second finishes then you can understand, guess, get a clear idea how that length of life of 100,000 years quickly finishes. It is not a concrete, independent, unchangeable thing. If you check up our feeling, the way we think, this is what we feel. So check like his. Then in this way we can see how 100,000 years so quickly finishes. It finishes and gets shorter, shorter that fast.

I think it is time? Like this, first you check such a long life finishes, because if you understand how that long life finishes then it is easy to understand ourselves, such a short life that we have that we cannot count, cannot guess. We don't know how many days will exist, so it is easy to understand, discover the shortage of our own life, if you can see clearly how that length of life, those 100,000 years, quickly finish.

After discussion do meditation on the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth, checking the three—cause, numbers, and examples. Also try to remember as I explained this morning regards numbers. Also you can find more examples, more stories. After that do meditation on the life shortage and death, which is extremely useful to stop the negative mind. Anyway, a little more explanation on this will come afterwards. But for we ordinary people who don't have that mind control and do have attachment, have delusions like huge mountains, it is difficult to control and easy to get into problems with people, friends, different things, with ourselves. If you are concerned and if you want to have peace, without these problems, this means controlling the negative mind, the most difficult thing, attachment. The simple method for we ordinary people, which we can use right away, is part of this meditation—impermanent life and death. This is most useful and can help right away. There are many other profound techniques and methods but they are difficult because first we need the deep understanding and practice, so to use them right away is not like candy that we can take right away to solve the problem. It is not like this, it is difficult. So this part of the meditation is a very instant method, very, very helpful. Anyway more explanation can be done afterwards.

Day Fourteen

Tuesday, 19th November

9 am

From the holy speech of the great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyalsen, “If one desires to benefit all the living beings, it is necessary to have bodhicitta. If one wants to be a friend of all the living beings, it is necessary to have bodhicitta. If one desires to have trust from all living beings, it is necessary to have bodhicitta. If one wants to be a teacher of all living beings, it is necessary to have bodhicitta.”

Among the actions that are done to benefit other sentient beings, the most beneficial action is that done with bodhicitta. Among the thoughts, the best most beneficial thought among the pure thoughts is bodhicitta. Generally there are different types of negative and pure thoughts. Even among the pure thoughts the best, the most beneficial thought is bodhicitta. However, there is much to talk about in terms of the stories of the holy beings, such as the bodhisattvas, how their actions were done with the pure thought benefiting other living beings. There are many texts that explain about it.

The action done with this thought never gets involved in self. Besides the action not getting possessed by the evil thought that is attached to the happiness of this life, besides this, the action isn't possessed by self-cherishing thought. The action of bodhicitta is possessed only by the thought of cherishing others, concerned more about others than oneself, which is the purest thought, more pure than just the pure thought that does not possess the evil thought. However, due to the power of the pure thought of bodhicitta, any action that is done with it is always powerful and effective. Even just general actions, general conversation, if they are done with this pure thought, the topic becomes effective and beneficial for other people. In the same way, giving medicines to other people, giving treatment to other people becomes beneficial as well. Due to the power of the mind, the action becomes greatly beneficial and effective. It can cure the other person's problems, such as sicknesses. Whatever is done, reciting mantras, doing meditation, any kind of action that is done in daily life is always beneficial, no question—as long as it benefits other beings there is no question that it benefits oneself, no question, no doubt. There are many stories that were experienced by many of the bodhisattvas, how benefiting others benefited them. Also with this pure thought of

bodhicitta there is no such thing as partisanship, wanting to benefit certain people, certain beings who like me and not wanting to benefit certain people who don't like me, who complain about me, and wanting to harm them and also not caring about the people who are dangerous and have a careless mind toward them. Usually even if we want to benefit, our thought wanting to benefit is not for all sentient beings. Even if we want to make charity, somehow we give only to those whom we like. We give charity only those who are of the same religion, or, even with beggars some people do this—they only give money to the beggar who looks more beautiful, who is better looking, and to the one who is terrible looking they don't give money. There are some people who do this. Anyway, these are just examples.

These are just examples but we are limited in regards our beneficial thought. Also in regards helping and the action of helping there is limitation—it is not equal for other living beings. So in that way, with this partial mind helping others, somehow it helps some people but causes confusion to some people. Because you don't help some people, they get hurt. Somehow it is not really perfect, the help done with a partial mind, somehow it is not a perfect method.

However with bodhicitta, whenever you create any merits, even when you give, even when you create merit by giving one paisa to a beggar or by talking few words, any merits that are created, since there is the pure thought, the merits are always dedicated for other sentient beings. So all the time, any beneficial virtuous action is always dedicated, always done for the benefit of all sentient beings. Always done for all sentient beings. No matter if you don't like or like the sentient beings. Without any discrimination. Even the sentient being who are going to cut the body in pieces—without any discrimination. Like this. Actions done with this thought, this method never bring one single tiny problem or confusion, only benefit. Then also one thing—this action done with such a pure thought can definitely help, benefit to release sentient beings from all suffering, because the action done with such thought, the thought itself, is basically concerned with releasing other sentient beings from the delusions. Not just releasing the beggar from the suffering of feeling hungry but concerned even with releasing him from all the causes of suffering. It is just like this with every sentient being. So therefore there is the need for bodhicitta, it is necessary to have this beneficial thought of bodhicitta.

Then, to be friends with all living beings, for instance, generally like this. Generally we make friends, most of the time we become friends with some expectations. Most of the time, you know, we purposely make friends, and we are involved with expectations, something. Totally, like this. We are always expecting the friend to do what I want, what I wish—basically there is some idea like this, the basic idea. So for this reason we become friends expecting something with the evil thought that is attached to the happiness of this life. We want something to bring the happiness of this life, something to receive help from him. Generally our ordinary people's idea is like this. The idea, the purpose of making and becoming friends is not so much concerned with helping them, or releasing them from ignorance or from the cause of suffering, but receiving something from them that helps for the comfort of this life. So this is just generally thinking without going through the details. According to individuals there are different expectations, generally like this. This expectation came through the evil thought, and with this we give the present, to become a friend, we call for a party in order to become friends. However even though they as we expect, as our evil thought expects, perhaps they may do something, give some help, give material things or do something as we wish, expect, but this is not enough. Even though that is done it is not enough, we are not satisfied. Just one time giving help, giving that material, or doing that thing, the person who receives the help is not satisfied. Again there are more expectations. This is the nature. Again there are more

expectations. Then the friends, their nature, their desires, are not as permanent as they were at the beginning. Somehow they won't be always with the same desires, not in the same situation. So afterwards you don't get other people doing things as you want. Afterwards it changes, this is its nature, it definitely changes—the person doesn't stay the same nature. Afterward the person definitely changes. That is the nature of the samsaric beings. They definitely change afterwards.

First of all you become friends, so when the other person changes, when you don't receive things that you expected from them, then dislike rises, anger rises, and as anger rises, you become their enemy, and they become your enemy. Like this. So like this it always changes—this is the nature, it is common, it is the experience of our life. Especially how quickly it changes in the West, the relationships. Nothing is definite in our life. With this egocentric thought, this evil thought that is attached to the happiness of this life, there is no way to be equally friends with all sentient beings. The friends that are made, begun with the egocentric thought, this evil thought attached to the happiness of this life, that friend doesn't last, that friend always changes, cannot last, because that friend that is recognized as a friend in dependence on the physical conditions. However, the friendship that is begun with bodhicitta always lasts, because it does not depend on physical conditions. To be a friend with bodhicitta does not depend on the physical condition, does not depend on how rich, how much material that person has, and does not depend on receiving material help. It does not depend on physical help. The other one depends on the physical conditions. So it is completely opposite. There is a big difference between them. So that's how with bodhicitta one can be equally friends to all sentient beings, without discrimination. Rich and poor, giving help and not giving help, giving material help or not giving material help—it does not depend on these things. So in this way, becoming friends with bodhicitta never raises confusion, because it does not depend on the physical condition. In this way being friends with sentient beings with bodhicitta never causes confusion, never raise problems. Even if all sentient beings become the enemy, if all sentient beings rise up as the enemy, since the person has bodhicitta, his friendship with those sentient beings never changes no matter how much the other people change, up and down. He never changes, never changes. His being a friend to them never changes. It is always the same thing, whether other beings become an enemy or friend, whatever changes happen, it doesn't change this person's life or his thoughts. With this pure thought, no matter how much they change, also from your side you can always see them as your friend, as your mother, as your relative. From the person who has bodhicitta, from his side, we can see always other sentient beings in beauty, as greatly kind, extremely greatly kind—we don't see even one enemy, as much as other beings try to be the enemy. This person who has bodhicitta doesn't find one single enemy. However, there is no confusion in the person's mind, there is always peace no matter how much they change—friend, enemy, up and down—the person who has bodhicitta always is concerned to release them from suffering and the cause of suffering. So that's what it means.

One of the biggest problems in our life is this. Since we were born until now, most of the problem has been this with people. Your mind has no method, so that's why as other people change up and down, you change up and down also. I am not going to talk much on this, it takes time. Perhaps it may come in other subjects. However, by understanding this, we can understand that even to be a friend it is necessary to have bodhicitta, because in that way the feeling does not change. We are much more sincere and equal toward all sentient beings. There are many benefits like this.

Also, another reason bodhicitta is useful—even if you want to have trust from other people, because you have this pure thought there is no cruel mind, no evil thought that makes you cheat other people or cause them problems. Totally like this. So even if you have trust, for instance, usually like

this. People who always tell lies, who always talk so much, changing so fast—usually people don't rely on that kind of person much, they don't trust him much, usually. Usually it is like this.

Also, similarly, by having this pure thought, even if one becomes a teacher, one only does beneficial actions for other living beings—teaching, no danger of betraying, no danger of reading the wrong way. Also there is no danger of not giving teachings. This being only does whatever is most beneficial for other living beings. So even if one wants to be teacher for other living beings, the best way is by having bodhicitta.

This became quite a long talk but I think it is alright! One thing, if you write down these things, sometimes if you keep these things in the mind, it is useful. After some time when the person is not always in the place where you can listen to Dharma, hear Dharma, sometimes in different places, sometimes the life gets into miserable situations, not knowing what to do, how to help to one's mind, with people, with yourself, things like this. So in those times it is useful to remember or read your notes; this is very useful, very useful. It is just like you are feeling very hot and then taking a cool bath all of a sudden.

(BREAK)

Student: In a friendship relationship between two bodhisattvas is there nothing other than learning and teaching?

Rinpoche: Learning and teaching. That depends on them.

Student: Is that all there is?

Rinpoche: No, no, there can be different kinds of help; it doesn't have to be only teaching.

Student: Then I don't understand what you said about a friend when he is a bodhisattva and when he is not. From what you said the only friendship they can have is that of teaching and learning.

Rinpoche: No, no. Help doesn't have to be only teaching. Did I say that? I don't remember. Maybe someone wrote it down.

Student: Is it possible to have bodhicitta without having skillful means?

Rinpoche: With the bodhicitta and without skillful means? Even if there is bodhicitta there is need of wisdom. That doesn't mean the person has to completely understand the way of helping, just having bodhicitta, there is need to know all the skillful methods.

Student: Does that come with bodhicitta?

Rinpoche: Yes, if there is bodhicitta it comes faster. Gaining the wisdom knowing these different skillful methods is the best way of achieving the wisdom.

Student: I have a general idea what my future holds in store for me if I follow my natural desires.

What I wonder—are you happy, satisfied, and realized the teaching of the Buddha?

Rinpoche: I didn't say I am a realized person. I am nothing experienced, a foolish person, I told you at the beginning of the course.

Student: But are you satisfied being a foolish person, are you satisfied?

Rinpoche: I am foolish but I am also happy too. By having the chance to practice such things I am happy.

Student: Could you just answer me, what other relationships there are between two bodhisattvas other than learning and teaching, between two friends?

Rinpoche: Is there any other help besides learning and teaching? There can be other help depending on them, there can be different actions. Through different physical actions, different methods, no such definite action.

Student: There can be another type of communication other than learning and teaching?

Rinpoche: Possible.

Student: But you can't be specific to say other than learning and teaching—what they can communicate or give each other.

Rinpoche: Their minds working together for sentient beings can be communication.

Student: That's learning and teaching.

Rinpoche: There can be communication. There's always communication. The bodhisattva helps the other bodhisattva because bodhisattvas help all sentient beings and all sentient beings include bodhisattvas.

However, it is necessary to have the pure motivation wishing to receive enlightenment in order to release all sentient beings from suffering and lead them to enlightenment. For these reasons we listen to the teachings on the graduated path. The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It was well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga and it is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding. It includes 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

This teaching, commentary on the graduated path has four topics in the outline. In order to show reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teachings. The way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment. The last has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind on the graduated path to enlightenment. The last also has two—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being.

The graduated path of the lower being has two—bringing up the thought seeking better future lives and following the method that brings happiness in future lives. Bringing up the thought seeking better future lives has two—remembering the shortness of the human life and death and after that, thinking of suffering or happiness that follows death.

As the person continuously trains the mind in the three meditations—the perfect human rebirth, the great usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, and the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth—when he receives such a great feeling or energy, even wasting this perfect human rebirth for a minute or two or three seconds, he will feel great loss, incredible loss, like losing a sack of gold. Losing it in the water, just like that, great loss. If someone drops a big luggage of jewels and gold from a bridge into a deep river, that person feels incredible loss. Just like this, if the person feels like this when even for a short time he is wasting his perfect human rebirth, even for a few seconds, then that person has the achievement of the third meditation, the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth. That is the definition of receiving the realization of this meditation, the difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth.

Realizing the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, the person avoids meaningless actions, and besides not doing meaningless actions, negative actions, the person cannot stand even spending one minute or a few seconds without working, doing something, without practicing Dharma, without working on something to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth.

Yesterday we briefly talked about the meditation on the shortness of this human life. First of all, it is useful to think of the person who can live 100,000 years. Check how that quickly finishes, how it changes and gets shorter even in each split second, each shortest second. This time I am not going to repeat. This person has that much length of life but all of this time, even though the person has that much length of life, spontaneously it changes, it gets shorter and shorter. Within the time one snaps their fingers there are so many shortest seconds, so even in each of the shortest seconds the length of life quickly finishes, becomes that much shorter and shorter. Thinking like this, we can see how it is impermanent. This is also the method of trying to realize the subtle impermanence of life. Doing meditation in such a way it helps us to realize how even that long life changes so fast, spontaneously, even in such a short time, besides this meditation giving the understanding of the gross impermanence of life. So if that person who has that long of a life finishes so quickly, why not mine? For me definitely I don't have that much length of life to live, that is for sure, for many reasons. For me I am not sure how long I will live, how many days I have to live, how many years, not sure. Perhaps maybe twenty-five years, maybe thirty years, not sure. Somewhere around these numbers. The future time and the past years, including all, I may have sixty or seventy years. Somewhere around that number I may have to live. The length of my life is nothing compared to that 100,000 years. Even this short human life, my life ... let's say including the past and future I will live sixty years. This short human life that has sixty years, this also exists like this. A certain number of split seconds is called a minute, a certain number of minutes is called an hour, a certain number of hours is called a day, a certain number of days is called a week, a certain number of weeks is called a month, a certain number of months is called a year—then by collecting each year, it becomes sixty years. So, the same thing, as the second changes, also the minute changes, and by the minute changes so does the hour, and by changing the hour also the day, by changing the day also the week, by changing the week also the month, by changing the month also the year, and as the year changes the whole sixty years, this length of my human life, changes. So all of this change is completely based on the very first thing, the change of the shortest seconds of my life. The whole thing is based on this. So this sixty years spontaneously changes. Since the time when my mind was conceived in my mother's womb, since life started, it began to change. Totally like this. Spontaneously as the shortest second changes the whole sixty years of human life spontaneously changes. As it changes that fast, as the shortest second changes so fast, spontaneously, also the human life gets older and older, that fast, by each split second. As each split second changes, life gets older and older, so fast. As it gets older and older, by each shortest second, since the time when mind is conceived in the mother's womb until death time, there are certain numbers of seconds, shortest seconds. They are not something that cannot be counted—they can be counted. Since the mind was conceived in the mother's womb, since life started, all the time the shortest second that makes a certain length of life always finishes, spontaneously finishes, gradually. As each of the shortest seconds finishes gradually, it has been finishing since life started. And that much more quickly life gets closer and closer to death. This is a scientific thing, this is nothing that you cannot discover, cannot realize without believing. This is a scientific thing that you can check up—even if you don't believe by checking you can discover it. As our life started in the mother's womb, the minute it started life has been running, flowing to death, each shortest second that makes life finish all the time. Just like this.

Usually we don't think that way. Usually we don't think with experience, with feelings like this. Even though we may intellectually say things, change all the time, however we don't really feel it in our life, so we are not really experiencing, not really feeling, and we don't really clearly see it even though we say intellectually. That's why there is no change in the mind. As much as the person says, there is no change in the mind. The mind is not getting better. That is mainly because of not really feeling it, the person not having the real feeling. Just like this. Usually we don't see it this way.

As the year finishes, somehow as the body changes, perhaps sometimes you may think, “I am really getting older, closer to death.” But we don’t check up with each shortest second, we don’t check up. That is because the continuity of life existing is very subtle and there is continual life existing—that’s why we don’t see it.

For instance, as there is a great pile of rice and a mouse takes each grain, slowly, slowly from the back—there are certain a number of rice grains that make that big pile, but the mouse takes a grain each time, each minute, so fast. But still we see the big pile of rice there, not finishing, always existing there, not becoming less. We only notice when it gets a little bit down, to half or something, then we see that it has finished, that much is lost. As the mouse takes each grain we don’t see it, but each time the pile is becoming less. As each grain is taken that big pile finishes quickly. Just like this, there are a certain number of shortest seconds in this sixty years of human life, and as they change so fast, so the human life finishes that quickly. Starting from birth time it gets closer and closer to death time, each shortest second. Like this. Just like this. Just like a stone falling down on the ground, in space there is no time that the stone stops without falling down. Just like this, since our life started, since we were born, life has just been finishing, running to death, each time closer to death. Even now, this present time, while we are talking, while you are listening, even now life continually, spontaneously gets shorter and closer to death. However the whole life since we were born is always running, always facing death. There is not one second, minute, or hour in which life exists without changing, without finishing, without getting closer to death. Just like a waterfall, another way of saying, like a waterfall. If you watch the waterfall as it is continuously coming down, flowing, each time, each minute, each second, one goes, another one comes, one goes, another one comes—like this it always changes.

But then why, even if there is death, why one should be scared of death? Why one should worry about death? It doesn’t matter even though the human life finishes that fast—perhaps it can be possible that you think like this. However, like this, because there is the previous continuity, the continuity of the mind that existed before this rebirth, this present human rebirth is taken by that mind. So as there was previous continuity of mind before this present rebirth, when death happens the mind stop with the physical body—like a candle flame finishes with a candle, not like this. As there was mind existing before this rebirth, same thing, even though the physical body disappears the mental continuity still exists. If there is no mental continuity after the death, if the mind is completely ceased at the time of death, then why do we always try to keep the life, make the life longer, keep healthy? It is better to die, better for death to occur right away, then no problem. The person doesn’t have to work, nothing, no problem, no life problem, doesn’t have to run, doesn’t need even a little movement to gain happiness. That is the most simple thing. If the mind doesn’t continue after death, if it is just zero, blank, then it is better to die as quickly as possible, rather than always experiencing different problems, always having this fragile body containing so many problems, which needs so many things. All these things are just foolish things, all the methods trying to make life longer if there is no mind continuity after the death. In this way it doesn’t cause problems for oneself or other people. Also there is no need for meditation, for religion, for spiritualism. There is no need to build anything, no need to make arrangements for the life to exist longer—all of these are unnecessary.

However, it is not like this. Mind continues after that, and mind takes a different body in a different realm. That depends on whether I will receive a suffering rebirth or a happy rebirth after death. So there are two ways to go—either to be born in the sura, asura, or human realms, or to be born in the

evil destinies, the three suffering realms. It is definite that I will take one of those rebirths. That decision about which rebirth will be taken is made by karma, made by this life's and previous life's karma.

So now checking karma. The cause that brings rebirth in the happy realms is good karma, and the cause that brings rebirth in the suffering realm is negative karma. For instance, in one day how much karma do I create, and do I create more positive karma or negative karma? In one day I create more evil karma. In my daily life's action, the karma I create more is negative karma. This is the same thing in one month—in this one month I create more negative karma. This year, same thing, in this life, since I was born, more negative karma than positive. Similarly in previous lifetimes, I create more negative karma than positive. Therefore at death time there is a greater collection of negative karma than positive karma, also perhaps we think that we did many positive actions. Some people who meditate a little bit, who spend their life a little bit in meditation think, "I did many positive things," and may have a little bit of pride. But actually if you really check up in among all those efforts that you made, the effort of doing meditation, all those actions, if one checks up specifically, the person hardly finds the actual method that can really benefit the future life's happiness—the action that is the real action of happiness, the cause of happiness and peace. Even though we think like this, "I did this and that," first of all, as we figured out, half of the sixty years of the human life finishes by sleeping. If all the sleep was a virtuous action that would be something else, but that is quite hard, difficult. We sleep uncontrolled—there is arrangement before sleep. When sleep comes it happens, there is no choice. So half of the life finishes by sleeping and then only part of the day is left. Then in part of the day, most of the life the period of the babies, the childhood is finished by playing, things like that. Then the rest of the day is left. However, so far most of the day was spent in distraction, in meaningless actions, it was used for meaningless actions. So if you collect the times that we created positive karma, the days we created positive karma, there are so little days. It is a very short time, a very, very short time.

Even though we have created positive karma from virtuous actions, it is not perfect, not perfect. To make the virtuous action perfect it is necessary to have these three—first, pure motivation, second, actual action, third, the dedication. These three make virtuous action perfect. If any of these three are missing then the virtuous action doesn't become perfect. So even though we do something it is difficult to make it perfect by gathering all these three. If one of these three is missing then it is not so powerful—the virtuous action is not that powerful. So the negative, evil actions, mostly, we create perfectly. How? For instance, we have the motivation and the actual action has no doubt, and then after doing the negative action we feel happy, rejoicefulness. If a bug eats us, then killing it between our nails the mind feels sort of happiness, thinking now I have stopped the one who eats my flesh, who causes me pain. Anyway, this is just an example. The negative actions are very strong, very powerful. There is a little bit of positive karma at least, we have created some positive karma, and some virtuous actions are perfect, but because we have no control over anger and negative mind, anger or heresy rises and the merits of the virtuous actions that are not dedicated completely are destroyed. The anger, the negative mind makes the virtues or merit useless, incapable of bringing the result of happiness. Just like the seed that is burnt, which has no power to bring the result. Also even for perfect virtues—if this uncontrolled negative mind rises, it prevents bringing the result quickly. This negative mind postpones bringing the result of happiness quickly. The result of happiness is caused by merit, virtue. The negative mind arising postpones bringing this result, like for one hundred eons, a certain length of time, according to the object with whom you get angry, or toward whom heresy arises, according to the living being, the object, depending on whether it is a higher object having higher realizations or an object at the same level having the same realizations. If

the object is higher, having a negative mind or heresy toward that object will disturb bringing the result of happiness created by virtues.

At the death time there is a greater collection of negative karma; it is stronger, more powerful than positive karma. Therefore it is more definite to be born in the evil destinies, in the suffering realms because of these reasons.

Now then, the person may think, “That is the future, who cares about that?”

Even though one has to experience suffering, the future is not today, not this month, day, or year, for sure not for several years. The person may think it is the future, sort of a long time. However, whether it is a long time or a short time, whatever it is, you cannot share that suffering. If you could share maybe that would be something else—“Please could you experience my karma, the suffering result of the karma that was created by me.” Like this. If there were such thing there wouldn’t be any sentient beings left. If there were a choice like this, if we didn’t have to suffer the result of the karmic cause we created, if some other beings could experience it for us, then there wouldn’t be any ignorant suffering sentient beings left. Beings who have compassion for all sentient beings would have taken all the karma and experience all the suffering on our behalf. Also numberless enlightened beings would have taken all the suffering and experienced the suffering on our behalf. Also they would have transplanted their realization and enlightenment to us very easily. But this is an impossible thing. That’s why we are suffering still.

That future suffering has to be experienced by oneself alone. There is nothing to share. Who will experience it? It has to be experienced only by me because that is who created the cause. The cause was created only by me. Therefore the result has to be experienced by me, whether it is happiness or suffering.

So what difference does it make... it is the same thing, if I am suffering now I don’t like it, and if I will suffer in the future, I will be the person who suffers that same thing. So what is the difference. It is just a matter of time. The person is the same thing, the experience of suffering is the same thing. Ask yourself, “Do I want to experience that suffering or not?” So of course the answer, if you really check up, definitely the answer will be, “I don’t like to suffer, whether in the present thing or in the future. I don’t like to experience that.” If it is really checked up with wisdom then there is definitely the mind wanting to renounce the suffering, this definitely arises. If death were not definite that would be something else. But death is definite. It is definite that one day all these planets, sun, moon—all we see now in the East, in the West, everything will emptiness. Just space, nothing left but space. Just space, darkness, complete darkness, nothing left. Definitely this will happen. If even all these things disappear, why not myself? At that time I will not exist on this earth. Death is a definite thing, like this.

How is death definite? At death time nothing can stop it. Even if we try to make the life longer, it continuously finishes, becomes decayed. Even if we try to make the life longer, it spontaneously decays. Even if we try to make life longer due to previous karma, if we have created the karma to have a certain length of life, even that spontaneously becomes decayed. Also at death time not having the chance to practice Dharma, dying without the chance of practicing Dharma as one wants, even though one has wish—many beings die just with ignorance, without any wish to practice Dharma before that in the lifetime. So check like this.

In the afternoon do meditation on the shortness of the human life, check like this. First of all check on the person who has 100,000 years to live, and check on yourself—how that quickly changes, becomes older, each time closer to death like this. Then think, why I should be concerned with that? Put the question. Then because of the mental continuity before rebirth, the same thing after death. Even so, why should I worry? Even so, why worry? Then think of two ways to be born—happy and in the suffering realms. That decision is made by the karma—not your choice, but by karma. So check each day how much karma was created—was more positive karma or negative karma created in the day? Check each day, month, year, check previous lives. Therefore it is definite that I will be born in the suffering realm. If death is not definite that is something else. Death is definite, nothing can stop it. Think of the example of all these planets finishing, all becoming empty. This is very helpful. Usually we say, “Of course I will die.” Ordinary people will say this. It doesn’t mean they really feel and see it. “I will die after some time,” they say, but that doesn’t mean they really understand, feel it. Nothing can stop death and even trying to make life longer, it spontaneously becomes decayed. We die without having sufficient time to practice Dharma.

Then think a second time, after checking this, how the actual time of death is indefinite. Whether you know when you are going to die, check up. Also before thinking that the actual time of death is indefinite, think of the three reasons that death is definite—how it is finishing, how all things become empty, how nothing can stop death, even if there is previous karma to make life longer still it spontaneously finishes, and without having the chance to practice Dharma in life, death happens. After this do meditation the future situation, what is going to happen, what will definitely happen in a certain time or place. No matter how much we dislike or try to reject thinking like this, it is something that will definitely happen in a certain time or place. So somehow, try to bring the future situation into the present, do visualizations like this as if you are dying at your home, on the bed, then go through the changes of the body. Then afterwards imagine the family crying, worrying, things happening, and then putting the corpse in the box, in the coffin. Then being carried to the cemetery, singing prayers, some people trying to cry. Visualize this process, whatever you do in the West, which will definitely happen. This is one of the most effective meditations on death, to make the mind realize. Then the body is burnt, or buried.

All these are methods, meditations on death. Meditation on death is a powerful, practical method to not create negative karma. It is a method to build energy, to grow wisdom and energy, to stop creating negative karma and to stop experiencing suffering rebirths in the evil destinies. This is the method. If you are scared of death, even just hearing of death, another person dying, just hearing the word death the wise are scared, have that much fear. This is a method to stop future suffering, especially the suffering in evil destinies and the fear of the suffering. This method is a method to stop the fear of death, to stop uncontrolled suffering death. If there is fear of death ahead of time and that is used to stop the future suffering, to stop negative karma, to stop uncontrolled death, to stop the fear of death, that is wise, very skillful. Then we do not have to worry or fear during the lifetime. At the actual death time having a lot of fears or worries or suffering doesn’t help at all. The time is finished.

After meditating that death is definite by checking on three things, think of the process of death as you do in the West—how things are done with the body, the changes of body. After that do the meditation on the topic “The actual time of death is indefinite.” Then the subject that comes after that, the evolution of death.

I think this is very wise. We have suffering, our minds live in suffering, but with wisdom we use suffering to achieve enlightenment. So this is how the poison, instead being a cause to harm the life, is used as a medicine for the life to exist longer. It is very practical thing that definitely helps to stop the mind's confusion and the usual life problems.

6 pm

Just a short talk on the benefits and purpose of taking this one day ordination. According to the story, in the first meditation course, the ordination was taken on only one day, the last day. The first course was, I think, fifteen or ten days long. The subject or the book was only seven pages for the first course, because there wasn't a plan before that to such a course, so it was started all of a sudden. The European student called Zina—she has many different names but this was one of her names—she asked to do the meditation course. For long time I refused, because I was not capable and had no knowledge, but however she insisted so many times and so afterwards I asked Lama Yeshe and he said, "If it will be beneficial, it is alright to do." So just being crazy all of a sudden we started the meditation course! Somehow the plan started like this. After one meditation course was done then the plan was set up according to people's needs. Then starting from the second course people have been taking ordination the last two weeks. It was considered that besides doing meditation and understanding a little bit of Dharma, that if the people took this one day ordination it would be a very practical thing. Besides just meditating and receiving, understanding a little bit about Dharma, at the same time some practical action or positive karma is created, which can definitely benefit all sentient beings. Some practical thing that makes life meaningful. Perhaps people coming here, people attending the course are not sure whether they will be always in a meditation course or whether they will always create some pure action, some beneficial pure action, or whether they will find the chance to create such beneficial pure action in their life before death. So somehow during the meditation course while the teaching is going on, while people are meditating, if this ordination can be taken, if the person has taken this ordination this one day somehow his life is not completely empty, even if after he leaves the course, he has no chance to meditate or think of Dharma, or any chance to create any virtuous action. Even if he is continuously creating negative karma. However, that person who this ordination even for one day, by being in the meditation course, when the person dies his life is not completely empty, not completely empty of virtuous action, not completely empty of positive karma. Even taking the ordination one day, he could make his life meaningful—somehow he has created the cause to achieve everlasting happiness, the boundless state of samsara, or enlightenment. Somehow in that life the person has definitely created the cause that will definitely bring the result of again receiving the human rebirth, and practicing Dharma. So that's how the life is not really empty.

You heard in the afternoon the notes from the other course explaining the benefits of the precepts. It was read this afternoon so it is not necessary to talk so much. Each person may have understood some benefits of taking this ordination. Somehow each person may have understood something that has meaning—that this action or practice has some meaning that benefits the life. However, generally like this. One easy thing is that as we have just finished that part of the meditation on the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth, as we have just discussed how it is difficult to create the cause of the perfect human rebirth, morality and charity, so you can check on those. Then you can understand that it has meaning, even though you don't have the wisdom to check in the wider way, the deeper way—for instance, most of the lower suffering beings in their lifetimes continuously create negative karma, not disciplining the speech, body, and mind, so after finishing the period of that karma again they are reborn in the evil destinies, again they suffer. As this is

caused by previous karma so always it just circles around like this. Born there, dies there, born and dying there like this. They don't find the chance to be born in the upper realms, they don't find the chance to receive a happy rebirth for a long time. It takes eons and eons to receive a happy rebirth. The whole thing is this. To create the cause, morality, totally disciplining the speech, body, and mind is extremely difficult. Observing morality is an impossible thing for those suffering beings. These suffering beings, such as animals, can do many things like human beings do, such as killing. They are very wise in killing each other, killing other animals. For instance, how wise the cat is in killing the mouse, hiding if it makes a noise or something. Then when the mouse comes out it grabs it. Also the cat, this dumb animal, has that much political method—it is a politician, it knows how to kill the mouse. How to make its life happy, it knows that much. Not only this, many wild animals are very clever—tigers, many other animals are so clever, in order to kill other animals, in order to get food.

For instance, the spider. The spider also has the method to make his life happy by killing other insects, by putting the web around them. Then he hides or stays in the center or in the corner, then as fly comes on top of the web, and if it moves all of a sudden he comes down and eats it. He has a method to make his life happy, killing other insects. He has that method. If a person is going to, without having anything, a person cannot do that.

However, killing for human beings is nothing special. What I mean by giving the example of the insects, how they are wise in make this one life happy by cheating other animals, killing other animals, what I mean is that harming other beings, killing other beings is nothing special—killing one's enemy is nothing that is special to human beings. Cheating is also nothing special to human being. Even those creatures are so wise in cheating others. Also they can tell lies. If you touch some insects they pretend they are dead—some insects are so wise. After a few minutes they try to move. For a long time they keep still, like a piece of stick or something. Making war is also not a special action of human beings because even animals can make war. Even dogs have partisanship, different groups, fighting each other. Animals also do this. Ants also know how to make war—with so many groups they attack other ants, other animals. So none of those actions are special for human beings.

Let's take sexual intercourse. This precept is one of the most heavy ones, it is kind of a shock especially for Westerners. However, even non-human beings, big animals, even the tiniest creatures that we find hard to see engage in sexual intercourse, they know this very well. They do this without being taught. Look at the flies, look at all the creatures. This is nothing special for human beings, nothing special, not a higher action than an animal's. Even the lower creatures do this—it is nothing special for human beings.

For instance, making the body look beautiful by putting on different colors, things like this, as it comes in the precepts. We look at butterflies and many other animals with so many different colors that look beautiful, like peacocks. However, physically looking beautiful, there is still no special meaning for the human life. Artificially making special, there is nothing special for the human life.

The human action has to be higher than those suffering beings' actions, so keeping the precepts, taking ordination, is not something that these lower suffering beings can do. This is something that human beings are capable of doing and this is a special action, a higher action than human being can do. Disciplining speech, body, and mind is the purpose for which we were born as human beings this time. This is the action that gives meaning to the human life. To create good karma, to gradually get close to enlightenment in order to benefit other sentient beings. This is the higher action. If you do this, this is the higher action. This is the special action of human beings. Having interest in this is

more worthwhile than having interest in those other negative actions that non-human beings can do. However, briefly talking, just briefly talking. [Peepee bell sounded] I will continue but people who have to peepee please release the trouble.

Student: Is it possible to make sexual action higher of higher understanding?

Rinpoche: There can be specific things. Just the action doesn't make it negative, it depends on the mind.

The purpose of explaining this, making this emphasis, is just a general explanation to have general understanding. Especially in the hope that it can help you keep the precepts purely during these two weeks. I don't mean that you should keep these precepts for your whole lifetime. It is your choice whatever you want to do with your life. Whatever life you want to have, to be, whether you want the life to be a white life, a black life, or a red life, whatever it is. I am just joking! However, it is in your hands. Generally, also practicing Dharma is also in your hands. Your mind is not in my hands, your mind is within your body. So it is your choice. I am not holding your mind. So there is no need to worry! It is silly to be scared. I do not have even that much strength. You can see by looking at my body! I can't hold even my mind.

Generally the purpose of explaining these things is especially to help you during the short period of keeping the precepts, only two weeks. Not one month, not one year—but if you can keep these precepts even one week, two weeks purely, it is greatly worthwhile. Then you made your life worthwhile, as you were born as a human being you made your human life worthwhile, as you took this human rebirth. Generally it is like this. There are eight precepts in total. The main discipline is not the actions of speech and body but the main discipline is of the mind. If the creator, the mind that produces the action of mind, produces the action of speech, produces the action of body, if this creator is negative, all those other actions become negative. If this creator is positive, no matter what the action is, the action of speech, the physical action, it becomes positive. So it is like a radio dial that you wind to find different stations, just like this. Mind is like this. Generally with Dharma, those actions that are not mixed with the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, they mainly depend on mind and not so much on the speech, the way the action looks. For instance, such as telling lies—even the action is created by the positive mind. Same thing with the action of the physical body. Such as telling lies, for example like this. If the police are checking her, wanting to kill her, and let's say she is hiding somewhere, then if I meet the police and they ask me, and I pretend, talk about another subject, "Today I went to Kathmandu, I am so tired," telling how beautiful it is or how busy it is. Talking round, going round. That action is not mainly for the happiness of my life—it is mainly concerned with her, to save her life. These things become positive actions. Saying she has gone somewhere else or something. Also in terms of killing, taking others life, sexual intercourse, and other actions, there is a way for them to become positive actions if the creator, the mind, is completely pure of the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas that is attached to the happiness of this life. At least there has to be that positive mind. Generally for instance, like this. If the positive mind, the creator, the level of that mind, has that much knowledge, as the level of that mind is higher, the positive action done by that positive mind can be that beneficial.

For instance, when Guru Shakyamuni was a bodhisattva, he was on a ship sailing to get jewels from the Pacific. On that ship there were five hundred traders, business people, and one man called Minadur Dungen. Guru Shakyamuni realized this person was planning to kill these five hundred people in the ship. He thought that if he let that person kill all these five hundred people he would create such heavy negative karma and also the five hundred people would suffer. Therefore he

thought it was worthwhile to experience the suffering of killing that one person instead. Guru Shakyamuni he couldn't stand—it is not just like this, but perhaps people may get a wrong understanding.

If there is a dog coming, and another dog coming, and some other dogs attack them, and with kind of a partial mind you get angry with one dog and kill it in order to save the other dog's life, that is wrong. This is not what happened with Guru Shakyamuni. Usually people have partial compassion, thinking they like this, don't like this. But Guru Shakyamuni couldn't stand the negative karma that the person was going to create by killing five hundred people—he had incredible compassion for that person—he didn't want him to create that karma and suffer for many hundreds of eons. Just like this, another simple way of saying. He felt incredible compassion for the other person, not wanting him to suffer, not wanting him to experience the suffering result, the negative karma. He was concerned with the other person as if it were him, not wanting to him to suffer, not wanting to experience the suffering result, the negative karma. He was concerned with the other person as if it were him. Saying concerned, we are so much concerned with ourselves. We think, "This is the most important thing, I am the most important thing." With this thought we are only concerned with ourselves. But Guru Shakyamuni was only concerned with the other person, just like we are concerned with ourselves. Such incredible compassion also with these five hundred traders. So with this incredible bodhicitta, this Mahayana compassion he preferred to experience suffering in the narak realms by killing him, thinking, "I don't care. As long as others don't experience suffering. If I have to experience it I am just one person."

Student: Does that mean Guru Shakyamuni can stop negative karma?

Guru Shakyamuni can help to stop negative karma, otherwise what's the purpose of the teachings? So anyway, this is going quite far. Instead of this action becoming a negative action, negative karma, it becomes a positive karma, it becomes cause of happiness. It saved five hundred other people and it saved the person creating that much negative karma. He didn't have to experience the suffering result in samsara. That action made him be 100,000 eons less in samsara. Instead of it becoming a negative action it became a beneficial action.

Also, there was one girl who had such strong attachment for sexual intercourse, and she couldn't find any man. So she tried to commit suicide—this was in one of Maitreya's lives when he was taking the form of bodhisattva. Maitreya couldn't stand the negative karma that the woman was going to create—her creating that much negative karma was unbearable for Maitreya, due to his infinite compassion. Just like Guru Shakyamuni felt with this person. So in order to save her from creating such heavy negative karma, from committing suicide and not experiencing that suffering result for such a long period, with bodhicitta that takes care of others more than oneself, making others dear, giving up oneself, with this bodhicitta, he felt incredible, unbearable towards the negative karma that she was going to create. So Maitreya spent twelve years with this girl, and then again took the form of living the life in discipline. This action that is done with the bodhicitta giving oneself and taking more care of others made the period he spent in samsara 40,000 eons less.

So you see like this, according to the positive mind, the action that looks negative can become positive. Besides the thought going in the Dharma, not mixed with the evil thought, especially living in the renounced thought like bodhicitta, the actions becomes such great beneficial actions, such big purification—they becomes the quick cause, the quick method to receive enlightenment. Especially in the Vajrayana, this bodhicitta has to be developed higher. This mind living in the realization of

bodhicitta has to be developed higher. With that higher realization, through Vajrayana practice, the person can transform, can make every action positive. Even though the action looks negative as I explained before, even though it looks like a negative action, with that special technique, that level of realization, this action that looks like a negative action becomes such a profound method, the quickest method to receive enlightenment, like this.

Usually some Westerners do like this. Instead of developing inside, they try to act, they do just the physical action, just pretending, the physical performance—pretending they are sort of a yogi, a great meditator, wearing all sorts of clothes, their hair in different shapes, trying to act like they see in tangkas, trying to act like the yogis. This only makes more confusion; nothing helps. So generally it is like this.

Generally in our lifetime we should try to make any action as positive as possible. We should try to make it pure. Whatever it is—whether it is meditation or whether it is just a general daily life action. Like I have just explained giving examples, stories, there is no question why we can't do it. Why we can't gain the same perfection by similar actions. By developing inside the mind. It is like this. Just briefly talking ending up the conversation. Let's say there are eight precepts, then just to make clear—if the opposite action of the eight precepts is done with a negative mind, with ignorance, greed, or hatred, it is a negative karma—the eight other eight other negative actions. If you don't take the precepts there are eight negative actions. For instance, if each of these actions are not disciplined, not stopped, the person creates that much different negative karma. Then it still depends on how much the person creates in the day. So as the person has created each of these it brings the suffering result. If the person is born in the upper realm, the suffering realm, whatever, sometimes it is possible to experience in this lifetime. This brings rebirth in the suffering realm and again much suffering has to be experienced even for the person born in the upper realm. Like this. So if the person doesn't observe the eight precepts for one week, as the person has done the negative actions, that much negative karma is created. If it is not observed in two weeks, if the person does these negative actions, that much negative karma is created. So much negative karma is created by not disciplining speech, body, and mind, not living in discipline. That much suffering result is already definite to be experienced, as the karma is created. Definitely in time. As the person observed that number of precepts in one day, keeping the eight precepts, that protects the person, causing the person to purify even the karma created in other lifetimes, negative karma, it becomes purification of even previous negative karma. Besides that, at this present time it protects the person from creating each negative action. In that way keeping the eight precepts makes the person not experience the suffering result of each of these negative actions. At the same time as the person lives in discipline, these eight precepts definitely help. Besides purifying previous karma, besides stopping the creation of negative actions, besides stopping the future suffering results that will be experienced in this or other lifetimes, besides stopping these, the precepts do not allow the person to bring up the negative mind. They protect the person away from bringing up the negative mind. So at the same time as the person has taken precepts, the mind lives in discipline and it helps the mind to not be confused. Why? Because it stops the negative mind that makes the mind confused, that is itself confused. So keeping the mind away from the negative mind is the instant benefit of the precepts. As long as the person is living in the discipline, the mind is living in the discipline.

This is just talking about one day, but if the person keeps them for one week, two weeks, that many incredible benefits are created. That much suffering result of negative karma is stopped, the person doesn't have to experience it, that much purification of previous negative karma is done. So this is just to have some clear idea.

Then also one thing, a simple thing. In order to receive the boundless state of samsara, of suffering, the everlasting happiness, it is necessary to realize shunyata, absolute nature. That depends on having concentration, and having concentration depends on morality. Just like this.

For instance, if the water if it is dirty we cannot see what is underneath, we cannot see through it. If it is shaking also we can't see through it clearly. In order to see underneath clearly, the water first of all has to be clean and then it has to be calm. Just like this, in order to realize the mind nature, the absolute nature of oneself, in order to clearly see this, it is necessary to have concentration and a mind that is not distracted. It is necessary to have concentration, and not be distracted by other hindrances—to be able to control the mind away from hindrances, agitation, and sluggishness, many things like this. Having concentration depends on controlling the mental scattering thoughts and the mental hindrances. Controlling them, we have control of the mind. The mind can be straight, the mind can be calm and kept straight. Also, with this concentration it is very easy to realize shunyata. So therefore in order to control the mind, to not be distracted by mental agitation, it is necessary to keep the body, speech, and mind clean. Mainly the mind—clean or pure. How? From the negative actions of speech, body, and mind, like this. Not disciplining the negative actions of speech, body, and mind is like dirty water, and the mind not being controlled, always distracted, is like water moving so much that we cannot see through it, like not seeing the mind nature. Discipline is very useful for mind control and especially to realize the mind nature, and that is useful for achieving enlightenment.

I think that's all. I think fifteen minutes late, I am sorry. Supper is late!

DEDICATION

Then as you get up tomorrow morning, I think it will start at five am., instead of feeling, “How boring it is, I don't want to get up and take ordination,” instead of feeling like this, which only make you exhausted, doesn't help other people or yourself, think, “I am not sure when my death will happen, when it will come, not sure. Whether it will be today or tomorrow, not sure. Even after this life, suffering is not ceased, but continuously has to be experienced in samsara. Besides that I have to release from samsara, from the boundaries of suffering and ignorance and remember that there are numberless other sentient beings suffering in samsara, in the boundaries of suffering. Due to delusion and karma, numberless sentient beings are in incredible suffering, suffering more than me. I am so happy now not having many problems having food to eat, clothes to put on, having choice in what I want to do. So many sentient beings, numberless sentient beings, are in incredible suffering, not knowing how day or night goes.” Even human beings on the earth, besides other sentient beings, remember other sentient beings' suffering.

Then think, as the compassion rises by thinking of other beings' suffering, “How can I benefit them? The best way it is to achieve enlightenment. By achieving enlightenment I can release them from all suffering and lead them into enlightenment. Therefore in order to receive enlightenment I need purification, I have to observe karma, morality—therefore I am going to take ordination.” Like this it is very simple. Think like this as you come to take ordination, your mind very happy, not tired, exhausted, not bored, getting up early in the morning and taking ordination with happiness, with rejoicfulness. If you spontaneously think like this, also during the day your mind will be joyful, you will see yourself as meaningful and beneficial for other sentient beings. Thinking like this is the perfect arrangement in your mind for taking ordination.

Day Fifteen
Wednesday, 20th November
Precepts

In order for the action of taking ordination to become a Dharma action, it is necessary that it be possessed by the pure thought that goes in the Dharma. Besides that, for the action of taking ordination to become the cause of enlightenment, it is necessary that it be possessed by the pure thought of bodhicitta. Therefore it is necessary to briefly think like this. “Myself and all sentient beings have been suffering generally in samsara, particularly in the suffering realms, from beginningless samsaric lifetime. Myself and all sentient beings are still not released from samsara. If I really think about how much I have been suffering, how long I have been suffering in samsara, the boundaries of the suffering, the numberless times I have been suffering in the evil destinies, the numberless times I was born as a preta and suffered, the numberless times I was born as an animal and suffered, the numberless times I was born in the narak realms and suffered—it is unbearable thinking how much and how long I have been suffering in these different realms. It is something now I should be exhausted of, tired of according to the numberless times spent experiencing different suffering in the realms from beginningless time. According to that, I should already have the renounced mind of samsara. Because of the ignorance not knowing all these past experiences, I am still continuously creating the cause of samsara. Besides that much suffering that I have experienced from beginningless previous lifetimes, as long as I follow the wrong conception that thinks of dependent things as independent and impermanent things as permanent and believes in the impurities as pure, such as one’s own body and what the body contains, as long as I follow these wrong conceptions I will have to experience suffering in samsara endlessly, again circling round.”

If you think of all the future suffering, if you really know all the future suffering that each person will have to experience in different samsaric realms according to the karma that has been collected from previous lifetimes until now, the suffering result that we will have to experience in samsara is something that will have to be experienced for a long time, for unimaginable numbers of eons. It is something that we cannot guess, imagine—the end of the suffering caused by previous karma; it is something that we cannot guess, imagine. According to this, all the different types of suffering that will have to be experienced by me, according to this, by checking this, it is such an unbearable thing. Just relaxing and doing some meaningless action without working on something in order to stop experiencing all these future sufferings, it is an incredible thing, such an unbearable thing that makes you unable even to fall asleep, to eat, or to relax. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, before he entered the path and received enlightenment, was also an ordinary person like us. By having met the Mahayana guru and having kept the Mahayana ordination of eight precepts, he received enlightenment and enlightened numberless other sentient beings. Just like he did, also we have the possibility to do.

“Releasing just myself from the boundaries of suffering samsara and receiving everlasting happiness is not enough, is not sufficient. All sentient beings are the field from which I receive all my past happiness and they are field from which also I receive all my present happiness and they are field from which I will receive my future happiness, and also they are field from which I receive all my realizations including enlightenment. At the beginning of the path I have to depend on the help of sentient beings, in the middle of the path I have to depend on the help of sentient beings, and even at the end of the path I have to depend on the help and kindness of sentient beings.

“Most sentient beings are extremely suffering, not having the Dharma wisdom to fully see what is to be practiced and what is to be avoided, what is positive and what is negative action. Not knowing what is the cause of actual happiness and what is the cause of actual suffering. Not having met the Dharma, not having met the Mahayana guru to lead them on the path to enlightenment, continuously suffering, creating karma with ignorance. So as in this specific time I have received a perfect human rebirth and have met the Mahayana teaching, and have also met the teacher explaining the path, and have a little bit wisdom to understand what is to be practiced, what is to be avoided, what is the cause of happiness, what is the cause of suffering—therefore I am responsible, as I have such a precious chance, I am responsible for releasing all the suffering sentient beings from suffering and leading them to enlightenment.

“Who has that capability to enlighten all sentient beings by releasing them from suffering? For instance, now, myself, now I don’t have that capability. Who has that capability? Only the Buddha has that capability, that perfect power. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment first. In order to achieve enlightenment I must complete the whole realization of the graduated path. Completing the whole realization of the graduated path depends on disciplining the speech and body. That depends on disciplining the mind. So the whole thing including enlightenment depends on disciplining the mind.

“Therefore I am going to take the Mahayana ordination until tomorrow morning, sunrise.” Then you do the visualization with feeling. Purifying the way you see the ordinary person granting the ordination, visualize that person as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, in the form of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, surrounded by numberless other buddhas and bodhisattvas. Then in their presence think, “I am taking the ordination.” Then you repeat as I say the prayer. If it is uncomfortable or painful then you don’t have to kneel down. Receiving ordination does not depend on how the person keeps the legs.

PRAYER

When I say “dag ming,” after that you mention your name, which means—you may have understood yesterday by reading—“As previous buddhas observed the ordination in order to make sentient beings receive enlightenment to stop all the epidemic disease, to stop all the famine problems, and to release all sentient beings from suffering and benefit them, I, called such and such, also will observe ordination for that reason.” So totally it means this.

At the end of the third repetition when I say, “yang dag par lang war gyi o,” then think, while you are visualizing the holy object of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas, think, “In their presence I have received perfect, pure ordination.” Visualize the ordination in the form of light and from your head down to your feet, each atom of your body is all filled up with light. Think, “Now I have fully received the ordination.”

Also repeat the prayer of the precepts thinking, “As previous tathagatas, the buddhas, observed the precepts, I will observe also the precepts until tomorrow morning only for the sake of other sentient beings.” In the depth of your mind think, “I am going to take these precepts, remembering the numberless sentient beings, thinking of the numberless other sentient beings’ sufferings.”

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

When I say ----- then you have to answer -----. Also repeat the mantra that revives the broken precepts, and to be able to keep the precepts purely.

MANTRA

Repeat also this, the last prayer and dedication.

PRAYER AND DEDICATION

Think, “Due to the merits of taking ordination may I be successful according to the meaning of the prayer.” Also think, “Due to the past and present merits of taking ordination and also future merits, may I achieve enlightenment quickly in order to enlighten all sentient beings by thinking of myself as empty of independence and the merit that is dedicated for sentient beings as empty of independence, and also all sentient beings and enlightenment as empty of independence.”

Then make three prostrations. Also visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

Only two or three words. Since we took ordination, precepts, the most important thing during the day is to remember the number of the precepts frequently. It is very easy to break the precepts because the mind is unconscious of the action and unthinking—the mind is not used to being conscious of the actions. We are not accustomed, not trained, not disciplined, so therefore it is new thing, and it is easy to forget it. Therefore, the method is trying to remember frequently—this helps to not break the precepts, makes the mind conscious of the actions of speech, body, and mind. The most important thing is, instead of feeling as if you are in the prison, sort of complete control or something, instead of suffering by thinking this, it is necessary to remember that you motivated for sentient beings. Think, “I have a great responsibility now, I have taken great responsibility—I have made the vow to keep the precepts only for the sake of other sentient beings, for each sentient being, including all the human beings, animals—all suffering beings. The whole country, all my friends, enemies, everything. I have a great responsibility as I have made this vow.” That is keeping the precepts in order to receive enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings and also cause sentient beings to release from suffering and receive enlightenment for each sentient being, the sentient beings that you see here, even just around here, the people even that you see here, even each of the persons here, the sentient beings here that we see, we have made the vow to keep the precepts for each of the sentient beings. So this is a big responsibility.

Usually the people who work in one country, like the President, which has a certain number of million people is recognized as so important, having great responsibility. However, as we took the precepts, as we made the vow to keep the precepts of speech, body, and mind for each sentient being, this is the greatest responsibility, this is the most pure work. That’s the best help for sentient beings, because in this way it brings enlightenment, it quickly brings peace to sentient beings. This is the correct way, this is the actual cause. So remembering this responsibility that you took on during the vow for each sentient being, whether you care about Buddha or not, because Buddha you don’t see, as you have made the vow for each sentient being, by thinking of that responsibility and thinking of sentient beings’ suffering, which are greater than your suffering, this can help you also to generate compassion. Compassion makes you keep the precepts purely, not break them, not be lazy. Even in the day, as you see each person, animal, insect, and thing, be conscious, thinking, “I am working for them, I am keeping precepts for them, in order to release them from suffering and help

them reach enlightenment.” This is very helpful. Also when you can see that you are working for each sentient being, you see yourself as meaningful, and in this way make your mind happy.

9 am

From the holy speech of the great bodhisattva Tenzin Gyaltzen, “The moon of the mind is bodhicitta, the sun of the mind is bodhicitta, the jewel of the mind is bodhicitta, the nectar of the mind is also bodhicitta. As the external rising moon cools and dispels the darkness, the moon of our mind that cools mental suffering and dispels mental darkness is bodhicitta.”

Mental darkness is the ignorance not knowing the nature and karma. Just like the sun that stops the cold and makes plants and crops grow, the sun of the mind that stops cold suffering and makes the virtuous crops, which means the realizations from the beginning of the graduated path down to the end, enlightenment, is bodhicitta. The jewel of the mind is bodhicitta. The meaning of jewel—usually jewels means the wish-fulfilling jewel, if you have that jewel whatever you think of, you can receive. Just like this the jewel of the mind that brings all samsaric happiness, the happiness of nirvana, the boundless state of suffering, the most sublime happiness of enlightenment, all the happiness of the jewel of the mind that brings all the happiness including the happiness that the person receives as the person feels hot, just even an air passing through, feeling cool, including even that small pleasure—the jewel of the mind brings all these happinesses. The jewel of the mind that brings all this happiness is bodhicitta.

The nectar of the mind is bodhicitta. The meaning is this—nectar is usually the best medicine to cure physical and mental sufferings and give bliss. The nectar of the mind cures all the mind disease, all the delusions. That nectar of the mind is bodhicitta.

All these things—sun, moon, jewels, nectars—all these examples are given in order to figure out the benefits of bodhicitta. In order to understand the knowledge of bodhicitta. However, even in these examples there is nothing to compare to the knowledge and benefits of bodhicitta, because the benefits and the knowledge of this sun, moon, nectar, and material jewels are so limited according to the knowledge and benefits of bodhicitta. They cannot function as bodhicitta can function. They don’t have all the benefits, all the value that bodhicitta has.

However, as this is the best method to cure all suffering, it is worthwhile, as we have the chance this time, to try to train the mind in this pure thought of bodhicitta. It is necessary to start it this moment. Also it is necessary to cultivate such pure thought in order for the action of listening to Dharma to become a cause of enlightenment. Therefore think, “I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all mother sentient beings. For this reason I must complete the whole realization of the graduated path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path.” However, in the depth of mind feel, “I am going to do this for the sake of other sentient beings.” At there is the feeling like that in the depth of mind, it is pure.

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. This was well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great pandits Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa’s understanding of the teaching. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. All these teachings are set up for the practice of one person’s achievement of enlightenment.

This commentary on the graduated path has four outlines. In order to show reference, the knowledge of the author. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening to and explaining the teaching, and the way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment. The last one has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind on the graduated path. The way of training the mind on the graduated path has two—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided into three—the method, the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. First the graduated path of the lower being, which has two—seeking a better future life and following the method for the happiness of the future life. Bringing up the desire to seek the better future life has two outlines also—remembering the shortness of the human life and death and thinking of the happy rebirth or the suffering rebirth.

Part of this meditation at this time is remembering the shortness of the human life and death. Generally it is like this. Many times also in other previous lifetimes we met the teaching, and even though we were born in a place where there was Dharma existing, we didn't follow it, and even though we believed in the Dharma, had devotion in the Dharma, we didn't practice. The reason we are not released from samsara, the reason we are still living in samsara, is mainly due to not remembering death. It is not because we never got teachings from beginningless previous lifetimes until now, it is not because of that. It is because of not remembering the shortness of life and not actually realizing the nature of the suffering death. Therefore also other realization, such as receiving bodhicitta, such as realizing the mind nature, such as receiving the fully renounced mind of samsara, have been stopped. That's why we are not released from samsara yet. All these realizations are based on remembering the shortness of life and death.

For instance, like this. Those who have read the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's twelve events may know a little bit, but however you see, at the very beginning when Guru Shakyamuni received enlightenment under the bodhi tree, that was through fully realizing the absolute nature, bodhicitta, and the renounced mind of samsara, besides many other realizations of the six paramitas, the five paths, and the ten grounds. He received all these realizations including enlightenment and after he was enlightened he gave sermons, Dharma sermons, gave teachings to numberless other sentient beings and led them on the path. What caused it, what made him follow the path, and have all these realizations, all these beneficial actions? At first, it started by the realization of death and impermanent life. He descended and was conceived in his mother's womb and then took the princely life. Then he took the form of getting married, and while he was in the palace there were four gates, one gate on each side, and he saw different suffering examples through each gate. Through one gate he saw an old man who couldn't walk, but had to rely on sticks. Due to this event he discovered suffering nature. After that, through one door he saw a dead man carried by people. Due to this, he realized death, discovered the nature of suffering death. So like this. Through each gate he saw a different suffering example, and met a different event. Seeing each example he discovered the suffering nature. This was the very first cause.

Many students have stories of what caused them to come to the Dharma, what made them find interest, to understand Dharma, to read Dharma course. Each person has his own story, different story. Some say that they found certain books and that's how they got interested in understanding Buddhadharma. Some people read Lobsang Rampa's books. Anyway, there are different stories. Some say because my friend was very happy with what he is doing, the methods, the teaching, and

what he understood was helping him very much. Each person has a different story. Some have the story that in the West there is nothing new to learn, no method for the mind problems. Going to the University, learning different subjects going to Church, whatever different subjects are learned do not solve the life problem. They say as they read Dharma books, as they read the teaching explained by Buddha, they find different methods. People have different stories.

The very first cause, the very first thing that made Guru Shakyamuni achieve all these realizations, receiving enlightenment and helping numberless other sentient beings—was always caused by this realization. The realization of the suffering nature, the shortness of life and death.

Not only Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, but also all those great yogis who achieved enlightenment in their lifetime also started from this realization—such as Milarepa, who also did his first meditation on this subject. His not having fear of the death, his having complete control over the death, and not having fear of any other suffering, all this happened due to this realization. For instance, Milarepa said in his teaching, “I was scared of death and escaped to the mountain. I have realized the nature of the mind which is emptiness—now even when death comes, I have no upset, no worry.” His having complete control over death and his fears by realizing his mind nature was mainly caused by having the realization of the shortness and impermanence of life and the death. Generally it is like this, this is important. If the person doesn’t remember death, the person doesn’t remember Dharma, the practice of Dharma. The person who doesn’t remember death doesn’t have worry, he is not concerned about anything—such as the suffering that comes after death. That’s how he doesn’t remember to practice Dharma. So his life just passes doing meaningless actions. If one doesn’t remember death even though one remembers Dharma, the person cannot practice, he can’t find the time to do it. He thinks, “Practicing Dharma is not urgent, I can do it later on after several years or months.” The mind feels that the practice of Dharma is not so urgent, not so important, and that what is more important is the temporal works that bring reputation, food, clothing, and material things. The mind thinking this is more important. In the depth of the person’s mind there is the feeling like this. This is more important than the Dharma, so the person puts off Dharma to do this afterwards, and that’s how person doesn’t find time to practice Dharma. This is also due to not remembering death.

Then third, if one doesn’t remember death, even though one tries to practice Dharma, one can’t purely practice Dharma. How? Because even though the person tries to practice Dharma, the mental hindrances come, the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas come, and that makes that person’s practice impure. As this evil thought arise, they make the person’s practice impure.

For instance, when some students go back to the West, then to show that they know meditation, something they learned from the East, they try to sit with crossed legs, eyes closed, not moving. Even though they try to think of the meditation subject, the mind not just blank, they try to think something, they have a little bit of the wish to practice Dharma, but then at that specific time this evil thought that expects the reputation, that is attached to the happiness of this life, at that time this evil thought comes. Because this evil thought that expects reputation arises, the practice of that Dharma, that meditation doesn’t become pure, because his motivation is mixed with this evil thought. In order to make that practice pure, what method is missing? What caused the practice to become impure, the evil thought to arise? Mainly, not remembering death. If they remember death there is no way for the evil thought expecting reputation, attached to the happiness of this life, to arise; it doesn’t come. Because this method is missing, not remembering death, the evil thought has found the chance to come to disturb the person’s practice. This is a very important point.

Usually by remembering death, I don't mean just saying, "Of course I won't last, of course I will die after some time." This idea everybody has is not sufficient, it doesn't mean just this. In order to make the practice pure, the way of remembering death is mainly thinking that the actual time of death is indefinite. Perhaps I may die today, tomorrow, thinking in the short time, perhaps I may die after a few hours. It is necessary to bring up the thought, "I may die today." This thought is necessary. If this person's meditation or practice does not become pure Dharma, it is mainly because of not remembering death like this. Not thinking, "I will die today, perhaps I may die today," the evil thought attached to the happiness of this life comes. It is like this. It is scientific, the way of benefiting, the way this is done, thinking, "I may die today," doubting, how this thought helps to keep the mind and practice pure—this is a real thing that definitely helps. Not just believing, this is something that definitely works. If that person has this thought, as this thought rises in the mind, he finds, "I am not sure, perhaps I may die today, so what's the purpose or meaning of my expecting reputation. There is no purpose." The person doesn't find purpose. The person doesn't find purpose for having reputation for these things. The person doesn't find much purpose to work in order to gain happiness for this life because it is such short time. As the person doesn't find purpose, meaning, the attachment doesn't arise. It doesn't come, doesn't come, there is no interest, it doesn't come. So bringing up this thought definitely stops the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas from rising. So now you see, the person who doesn't have any of this evil thought, that person's mind is pure. He is only concerned with what will come after death, not concerned with this short period, how to make this short period of several hours happy, he has no interest. He is concerned with this. The person's work and methods are mainly done for that, so that's how his practice becomes pure. It is a psychological thing. Actually this is the best psychology in order to stop the mind disease that we can learn from the teaching on the graduated path. Usually psychologists, those who have limited knowledge, don't really have methods to stop attachment. This is our biggest problem and they believe that without attachment the life cannot exist.

So what is necessary to have in order for the daily life meditations, to keep the daily life practice pure? The most instant method, the most practical powerful method that you can easily discover, use, is this thought thinking, "Perhaps I may die today." If this thought arises, there is no question, no doubt that it can definitely stop the attachment. Besides attachment, even anger and pride—many types of negative mind, because the person who thinks that the arising of such negative mind has no worth, no meaning. So what is necessary in order to purely practice Dharma, in order for the daily life actions to become pure, such as practicing meditations, whatever it is, in order for those to become the pure, is to continuously to keep this thought and be conscious—this is always useful. This is what is missing.

What betrays, what cheats the person, what makes the person be controlled by attachment, controlled by the negative mind? What makes the person be easily controlled by the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas? The opposite thought that thinks, "I am not going to die today," which definitely believes, intuitively thinks, spontaneously feels, "I am not going to die today," every morning once you are born. Every morning when you get up all the time you are continuously thinking, "I am not going to die today, I am going to live." This our experience. If you think now, it is our experience. It is there, it is not something you can buy from Kathmandu. It is something you have to get from the book. If you check up it is there.

Because of this thought arising, you don't care, and as this thought comes, the thought of the Dharma doesn't come. The thought objecting to the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas doesn't

come. Even though the person is trying to do something, some positive action, trying to meditate or something, it is very easy for the person to be controlled by the evil thought. First of all the person may think, "I should do something," and then he starts meditation, maybe reads book, says prayers, somehow something. Then somehow while the person is not checking his mind, being unconscious, the evil thought comes just like this. Just like a robber coming to steal things from the house.

(BREAK)

Bringing up the thought thinking that, "I may die today" for a few days, then forgetting, is not enough. To be able continuously and purely practice the Dharma it is necessary to have this method continuously. Then because of this method you keep the practice continuously and purely. Otherwise, like some people, after the course, they heard a little bit of teaching, and all of a sudden they leave, go to the mountains, go somewhere as if they are completely absorbing somewhere, then after a month, two months, they come back to the same situation, then afterwards there is not so much feeling with the Dharma, the mind is not in the same position as it was before. Then there is not so much thought of doing meditation, things like this. Sometimes you keep the life so tight, sometimes over-relaxed—this is not really a wise method, not being skillful with the life. Also even though the person knows the words, he doesn't use his mind, and they don't become the medicine to cure his mind disease, the negative mind. That kind of thing, doing that for a short time as the person just heard the teaching with a temporal emotion, then trying to do something, even not eating food, doing this and that, cutting off so many things. Then afterwards because the person has not that much skill and is not so wise in the method, doesn't know the method to carry on, again it comes down. So like this. In this way it is good that one month, even a short period, he is trying something—it is good but that is not a skillful method, not a method to bring realization quickly. It doesn't really help to complete the practice of meditations. So if this thought continuously arises, the practice of Dharma continuously comes. Also not only this, not only Dharma, but because of not bringing up these thoughts that I may die today, the person creates so much negative karma in the lifetime. Because of not rising this thought, they think, "I don't care about creating any heavy negative karma." Then also because of not having these thoughts, at death time the person has to die with such great upset, great worry, without understanding, without being capable of using the method, even though he learned the method. It is good to understand these benefits. Remembering this has great meaning—the person who achieves the complete practice of the graduated path of the lower, middle, and higher Being, all of this realization can be completed by remembering this, due to this realization. It has great meaning. Also remembering death and impermanent life is really a very powerful method. Just like a hammer to mash, cut the stones in pieces, just like the hammer, very powerful.

Also one thing, once one understands this it is easy to use, not difficult to understand the subject, not like shunyata, not like other meditations. The subject is not profound, it is easy, it is something you can easily discover, you can experience right away. By not thinking of how the negative mind comes, how it disturbs you, thinking of this thought helps—it is something one can easily experience, an effect one can easily receive right away. It is a very simple method, but so powerful, so effective. Actually this psychological method and all the weapons of the countries, on this earth, in these days the atomic bomb—if you compare the power of the atomic bomb and this psychological method, this way of meditation, there is nothing to compare. The atomic bomb cannot stop attachment, but this meditation has the incredible power to stop the attachment right away, to control it right away. Just like this, for instance, I think some people were asking two or three days ago—if I am with the family what to do, how to stop the attachment? I think someone

asked. Whether there is attachment to the parents, husband, wife, children, or possessions, as we discover strong attachment rising then we should think, “This is the attachment that keeps me in the boundaries of suffering.” It is good to think this. There is not so much understanding in the mind so there is not really that much feeling. If the person really knows how attachment is suffering, the cause of the boundaries of suffering, just by thinking this he can control attachment. But for us now at the beginning it is difficult. Thinking like this is useful. Then thinking, “I may die today or tomorrow, it is not sure that I can definitely exist, definitely live, it is not sure how many hours my life will last.” Think that the actual time of death is indefinite. Then think that it is more definite that death will occur than existence. Before you think, not sure, but the second time you think it is more definite that death will occur than existence. So if you think especially about the second one, it is very powerful. At the same time that you think this with feeling, you can see you won’t exist here all the time, just only for a short period. Therefore why should you be attached to this person? There is no reason, no interest. If you were going to be with this person all the time, permanently, that would be something else. So therefore there is no reason for attachment to arise. At the same time when you think, you first think, you are not sure, but the second time think that it is more definite that death will occur than existence. At the same time that you think this, you see the short period of life, and attachment automatically gets lost, goes down, just like the wind in the balloon. When you take off the knot that was tying that, all of a sudden the balloon goes down. Anyway, just to express this feeling, like this the attachment is lost all of a sudden. Especially anger, pride—this is useful, very useful. Generally attachment is more difficult to control than other negative minds, for example anger, but of course it depends on the individual. Each person has a different problem, some have more problems with anger, some with attachment, some with pride. However, especially with anger this is extremely helpful. Because even though I exist, I live for a long time, there is still no use in getting angry. Even if I live permanently, it doesn’t bring peace to my mind. It only makes the mind confused and violent. Even though I live forever, there is no use for anger. So definitely it is not sure that I am going to live for ever, or whether death is going to happen today—I am not sure that it will happen today. So there is no point in getting angry, better to not get angry. As the person thinks this all of a sudden the anger will get lost, becomes less, just like hot water in a pot, then you put cold water—all of a sudden it relaxes. Just like this. All of a sudden you change—by thinking this even one minute, you change, you become different person. Same thing with pride, remembering this makes you completely control all the delusions, that much this powerful, strong. Especially at the beginning of Dharma practice it is very useful. Even while the person is following path, this is very useful. Even at the end this realization always helps.

For instance, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gave teaching to numberless other sentient beings living in the path was due to this realization, so even at the end it is very helpful. Before I said not remembering this makes the person create so much negative karma, and now by remembering the benefits, it always helps the person to not create negative karma and to create positive karma. Before, not remembering that makes them worry, have much suffering at death time, and by remembering this even if death happens, due to this realization or remembrance, the mind is happy at the death time, relaxed and happy, the person dies with such a happy mind. So according to the practitioner like this. Those who purely practice Dharma in this lifetime, those meditators who have made a deeper practice at death time, for them it is like going back home, like going to a beautiful park for a picnic.

So second, a little bit lower than that, even though they can’t spend their whole life in pure Dharma practice, they create so much merit, make so much purification, even though there is no high realization, so much purification is done, so much merit collected, that when they die they have no

worry at death time—the mind is relaxed, there is no upset mind. Somehow the mind is so relaxed and somehow there is security in the mind thinking that I am not going to be born in the suffering realm. Somehow there is security that that person will receive a better rebirth, there is a feeling of security in the mind. No doubt, not so much worry, doubt, like this. The happy death is caused by this realization, by this remembrance.

Death is definite, then nothing can stop death, even if there is karma that can make the life longer, spontaneously it becomes decayed, it stops, and also the life passes without having the chance to practice Dharma, just like this. Half the life finishes by sleep and rest, most of the time passes in distraction, so just like this, life passes without having the chance to practice Dharma. Because of all these reasons, death is definite, and the actual time of death is indefinite. Generally life in the world, in this specific world, nothing is definite, there is no such exact life. Thinking like this, of indefinite life, beings who are in this world having indefinite life, thinking like this. Some die while in their mother's womb without having the chance to come out. Some die just after the baby comes out of the mother's womb, they die without having the chance to grow. Some die when they are babies without having the chance to grow older, like this. Also whatever plan the person has, whatever plans different people have, they die without having the chance to finish them.

For instance, more examples. It is useful to think of more examples. For instance, some tourists come from the West and without having the chance to go back home they die. Also people in schools plan to finish the course, but without having time to finish the course, the University, they die. Some people get a salary after a certain month, and with the expectation of that salary, they work, but without having chance to get it, that \$100, I don't know how much, without having the chance to get it, they die. There are many examples. Some go from their homes but they have the definite belief, plan to come back. Going shopping, things like this. By accidents, by car, they die without having the chance to come back home. Some people go to the movies without having the chance to come back—they die. There are so many examples proving the actual time of death is indefinite. Some people buy apartments, beautiful apartments, the whole building is beautiful, just making it ready to enjoy with flowers, paintings, many things, then just at the time they are ready to enjoy, the person dies. All of a sudden something happens, the life finishes without having the chance to enjoy that beautiful thing that you put lot of energy into, like this. Some people make so many arrangements in the house, so many clothes to wear at different times, in summer, winter, special days. Then even they buy the clothes, they have made a definite plan like this from their mind but without having the time to put them on, without having the time to have the experience of wearing them, life passes. Some people also, while they are eating, without having time to finish food on the plate, they die. There have been many, I am not joking. Some people, while eating meat, the bone goes inside and they die without finishing a small quantity of food on the plate. A few years ago in India one army leader died from eating fish. The bone went inside and he died. Many other people. Also many people go on expeditions and without having time to come down and go home, they die on the mountain due to an avalanche or other conditions. Like the army, they have arrangements to come home and do things but without having the chance to come back they die. Even the person who has collected so much money in the bank, without having the chance to use it by himself, without having time, his life passes. Also some people make arrangements for weddings. They have made definite plans to enjoy life, they make lots of children. But some even die just before the festival—they have been making arrangements for that but without having time to enjoy the festival, the wedding, they die.

For instance, one example of a man called Dawa Tragpa. He worked as a servant for a family, and after a long time working, maybe a year, a month, he saved up a quantity of wheat from his work. He had a big sack of wheat from working for a long time. He collected all this wheat. Then he came back to his home with this big sack of wheat. He had so many ideas coming, "Now I am very rich, I have big sack of wheat." He thought, "Now I can enjoy life, I should have a wife, I should get married. Then after I get married, I will have children. Then the child has to be named." Then he was very concerned with what name should be given to the child. He couldn't think of one. So after a long time the moon rose, and the light of the rays of the moon came through the window, in his room. All of a sudden he saw the moon and the light and he thought to call the child "Famous moon." *Tak.pa* means far farmed, *Da.wa*. means moon. So Da.wa Tak.pa—Moon Famous. All of a sudden this thought came. Then he found this such beautiful, wonderful name that he was extremely happy and he couldn't stand it, so he got up and found a long stick, and then carrying this long stick then he danced around the room. The big sack of wheat was hanging near his bed on the ceiling. As he was dancing with the stick, so happy at finding this name, the stick got stuck in the big sack of wheat. Then all of a sudden the rope broke and it fell on him and killed him. But he had made so many plans. First of all to have the wedding, then second, the child, then third, the child's name. But his life finished without having time to get married, to make the child, or to give the name. This is just one example. There are many like this.

Some people write books and have made certain plans, and without having the time to complete writing the book, they die. Some people go to see their family, coming from their workplace or another place, and on the way by some accident, without having time to see their parents, they die. Also we can see that many patients die on the way to hospital, without having the chance to reach the hospital. And many patients in the hospital die without having the time to go home. They had plans to go home but they die in the hospital without having the time to come back home. There are many people like this. Some people at death time try to give a will, a last talk, the very last talk in this life. But they can't even complete the will. The person begins it but cannot complete it, because there is no power to talk—the mouth gets dry at death time, they cannot even say it clearly. Very unclear words. So even without having the chance, the time to complete as the person wanted, the person dies in the middle of the talk. Also while doctors are working in the hospital for other patients, without having the time to cure those other patients, they die first, their life finishes first.

The last one is that the actual time of death is indefinite and the life of this human being in this specific world is indefinite. Like this, as I explained before, the baby time, in the mother's womb, after that remember these examples—it doesn't have to be exactly as I tell—you can find so many examples as you saw. This is something we always see and hear but we don't really feel, we don't really feel it even though we hear it. It is very useful to think like this. If you think of another person like this, dying like this without having the time to complete things as they plan, each time as you think remember the examples, the different subjects, thinking that it is possible also that this will happen to me. Not sure. As you find easy examples, like some people who came from the West, and without having the time to go back to the West, they die. Like those other persons, not sure. There is the danger that a similar thing can happen to me. As you hear, see outside that things happen to these people, take it on yourself to realize the impermanent nature of life and death. The purpose is to escape from the danger and fear of death.

Just momentarily talking, according to the temporal things that we want, without talking about enlightenment and realizations, this is what we want—not to have fear of death, danger of death. This is the method. So each time you remember and see an example, how different things happen in

our lifetime, since childhood—so many things happened to other people, how many friends died so far, if you check up, so many people we know, lived with, traveled with, many people died in our life, many friends died like this. Each of them died without finishing something, without finishing their plan. A different work was not finished. So as you remember, take all these examples, thinking that this danger can happen to me. As you find each one, take it on yourself. This is very useful, more useful than just remembering the other person's death. Like this you do meditation.

Then also you can do the meditation on the evolution of death, the different signs happening, the different elements absorbing. Read books and do the visualization as if you are in the process of death. Then try to feel it, try to see it. Also after that, follow the outlines—after the indefinite life of the human being in this specific world, after checking like this, then check everything that makes life exist, to have a longer life, to keep you healthy—even these become condition of death, causes of death. Again go through many examples like the house that was built to have a longer life, but then the person dies, gets killed by the house collapsing. There are many examples—try to remember each example. You make commentary, give a lecture to yourself.

Day Sixteen

Thursday, 21st November

Precepts

Before taking the ordination, it is necessary that the action be possessed by the pure motivation, the thought that goes in the Dharma. For the action to become the cause of enlightenment, it is necessary that it be possessed by the pure thought of bodhicitta. Therefore briefly think like this, “Myself and all other sentient beings have been experiencing the suffering of the naraks, all the different sufferings of the naraks, in numberless times from beginningless samsaric lifetimes. Also myself and all other sentient beings have been experiencing the suffering of pretas in numberless times from beginningless previous lifetime. Also myself and all other sentient beings have been experiencing the suffering of animals, all the different types of suffering of animals, numberless times from beginningless samsaric lifetimes.”

If you really remember all the experiences of your previous lifetimes, it is something that makes you feel unbearable, extremely unbearable, and if you can remember the whole experience of suffering, it is something now that you should get an extremely exhausted feeling about, that it is unbearable even to create even a negative action in the dream.

“Still I am continuously following the wrong conceptions such as attachment that is attached to the happiness of this life, the wrong conception of the self “I” and the self-cherishing thought. As long as I follow these wrong conceptions, they will cause me to suffer in samsara endlessly, again circling around as I have before. Once I have received such a perfect human rebirth, and met the method that releases from suffering and the cause of suffering, still following the wrong conceptions and creating negative karma is extremely foolish. There is no greater ignorance than this, nothing more foolish than this, no greater loss than this.”

“As Guru Shakyamuni Buddha received enlightenment and enlightened numberless other sentient beings, by having met the guru and following the eight Mahayana precepts, also did, so it is possible for me. Releasing myself alone from samsara is not sufficient, not enough. All sentient beings are the field from which I receive all my past, present, and future happiness including enlightenment. At the beginning of the Dharma practice, I have to depend on the kindness of the sentient beings. Even in

the middle of the Dharma practice, I have to depend on the kindness of sentient beings. And at the end of the Dharma practice, also I have to depend on the kindness of sentient beings. Sentient beings are the principal relative. Just as in this example of the field where there are crops growing, the field where I receive my enjoyments, because I am receiving enjoyments, my food from there, the enjoyment that makes the life happy, therefore I take care of the field, I am responsible of taking care of the field, keeping it away from dangers. I am responsible for looking after it. Just like this example, I am responsible for looking after all the infinitely kind sentient beings. The best way to benefit or repay their kindness is to release from suffering and enlighten them. Who has that capability? Only Buddha has that capability. At the moment I cannot even guide myself, I cannot even solve my own problems, therefore it is necessary first of all that I achieve enlightenment in order to enlighten all sentient beings. In order to achieve enlightenment, it is necessary to discipline the body and speech. Disciplining speech and body depends on disciplining the mind. For these reasons I am going to take the Mahayana ordination and keep the precepts until tomorrow morning.”

Visualize the person granting ordination as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless other buddhas and bodhisattvas, and think that you actually taking ordination in the presence of them, and think that you are reciting the prayer that is said by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. At the end of the third repetition of the prayer, as you have been visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas, think, “In their presence I have now fully received the Mahayana ordination in the form of light,” and each atom of your body from the head down to the feet is full of light.

PRAYER

Think, “I am going to observe the precepts for one day as previous Tathagatas they followed the precepts.”

PRAYER OF THE PRECEPTS

Repeat also the mantra in order to revive the broken precepts and to be able to keep the precepts pure.

MANTRA

DEDICATION PRAYERS

Think, “Due to the merits of taking the ordination and also to other past, present, and future merits, whatever the meaning of the prayer contains, may it be successful.” Think of yourself, the creator of the merit, and enlighten sentient beings as empty of the independence, and dedicate also like this, “May I receive enlightenment on the basis of the realization of bodhicitta, the absolute true nature, and the fully renouncing mind of samsara in order to enlighten all mother sentient beings as quickly as possible.”

(Lama Yeshe gave lecture 9 am)

4 pm

So this morning we didn't have to spend much time—like we did in the morning always hearing about this word “bodhicitta.” Generally we may have motivated already from the morning time but it is always worthwhile to repeat just to be careful.

“I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings, therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path.” It is necessary that this action be possessed with the pure thought of bodhicitta. Also, usually I repeat the outlines of the *lam.drun* teaching, the teaching that I received first in my life. So anyway there is a purpose to repeat the outlines and because ... generally it is like this.

Generally there is all kinds of different divisions of subjects and chapters and you can go into much detail in each subject, you can go into wider subjects. From this, there are all kinds of different commentaries on the graduated path—the great commentary written by Guru Tsongkhapa and many other different commentaries on that written by others, Guru Tsongkhapa's disciples, other Tibetan ascetic lamas, who lived their lives in the graduated path, trained in the graduated path. There are many other commentaries written by Guru Tsongkhapa's disciples that show the essence, makes it very easy to understand the great commentary written by Guru Tsongkhapa and other teachings, other philosophies, many other deep philosophical subjects written by the previous Indian pandits.

However, there are a different number of pages. Sometimes such as the text *jang.chub lam.drun*, the “Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment,” the text that explains about the graduated path to enlightenment written by the great pandit Atisha. This is only a few pages but explains the whole 84,000 teachings, it includes every teaching with nothing missing. Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana, nothing is missing, as I often repeat in the outlines, nothing is missing. Even a letter “R,” just one letter “R” on the piece of paper, even the subject of this is included in this teaching of a few pages, the teaching *jang.chub lam.drun* written by Atisha. Fully understanding this teaching, any pieces of a letter that you see you can use ... there is a method to take the meaning of that into the path to enlightenment. That text has that much knowledge.

The subject is incredible. Extremely wide, unimaginably wide subject. Even though it is such an extensive subject, setting up the outlines makes the subject so small, very condensed, so there is no confusion in the mind. It is very easy to start, to learn, very easy to get the whole idea. It is very useful, extremely useful, not just for understanding, but also for meditation. It really gives a good method to do meditation. Setting up the outlines doesn't cause confusion, for instance, like usually there is a book that just talks, no outlines, nothing, it just goes on and on, and then how do you meditate? After reading that, how do you meditate, how do you start, you have no method, that book doesn't explain, doesn't have a key. Some people read so many books, but they don't know how to practice, how to start meditation, they don't know how to begin. Even though they know intellectually they receive many words from that book. Partly this can be a mistake for the person, partly from his ignorance, and partly from the book. There is great meaning and purpose in going through outlines. Going through outlines you can see the whole subject that is in this teaching. It can be explained—all these 84,000 teachings that take incredible lifetimes—but also you can see the subject that these teachings contain. Through outlines you can see so clearly. This time I didn't plan to talk about this but it just happened. Perhaps this is also useful for a person who is going to meditate on the graduated path, continuously training the mind, continuously doing the meditations, it is useful to know. Also the different outlines are a psychological method set up by Atisha and

Guru Tsongkhapa. They set up these outlines, these different level of meditations according to the other person's level of mind—how to build it up, how to develop it. This is a psychological method. For instance, like this, simply talking. First of all like this. According to the subject, the first meditation is generally the way of following the guru who is the root of the path. That meditation comes first according to the text generally. Then the way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment, that actually starts from the perfect human rebirth. By following the guru then how to train the mind in the graduated path, then after the meditations on following the guru then comes the way of training the mind in the graduated path, starting from perfect human rebirth like this. So before explaining the method on how to take the essence, if the person's mind is not persuaded by explaining these three meditations on perfect human rebirth, the great difficulty of receiving, and the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, even if the method is explained the person has no energy and the person may not listen. The person may not pay attention, may not take care of it—how to take the essence with this perfect human rebirth, even though it is explained. Therefore it is a psychological method, first of all persuading his mind. The method of these three meditations comes and show previously that he has received a perfect human rebirth and how useful it is.

You see, for instance, if a child found a diamond and didn't know, and someone explained, "This is so valuable," then he knows that it is so precious and he takes care of it, more care than of any other possession. Some people take care of their possessions more than their body, their life. He uses his body to take care of his possessions because he sees some value. He thinks about how much value that material has. Thinking this, he uses his life to take care of that possession. He uses his life and he becomes servant of the material, and he uses his life for that. He gives up his life for that material. That is because of seeing the value of that. Just like this with the perfect human rebirth, understanding the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, and also the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth. Then after understanding this, even if the method is explained, how to take the essence, how to make this life meaningful by taking the essence, if it is explained to the person and he listens and also practices, there is a way, there is a possibility, to develop the person's wisdom. So it doesn't become like speaking into space, explaining Dharma in space. Somehow it becomes much more beneficial.

Then comes the way of taking the essence. The method is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being, like this. Then the graduated path of the lower being. For instance, bringing up the thought seeking a better future life and then following the method that brings happiness in the future life. Then bringing up the thought seeking a better future, which has two outlines—remembering death and the shortness of life and thinking of the suffering or happiness that comes after this life. Then for instance, now we have briefly talked about the shortness of human life and death, so according to the outline, how it is a psychological, useful method, how it is set up according to the person's mind. For instance, after death comes the explanation of suffering, the explanation of the three suffering realms. That is to show that by creating negative karma there is such a suffering result that has to be experienced—that is to show the incredible, terrible suffering that is to be experienced by creating negative karma, that will definitely be experienced. "I created negative karma that many times, is I will have to experience all these suffering results, being born in these suffering realms." But then what is the method? The person checks up the method, person seeks the method before death, what to do? How to stop it? How to stop the lower suffering rebirth? The method is given—refuge, the fundamental method, the essential method that saves and guides the person from the danger of suffering, from the danger of rebirth in the suffering realms. Then the explanation of refuge is given,

to rely on something, refuge is mainly ... like this, since you have created such negative karma and since you are going to experience the suffering result and since you don't like to suffer, there is perfect object of refuge that you can rely on, that has the power to guide you from suffering, those suffering rebirths. Then comes karma. So what the person should do by relying on the perfect object of refuge and how the perfect objects of refuge, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, guide the person from suffering. Totally this is by observing karma, totally the way the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha guide the person from suffering and what the person is supposed to do by relying and taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, the main thing, is to observe karma. Just like this.

Yesterday and today we are trying to observe precepts, so just this action itself as we observe, try to observe, we are trying to observe the positive karma. Also, the following meditations are also like this, very well set up, so beneficial, so effective for the mind, the way the subjects are set up—each meditation has a combination, has relationship. Their method, Guru Tsongkhapa and Atisha, those highly realized beings who have complete mind control, their method in the written text is concerned with each sentient being who will practice it—it is incredible how their psychological method works, the way it is set up. So that's how usually *lam.drun* meditations, the graduated path meditations and teachings are always so helpful and effective for the mind, for the life. As much as you hear and listen, it is always helpful for the mind. Because the whole method, the way it is set up is mainly to subdue the mind. Generally there are so many subjects scattered and separated, subjects with so many details like philosophical subjects, teachings, so many details. Of course, it mainly depends on the meditator himself, how he understands the subject and if he understands it how he uses it. According to his understanding, how he uses it. It mainly depends on that. However it is difficult for one who has little mind, who cannot understand that big subject, totally cannot bring it into one total practice, doesn't have this mind, this wisdom. Then it is difficult to help the mind, the person reads so much understanding, so much subject, so many words, but it is difficult to subdue his mind. Just like always starting geography like in America, New York, this and this and this, Department Shops, then Masons! Then what else? America becomes my previous life trip! Anyway, just like this, studying geography, discussing like this but not discussing yourself, not checking yourself. That how the subject doesn't cure the problem.

Usually also like this. Tibetan meditators usually know, can explain, they themselves meditate and they can explain to other people all the meditations of the *lam.drin*. However, whenever there is the possibility to receive teachings on this graduated path, no matter how much they know, always they come to listen to the teachings from their guru. That is because as much it is heard, it is always effective, always subdues the mind.

One thing, for lower intelligence people such as me, it is very easy to practice, it is very easy to bring in the practice, it is great knowledge, easy to practice.

So as I explained just roughly, you may have tried to think a little bit about the subject, of course the other part of the meditations, but especially the death meditation. That death is definite. Then by thinking of these three outlines:

1. No condition can stop death
2. There is no additional life and even if there is previous karma that can make the life longer spontaneously it becomes decayed and
3. Even during the lifetime there is no chance to practice Dharma, and then death happens.

Checking though like this as I explained, checking like this. Then, the actual time of death is indefinite. If the in the depth of your mind as you are thinking, doing the meditation, there is no feeling, if your mind doesn't care even though you are trying to think, but in the depth of your mind you don't care, you are just ignorant, not caring, not having fear, any feeling with it, then it is useful to think like this. I think I explained this once before. Check, the death mind doesn't cease as the physical body ceases, the mind continues. Then you check karma, how much negative karma there is. Before meditating on the actual time of death is indefinite, before that last outline, without having a chance to practice Dharma during the lifetime death happens, when you think of that outline then as you are checking how life finishes night and day, also check positive and negative karma, more negative karma and because of this reason, you will be reborn in a suffering realm after the death. This becomes the reason. So if you put the reason that exists, that you have created, even though you don't know the reason is there, if you put the reason, it makes you discover what feeling, what experience will come after death, either suffering or happiness. If you find more negative karma you will find you will get the suffering experience after death. In this way you feel as you make the meditation on death, somehow it moves the mind, thinking like this, it moves the mind. If it doesn't move the mind then it doesn't help, but of course it takes time.

Then second, the actual time of death is indefinite. Also going through the three outlines.

1. The human beings in this specific world, the life of the human beings in this specific world is indefinite. As I put examples before, try to remember and as you see other people dying, all of a sudden dying, each one take as yourself. Also I may die like this as he passed away, as you remember the examples. This is very useful. For instance, just one example. Last year there was a monastery down there nearby the stupa. There are seven monks dying each year, somehow they have some this hindrance and the abbot arranged a big puja in order to stop hindrance that makes the monks' lives pass away so quickly. Somehow they checked up the monks and the abbot made a big performance, made big arrangements for a puja, trying to collect many things necessary for a puja. All kinds of elements, things were needed for that method. I think the puja was going to be done tomorrow and everything was arranged. From the abbot's side he was planning to do these things but however, just at night before the time the sun set, he was okay. He was praying and then, we call it defect of pollution—all of a sudden you become unconscious, cannot speak, I think epilepsy. Then I think it may have taken one hour, and then he passed away. He away after he received everything to make puja. All these things, and he was going to lead puja, but he couldn't complete the puja as he planned. So like this, things happen unexpectedly like this. Unexpectedly. Also you have seen many examples—these are very useful rather than using the information that you heard in past, rather than just sometimes if it is your enemy feeling happiness that is negative, wrong joyfulness, creates negative karma. Then if it is your friend dead, attachment. Using your consciousness to remember these things, using it for negative joyfulness or for attachment. If you use it for meditation on this part, taking it into your own situation, thinking like this, that it can happen to me one day unexpectedly, if you use this for meditation, what you remember it, it becomes medicine, it becomes useful, you use it for achieving enlightenment rather than for rising negative mind, creating negative karma. Your remembrance itself becomes meditation. So mainly it depends on your own skill.

For instance, the first European student, I think I mentioned her the other night, she also had a plan, but she died on the mountain. First of all, she had also a plan to come to Kathmandu then to India, to Dharamsala to receive teachings, different gurus there, she also had a long plan. Just before her death we received a letter explaining all these plans, what she was going to do, what she wanted to do. So however unexpectedly the event of the death happened—she didn't have the chance to

follow her plans. But somehow she had a little bit of fortune because before death she tried much, as the possibility was there, she did long retreat near that monastery. So like this, examples like this. These are very useful to think about. Somehow because she made retreat for a long time and also usually she tried very hard to be honest or good. She tried to help other people as much as she could, giving the chance to other people to practice Dharma, helping in many ways. It looks like at death time she had a little bit good time. She died in the position of meditation, even though she couldn't get up, before when she was sick.

2. Then the second one is there are many conditions that cause death, and fewer conditions that support life. Even the arrangement that is performed to support life becomes a condition of death. Also like if you don't know, sometimes person the dies very easily, making mistakes in the way of drinking, or eating food. It is to support the life but it becomes also a condition of death. Many things such as weapons, many examples. Many families keep many weapons in the house, keep these in order to take care of life if something comes, but many times it happens that other people come there and use the weapons to kill the owner of the weapons. Many times it happens. Also the country's armies are also to keep the life, support the life somehow, but sometimes it is possible that they become a condition of causing death. Same thing with machines, other things. There are many examples like this. So as you remember this outline you try to find many examples.

3. The third one is how the body is like a water bubble. A bubble is so fragile, if you touch, it pops. Even if wind comes it pops, like your body is so fragile. We understand even nothing is happening, but even just sitting, how much trouble. No one beating us, but very easy, because the body so fragile, death is easy to happen. But the actual time of death is indefinite.

So tonight first of all again go through the death meditation as you remember, then spend more time in this. Do purification for a short time, then when you bring Guru Shakyamuni down on your head and he become oneness, absorbed into you, all your wrong conceptions, the way you usually see yourself, completely become emptiness, mind emptiness, and your mind is oneness with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's blissful omniscient mind in the form of empty space and you feel blissful. Then concentrate try to concentrate there as long as possible, spend a little bit more time in this—as you try, feel blissfulness to keep your concentration otherwise it is difficult, it doesn't last. Feeling blissfulness somehow puts energy, and as the person puts energy somehow it helps the concentration to last a little bit longer.

DEDICATION

Then when you are finished, dedicate the merits as purely as possible because you put much energy and you have motivated each time excellently. We try to put some energy, we spend time, life, try to put energy, human energy, the precious energy, so for safeness or security, in order for it to be continuously beneficial even though one day working, one hour working, to make it continuously beneficial, dedicate, even though you cannot say the prayer. Dedication does not depend on your saying the prayer, dedication depends on the mind's action. So it mainly depends on the mind's thinking, the mind dedicating the merits to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings. You can dedicate as it is in the end of the precepts, on the last page of the precepts there are some prayers, translation of prayers—if you do like this it will be perfect. That is the perfect way of dedicating. Especially the last prayer has incredible merit. As the past, present, and future Buddhas dedicated to receive enlightenment, dedicating also our merits like that is a very powerful way of dedicating.

One thing is this. When you dedicate yourself and the merit that you dedicate to enlightenment, also if you think of sentient beings, you can think of the emptiness of independence, the emptiness of self-existence. If you cannot think what it means, it doesn't matter. Empty of independence is easy to think of. The reason I say this is that it gives a clear picture, rather than self-existent like this. If you dedicate like this, concentrating on shunyata, yourself and the merit and the result of enlightenment, and also sentient beings, if you concentrate on shunyata and dedicate the merits, with the concentration of shunyata it becomes the direct method of cutting samsara. It becomes the real method of cutting samsara.

Day Seventeen

Friday, 22nd November

Precepts

For the ordination that we are going to become a Mahayana ordination it is necessary that it be possessed by the Mahayana motivation. In order for the action of taking the ordination to become the cause of enlightenment, it is necessary that it be possessed by bodhicitta. Therefore it is necessary to think briefly like this.

“From beginningless samsaric lifetimes, numberless times, I have experienced suffering in the evil destinies. Just once, at this time, I have received a perfect human rebirth. Even though I have received a perfect human rebirth in this momentary period, momentary time, as I have created so much negative karma in previous lifetimes and also in this life, after death it is more sure, more definite that I will be born in the suffering realms and suffer there for a long time. Therefore, not being reborn in the suffering realms, just having received the perfect human rebirth, the rebirth in the happy realms, is not sufficient because that is what I have received now but it is still not definite that I will not be born in the suffering realm. In each of the realms, even the upper realms, the sura, asura, and human beings, according to their karma they have different sufferings, different problems. In samsara, from beginningless samsaric lifetime until now, there is no such rebirth that I have never taken. Any rebirth in the six samsaric realms I have taken numberless times. In the samsaric realms there is no one small happiness left that I never experienced before. Any small happiness I have experienced numberless times. Just like this there is no one little suffering left in samsara that I never experienced before. I have experienced even small sufferings numberless times in previous lifetimes, there is nothing left. There is nothing in samsara, no great pleasure that I have never experienced before—every great pleasure that is possible to experience in samsara has been experienced by me numberless times in previous lifetimes. There is no greater suffering left in samsara that I have never experienced—the greatest suffering that is possible, even this has been experienced by me in numberless previous lifetimes. There is no samsaric work, nothing new, it has all been done by me numberless times in previous lifetimes. Any happiness, any pleasure, is nothing new, everything is old, nothing new. Totally, due to these reasons, there is nothing to be attached to in any of these samsaric works and pleasures. Everything is just an old thing, doing the second round, doing again and again. The nature of samsara is just like a fireplace. No matter what rebirth, ugly or beautiful, an animal rebirth, an animal looking beautiful body, having all kinds different colors, whatever it is, such as a god who has light around, taking any of these rebirths is just like being in the fireplace. Just only suffering, no experience of true happiness in samsara.

“I must release myself from this samsaric prison. Just releasing myself from this samsaric prison is not enough, not sufficient. I am equal in desiring happiness and not desiring suffering with all

sentient beings. As I have this desire, all sentient beings have a similar desire, so we are equal in the desire. All the mother sentient beings are the field from which I receive all my past, present, and future happiness, all the perfections. Even at the beginning of the Dharma practice, I have to depend on the kindness of sentient beings, and in the middle of the Dharma practice, and at the end of the Dharma practice, I have to depend on the kindness of sentient beings. Sentient beings are the utmost need, the principal relative. Therefore, as all mother sentient beings are also suffering in samsara worse than me, at this time as I have met the Dharma, received a perfect human rebirth, and am living in the path to enlightenment, I have a better chance, so I am responsible this time, I am responsible to repay them. The best way to repay them is to make them release from all suffering and give them the causes of happiness, the most sublime happiness of enlightenment. At the moment I do not have that ability. Therefore who has the perfect power to guide? Only Buddha has. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment first. In order to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of sentient beings, it depends on the root of disciplining speech, body, and mind. Disciplining speech and body depends on disciplining the mind. Therefore I am going to take ordination until tomorrow morning.”

Visualize the person granting the ordination as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas.

At the end of the third repetition think that you have perfectly received the Mahayana ordination in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas. Think also that you have received ordination in the form of light starting from your head down to your feet; each atom of your body is full of light.

PRAYER

Repeat the prayer of the precepts thinking, “I am going to observe the precepts for one day as previous tathagatas observed them.”

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

Repeat also the mantra that revives the broken precepts and helps to keep the precepts purely.

MANTRA DEDICATION

Think, “Due to these merits, whatever meaning this prayer contains, may it be successful.” Also dedicate the merits while concentrating that oneself and the merit, enlightenment, and also sentient beings are empty of independence, empty of self-existence. While your thought is in concentration, dedicate, thinking, “Due to the past, present, and future merits, may I receive enlightenment by receiving the realization of the fully renouncing mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute nature in order to lead sentient beings into enlightenment quickly.”

PROSTRATIONS

Maybe two minutes! As the great bodhisattva Shantideva said in his teaching, after taking this thought perfectly, whether the person sleeps or becomes unconscious, whatever the person becomes, there is the energy of the merit continuously increasing without breaking. Numberless, which equals as space, means there are two types of bodhicitta—I think once I mentioned this

before—the other one is wishing to receive enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings. The second one is the thought of following the bodhisattvas deeds, such as keeping precepts with bodhicitta and also the bodhisattva's deeds. What we are doing now—we are not bodhisattvas yet but close, as we have motivated like this. It becomes close. So besides just having the wish with this thought, we need to actually putting it into action, work on the path by keeping the precepts. Since the person took the precepts, besides just having the wishing thought of bodhicitta, besides having the motivation of this pure thought, during that day, for instance, as the ordination is taken for one day, during this day until tomorrow morning, the great benefit is that the person doesn't have to be always conscious of the other merits. If he is not conscious it doesn't become powerful, doesn't become perfect, but here, after the ordination is taken with this pure motivation of bodhicitta, whether the person during that day is unconscious, eating, talking, standing, lying down, or even sleeping at night time, that person's fortune or merit continuously increases all the time as the person is living in the ordination, living in the vows. The merit continuously increases no matter what the person does, meditating or not meditating, it continuously increases. The benefits of this are much greater, much more powerful than the benefits of the wishing thought, just having the wishing thought but not doing the actual action.

The precepts are such an easy way—once you have made the vow, they are such easy way to continuously receive merit. You continuously gain merit all day and night for the length of time you have made the vow, continuously like this. Understanding this, thinking of the benefits of this, sometimes remembering this when you feel tired, hungry, something like this, instead making yourself tired or exhausted, upset, or boring, think, remember these things, remember the benefits of bodhicitta, especially this, the benefits of the thought of following the bodhisattva's actions. If you think of the benefits of taking ordination and how they continuously bring merits, if you think of this instead of feeling tired and bored, you feel happiness, rejoicefulness in your mind, and you make your life happy. This also helps to build energy in the mind to not break the precepts. If you don't have the method to take care yourself, if you get tired then there is the danger to break the precepts, as the attachment tells you to not care, as attachment pushes you. Then as I said frequently remembering especially when you are out, when you not meditating, especially during break times especially if you can remember, generally like this. Meditation time makes the time useful, and then during the break time there is also a way to meditate—even if you are active there is a way to meditate, both times can be used for meditation if the person has method, skill. Also especially during the break time try to remember frequently that I am keeping the precepts for each sentient being.

For instance, how many animals are killed on this earth today in different countries. Just one example—so many of them are killed in Kathmandu, numbers of them in different countries, just today, so many. Even now so many are killed, ready to be killed, many things, terrible suffering, not finding any method to escape from death. Even just now in the world. So today even the animals that are used for people's food, sickness or anything, there are so many in each country. In the West, East, different countries, so many. Just thinking about even one animal that is killed, how much he is suffering, and there are many killed, great numbers, incredible numbers. So let's say we are happy, not having any worries of living like those sentient beings, in suffering. However, we are keeping the precepts not only for those animals who were killed this morning, who are going to be killed today, but for every sentient being. Those who are naraks, pretas, experiencing extreme suffering, great suffering, and also suras and asuras, those suffering gods, human beings—for each of them as we have made the vow, motivated, isn't that lucky, very fortunate. I think we are very lucky finding the chance to do something, having the chance to do something, that we can make ourselves beneficial

for not just a few sentient beings, but for all sentient beings. As we have received the human rebirth, we can make one day beneficial for all sentient beings—that is incredible, really incredible. If you think really like this, comparing other sentient beings, the chance, the fortune that we have is incredible. Actually it is kind of unbearable according to other sentient beings. What I mean ... this is really something that we can really enjoy, this is not also a wrong way of enjoying, this is a right way of enjoying because keeping the precepts never brings one single problem, never causes one single suffering. Especially if we do this with the thought of bodhicitta. As we keep the precepts motivated by bodhicitta, today our rebirth is that much higher, our body is that much higher, transcendental, higher, that much more pure. As that many precepts are kept, our rebirth is that much more pure, higher than that of other sentient beings who are not living in ordination, than other ordinary sentient beings, ordinary people. Actually today as we are keeping that many precepts, we have a higher rebirth—in the Dharma way we have a higher position than the President of the country who is not living even in one precept. This position is something that benefit you to receive enlightenment, to bring peace to sentient beings, not the kind of position that brings confusion to sentient beings. Anyway like this.

So in the morning time after the ordination, if there is time I am thinking maybe to explain a little bit about prostrations and the seven limb prayer, which has incredible benefit, which is essential. The seven limb prayer is in the book, and is the essence of making purification and creating merit. This is recognized as the most powerful method to receive enlightenment sooner. It is one of the principal methods to bring enlightenment quickly, so little bit in the morning according to time, and in this way maybe the actual meditation subject can go a little bit faster. This is just in case there are some people who want to practice here.

9 am

This morning without needing to explain the quotations, before listening to the teaching try to cultivate the pure motivation that makes the action of listening to the Dharma a positive action of Dharma and also a cause of enlightenment. Therefore think, “I have to receive enlightenment in order to enlighten all mother sentient beings, therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path.” It is necessary to have such a pure thought, as strong as possible.

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate being to enlightenment. It is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa’s understanding. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. It is all set up for the practice of one person’s achievement of enlightenment.

This teaching on the graduated path has four topics for the outlines. In order to show reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teachings, and the way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment. The last one has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment. The last one also has two—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The actual method of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided in three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. So the graduated path of the lower being has two outlines—bringing up the thought seeking a better future life and following the method that

brings happiness in the future life. The first outline, bringing up the thought seeking a better future life, has two outlines—remembering the shortness of human life and death and thinking of the suffering or happiness that comes after death.

We have been briefly talking about the part of the meditation on death and the shortness of the human life. So in regards that, there are three outlines—death is definite and the actual time is indefinite. Death is definite also includes three ways to think. The actual time of death is indefinite also includes three ways to think according to the outlines. So on that subject this time briefly like that.

One of the very effective meditations on death, as I told you one or two hours, is thinking about the process of death that we are going to definitely experience in the future—taking that as the present situation and trying to go through it, try to imagine. This is one very effective, very strong meditation on death. Generally the method is like this. According to the person's mind, the meditator who is training the mind in the graduated path, through this meditation on death is definite, the actual time is indefinite—if this doesn't make a change in the mind, doesn't move the mind, if this method is not strong, then they do the visualization of the future death as if it were in the present time. Still, if this doesn't move the mind or make any sense, if it doesn't give any feeling, then the method is to go to see cemeteries, the places where they burn the human corpses. Like this there are different types of meditations according to the mind. Like this it is not so difficult a subject.

For example, thinking of the hospital somewhere, and the body completely becoming ... first of all the breath stops—we breathe out and don't have time to breathe in—somehow death occurs and then all of a sudden the whole appearance of the body is completely changed. Even during natural death, the appearance gradually changes, looks more and more different. Then afterwards also the mouth becomes dry, the eyes can't move, things like that. Then the body in the bed is wrapped, and laid down on an expensive bed and covered by expensive blankets, sleeping bag—but it is like a piece of log, or wood, that thing there. The body is completely like a piece of wood with very expensive clothes around—no feeling, no sensation. At that time even the people who were very close to oneself, who lived around one, in the family, even these people don't touch you. They are scared to touch, scared to look, even though they always lived with you in this lifetime. Before you were so attached to each other physically, almost inseparable—friends, husband, wife, parents whatever—during the lifetime like this, but at death time completely different, the person dare not touch, dare not see, dare not look at the corpse. Also, as many possessions as there are in that room, as much money and jewels, well preserved, as much attachment as there is to those things, you do not want to give up or separate from them, you feel scared, attached to the possessions, not wanting to split from them, worried, “Now I am dying and these possessions will be taken by other people, other people will get them.” No matter how much the person worries at that time, there is no method, nothing, no method. Also like this you can visualize.

Then from the relatives, at that time as there is strong attachment to them, usually there is attachment, then especially at death the person knows that he is leaving somehow. Even if it is a person who thinks the mind ceases with the body, believing in one life, at that time also because evolution does not depend only on the person's body, he has strong attachment to the relatives because he must split from them. Sometimes when relatives come, and when they leave the country, even though that time is not death yet, how upset we get at that time, even in this lifetime. So there is no question about death time. Like this. Think, “I won't have the chance to enjoy with them like I

have been doing,” think like this. There is much fear, much worry because of strong attachment. Then also during those times, even the relatives who are not around there, who we want to see very much even though they are very far—of course the person wants to see the relatives that are close, but wanting to write and see even the relatives in very far places is mainly because of attachment, like this, missing very much. It doesn’t help at all. This is the situation that happens. Even though they arrive, all there surrounding the body, the only method is just watching, what they can do is only watch, the mind terribly upset, with an upset face. There is no choice so also the surrounding people are upset by it. Upset looking faces. Whatever is happening there, there is no choice, they can’t do anything. Even in the hospital with hundreds of doctors around, no choice. If the doctors discover that the person is no longer going to live, no longer going to be useful, they just leave quietly. I am joking.

Anyway, in India they do this. If they think person really can’t be cured and is going to suffer for quite a long time under miserable conditions, then they give a big injection. I don’t know what its called—anyway, they do these things, somehow it makes a quick decision. It is easy for them. Anyway, it is like this. Doctors, even doctors, relatives—all around no one has the method. As much as the relatives ask the dead person, “Please don’t die, please,” as much as they request by prostrating, as much as they request, there is no choice. Even if they make many offerings and give so many presents that the person likes, everything the person likes, as much as they request, there is no choice, no control from the person’s side.

I just remembered. When Zina was dying—I think she had one young daughter whose father was in another land, and she was there when she was dying, in the same room. The daughter knew because she said, “I am going to die,” so the daughter was crying, the young girl, I think she was about nine or ten, she was crying and asking, “Mother, please don’t die,” screaming like this. So however there is no choice—even if the person’s body is held by the relatives, the head and the hands and the legs held by many relatives to save them from the danger of death and then asking them to not die. However death is not only a physical action. If it was only a physical thing then maybe we could help by holding, perhaps, but it is to do with the mind, so that doesn’t help. Sometimes the person who dies holds the relatives’ hand like this. Or bed. I think in the hospitals, the people in the hospitals like the nurse, that happens many times, they hold the bed, the other people’s hands like this. Then afterwards, this body that we always take care of from feeling hot and cold, after death it is taken care of like this, burnt in the fire. The body that was always taken care with soft, beautiful clothes, having good colors, nice clothes, in the time after death this body is just buried without clothes on, just naked. During the lifetime the body that feels happy by having very thick blankets, clothes to put on, after death no body feels like this before. After death it was buried under the ground. So everything becomes opposite.

However, after the body was taken from the room, from the house, everything is left, all the materials that have been taken most care of in this life, all are left there. All the relatives and friends that he has been taking most care of have also left. At that time even the body that was taken the most care of, more than any other sentient being, even this body has to be left. Even this has to be left. During that time also the place where we die also has some vibration, something is lost, something is missing, there is a feeling of emptiness. Also at that time other people who are around and before enjoyed very much being together with us, eating together, talking together, many things done—now we do not exist. Other people experience that life, that relationship, what they had with this person, just like last night’s dream. Things quickly finished. They finish in one minute. Also the person himself at death time, no matter what he enjoyed in life, what kind of expensive material he

had, travels, different countries, enjoying with people, whatever enjoyments he had in his lifetime, children, wife or husband, whatever was done since he was born—all of this time that he usually thinks of as a very long time, all this time has quickly finished. Just like you waking out of a dream. In the dream sometimes you get things like this, spend many years, get the feeling that you traveled East, lived many years, you worked at certain things, you get the feeling that you worked very hard and did this and that, so many things. You enjoyed with other friends, doing all kinds of things, like this. There is also the feeling of a long time. But when you wake from the dream whatever you had before no longer exists; it is not there. Before you thought the whole thing was one long trip, but the whole thing just finished in one second. The same situation comes at death time. Just like Padmasambhava, the great yogi who established Buddhism in Tibet, said in his teaching, “The vision of this night is like last night’s dream, the meaningless actions are like the ripples.” The ripples come and go, come and go, another one comes and goes. If you watch one ripple, another comes and goes like this. What he is saying is that there is nothing to be attached to in the dream—things, the enjoyments of life—like the things you had in the dream, there is nothing to be attached to; like the things you lost in the dream, worrying about it is useless, ridiculous. Also similarly, the things you dream, meeting beautiful friends, finding beautiful objects, material things—after you wake up being attached to that. Nothing helps—this only makes the mind confused. It is not worthwhile even in a samsaric worldly way, not worthwhile, because the object doesn’t exist, the person doesn’t have the object. If the person has the object maybe that would be something else, but the person doesn’t even have the object. What he dreamed is something that doesn’t exist in his room. So it is ridiculous for attachment to arise. Just like this. This is very useful to think about frequently in life; during daily life it is very useful. In our daily life, the friends that we see, with whom we enjoy, the food that we eat, the beautiful apartment that we enjoy, whatever beautiful possessions we have, the beautiful views that we see, whatever, even our body, whatever shape of body that we have, beautiful or ugly, whatever it is, everything is just like ... also there is no reason to be attached to those things. Because just like the dream, just like the things that you dreamed, just like your friends, the beautiful apartment, your own body, the things that you dream, the things that you get in the dream, just like this, they don’t last, you cannot always have them. Even in these things we have in our daily life—our bodies, possessions, other relatives—there is no reason to be attached. So this quotation is very useful to loosen the attachment. It is very useful to use for the meditations on impermanent life and death. There are other ways to see things as just like a dream, like the dream that is not true, but this subject can be discussed later on, after finishing karma and refuge.

(BREAK)

Question: Can you explain the difference between free will and karma?

Rinpoche: I think free will is used much. I think this is a Western term, Western philosophy, but I am not sure what it means.

Student: I will give an example. In the book it says, “Is the time of my death definite,” and three reasons why the time is uncertain. (Page 46) If I decide to commit suicide, is it my karma to do suicide or is it my will to kill myself?

Rinpoche: There is a will, right. Actually it is not free will, that kind of will is not free will. That is karma that your mind created, producing such action, that is karma.

Student: So my will is created by karma.

Rinpoche: That will is ignorant, uncontrolled will. That will has arisen, that will came from ignorance. That ignorance produces the karma, the action of mind and then the action of the body, like this. The action of mind produces the action of body—this karma and this karma, this impression on the mind, it leaves an impression, an ability on the mind, just like cultivating a seed in

the ground. Then later on whenever this karma or impression is strongest, heaviest, closest, or more habituated than other karmic impressions, as this is ready it will come out and bring the result. There are different types of result—perhaps you do similar actions again. There are different types of suffering results like this.

Student: Is it possible to develop bodhicitta by seeing God or Buddha nature in sentient beings rather than suffering nature, thereby developing great love leading to bodhicitta?

Rinpoche: Meditating the person as God?

Student: He is not about to manifest in them because of ignorance in them.

Rinpoche: You don't see them as God, sentient beings cannot manifest in God even though they are God.

Student: If we have the ----- to allow God to manifest through them.

Rinpoche: Seeing them as God.

Student: Perhaps. It is to develop love—he loves them as I love myself.

Rinpoche: Without realizing the suffering nature of other living beings there is no way for bodhicitta to arise, no way to receive bodhicitta. So receiving bodhicitta depends on realizing the nature of the suffering of others and that depends on realizing the nature of the suffering of oneself first.

Knowing that sentient beings have the possibility to receive enlightenment or to become buddha is necessary but that is not the main thing that generates bodhicitta. That understanding is not the main thing that generates bodhicitta. The main essential thing, the method that quickly brings the realization of bodhicitta is the depthless understanding of how the different sentient beings in different realms are living in the suffering nature, how they are suffering. Not just intellectually understanding, not even having an emotional feeling, but without a deep understanding of how they are suffering, living in the suffering nature, but depthlessly knowing how the sentient beings are experiencing samsaric suffering. If there is a deep understanding, that person also feels other sentient beings' samsaric suffering is unbearable. As the person feels that much unbearable with other sentient beings' suffering, that much strong compassion comes. Before this, in order to have the deep understanding of other sentient beings' way of experiencing samsaric suffering, to receive this deep understanding, first of all you have to have the deep understanding how you are experiencing suffering in samsara, how you are living in samsara. It is not just seeing that my body doesn't feel comfortable, it always gets sick—just one small understanding, just having dislike of these things, is not enough. Just having a little understanding doesn't help much. The main thing, the way to check, the way to realize that oneself is living in samsara is to try to discover as deep as possible how one is bound by delusion and karma. The deeper we understand delusion and karma, the actual suffering, the actual suffering, we get a feeling like sickness, stomach pain, headache we feel strongly that it is suffering, painful, life is like this. We get the very strong feeling, deep feeling seeing delusion and karma as sicknesses—very painful, and how oneself is experiencing suffering bound by delusion and karma. Also, we think no matter what rebirth I take in the samsaric realms, it will always be like this.

So the deeper we understand, the more we see the suffering place as painful, not having true happiness. That much feeling that we have, that much understanding we have, that much we understand our own suffering nature. And one thing is this. Through the deep understanding of one's own samsaric suffering, one can easily discover, easily know how other sentient beings are also suffering in samsara, one can easily know. In this way it is very easy to feel other sentient beings suffering is unbearable and in this way very easy to generate compassion.

The first thing is understanding how sentient beings have been infinitely kind. For each sentient being, without excluding even one, it necessary to have the deep understanding how they have been

infinitely kind from beginningless samsaric lifetime. When you have such deep understanding seeing that sentient beings are infinitely kind, at the same time also you see sentient beings in beauty. In this way, through this deep understanding, it is easy, as you see all sentient beings in beauty, it is easy to generate pure Mahayana love. If you want to receive bodhicitta quickly it depends on how much you generate compassion and love—the Mahayana great compassion, the Mahayana love. The great compassion and great love.

Therefore in order to bring up compassion you have to understand the subject, you have to have the understanding that generates compassion, that develops the compassion and the understanding of the subject that increases the Mahayana love. The method to have all these understandings and realizations, to achieve bodhicitta—just only meditation is not enough. Without taking refuge in the holy objects, in the one who has shown the method, without relying on that, without taking refuge, praying to that, just only making meditation cannot bring realizations. Just your own intellectual understanding cannot bring realization.

The fundamental method is doing purification and creating merit. Doing purification and creating merit makes the mind fertilized. Just like ripening fruit. That makes the mind open, ready. Then on the basis of that, taking refuge and praying from the heart to the holy object who has shown the method, the teaching, that perfect object, requesting that object to grant the realizations. By the blessing and of this holy object, refuge in the enlightened being, we receive realization through his help, his blessing. Then if we practice the meditations we receive realization. Receiving bodhicitta quickly also depends on doing much purification and creating merit, continuously praying to the holy objects. If meditation is made on the basis of this, it is not so difficult, there is not so much difficulty in understanding. Not so much difficulty in the practice of the meditations. Those two are the methods that stops the hindrances of the meditation practice. Those two are the main methods. If those two methods are not done then it is difficult to achieve the realizations—there is much hindrance understanding the subject of meditation, and so much hindrance to make the practice successful. You are unable to continue, there are many hindrances. Also it takes so much time to experience. Anyway, this is a big subject. Anyway, it just happened but it is another big subject.

Then again the whole thing again comes to the point, the subject of the guru—the most important thing again if you are going on comes back to this subject. Also especially also during the practice of bodhicitta, the object of refuge, the object of the prayers has to be oneness—one's guru and special deity, special compassionate deity, the deity, the buddha who has taken that specific manifestation in order to grant help or realization, in order to grant blessings, in order to grant bodhicitta, great love and great compassion, bodhicitta—such as Buddha Avalokiteshvara, the compassionate Buddha. So by relying on this, by praying to the special manifestation of Buddha Avalokiteshvara, the compassionate Buddha, and this being oneness with the guru or the guru being oneness with this. This depends on receiving help or blessings through the form of meditation. Praying to the guru who is oneness with the compassionate buddha.

The answer to that question, sentient beings receiving bodhicitta, depends on the help of sentient beings and depends on the help of enlightened beings. There is nothing to talk about it terms of how it depends on the help of sentient beings; this doesn't have to be explained. It depends on Buddha, it depends on the enlightened beings' guidance or help. How? Because it depends on purification and merit and also it depends on the teaching, the method, that we have to actualize and train the mind in.

Just part of the process of death, the ordinary way of dying.

(Page 49)

Paragraph 3

Usually many people do this. Even after the breathing stops they touch the heart to see if there is heat or not. If there is heat at the heart that means the person is not dead yet. Many times people do like this. In natural death there is a whole evolution. I heard that many times the doctors decide as soon as the breathing stops that the person is completely dead, then afterwards when they touch the heart they discover heat—it is warm at the heart and they can't tell why there is heat at the heart, they can't explain. So doctors they have to check up, they have to do checking meditation! There have been stories like this. Just because the breathing stops doesn't mean the person is dead, because many times even in this lifetime, with different situation the breathing can be stopped. Also during meditation the breathing can be stopped. In certain meditations, Vajrayana meditations, the breathing stops, and also the stomach doesn't move. There are certain levels of practice like this. That doesn't mean the person is dead. Also due to very deep sluggishness, the breathing can stop, sort of becoming invisible. Sometimes in meditation when there is very strong, very deep sluggishness things like that can happen. Sometimes in sleeping time, when there is very, very deep sleep.

1. (d) - Not having any power or capability to act, to move.

(Page 50)

3(a) - For instance, many times this happens. Many times I met many people who are close to death and they don't recognize the people around there, if they are going to die that night or the next. Even the people that they live with, they don't recognize. They cannot tell names, cannot recognize them. Ask the person, "Do you recognize me, do you know my name?" They find it very hard to tell.

5. - *Prana*. I am not sure sometimes they call *prana* breathing, the breathing air. So it can be a little bit different meaning.

5(a) - "...moon" sometimes just like the white vision, like when there is snow falling, just like that. Also like that example.

(Page 51)

Paragraph 2

Comes down sort of in this form. So also in the meditation time there is a meditation to use with this evolution, so that time it has to be visualized in this form of letters.

(b) Paragraph 1 - Sometimes there are clouds that are similar to the color of copper, kind of orange, red clouds. Sort of like that.

Paragraph 2 - Fire-heat. This is the thing many people call *tummo* meditation or something. This is the place.

(c) Paragraph 1 - Also there is the feeling like falling down in the darkness.

Paragraph 4 - During that time all the gross superstitions absorb so the subtle mind becomes visible. Then as the subtle mind becomes visible, the clear light vision comes.

(d) Paragraph 5 - Whether it is called spirit or not it is the consciousness, *nam.she*, which has the capability, to know the aspect or object. Spirit, I am not sure whether it is called spirit, the mind that makes the continuity of life. I think many times also people taught that after the spirit goes to heaven or the spirit goes something like that.

“Now the mind has completely” When you do meditation on this part it is good first of all to think here according to the way it is written in the book, the visions explained first, then the cause. When you do meditation, first you have to concentrate on the cause otherwise there is no way. It has to be meditated on in that way because that is the evolution. So according to the vision, you get the vision depending on the concentration of the evolution. First of all think that the cause is prana, and by the prana going from the left and right nostrils into the nadis and coming through the central artery, as it is coming from the head chakra down, the white seed comes down in the form of this letter inside the middle artery. When it comes down, you have this white vision. Like when there is snow falling—a very bright, very white vision like that. The same thing also from down below as the prana from both nadis, left and right, goes in the center artery up by opening the fifth chakra, the red blood in the form of the letter AH is reversed. As it is coming up the middle artery try to visualize having this red vision. Then as these two, the white seed and the red seed meet together here, there is a small seed like a bean inside the center of the middle artery. The white comes down and the red comes up and they meet together here, and there is a bean inside. Then when these two meet together it is sort of like becoming unconscious. There is only the dark vision, the very deep dark vision. Sometimes at night when there is no moon it is just very completely dark. From your room there is light, then all of a sudden when you go outside, it very dark, sort of like that. Then again the red one goes up and the white one goes down and splits after the dark vision. Due to this condition of splitting, one going up and one going down, the clear light vision comes. The clear light vision is like the vision at dawn time, very clear, kind of emptiness, very clear and bright like sunny day, not dark like night time when the sun sets, a kind of red cloud, colors—not like that color. Then after this clear light vision the subtle mind leaves the body. That is the time that the mind leaves the body. At that time the person leaves that body. As long as there is the subtle mind even though there is no gross mind, the person exists there. Then the person leaves the *skandha* of form, and exists only on the skandha of consciousness. The person exists by depending on the skandha of mind. That is where the person exists. That is also how the person exists, even though there is no physical body.

It good to know about these things, and as you know now, if you can do meditation remembering this evolution—this is just the ordinary evolution that happen in ordinary beings, even animals, birds—this evolution doesn't have to happen only for meditators. This is just the ordinary evolution but there is a whole set of meditations and methods to use on the basis of this ordinary evolution, according to this ordinary evolution. The person who practices this method at death time, either during his lifetime or at death time, especially at death time when this evolution actually happens, uses it as he was training in life. At death time he uses the different methods as he gets the different visions. In this way he uses the ordinary evolution of death as the cause of enlightenment, to receive enlightenment quickly. This is done by certain very high meditators, yogis, those whose lives were purely lived in morality, in the precepts, in the general precepts, Mahayana precepts, bodhisattva's precepts, Vajrayana precepts—those who have made very high practice, understanding the

Vajrayana teachings, who have made such pure deep practice in their lifetimes. Sometimes if they don't receive enlightenment in that lifetime, they receive enlightenment during the death time, in the intermediate stage. Or, even though they don't receive enlightenment this way, being conscious of the death evolution, by using the Vajrayana tantric methods, if they have a conscious death they also take the intermediate body consciously. They use the meditations in that time according to the intermediate body and also after the intermediate stage they take rebirth. When they take human rebirth, they do so in a specific place and family that they have decided on. At that time they take the rebirth consciously, using the meditations, using the profound techniques, and they are consciously reborn and in that lifetime they complete the rest of the Vajrayana realizations that they didn't receive before. They quickly complete them in that life, practice and complete. Doing this, the meditator quickly achieves enlightenment.

There is a practice like this, the Vajrayana method.

Student: Is the study usually completed in the second life, in the case of the one who has taken this rebirth?

Rinpoche: They take this rebirth to gain higher realization.

Student: You said in that life the practitioner would complete his practice.

Rinpoche: The one who has the understanding of the Vajrayana teaching and who has made deep practice. Even the very last one, even if the person can remember, recognize each evolution and the clear light vision, if the person can remember this, he finds the chance to use the method in the actual time. He uses the meditation techniques in that time, during the clear light vision—that is the most important place to use the meditations that the person knows. If the person is that capable then the person has no worries. It is definite that the person doesn't have to be reborn in the suffering realm. He will either be born in a pure realm, or take a better, higher, fortunate rebirth to meet the teaching and practice Dharma, to meet the Vajrayana teaching again.

Student: Does *nam.che* also have the normal bank of memory?

Rinpoche: That is the main bank of memory. That is the carrier of memory. The consciousness is the carrier of the whole memory. That is the thing that makes the relationship between previous karma and this life's karma, the continuation. The previous time's cause of the suffering result continuity is made by the mind continuity of the consciousness. Because your mind carries the seed, all the impressions that were planted, left by the karma, as long as there is this carrier carrying the impression, there is always the continuation of the relationship between the previous karma and the present life situation.

In the afternoon meditation you can do this visualization, the death evolution. First of all begin with yourself as if you are dying, then as I discussed this morning, do the evolution of death, then after that it is all very useful but it depends on you, visualize yourself as those suffering beings in suffering. If not, then read the part on the subject of refuge, taking time, read each line taking time, thinking and checking like this. As you do meditation on the suffering realms, actually that will be very helpful and useful, but if you can't meditate on that, if it bothers you, then you meditate on refuge.

Day Eighteen

Saturday, 23rd November

Precepts

Before taking the ordination it is necessary that the action of taking ordination be possessed by the pure thought that makes the mind go in the Dharma. Generally to take any ordination it is necessary that it be possessed by the renouncing mind of samsara, otherwise, if there is no thought wanting to renounce samsara, there is no perfect reason and also there is no foundation to receive the ordination. Besides that, to become a Dharma action it has to become the cause of enlightenment, so it necessary to be possessed by the Mahayana thought, the pure thought of bodhicitta. Therefore try to think briefly like this. “The attachment that is attached to the happiness of this life and the wrong conception of the self-”I,” the self-cherishing thought, these negative minds have been obliging me and sentient beings to suffer in samsara, particularly in the suffering realms, in the evil destinies, numberless times from beginningless samsaric lifetimes. Myself and all sentient beings will have to experience the suffering in samsara by circling around in the six different realms endlessly, as long as myself and all sentient beings follow the wrong conceptions, the attachment attached to the happiness of this life, the wrong conception of self-”I,” the self-cherishing thought. As long as I am in samsara in any realm that I take rebirth, no matter which, it is always like sitting on a thorn. It is like sitting on a hole whose foundation is made of thorns. As the example, there is no possibility to relax there without pain. Just like this, in any realm of samsara, wherever we are born there is no possibility to experience true happiness. Even a slight true happiness.

“Guru Shakyamuni Buddha received enlightenment and enlightened numberless other sentient beings by having met the Mahayana guru and the teaching, by renouncing and completely purifying the attachment attached to this life and the wrong conception of the self-”I” and the self-cherishing though through the fundamental method of observing precepts, such as taking the eight Mahayana precepts. When Guru Shakyamuni was an ordinary person, trying like this he achieved enlightenment. Therefore, the same thing is possible for me.

“Just myself releasing from samsara, receiving the boundless state of nirvana is not sufficient, not enough. Just being satisfied with this realization is very ungenerous—not worrying, not being concerned with other sentient beings. Not being concerned, not being worried, not thinking of other mother sentient beings who are the field from which I receive all my past, present, and future happiness, including enlightenment. Also they are the utmost need and help at the beginning of the Dharma practice, and in the middle, and at the end.

“At the moment sentient beings are extremely suffering, such those in the narak, preta, and animal realms and then suffering also in the human realm, the sura, and asura realms. Most of them suffer incredibly, creating the cause of suffering continuously without having the Dharma wisdom eye knowing which is the cause of suffering and which is the cause of happiness, without knowing anything about karma, and not having met the leader leading in the path to enlightenment, and not having met the teacher. This time I have met all these chances, so therefore at this time, as I am responsible for repaying them, I have the possibility to release from suffering and lead them into enlightenment. At the moment I don’t have the ability to do this because I can’t even guide myself from samsara. So who has the perfect power, the perfect knowledge, and infinite compassion? Only the Buddha has. Each ray of the Buddha can enlighten numberless other sentient beings—they have that much knowledge, power, and compassion. Therefore I have to achieve enlightenment. In order to achieve all this knowledge I have to achieve enlightenment, to know all these methods. In order to achieve enlightenment, the fundamental thing that creates, that brings enlightenment, is disciplining the speech and body and mind. Disciplining the speech and body depends on disciplining the mind. Without disciplining the mind it is difficult to discipline the speech and body. However, the essence of disciplining the mind is the individual himself trying to keep his mind,

trying to look after his mind, taking care of his own mind. Taking care from what danger? From the hindrance, the danger of the negative mind. From the wrong conceptions. Totally, disciplining the mind is like that. So therefore in order to discipline speech, body, and mind, I am going to take this Mahayana ordination until tomorrow morning.”

Visualize the person granting the ordination as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless Buddhas and bodhisattvas, and that you are taking the ordination.

At the end of the third repetition of the prayer think as you are visualizing the holy object, “I have perfectly received the ordination,” and think that the ordination is in the form of light, and from the head down to the feet each atom of your body is full of light. It is necessary to make the decision thinking that, “I have received ordination.”

PRAYER

Repeat also the prayer of the precepts, thinking, “I am going to observe the precepts for one day as the Tathagatas observed the precepts.”

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

MANTRA

DEDICATION

Think, “Due to the merits may whatever meaning the prayer contains be successful!” Think that the three circles of yourself, the creator of the merit, the merit, and enlightenment, and also sentient beings, are empty of self-existence. Think, “Due to the merits, past merits, present merits, of taking ordination, and also future merits, may I achieve enlightenment by receiving the three principal paths, the fully renounced mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and fully realizing the absolute true nature in order to enlighten sentient beings quickly.” Whether we desire to receive enlightenment, even if we don’t have any plans like that, even if we desire to escape from samsara, from the state of the suffering, even if there are no plans like this, even if we do not desire to be born in the evil destinies, the suffering realms, even if there are no plans like that, first we desire this life to be completely released from all suffering. However, our desire is quite funny—it is funny, it is very strange, it is very strange. How is our desire very strange and funny? We like to create the cause of suffering but we don’t like to experience the suffering result. This is funny. This is what is funny. Just like this, you want to sleep in the fireplace but you don’t want to feel pain. Just like that, exactly like that example. So nothing happens, what happens is this, now simple. What happens is, that person doesn’t stop the continuity of the pain and not being out of the fireplace—the person gets nothing done that way. Just like this example, exactly like this. This is just exactly what we do usually in our daily life—how our desire is, the ignorant mind’s desire, the ignorant or the negative mind’s attachment that we always listen to, always obey. It is exactly like this. So what I mean by desire—we desire to escape from suffering means, for instance, like this. Just one way of talking. We do not desire the result of suffering—when we experience that we don’t like it, we don’t want it, so that means if you don’t want that, for instance, headache, if you don’t want to experience the suffering result of the headache, actually that means also not wanting to create the cause of the headache. The person just ignorantly doesn’t know, but if the person understands, he doesn’t like the cause of the headache. If the person understands karma he doesn’t like the cause of the headache. So as we are

ignorant, even though we do not desire the suffering result of the headache, we don't have the same feeling toward the inner cause of the headache, the karma. That is because we are ignorant, not because we are intelligent, enlightened, free—this is because we are not free. Just like this, actually it is just because of ignorance, but if you have understanding it is same thing. As you do not desire the suffering result, you do not desire the cause, same thing. The cause is the nonvirtuous karma, the cause of samsara. If we desire this life to be completely released from suffering, from all problems and all confusion, what I am saying is that the whole thing depends on purifying the negative mind. Without purifying the negative mind there is no way—whether the person believes in Buddhism or not, it doesn't matter, as long as the person wants to release this life from all the suffering and confusion—he has to purify the negative mind that is the cause of suffering. The main thing, the essential method by which to purify is the seven limbs.

1. Prostration
2. Offering
3. Confession
4. Rejoicing
5. Requesting to give continual Dharma, requesting to continuously circle the Dharma wheel—meaning to give, teach Dharma.
6. Requesting to lead beings until samsara ends
7. Dedication. Dedicating the merits for achieving enlightenment for the benefit of sentient beings.

The last one is this.

There are about seven. This is very important. Even though you don't know other things, just knowing these seven things, how to practice, is extremely useful, the one method that purifies all negative karma no matter how much has been collected, how much you have created in this life or previous lifetimes. All the living beings who receive enlightenment, numberless sentient beings who received enlightenment in the past did so also through this purification. Also, those in the present who are receiving enlightenment also do so through this purification. Also those who will receive enlightenment in the future—the fundamental method is this. Through these seven different methods.

I think I stop here.

9 am

It is necessary to think, “I must achieve enlightenment for the sake of all those mother sentient beings, therefore I must complete the whole realization of the graduated path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path. It is necessary to listen with such a pure motivation that makes the action of listening to the Dharma a Mahayana action—a Mahayana action or a Mahayana Dharma.

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It was well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great pandits Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding. It includes 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

This commentary on the graduated path has four outlines. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teaching. The way of listening and explaining the teachings, and the way of leading the disciple on the path to enlightenment. The last one has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path. The last one has two—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being has two outlines—the first is bringing up the thought seeking better future life and the second is following the method that brings happiness in the future life. Bringing up the thought seeking a better future life has two outlines—remembering the shortness of human life and death, and thinking of the suffering or happiness that comes after death. By doing meditation on the shortness of human life and death, besides the person not daring to create negative karma, like the followers of Guru Tsongkhapa, who, when they achieved this realization, didn't even want to take the time to take a thorn from their flesh. They did not even dare to spend such a short time as that not practicing Dharma, doing a meaningless action. They could not stand just living life without practicing Dharma. In those times the person had the achievement of the realization of this meditation on the shortness of human life and death.

For instance, I think it was one of the followers of Atisha—when he was in retreat there was a thorn bush growing outside his cave, so every time he went out or went in, his robes got stuck on the thorn. When he went out for peepee his robes got stuck on the thorn and he thought he should cut it, but then he thought, “I may not have time to come back to the cave.” So he didn't cut it and he went on. When he went inside again, his clothes got stuck on the thorn again, and again he thought he should cut it, but then he thought, “I may not have time to come out again.” Just like this, he kept thinking like this, and he dared not spend even a short time to cut off the thorn to take care his clothes. Just thinking like this, his life finished without cutting the thorn, his life finished living purely in Dharma practice, doing meditation, without needing to cut the thorn. These yogis have the realization of these meditations. When there a feeling like this, when the mind is at such a level, that is the definition of having this realization.

By doing meditation on death, that death is definite, what one has to realize is that the practice of Dharma is necessary—it is definitely necessary. This is what one has to realize by doing meditation on death, that death is definite. Especially it is useful to think this.

There are three outlines on how to do meditation on death, how death is definite. After that, it is also very useful to think that, firstly, at death time nothing helps—even this body that we have been together with for a long time, that has been taken in most care, even our relatives, possessions—none of this helps at death time. Nothing can stop death or help at death time—nothing can stop death. It is very useful to think this after the meditation on death is definite. Very useful. In this way you can see, discover what is useful. Nothing can help you to not have to worry, to suffer at death time. Nothing can help to make death happy, to have a happy death, a pleasant death. So is there a method that can help at death time? To have a pleasant, happy trip at death time? Is there any method? There is one. What is that method? That is Dharma, that is the only method that can definitely benefit at death time, to stop the suffering of death, to stop the worries at death time. Dharma is the only one that always can benefit. As this is the only method like this, it is definite that this will happen. Since the Dharma is the only method, it definitely has to be practiced—this

method has to be definitely practiced. Question yourself. If some other mind says it is not necessary even though it is the only method that can help at death time, it doesn't matter. Some part of the mind explains, says, talks to you, "It's not necessary, it doesn't matter, something will happen in the future, the death is the future, something will happen, it doesn't matter even though Dharma is the only method that can help." Some part of the mind may say like this. Part of mind. However, that is the negative mind that is produced by the wrong conception of the self "I," that thinks the self "I" is the King and many other negative minds are like servants around—many other negative minds such as attachment, pride, jealousy—so many things, like servants. So the ignorant mind says, "This is not necessary, you don't have to practice Dharma even though it is the only method, it doesn't matter."

Then you think, "Do I desire a suffering death or a happy death?" Death has to happen, this is easy to accept. But then the question is whether it is a happy or a suffering death—this question you have to ask yourself, question yourself. Of course whether it is in the present or future, of course I don't desire a suffering death, never at any time, never—only a happy death. This is the answer that comes if you check up. If you check up this is the answer that comes. Do I know for sure if I will have a happy death? Not sure. Question yourself as I am telling you, right away you think. Instead of looking at my face, look at your mind. Not sure, cannot tell. What comes in the mind is darkness, complete darkness just like the night time, no moon, no light, just like that in the mind, just like that. Not sure, there is no full confidence, it is not definite. If it were definite the mind could be relaxed without worry. If there was full confidence with understanding. But definitely seeing that you will have a happy death is not sure.

For instance, when we think this, we think after thirty, forty years—after a long time, sort of like after one hundred years, after a long time, many years. But think now, if that situation occurs right away, right this time, am I happy or suffering? How is it? If it happens right away, the future situation, am I happy with it or worried? It is necessary to check up like this. What is your present feeling with death? There is worry in the mind, there is worry and fear if it happened right away. So just this proves that if you meditate right away, if you think right at this moment, you can see that you have fear—you don't even want to visualize that you have fear, not to mention the actual situation happening. Feeling scared. Even just this proves that you don't have full confidence that you will for sure have a happy and free death. It clearly proves this.

Questioning like this, oneself knows, "I have fear, I do not desire a suffering death. So therefore I have to do something. Since it is definite I have to do something, and since Dharma is the only method, it has to be practiced. It has to be done. It has to be definitely done. At that time, the body, relatives, and possessions, besides not helping, just cause attachment to arise, and as attachment rises there is fear. Due to this attachment that strongly rises at death time, this causes one to be born in the suffering realm, to be born in samsara continuously. Besides causing one to be born in the suffering realm, it causes one to be born in samsara continuously. This is the thing, this is attachment—besides helping it disturbs, like this. This is very useful to think.

Then there is the thought that Dharma has to be definitely practiced, but doesn't have to be practiced now, in these days—it can be done after some time. When I find time, when I am more relaxed, or when I finish my job. I am a little joking. But thinking like this, that it can be done after some time, after several years. Question to yourself. If it is definite death will happen after several years, is it really sure that this will happen after a long time as I plan? That is not sure, not definite at all. My mind doesn't see when it will happen. Just as Shantideva, the great bodhisattva, said in his teaching, "By thinking that I am not going to die today it is not worth enjoying samsaric happiness."

This means with the careless mind, the lazy mind. As Shantideva said, it is true, check up. Besides tomorrow and tonight, just after two or three minutes, what is more definite—existing in this place, on this bed, or the future, when death occurs. What is more definite? Death is more definite than me existing on this bed. Death is more definite than existing after two or three minutes. Also it is very useful to think like this. Death comes in a time—there is a time one day after two or three minutes, dying, there is a time, even if we don't believe it logically, there is such a time after two or three minutes dying, logically we can see. It is not sure whether it will happen this time, this day, this specific hour. But there is such a time like this that will definitely happen, whether it will happen today or not. This is more certain to happen today, in this hour, than existence. It is more certain that the suffering death will happen after two or three minutes.

So therefore, first of all it is definite, more sure that the suffering death will happen after a short time--two or three minutes--so therefore the method is like this. After death, taking rebirth in the suffering realms is more definite. So all these things are more definite to happen after two or three minutes, so therefore, besides the fact that Dharma definitely has to be practiced, it is necessary to practice Dharma right away. It is necessary to start right away, right this moment.

As Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said in his sutra teaching, and as Shantideva said in his teaching, I think it is here (Page 47), this is very useful. It is not certain which will come first--the future life or tomorrow. So it is more worthwhile to work for the future life, rather than making arrangements for tomorrow. We can see even right at this moment, it is more worthwhile, just like this, like the quotation, it is more worthwhile that you work for the future life than work for this life, even for this short time. Then the last thing, it is very useful to think like this in order to control attachment. It is more definite that this will happen right after two or three minutes, more definite that we will leave the body, the possessions, everything after two or three minutes. Therefore, why I should be attached to my body, possessions, or relatives? You don't find any reason, after checking like this you don't find any reason. Your negative mind, the conception of the self-"I," this ignorant mind, doesn't find any reason to continue to bring up attachment. Same thing, the attachment doesn't find any reason to rise. This is very good, this part is very good to train the mind in order to control your attachment, even though you are always living with a family and possessions. The main thing is not possessions, the main suffering is not possessions or relatives, and those things. The main suffering is your mind, the attachment in one's own uncontrolled mind.

(BREAK)

Student: Could you give the definition of the difference between the gross and subtle mind?

Rinpoche: The gross negative mind such as anger, attachment, all those minds, pride--the visible negative mind can be an example of the gross mind, and also the mind that sees the gross object is a gross superstition. When the subtle mind arises there is no vehicle for the gross mind, so there is no way to see the gross mind. The gross mind becomes temporarily invisible. Because according to karma--this is nothing to do with the person's practice or control, it is just a karmic thing. If it is not purified, the seed always continues in the subtle mind, so the gross mind again comes back after the subtle mind takes an intermediate stage rebirth. Also the clear light vision is the object of the subtle mind. It is sort of a subtle object, so at that time the gross mind cannot see. Usually having the negative mind visible, all kinds of thoughts coming during meditation time, the mind that discriminates this and that--all these are the gross superstitions and this is not the subtle mind. This is the gross mind.

Student: The mind that discriminates your actions, whether what you just did was good or bad?

Rinpoche: That is the gross mind.

Student: Even discriminating your own thought and action?

Rinpoche: Now it is the gross mind.

Student: When a meditator reaches shunyata is that beyond subtle mind. I am not sure about my understanding of shunyata, but ...

Rinpoche: Looks very good. Something like that, when you realize something like that.

Student: When the meditator goes into shunyata, is that beyond gross mind is that still subtle mind?

Rinpoche: That doesn't have to be subtle mind at that time, not necessary.

Student: If the negative mind exists relative to the object of ignorance, if during the clear light vision you experience the subtle mind, why does the ignorant mind arise again? If you break the continuity can ignorance cause the next moment of ignorance, if you experience the subtle mind?

Rinpoche: That's the continuation of ignorance.

Student: The subtle mind?

Rinpoche: Yes, that is ignorant. As long as the person's mind is not purified of ignorance there is always the continuity of ignorance. We human beings, animals, all beings have the subtle mind. Sentient beings and enlightened beings, all beings have the subtle mind, but sentient beings' subtle mind is different from the enlightened beings' subtle mind, because it is not completely purified of all the subtle obscurations, not completely purified from all the subtle illusive minds. So especially the subtle mind does not recognize the clear light vision. The subtle mind becomes visible at that time but it doesn't recognize the clear light vision for most of the ordinary beings. They don't recognize this at death time. If there is no ignorance there is no problem like that. If there is gross superstition there is also subtle superstition, but if all superstitions all purified, when all subtle superstitions are purified, that is the time of receiving enlightenment.

Student: Could you give an example of subtle superstition?

Rinpoche: The mind that has the view of existence as being self-existent. That's one way of saying. That is the mind that sees duality, in duality.

(Page 69)

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So as we briefly talked about the evolution of the death, one thing--in order to have complete consciousness in the death evolution when it actually happens and also to be capable of using the profound Vajrayana meditation at that time depends on training in the life. That yogi, that meditator using the profound techniques of the teachings depends on using this method during his life. He should especially be capable of using this in the sleeping time. He should be capable of using this between dreaming and sleeping and between dreaming and waking up. He has to be capable of using the profound Vajrayana method that has to be practiced with this evolution at that time. As long as he is powerful enough, capable enough to train, definitely he can use it in that time. This evolution happens very quickly. It happens in just a very short time, just a few seconds, very quickly. From sleeping to dreaming and from dreaming until waking up. Also things happen in a very short time. Also when the person does sexual intercourse this evolution happens in a very quick time. The person can hardly recognize it. It is extremely difficult to recognize because these visions happen in such a short time.

However, it is always worthwhile to know that this part of the meditation, somehow doing meditation, especially at the part of the clear light vision, doing meditation there is always useful. Somehow training the mind in this meditation, the clear light vision, what is explained there is the fundamental thing. That is just like water if you want to make tea. That is like the water, the

fundamental thing. Then if you want to make tea, delicious tea to quench the suffering of thirst, in order to make the delicious tea you mix it with milk and sugar, things like this, including the liquid. Of course tea has to be mixed like this. So just like this, with the ordinary clear light vision there are other things to mix it with. To practice being oneness with the clear light vision there are other things, just like sugar, milk, and tea. Just like this, there are other methods to use on the basis of the clear light vision. However, the Vajrayana teaching is a very profound technique and there is so much to explain. These techniques that are used on the basis of ordinary evolution are extremely profound.

So one thing is like this. The purpose for which we meditate these days on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha--after Guru Shakyamuni Buddha absorbs into oneself and all the wrong conceptions, delusions, and all wrong views, the way you see things, all completely become emptiness. The mind is oneness with blissful Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind in the form of emptiness like space. Somehow this is also a profound technique or method. Actually it is a very profound technique. There are many reasons to do meditation like this, as it is a very profound technique. One thing is to be able to help the clear light vision, to be able to help the mind be conscious during this time, at death. If you train from now like this, every day, as the mind is well trained you are not only doing this meditation but also doing continual purification, creating merits. Due to the actual thing, the meditation, training the mind in this and due to this support of purification, when this actual evolution happens, the person has somehow a fine chance, has quite the power to remember the meditation, to remember Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and the meditation. So if the person remembers and recognizes that, the person finds the chance to meditate there. However much the person can do, it is very easy to be born in the pure realms where it is impossible for the visible negative mind, the gross negative mind, to arise. Also by going to the pure realms there is the chance to directly receive teachings from different aspects of buddhas, and it is very easy to receive the realization of the graduated path. Why it is so easy? Because there are less hindrances, not so many problems of the gross negative mind.

Student: Is there subtle superstition mind in the pure realm?

Rinpoche: Yes.

So in that way the person, the meditator receives enlightenment very quickly. This is recognized as one method. If one cannot achieve enlightenment in this lifetime, then being born in the pure realm one receives enlightenment like this. This is one of the quicker ways of receiving enlightenment. So this has great importance. Also this meditation has so many benefits. It is not a simple method. Just even the mind, one's own mind, meditating on becoming oneness with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's blissful mind is a very profound technique, a technique that makes you receive enlightenment quickly, and purify the obscurations quickly. Also this meditation helps very much for one to realize the mind nature. As this is a profound method, there is a very deep way to explain this also. However the meditation concentrating on one object, trying to cut off all thoughts, like sleeping, trying to have no object, nothing, trying to be unconscious, no thought, that means trying to be unconscious. That kind of meditation is just wasting time, life--nothing benefiting oneself or other beings, nothing becoming the remedy of the delusions or attachment. However there are all kinds and types of other meditations, but whatever the benefits of this meditation, this specific meditation with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, this meditation or any other of those types of meditations, even the benefits of this meditation cannot be compared to those meditations. There are many reasons. So however like this.

Also doing this meditation continuously, thinking, “If I cannot live life in Dharma purely, if I cannot practice Dharma all the time, day and night like the ascetic yogis and meditators, then what should I do? What will help at death time even though I can’t have a life like that?” Even though we cannot practice Dharma, or cannot study much. This little understanding, the understanding of this meditation, of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s yoga, this yoga meditation of purifying and receiving knowledge, if you do this frequently, if possible every day, this meditation, which is very simplified, not complicated, and also very interesting if you can see it, if you understand. If you don’t understand, afterwards as you study Dharma longer, as you understand more deeply, as you practice Vajrayana, then you can really see the meditation that you try at the beginning, that this is really the profound technique. There are so many benefits, and you can really see them, and then you have a deep understanding of the different aspects of the teachings, then you can really see how it is precious. Now we don’t have that much wide extensive understanding of different teachings, so therefore we don’t see that many benefits, that many profound methods. However, even though we don’t understand the benefits, the reasons, so far as we have been doing, practicing this, it has been always meaningful, worthwhile, meaningful. Even if we do it just one time in life, that much somehow it blesses, purifies the mind. Somehow just doing this one meditation has made contact with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or with enlightenment. What I mean is this, I emphasize this. If you can do this, if it is possible, the best thing, if you can do this meditation every day, even though you can’t do the other meditations in the book, if you can do this purifying meditation every day, frequently, although the best thing is every day, if not then frequently, somehow at death time, when the greatest danger to life comes, the person’s mind is conscious. Somehow due to this purification and mind training in this meditation, the person’s mind becomes conscious and remembers this meditation. When he sees the danger of death coming, he remembers the method, that person has a definite method to use that can definitely help at death time for sure. Even if the person can’t make exactly, cannot really concentrate on being oneness with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s blissful omniscient mind in the form of emptiness, like empty space, even if the person can’t make up the meditation, around the time when the death evolution starts, even just at the time when the elements begin to absorb, even if at that time the person remembers Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, just even this even remembering this at death time, no question, no doubt, that person can never be born in the suffering realm, impossible. It is definite that that person will be born in the happy realm. Even just remembering that helps a great deal.

One thing is this. Even though during your lifetime you have created so many negative karmas, somehow if you know, if you are very careful, very wise at death time, if you are very careful at that time when you are near that danger, and at that time make very strong purification and create merits, there are many other techniques to use at that time if you are very wise and capable, really careful. Even though your early life has been very evil, and at that time even if you created so much negative karma that makes you continuously take suffering rebirths in the evil destinies, as an animal, preta, or narak for a long time, even though there is also karma that was created before but in your later life you lead a more positive life, which mean making more purification and creating merits and making less negative karma, somehow that is different from the early life--this also helps a great deal to change your life, whatever comes later, especially around death time. There is a method that you can confess, a profound method that you can purify and also do at that time, strong purification, such a profound technique to do at death time even though you created that much heavy negative karma in your early life. Because of the strong purification you do at the death time, because of that, without needing to be reborn in the suffering realms and experience suffering for many eons, you take higher rebirth. It is possible to be reborn in a pure realm or again to receive a perfect human rebirth. So in each part of the death time it is very important to be careful--very important, very

important in the last part of the life. But we don't know when this time will happen. Generally it is like this.

There were so many people, other than meditators even just lay people in Tibet or in other places who live in a family, who don't know much about Dharma but have certain mantras, methods that they receive from their Guru and devotion to the teaching. What they have received, they are continuously doing, even though they don't know much about meditation on the graduated path. There have been many people also whose life was evil in the early part but later at death time because of the profound methods and teachings they used, being careful, amazing things happened at death time, and they had a happy death, many things.

Generally it is like this. We are not sure when this time will happen so therefore it is wise to do something, to train the mind as much as possible in Dharma, trying to do Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's yoga purification meditation as much as possible. The best thing is every day either in the morning or at night time, whenever the person finds time. However, the total thing that is your mind has to be guided by yourself; it is your responsibility. The husband's mind cannot be guided, the wife's mind cannot be guided by the husband. Each of us here taking care of our mind from problems and suffering is the responsibility of ourselves. The negative karmas that were created in early life, try to confess. If you do this Guru Shakyamuni Buddha yoga meditation with the repetition of the mantras you can definitely purify. Also even though the negative karma is done again, there is a big difference. Even though the negative karma is done again, for example if you cheat another person or if you somehow create certain negative karmas, there is a big difference between feeling relaxed, feeling rejoicfulness, doing it ignorantly without knowing, or doing it and then feeling repentance, "Oh, I shouldn't have done that." Actually you didn't have the desire or wish to do it. That feeling of upset, repentance, just even this makes a big difference--having the feeling of repentance after negative karma has been created makes a big difference afterwards in regards result. The other negative karma that was created without a feeling of repentance is heavier, and the suffering result of that karma is heavier. Right after you created the negative karma, if you feel strong repentance, stronger repentance, the karma becomes light, the negative karma becomes light, the suffering result becomes light, not that heavy. So those who want to do something with life, to make it a little bit better, to do something with life--how to take care of the life. Even though you can't continuously do meditation on the graduated path, generally it is like this. The actual method, the tool, the axe, to cut the poisonous big tree, the main method to cut off all the problems is the meditation on the graduated path.

Student: Could you repeat the last sentence. It seemed you were going to say if you didn't have time ... then you said to meditate on graduated path.

Rinpoche: Actually long silence. By the actual method, generally what I mean is that first of all as you just briefly explained, at least what you can do even though you cannot do meditation every day, even though you can't meditate routinely every day on this, on the different subjects like this, making a mind of schedule, there are things at least that you can do in order to take care of the life, in order to take care of the mind. This is a way of taking care of the mind and not only taking care of the mind for one day and a few years, but this way of taking care of mind is for many lifetimes. Generally what I am saying, generally the actual tool is like the axe to cut the big huge poisonous tree that has so many branches growing, covering many places, the axe, the main tool, is doing meditation on the graduated path, actualizing the graduated path. What I mean is that this is the method to completely destroy the whole root of suffering. Death time is not an easy time because even though we know the meditation techniques intellectually, if we don't make enough continual

purification, then even if we know the techniques, even if we know the techniques, if we expect to use them without making continual purification it is difficult at death time, when the actual time comes, and there is so much fear. Also, as the elements change the whole inside thing becomes decayed and gradually changes, and also the gross superstitions are absorbed--this evolution happens so due to this the person has so much fear, so it is extremely difficult to meditate on the actual time of death, extremely difficult to find the chance.

For instance, if you try to meditate in the street in New York, even just to relax your mind is so difficult, isn't it? Just to relax, to be able to start the meditation, is difficult. Without relaxing the mind it is difficult to do meditation. I am talking generally about how our level of mind is. During our lifetime when we are not sick, when everything is okay, when we are not sick physically, when we are healthy, when we try to concentrate we can't concentrate--there are so many other problems, hindrances to bringing the mind into meditation. Even though we know the meditation, it may take half an hour to bring the mind to the meditation. So it is difficult to bring. During such dangerous times, when there is so much fear and lots of things happening, it is difficult, so we need training even from now.

(Page 52)

During this time if the person is conscious, if the person has the capability, then try to ignore all the other doors and try to be conscious as much as possible of the door that is in the center chakra. Try to concentrate on being conscious of that. Just like trying to go through a pipe that has only one way. At that time the person can make the choice to go the mind through the head chakra, like going through a pipe, and ignore all the other holes. Again, to do this we need training during the lifetime. During the intermediate stage there is much fear, much suffering. There is much suffering, such as feeling pressed down by the earth or stuck in big cracks, or strongly taken by karmically created visions. The being suffers because of not recognizing this as the vision of the illusive mind. If he recognized it then there would be less fear, because that suffering being, that intermediate stage being doesn't recognize these things as projections of the illusive mind. The person believes them to be true so there is extreme suffering. Sometimes it is like being taken by a sea wave. I am not sure whether at that time you can ride on the waves! You can play! You can expect it but I am not sure! Anyway, like this. Like a whirlpool. Also those suffering beings have a karmic vision like this, getting inside the whirlpool, with much suffering. There are karmic visions like this. Also, being involved in a great fire, a big fire, with such big flames, wide flames, the fire burning. The being is in that and there is such suffering, all kinds of noises, sparkling like this. Also there is much suffering during the intermediate rebirth.

There is no need to read page 53.

The last prayer ... "Guru Shakyamuni, surrounded by Vajradhara ..." Here, if the person finds it easy to visualize it is okay. The best thing, if the person doesn't know how to visualize, they don't have to make their mind complicated. Whether we visualize, if we don't know how to visualize all these different lineages and holy objects, just thinking that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is the embodiment of all the infinite buddhas, just like this. This guru is Shakyamuni Buddha and he is the embodiment of all the buddhas. Just like this. This is one way of visualizing, instead of spreading around like this in different manifestations. Instead, there is just that one totality, but the entire essence is there. Both visualizations have great meaning. Perhaps maybe you can repeat this prayer.

The meaning--without being distracted by the meaningless work of this life--meaningless work means that which is only done for this life and doesn't benefit other lives.

Student: You said to pay attention to the chakras.

Rinpoche: The head chakras.

Student: Do you hold the vision of Guru Shakyamuni in this place? What do you mean?

Rinpoche: What you said is just right, okay, that's perfect, the best thing, that is better than just visualizing a tube. If you can visualize Guru Shakyamuni this is one technique, then visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha on the top of the head chakra. Then you go through this tube which is like a pipe. Visualizing this somehow helps to not go into any other holes or doors. Anyway there are many techniques about how to visualize the tube. This is one method of visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. On top of the head chakra is an upside down trumpet. On top of the bell of the trumpet visualize Guru Shakyamuni. This is one of the most profound methods but there are certain techniques involved in this; this is not something that can be explained, it is something that can be only explained when our mind ... I think that's all right.

In the afternoon just before refuge if you can quickly read or think of the suffering of the evil destinies it will be very beneficial. It helps if you think of this before refuge. Somehow it helps very much the second time when you do meditation on refuge, somehow it makes the refuge pure. That will be very useful. Do checking meditation on refuge and karma. Just read slowly and check. Then when the explanation comes you have a fundamental understanding, some understanding in your mind, some idea so when I talk a little bit differently, not just exactly what is in the book, you have less confusion, it is easy to understand. Somehow you have some basic understanding, so it is easy to understand, easy to grasp. In relation to the subjects there will be things that are sometimes maybe a little big ... sometimes there are simple things that are necessary for beginners, or sometimes a little bit abstract things that are quite difficult to figure out and understand. So as we have different levels, different listeners, this is necessary. The other person who doesn't understand, who doesn't hear this before, however, should not depress himself because of not understanding. Sort of thinking, "Oh, it is very deep, it is not clear to me, I don't understand," and then because of this instead of trying to understand that which is not clear and that which you don't understand, instead trying to understand, making more ignorant, instead of growing to be able to understand with patience. Depressing down, making oneself more ignorant. That doesn't help. That is not a beneficial method. Also, understanding is not easy, it takes time.

Day Nineteen

Sunday, 24th November

Precepts

Before taking ordination it is necessary to be possessed by the pure Mahayana thought that makes the action of taking the ordination a Mahayana action, and also becomes the cause of enlightenment. Therefore, it is necessary that the action of taking ordination be possessed by the pure thought of bodhicitta. Therefore it is necessary to briefly think like this, "Myself and all other sentient beings have been suffering in samsara, particularly in the evil destinies, numberless times from beginningless previous lifetimes. Any suffering there is, any pleasure there is in samsara, from any pleasure that is recognized as pleasure and any suffering that is recognized as suffering, nothing is left. Each different pleasure, each different suffering—everything has been experienced by me numberless times from beginningless samsaric lifetimes. As long as I follow ignorance I will continuously create karma, so that's how I will continuously experience suffering endlessly.

According to the situation that we have been experiencing, any suffering of samsara and suffering rebirths that have occurred numberless times, just once we recognize this evolution, and that it has been like this from beginningless time. According to this, it is unbearable to do nothing to stop this continuity of suffering, to stop the continuity of the experience of this samsaric suffering. It is time that we get fed up or tired of the experience of samsaric suffering, continuously circling around from death to rebirth, death to rebirth. Also, besides understanding the beginningless experience of samsaric suffering, also understanding the endless experience of suffering, as we follow ignorance. Understanding this, when we think, check like this, we dare not create even one extra negative karma. We can no longer create, we dare not, we can no longer create even one extra negative action. Many negative actions have been created from beginningless samsaric lifetimes. After that much collection of negative karma we are again collecting negative karma, even in this particular time, having received a perfect human rebirth where there is the chance to avoid negative karma and avoid the creator of the karma, delusions and ignorance. Instead of avoiding the karma, we practice delusions and negative karma, using the precious human rebirth to follow the delusions and to create negative karma. The precious perfect human rebirth is used again for suffering.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha received enlightenment and enlightened numberless other sentient beings by avoiding delusions and ignorance that produces karma, the karma that keeps one in samsara. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha did all these things by avoiding ignorance, avoiding creating negative karma. We still live in samsara because we follow ignorance and karma. Also, Guru Shakyamuni observed the eight Mahayana precepts. Therefore, just like he did, it is possible also for us to do. However, myself releasing from samsara is not sufficient, is not enough. All sentient beings are the field from which I receive all the small pleasures and the greater pleasures, the happiness in the past Also any happiness that I receive in the present, and all the happiness that I will receive in the future. Totally, starting from the small happiness of feeling cool, feeling hot, starting from that small pleasure up to the most sublime happiness of enlightenment—all this happiness has to be received by depending on the kindness of each sentient beings The sentient beings are also the field from which I receive all my three diamonds, perfection. They are of utmost need, relative to the beginning of Dharma practice, and even in the middle and the end of Dharma practice. So I am responsible to enlighten all mother sentient beings by releasing them from all suffering. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment. In order to achieve enlightenment I must discipline my speech and body and mind. Therefore I am going to take Mahayana ordination until tomorrow morning.”

At the end of the third repetition of the prayer, think that you have perfectly received the ordination in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless other buddhas and bodhisattvas.

PRAYER

Also repeat the prayer of the precepts, thinking, “I am going to observe these precepts for one day as the previous tathagatas observed the precepts.”

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

MANTRA

DEDICATION

Think, “May it be successful as the meaning of the prayer contains.” While concentrating on the three circles, oneself and the merit, enlightenment, and also sentient beings, in the emptiness of self-existence, concentrate on the absolute nature and dedicate the merits. Think, “May I receive enlightenment soon by receiving the fundamental realization of bodhicitta, the full realization of the absolute true nature, and the fully renouncing mind of samsara in order to enlighten all mother sentient beings by releasing them from all suffering.

It is very useful and beneficial to understand the brief prayer on the seven limb written in the book, and it is very useful, extremely useful to know how to think of each one. How to make prostrations, make confession, how to rejoice, how to dedicate, each of these things. Also how to make offerings. It is very useful because this is the essential method of creating merits and purification, which means the same thing. Especially, the practice of the seven limbs is very necessary. Without depending on such purification, it is difficult to receive any other realizations of the graduated path. Receiving realizations on the graduated path requires the support of this purifying method, the seven limbs. Without depending on this method it doesn't become successful, even though the person knows the meditation, and tries to practice. It doesn't become successful, it takes much time and always the person cannot continue the practice; there are so many hindrances. This practice of the seven limbs is the best, essential method to stop all the hindrances of the meditation. It is an extremely useful, beneficial method that can be done by anybody—lay people, celebrates, anybody. Also it is not that difficult to understand. Enlightenment cannot be received without depending on this purifying method. So each of them has incredible benefits, generally, if one is going to talk, incredible benefits.

For prostration we can do like this. First, the object to whom you make the prostration should be visualized. If you just make the physical exercise without any reason, without a Dharma reason, without any object to whom you make prostrations, the enlightened beings, it is just a physical exercise and doesn't have benefits. But prostrations have benefits. How? One thing is this. It is mainly the power of the object of the prostration, the perfect being. Because of that the prostration has incredible benefits and becomes such a big purification. Also at the prostration time if you can meditate like this it is very useful. Visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas. Think as the number of atoms there are in this universe, there are that many holy objects—Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in the middle surrounded by as many holy objects as there are numbers of atoms in the universe. You are in the presence of these numberless holy objects. The continuity of all of your beginningless previous lives is in the form of a human being and you prostrations at the same time. This is one extraordinary method, a special technique, a method to quickly purify, because negative karma is not only created by this life. There are so many collections of negative karma created by different previous lives, from beginningless previous lifetimes, so therefore it is necessary to purify all this. Therefore if you can visualize this it is very effective and useful. Visualize all your previous lives in the human form and make prostrations together in the presence of the holy objects. First of all think of one group, then think of each of the holy objects equal to the number of atoms, and you are in the presence of each of these holy objects, from numberless beginningless lifetimes, and make prostrations like this. As much you can think, make prostrations.

When you make prostrations first of all, the hand and the feet have to be kept together like this. If the feet split then this becomes disrespectful, so the feet are together and the hands are like this. This one prostration with the hand like this [thumbs out], this kind of mudra means you have wrong realization. If you put the hands like this then also it becomes disrespectful, and makes the karma to be born in a period or place where there is no Buddha, such as in the dark eons. The thumbs inside

signifies the making offering jewel. According to Buddhadharmā the prostration is like this. First of all you have to put your hand on top of your head, in the center of the head like this. Prostrate like this with the devotion that comes by thinking of the enlightened beings' infinite knowledge, power, and compassion. Prostrating like this creates the karma to receive the holy signs of the holy body such as the double head, the hair knot on the top like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has when we become enlightened. There are many holy signs of the enlightened beings. Perhaps the person may be thinking, "Without doing that, can't the person receive enlightenment?" However like this. For instance, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body has all kinds of different holy signs. He has many holy signs signifying the realizations he has achieved—such as the chakras and feet and hands and many other things. However that is because in his previous lifetime when he was following the path in many lifetimes he created good karma, merit that brings the result of each of these holy signs. Just like this, in order to achieve enlightenment, in order to achieve the enlightened holy body that has that much knowledge, such as the thirty-two holy signs like this. This is the knowledge of the enlightened beings' holy body. Just one part of the knowledge of the enlightened beings' holy body. In order to achieve the enlightened beings' holy body that has infinite knowledge, besides this there are many other knowledges, powers that it has. Therefore, in order to achieve the enlightened beings' holy body with infinite knowledge we have to create the karma, the cause. Before receiving enlightenment we have to create the cause, the karma that brings the merit, that brings each of these knowledges of the holy body. For instance, the cause that brings each of the holy signs of his holy body. Without creating the merit, the cause, if one thing is missing, such as, for instance, the cause of the double hair knot, there is no way to achieve enlightenment. So all the causes have to be created. The purpose is to be able to receive the hair knot when we receive enlightenment.

Then to the forehead like this. Prostrating at the forehead creates the merit to be able to receive the hair curl in the center of the forehead. That also signifies the realization that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has achieved. Even just to achieve this so much incredible merit has to be created. Then the third time, at the throat prostrating like this.

The fourth time at the heart. Prostrating like this, one purifies the negative karma of the body. Prostrating at the throat purifies all the negativities of speech and prostrating at the forehead purifies all the negative karma of the mind. Generally the benefits are like this. This is purifying any negative karma of speech, body, and mind and attaining the Buddha's holy speech, body, and mind. These are the total benefits of making prostrations.

Each time when you prostrate think that the light coming from the holy objects purifies negativities.

Then you put the two knees—the five limb prostration means the forehead, the two hands, and the two knees have to touch the ground, no matter how dirty the place is, the forehead has to touch the ground, otherwise doesn't become a five limb prostration. You can't have the hands folded in [fist clenched]—this is disrespectful, and also becomes the karma for having animal's feet. Not like this, but in a gentle way, a respectful way.

Also you should not lie down that much—just touch the ground and again get up quickly. That signifies your getting out of samsara, releasing from samsara. When you get up without dragging on the ground you get up.

I think I stop there.

9 am

Think, “I must lead all mother sentient beings into enlightenment by releasing them from all suffering. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment. Therefore I have to complete the realization of the graduated path to enlightenment. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path.”

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It is well expounded by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. “Well expounded” means without mistakes and clearly. Then, it is a profound teaching according to the understanding of Atisha and the great yogi Guru Tsongkhapa. It includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person’s achievement of enlightenment.

This teaching, this commentary on the graduated path has four topics for the outlines. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teachings, and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path. This last one has two outlines also—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking essence with the perfect human rebirth. This last outline is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being has two outlines—bringing up the thought seeking a better future life and following the method that brings happiness in the future life. The first one, bringing up thought seeking a better future life has two outlines—thinking of death and the shortness of the human life and thinking of happiness or suffering that comes after death. The first part is briefly finished.

After that, what comes is the explanation on suffering, the explanation on the suffering of the evil destinies. When you meditate, do checking meditation on whether you have created negative karma or not. If you don’t check up then you don’t remember. If you don’t check up you don’t recognize. If you don’t recognize and if you don’t check up always there is a feeling in the depth of your mind that, “I am good, okay, all right, perfect, nothing is wrong, I didn’t make any mistakes, I am always perfect, always right.” There is this spontaneous intuitive thought always happening there. Like this. This only disturbs one from realizing oneself or one’s life or actions. In this way also you don’t change because you don’t check up, you don’t recognize what is negative karma. In this way also, not checking, not recognizing, it is so difficult to do the practice of avoiding the negative actions as much as possible and creating positive actions as much as possible. It is difficult to do this practice if there is no wisdom.

Therefore, first there is the need for the wisdom understanding karma. It is necessary to have this wider, as much as possible. Actually it is not easy to know every single action and to know what is right and what is wrong. It is not easy but there is always the possibility to bring up the wisdom in order to realize what’s right and wrong. This is done mainly by understanding the mind, the different function of mind, and by recognizing different negative thoughts. What I mean is that if the person has no examples, there is nothing to point out, and then even if the person checks up, “I have created negative karma, how many negative karmas have I created today, in this life,” when the person checks and doesn’t have the wisdom to recognize, then the person can find nothing. Then he

thinks he is perfect, all right, pure. He thinks he is not ignorant. Many people think, “I have no anger, no attachment.” Just in that moment they think that having anger means they are always getting angry, spontaneously, all hours of the day and night, all the time, and that the mind is violent. So they say, “I have no attachment, anger, or ignorance; I am completely perfect.” They just close their wisdom, their understanding wisdom. I meet many young people who say this. Also they say, “This example can be talked about later on, I am not interested now!” This is wrong. In the present time not strongly getting angry doesn’t mean that one is released from anger; it doesn’t mean that. In the present time the person not having attachment to another person doesn’t mean the person is completely released from that attachment. He doesn’t have physical strong attachment to that person momentarily, in a short time. This we can easily understand because after some time, in different times, he gets angry or attached to that object, and it is just a matter of time. However that means he has anger, it is always there. It is just a matter of becoming visible in different times. Only when the person is completely released from ignorance which is the cause of anger and attachment, when the person is completely free from ignorance, and that time the person is completely free also from attachment and anger and also other negative minds. Somehow like this is very good, checking through attachment with the evil thought of the worldly dharmas, how many actions we did—this is one of the most useful things to check, to be always conscious of. Then checking more details and also checking how many of the ten immoralities I have created. Those are the examples of the negative karmas. Whether we talk about ten immoralities, whether we give them this name or not, the actions are done with negative minds, with different negative minds. About the brief explanation on different negative minds, this is in the part of the meditation on general samsaric suffering. There is a little definition of each negative mind. Also you read, recognizing the different negative minds is very important. In that way you can recognize whether an action is pure or not. From there you can judge, otherwise it is difficult to judge. Because you can’t judge just the mere action you have to judge through the mind, the creator the mind, whatever is there, and through that you have to judge. The definition comes by checking the creator, the mind. Just the mere action, even though it looks like a good generous action, it can be negative, and even though it looks like a negative action, it can be positive. The action itself doesn’t make it definite—by checking the creator the mind, by checking that, then you know the difference. The purpose of why I told you to meditate on the ten immoralities checking like this, attachment, the action done with the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, checking—this is just a method, just an example. It doesn’t mean that everything we do in life, all the actions, the negative karmas we create in our life are included in the ten immoralities. The ten immoralities are just an example in order for ordinary people, for beginners to recognize the negative karma. For that reason some simple examples are given, and those are the ten immoralities explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in his teachings. By understanding the fundamental things such as these negative karmas, from this we can figure out the other negative actions. However the meditation that we have been doing, checking like this, is very, very useful. By checking like this, for instance, the ten immoralities, each of the actions has a different suffering result. So by checking the karma like this, we know the actions done with the evil thought of the worldly Dharmas, the ten immoralities—through this then we understand whether we have created karma, negative karma, to be born in the suffering realm, the evil destinies or not. Through this we can discover and also discover whether we are going to be born there or not after this life—whether it is more sure that we will suffer there or be born in an upper realm. Which is more sure. By understanding karma, your mind, somehow if there is not so much negative karma created, or if you do much purification, somehow the mind finds some confidence, trust, feeling relaxed. Generally it is very useful to do meditation on the suffering of the evil destinies, very useful. However all these sufferings are karmically created things, individual karmic creations just like I talked about yesterday—how the intermediate stage beings are suffering with their karmically created visions, the illusive visions that

are projected by the ill mind and are not recognized as just illusion, and there is so much suffering with wrong conception. Just like this, simple, very simple.

For instance, in the dream we fight each other, kill each other. Sometimes in the dream you get dreams of horrible wars, fighting, somebody killing you, so many fighting things happen. Also in the dream you are so scared, so worried and scared, and in the dream you are trying to escape from suffering. That is also a karmically created vision. The other things such as the narak sufferings, the intermediate state—those sufferings are actually experienced. The little difference between the dream and that is that in the dream even though your body is cut into pieces actually it is not cut into pieces; your body is there without wound. However, that fighting vision was a karmically created vision. In the dream the person is suffering so much, worrying so much, all kinds of horrible things, seeing, fighting. All kinds of frightening things are happening. That is the experience of that individual. That is that person's karmic experience. So whatever he dreams I don't see, even though we slept together in the room. I don't see that thing happening, many things going on, war, I don't see. I don't have that dream; I don't feel or see anything like this in my dream, so this is contradicting others experience. There is only one reason for which I don't get that dream. Only one reason. That is wrong, that cannot be proven because I didn't dream such things. The other person's particular karmic vision cannot be experienced by me, and what I experience is my own karmic creation.

As the example is given here, we cannot say that there is no such thing, no such suffering, like this. We cannot say this. Just like we cannot say for sure by seeing. For instance, in Kathmandu Valley at the moment we see houses and beautiful places and we believe it will always be like this. We don't see flames or water, lakes. But because we don't see this now, we cannot say this will never happen; we cannot contradict completely. Just with ignorance without knowing.

Student: I have had the experience of waking up in the morning and remembering being in a dream with the lady I lived with and talking to her and she had the same experience. How is that possible?
Rinpoche: Sometimes it is possible. Those things happen because there is some karmic contact and also the minds of both persons mind are involved in the same thing. That kind of thing is possible. Generally there are all kinds of different dreams. Many times things come due to the relationship, due to the attachment, many times. There are different types of dreams. Anyway, it is not necessary to talk about at this time.

So we cannot really say, we cannot completely negate that no-one will see Kathmandu Valley like this, full of fire or lakes. So that's how we cannot contradict other people's experience of seeing different things—even the object that is experienced by other people and not experienced by us, we cannot contradict. Because it is a karmic thing, because the cause of the visions or experience that the individual himself has was created by the individual himself. The cause was created by himself, and the result cannot be experienced by another person.

For instance, when one friend is in trouble, having pain, making much noise, so much moving, making much noise, terrible pain, as much as you wish to share that pain, to experience his pain, as much as you wish it, there is no choice. As much you like him, as much as you are attached to him, wanting to suffer for him, there is no choice to take his suffering. Why? Why doesn't the other person have the capability to share, to give his suffering to his friend in order to make it less? Why does he have an uncontrolled experience? Because at that time he has to experience the suffering result the cause of which was only created by him. There are also people who see certain mountains,

places full of fire, so many flames coming around, and then their other friends, other people, do not see anything, no mountains, no flames, but this person sees flames around, from all sides flames come and they are so scared. But his karmic vision is not seen by other people, that's why they are not worried. However it is like this. Just only because we don't fully see, only because of this reason, we cannot contradict these experiences of suffering explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha as he fully understands them. Even though there are beings who experience suffering like this, we don't see them suffering. Just like this example, just like that dream. The two people slept in the same room, and this person doesn't see the other person's dream and whatever he is doing during the dream.

(BREAK)

Student: Because each of our karmic creations is reality, how is it that within certain limits our realities are consistent? How is that?

Rinpoche: Because there is similar karma created in previous times to be together like this, with each person like this, together in such a tent. There was similar karma created before.

Student: If I die while sleeping how do I recognize I am really dead and not dreaming?

Rinpoche: If you died in a dream—many times it happened, you die in dream. Actually your dreaming that is not the actual death, not actual death, you dreaming death is not the actual death.

Student: Sometimes, particularly at the course where I am more aware of my dreams, it seems as if I receive teachings either during or in between dreams. How can I understand these experience?

Rinpoche: You mean you dreaming while receiving teaching!

Student: Are those karmically created?

Rinpoche: Yes.

Student: It makes no sense to try and learn from them?

Rinpoche: Yes, even receiving dreams comes from karma.

Student: If all experiences in dreams are from karma, is it possible through dream telepathy to program another human being's mind so when they go to dreams for understanding of what's happening in their life, they come in contact with what you telepathed in the mind and you are actually being the force?

Rinpoche: You are leading them to certain dreams you mean?

Student: Yes. [Dennis used the example of programming world leaders to think more peacefully.]

Rinpoche: It is possible to do that with certain powers, show things through dreams. Through certain powers that is definitely possible.

Student: Do Tibetans ever do that with world leaders?

Rinpoche: [Gave no reply]

Student: When we wake after sleeping is there anything we can do to remember our dreams or before we go to sleep or during the day?

Rinpoche: It depends on you, it is possible. Through Vajrayana practice it is possible to have conscious dreams, besides remembering the whole dream. Like that you can do as you do in the day, you can do also in the dream time. Like this, mainly the same thing, basically the same thing. Not remembering dreams is also due to unconsciousness, just like we don't remember the previous life, don't remember many things we have done in this life. This is mainly caused by ignorance, forgetting dreams. Therefore as it is mainly caused by the pollution of ignorance, there is a way through purification to make the mind more conscious. Besides that there are many other methods to get predictions in the dream. If you have plans to do in the future just to check up whether it will be successful or not, things like that. You can check in the dreams. There is a technique through which the person can check in the dreams. Like how long the life will exist—anything can be

checked in the dream through certain deities, by making meditation on certain deities. In the day making very hard, very strong purification and reciting mantra, making strong purification and concentrating on that deity in order to get the prediction in the dream. According to the person's practice, how pure, how strong purification he has made during the day, then pray to this deity, then go to sleep in the night time by completely relying on this different manifestation of Buddha, whatever you meditated on. Then you sleep, then either maybe you see a similar form of the deity or the deity manifested in the form of a monk or a certain aspect, and then it predicts, tells you how it will be. There are things like this. Also before the dream the mind is planning, the mind is completely planning, trying to remember, trying to not forget, making strong energy like this. This is mainly due to the purification, so the person can remember. There are many techniques like this. Many of the lamas check things through dreams. There are many other ways to check up, but also through dreams they check up with their own specific deities.

There are different examples like this, such as the person's specific karmic visions, what he sees cannot be seen by others no matter how much the person suffering, things like this, just simple examples. Another simple example is, for instance, in a hot country, terribly hot but some people really enjoy, while some people find much suffering being in the hot place. They feel different, even though they are at the same place. Both are karmic things, both are decided, fixed up, by the individual karma. Such a person's experience and feeling does not depend on the condition that is there. It doesn't mainly depend on the outer condition, it mainly depends on the mind. One person's mind is not happy, and the other person's mind is happy. It is not up to the condition, it is up to the mind. Different karma mind. In this way we can see how the different situation is created by mind. In this way it is easy to understand how it came from karma, how each person's experience and views are karmic view. Individual karmic views. However this person cannot contradict his experience. Like this. So therefore even though we don't actually see this suffering realm, we cannot contradict it saying, "There is no such thing existing."

One thing is this. In all of existence, the definition whether something exists or not is not up to our understanding. Generally the definition of whether it exists or not—anything, any existence, phenomena, any existence—is not up to my mind or understanding. For instance, even just thinking this way. There are infinite numberless objects that I didn't discover, I don't see, but they are experienced, fully discovered, and seen by other sentient beings, other enlightened beings. Just because they are not an object of my present understanding mind I cannot say they do not exist at all. How can I contradict completely like this? Just like this. Anyway, if you are born in the narak suffering, even the lightest, smallest suffering there, in certain stages where there is lighter suffering and a shorter period of experiencing suffering, for instance, for the time of one day here in the human realm, three hundred and sixty spears are put on all over the body. Comparing this experience that we experience in the human realm and the smallest suffering of the lighter stage of the narak realm, the human experience of this suffering is still nothing compared to even the smallest suffering. So this is just only talking about the lighter stages of the narak where there are lighter and shorter periods of suffering. This is just an example in order to have some idea, understanding how it is. According to the individual's karma there are all kinds of different sufferings, some greater experiences, and difference between experiences like this. Generally it is like this. You see, for instance, now when we understand the teachings, as we go through the teachings, as we start to understand a little bit, we feel very happy in the mind when we hear teachings, sort of carrying very heavy luggage. Because of the problem with attachment ... you see somehow this that this teaching explains is something that has to be done. It is a good thing, what the teaching says, it is a good thing if it is possible to be able to do what the teaching says. You see some kind of profit

but find it very heavy. What makes the person feel heavy is attachment, because attachment wants the person to follow him, to work for him, to do whatever works attachment wants. So you find it difficult to put in action, even though you think it is good. You see it is a good thing to be done but somehow to put in action is difficult, still very heavy, difficult. However the main thing is attachment, its cause is attachment, and the most useful thing in order to cut off that which makes you feel heavy or makes you think it is so difficult to practice, almost impossible, is the attachment, ignorance. So what can control and destroy that attachment? One profound method to destroy and control that which makes you feel tired, saying Dharma is so difficult to practice, is the energy or the understanding that comes through meditation on karma and especially on the suffering realms, the suffering of the evil destinies. The deeper you understand that the more strongly you feel. Besides intellectually, that much more you strongly feel the suffering of the evil destinies, and as you can that much strongly feel it, understand or feel it, and not want to experience suffering, that much you can make the decision. That much energy comes. As that much energy comes, it is that easy to avoid negative karma. It is that easy to avoid negative karma. As this energy that comes through understanding these meditations or these sufferings is seen more and more clearly, and you strongly feel the suffering of the evil destinies through the meditation, as your energy that comes through the understanding and meditation increases, the person has less and less difficulties and problems avoiding negative karma, avoiding the actions of attachment that we always find difficult at the beginning, that we think are almost impossible to give up that. Like this. Afterwards through continual meditation on this, it changes. That which you found almost an impossible thing at the beginning, afterwards becomes so easy, so simple. Afterwards as this energy is received through your meditation by clearly understanding the suffering of the evil destinies, the strong feeling of that, as this increases, there is less and less difficulty in the practice. There is less difficulty in regards to avoiding the negative karma, and not so much problem in your mind because easy and difficult are only created by the mind. Easy and difficult are not something that are there without depending on your mind's creation. They are just mind creation. They are just a way of thinking. However this meditation is the most useful profound technique, extremely useful to stop negative karma, to give understanding and energy, to stop creating negative karma. It is like an atomic bomb that explodes the attachment, very useful. Especially for ordinary beginners it is very useful. Without having such an understanding result of negative karma, without this, it is very difficult for any action to become pure, and difficult to avoid negative karma.

For instance, in certain situation when there is strong attachment arising, or such strong anger coming, think like this, "Now I am creating negative karma. By the negative mind arising I am creating negative karma." Then think, "This is negative karma but why should I worry about this negative karma? It doesn't matter even though it is negative karma." Just thinking, "This is negative karma," doesn't give much feeling to you. It is just saying, it doesn't move the mind. Just that doesn't make mind understand, because the mind has no experience, no deep understanding. Thinking that doesn't move the mind to lose the attachment, to cut off the negative action. First of all thinking, "This is negative karma; even though it is negative karma, it doesn't matter," perhaps it is possible to think like this. But it is not easy, negative karma is not easy. Thinking, "Why am I getting angry now?" is very useful. Because I don't want this difficulty or suffering. In order to stop that I get angry. In order to stop the difficulty of that suffering I get angry. If you check up, when you have attachment, anger, when you check up, it is all to get pleasure for oneself. The whole thing, the whole point is that. So think like this. "For what reason am I getting angry? I am getting angry because I want this pleasure by having something, receiving something, many things, and to stop that suffering, difficulty, I get angry." Then think, "If I do not desire that suffering, difficulty, same thing, for the same reason I don't want to experience the suffering result of this negative karma, I

am getting angry. For the same reason.” So now you see, now you remember the suffering result, the suffering in the evil destinies, you remember as you have been making meditation, you remember this dangerous situation. It is incredibly unbearable. Because of the mind being conscious of the result of this karma, there is energy in the mind. As that understanding the energy to give up this negative action, to renounce this negative action arises. So all of a sudden when you think of the result of the suffering negative karma, when you think of that, when you strongly feel the suffering result, the anger just goes, disappears, is lost. Besides losing the anger losing the person feels repentance, “Oh, I shouldn’t have gotten angry,” repentance rises, which is beneficial, which always makes the karma less powerful. Checking, your mind being conscious of the suffering result of this negative action, that’s how it is useful right away. It is the same thing with attachment—also you can think, check like this. Also the reason I am now creating negative karma, the purpose of that attachment arising is to receive pleasure and stop suffering, to stop some problem. There is always something like that there to stop suffering, some suffering, a certain difficulty. Then think, “If I cannot bear this” ... also you can question like this, it is very useful. “Which should I choose, experiencing this suffering, this temporal suffering and the suffering of the result of this negative karma that has to be experienced in the evil destinies, that suffering result and this temporal problem, suffering—which can’t I bear, which is worse? Which can’t I bear, which is more terrible?” You check like this. The suffering result of this negative karma, of this attachment arising is much more unbearable, more terrible, much greater so when you think and see in this way, all of a sudden you stop creating negative karma with attachment. At the same time, when you think of the suffering result like this, the greater suffering, more unbearable, you lose the attachment, like the anger the attachment is lost. As the attachment is lost you stop creating negative karma. Also besides stopping negative karma, as the attachment goes down, you don’t have that suffering, that is lost. That suffering that you had before, not having that possession, not having that friend, something, that difficulty, that problem before, as the attachment goes down also that other problem that you are raising as suffering, that also disappears, is lost. So it helps in so many ways, and it is very useful in daily life. Totally talking, emphasizing, it is very useful to stop creating negative karma, one of the best methods, especially for those who don’t have much deep understanding, for beginners, this is very useful. In this way you can change the action to a positive one very easily, even though it was negative before. All of a sudden it can be changed very easily, as your mind changes.

The benefits are as Shantideva said in his teaching, by remembering the suffering of the evil destinies, anger, pride, these things, by remembering these, it destroys pride and jealousy, many other negative minds. For instance, a person has so much knowledge and thinks, “I am so important, I am the most wise person,” building up so much pride, so much unpeaceful mind. Then when the person thinks of the negative karma created by the pride arising and checks up the result of that, the suffering of the evil destinies, when he checks that, all of a sudden his pride goes down—when he sees his future suffering, his pride goes down. It is all a psychological method, very practical, that helps right away. Also in this way, the more we understand suffering beings, their unbearable suffering, the more we understand, the more we feel, in that way it is easy to rise, to build compassion. So this helps very much, understanding this, doing meditation on this helps very much to bring up compassion and by bringing up compassion we receive bodhicitta quicker. So, so many benefits.

Sometimes also Tibetan Lamas do this. When they come to sit on the throne, also they think of impermanence, they think all causative things are impermanent. Like a star ... I don’t know how to say. Sometimes we see things not clearly in the eyes, flickering like a star. Stars are very impermanent, they disappear in a short time. Like the light, like the phantom, like water dew, very

impermanent, a little drop of water that stays on flowers and grass, which doesn't last, like a dream, like lightening, like a cloud, like this. Generally however it is up to the person, but generally thinking like this. That is to control the pride, by sitting on a high throne there is the danger of pride arising and other negative minds as well, so therefore just before sitting there, the mind has to concentrate causative things which are like this. In this way there is no attachment, no problem comes in the mind. However impermanent sometimes just becomes a word, even though you think it, it just becomes words, it doesn't give a feeling. So it is very effective to remember the narak suffering of the evil destinies. All of a sudden that keeps you away from negative mind, away from problems like this. The purpose of making three prostrations is this. It is the practice through certain lineages of lamas that prostrations have to be made to the merit field, the holy object with which we usually create merit. So visualize that and visualize the guru in a different manifestation of the buddhas, then after making prostrations, as the person sit on the throne, all these holy objects have to be absorbed into the center and then become oneness. In this way there are many importances, many purposes to losing the negative mind, pride, attachment, and many other things—there are also other purposes. It is useful to talk like this. It makes the meditation more practical. This is not just something to use at a time, at a certain hour, like this. Not just like this. This is not just to use at a certain time and for the rest of the day sort of completely unconscious, in another world, not like this.

Actually, lamrim meditation, for instance, some people do meditation just like emptiness, trying to stop thoughts, things like that. Trying to concentrate on one object like those simple meditations at a certain time in the morning, maybe they do this then the rest of the day there is no method, the mind is just crazy, the person doesn't have a method when the mind is violent, the body, speech, and all actions are violent—no method. The person's short meditation that he does in the morning doesn't make much sense, doesn't really benefit his life. That kind of meditation doesn't really benefit, doesn't really stop the problem, doesn't make one understand the nature of life, of oneself and others. Actually lamrim meditation, meditation on the graduated path, is something that doesn't need a certain specific time, or a specific schedule, no matter what the person is doing—outside, working, traveling, at the job, all the time, day and night, but lamrim is something, is a method that makes the way you live, the daily life, peaceful, happy or peaceful, happy and peaceful, avoiding negative actions, by avoiding negative action. It is really happy and peaceful. It is something that the person can continuously live in it, no matter what work the person does.

Student: Would you say that the dream state was just like the after death state?

Rinpoche: The dream state is just like after death state.

Student: But I thought you started by making a comparison between the dream state and the after death state of the narak and preta.

Rinpoche: The dream is explained for two reasons. One thing is to talk about karma, the other person. Karma cannot be experienced by another person and that suffering is not exactly like a dream. It is not a dream—what I mean is, it is not just dreaming, not just dreaming. For that reason I mentioned the example, for instance, in a dream your body is cut in pieces but actually your body is lying there, actually not cut in pieces, it doesn't have even one wound. So these sufferings are not just dreaming.

The lamrim is the teaching on how to talk, how to eat, how to sleep, what should be done, what shouldn't be done, the whole thing, what to do when there is this problem, what to do when there is this problem—just like different types of medicine. So by talking about the specific subject, how the meditation can help in daily life, how it is practical, what can be used right away, this is useful to talk

about and to think about. It is useful to know. In our minds, even though we see the Dharma is good, enlightenment has so much incredible benefit, even though our understanding has some knowledge, from the person's side we think it is good to be able to attain this, but then when the person comes to the action, close to the action, what should be done, they find it difficult, very difficult. I am talking about that kind of mind, and for that kind of mind it is more useful to think of suffering, otherwise there is no energy for that kind of mind.

Student: Isn't this rather like a trick to persuade the dualistic mind to become energetic, because the conception of the hell state is a dualistic conception, so aren't you encouraging us to think in a relative way in order to work towards absolute truth?

Rinpoche: The beginning I understood, but the last one was a little bit like mud.

Student: For instance, meditation on the suffering states is training, encouraging us to think in a dualistic way because the description of suffering, burning, cold, hot, a dualistic conception, so this is encouraging us to meditate on a relative conception in order to approach absolute truth.

Rinpoche: How you are going to stop the dualistic, what method to stop dualistic mind? Do you know? I am joking. This you check up, this one question, okay, right. For instance, a room full of kaka, in order to clean and live in it and use it as a room, does it need a different method to clean, a different method than washing with water, first you take the kaka—does it need different method or not? This you check up. Then same thing, the patients. For the patients, for instance, the doctors know well that to cure that sickness there is the need to take different medicines, not just to take one type of medicine, it doesn't completely stop, you need to take different types of medicine, as the patient has different sicknesses. Also even to cure just one sickness you have to take different medicines at one time.

Student: First you have to make the patient realize he is sick.

Rinpoche: In a Dharma way or what way?

Student: The patient doesn't go to the hospital if he doesn't think he is sick.

Student: So you tell us to be afraid of suffering to make us feel sick.

Rinpoche: You think you are not in suffering?

Student: I am starting to believe it.

Rinpoche: You don't have suffering, you have suffering or you don't?

Student: Suffering arises from the dualistic mind.

Rinpoche: However, both believing, even though you think you don't have suffering, that is also believing. If you think all beliefs are not true, that is also believing. You think you exist here, talking, that is also believing. One thing is that you think nothing exists?

Student: Are you asking me?

Rinpoche: Do you think that what everyone experiences, what he sees, doesn't exist?

Student: It exists according to his own experience of it.

Rinpoche: So it exists according to the person, it exists as the person sees it. I see.

Student: It also exists in the absolute sense.

Rinpoche: Whatever the person sees exists. That is the definition of this existence?

Student: Part of the definition of existence is because you have relative and absolute.

Rinpoche: What is your complete definition of existence?

Student: Beginningless mind and all that stems from it. With beginningless mind you have absolute true nature and the samsaric world of relative truth.

Rinpoche: Then, what's left?

Student: Is that not a fair definition of existence?

Rinpoche: Yes, but how does that exist. What is the definition of that existence. Why is there absolute true nature and relative nature existing?

Student: Because of ignorance.

Rinpoche: I see, I see. Ignorance exists, doesn't it? You are living in ignorance, you have ignorance.

Student: Most of the time.

Rinpoche: Anyway, so just one thing. When ignorance finishes, there is no relative, no absolute nature, no absolute nature existing, nothing existing?

Student: Absolute nature exists.

Rinpoche: Why. You said absolute nature—whenever your relative nature finishes your absolute nature finishes.

Student: No, I said relative nature, samsara is created by ignorance. I appeal to the secretary!

Rinpoche: Good, you check up. Are you existing, relative or absolute?

Student: Both.

Rinpoche: You are absolutely existing. Existing absolute truth, you are absolutely existing?

Student: Yeah? The nature of my absolute existence is not the nature of me, itself. Not the nature of the self, the "I" doesn't exist absolutely, but on the absolute nature of no self—"I."

Rinpoche: That's only one good word. What do you mean by your relative existence?

Student: That is the self—"I."

Rinpoche: There is a self—"I" existing, that self—"I" exists.

Student: Relatively.

Rinpoche: Is that the definition of your relatively existing. Your absolutely existing is another discussion, okay. Your relatively existing is that, isn't that the definition of your existence?

Student: Part of it.

Rinpoche: Is the life because you are relatively existing?

Student: That's why I exist.

Rinpoche: It doesn't matter whether it is you or I. So it exists doesn't it. Relatively existing is the definition of existence isn't it? So anything people experience, people say it is relatively existent isn't it?

Student: That's where we started.

Rinpoche: You are saying the "me" is also relatively existing isn't it?

Student: I am experiencing it.

Rinpoche: So that is the same thing. My experience of the narak suffering, is that existing or not?

Student: Yes, if you have experienced it, it exists for you in a relative sense. It doesn't exist in a relative sense for me. It exists for you in a relative way.

Rinpoche: So it is existing. For instance, is your mother existing?

Student: It depends on whether rebirth exists. My mother is dead.

Rinpoche: Did your mother exist?

Student: Yes.

Rinpoche: Your mother exists, your mother didn't exist?

Student: She existed for me in a relative way, she didn't exist for you.

Rinpoche: You are saying that she existed?

Student: In relation to my experience, yes.

Rinpoche: In the depth of your mind whether you use lip or not, you think your mother exists because you see the picture of your mother. Okay. Right. Better to release the suffering of the stomach.

Day Twenty

Monday, 25th November

Precepts

Before taking the ordination it is necessary to be possessed by the pure thought in the Dharma and also it is necessary to be possessed by the pure thought of bodhicitta in order for the action of taking ordination to become a cause of enlightenment. Therefore briefly think, “Myself and all sentient beings have been experiencing suffering numberless times in samsara, particularly the suffering of the lower realms. No suffering is left that was never experienced, no pleasure is left that was never experienced. There is no new experience left in samsara. Still, as long as I follow the wrong conceptions believing the non self-existent things to be self-existent and the impermanent things to be permanent and the impure things to be pure, again in the future we will have to experience suffering in samsara continuously.” Checking like this, what was experienced before, how we experienced it, how we lived in samsara before, and again how we are going to live in samsara, by thinking that all this is an unbearable thing, information that causes the tears to come out, which makes a great upset, even the hair of the body is rising up, something like this, such information.

“Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was also an ordinary man like us. By following the eight Mahayana precepts, taking teachings, and having met the guru, he received enlightenment and he enlightened numberless sentient beings. Therefore there is no question that we can do this. But just releasing ourselves from samsara is not sufficient because all sentient beings are the field of all my past, present, and future happiness and perfection. The sentient beings are of utmost need, they are the helper, the relatives at the beginning of the Dharma practice, and even in the middle and at the end of the Dharma practice. At all times we have to depend on sentient beings’ kindness, as we depended on them in the past times, so it is the same thing in the present and future time. At the moment most of the sentient beings are extremely suffering, worse than myself, not having met the Mahayana Guru leading them on the path to enlightenment and not having met the teaching, being blind of Dharma wisdom, knowing what is wrong and what is right, what is practice and what is avoidance, therefore how the sentient beings are extremely suffering, always creating negative karma without knowing. Myself having met all these things and having a little bit of wisdom knowing what is practice and what is avoidance, for all these reasons, as I have the chance, I am responsible to look after all sentient beings, that is, to repay all sentient beings’ kindness, that is, to make them release from suffering and enlighten them. In order to enlighten them I must enlighten myself. Even the arhats have that much knowledge, psychic powers, and understanding, but they can’t help sentient beings as the buddhas do. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment first. In order to achieve enlightenment I must subdue or discipline my speech, body and mind. Therefore I am going to take the Mahayana ordination until tomorrow morning.”

Visualize the person granting the ordination surrounded by numberless Buddhas and bodhisattvas and you are taking ordination in their presence.

At the end of the third repetition of the prayer think that you have perfectly received the Mahayana ordination in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all the infinite buddhas and bodhisattvas.

PRAYER

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

MANTRA

DEDICATION

Think, “Due to the merits may all the meaning that the prayer contains be successful.” Also while you are concentrating on the emptiness of the three circles, dedicate the merits thinking like this. “May I quickly receive enlightenment by receiving realizations, the fully renounced mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute nature in order to lead all sentient beings to enlightenment by releasing them from suffering.”

So yesterday we talked about benefits of prostrations. Generally just even making them without any motivation, just bringing up devotion with the pure object of the merit field, remembering Buddha, the perfected being, and making prostrations to him even though there is no particular motivation, somehow even just that has incredible benefits, even though during the prostration time one doesn't make any meditation.

Also as much ground as is covered by the body, there are that many incredible benefits. For instance like this. Starting from the surface of the ground where the person makes prostrations, by going down the very end, by measuring down, measuring through starting from the surface of the ground to the end, as it is explained in the mandala, there are eight circles like this. As many atoms that end the body of the person making one prostration, they create benefits such as to be born as a universal king that many times. Like a king of the universe--that means a being who has created so much merit before, who has all the possessions, who controls one continent, two continents, three continents like this. So as the person's body covers the ground, that much the person's body covers wider or longer, that much there is incredible benefit.

Yesterday I talked about how prostrating on the head brings the result of the hair knot when we receive enlightenment, and prostrating at the forehead brings the result of the curled hair on the forehead when you achieve enlightenment, and prostrating at the throat signifies purifying negatives. Prostrating on the head or forehead signifies purifying negative karma created by the body and also makes the cause to attain an enlightened being's holy body. Just like this, prostrating at the throat purifies all the negativities made by the speech and also causes one to obtain the holy speech of the enlightened beings. Prostrating at the heart signifies, besides purifying all negativities created by the mind, causes one to receive the enlightened being's holy mind. Besides this, also prostrations are the opposite of pride. It is a method that is opposite to pride; it helps a great deal to lose pride, to not bring up pride. So it is a remedy for pride. When you make prostrations you can visualize as I explained before, yesterday, if you can. Visualize the object as numberless as the atoms of the universe and in the presence of each of the holy objects, are your numberless previous lifetimes in the form of human beings making prostrations. If it is not possible then the most simple thing is also this. Whatever different manifestation of Buddha to whom you are making prostrations, instead of thinking of one body making prostrations, visualize your numberless previous lives bodies making prostrations, purifying the negative karmas created in those times, created by each previous life. This is very simple. Each time as you are prostrating you can visualize also light coming and purifying. After each prostration one most useful thing is thinking, “Now I have purified the negativities of body, now I have purified the negativities of speech, and completely purified the negativities of mind”. Also the prostration can be practiced in the six paramita way. That's how, for instance, with you visualizing other sentient beings and making prostrations, making purification, you are leading them to try to practice this without being involved in the self-cherishing thought. Charity is thought of renouncing, the thought giving charity and morality is the thought of

protecting, the thought of keeping, the thought of protecting the person himself away from the self-cherishing thought during the prostration time. That is how the prostration becomes the paramita of morality.

Then how the prostration practice becomes the paramita of patience. For instance, no matter how difficult it is during the prostration time, the physical body getting tired, however the difficulties during that time, you accept or bear the difficulties during the prostration time. However even though you find it uncomfortable or difficult, in spite of that you are making prostrations, accepting the suffering or bearing the trouble. That is how the prostration becomes the paramita of patience.

Then how the prostration becomes the paramita of energy. Generally the meaning of energy is the thought of pleasing. The energy we need to practice Dharma, to meditate is the thought of being pleased in that action, in that work. So during the prostration time the mind is pleased in the action of the prostration, in that purifying method. That is the energy. That's how prostration becomes the paramita of energy.

The paramita of concentration is the mind being mindful, being conscious in regards the disciplines of the prostration, what is right. For instance, continuously being mindful in the way of making prostration or on the meditation of the prostration. Visualizing the holy object, purifying. The mind not being distracted, not like this--the body making prostrations but the mind doing some other things, going somewhere. That's how prostration becomes the paramita of concentration.

How prostration becomes the paramita of wisdom. The person's wisdom knows the right way to make prostrations, what is the disrespectful thing, the wrong method--knowing these things with wisdom. Also during the prostration time, making prostrations concentrating on the emptiness of yourself, the way you see, and the emptiness of the prostration. The emptiness of the way you think of the prostration, the emptiness of the object, the way you see, making the prostration is also concentrating like this. This is the wisdom that is checking the absolute nature of the objects. So that's how the prostration becomes also the practice of the paramita of wisdom. Like this.

According to how much understanding the person has, he can make the prostration that rich, that high purification.

Then prostrations can be whole body prostrations and even hands like this. For instance, when you see the holy object of the merit field, the symbol of the merit field such as statues and stupas, even two hands prostrating making prostration is also making prostration. Also there are mind prostrations and prostrations of speech, besides prostrations of body. Mind prostration is devotion for that holy object, that perfected being, knowing the knowledge of the enlightened being. Prostration of speech is saying the knowledge of the holy object, such as orally admiring the knowledge of the holy object. That is prostration of speech. There are prayers chanted many times containing the knowledge of the enlightened beings, and these become prostration of speech.

In regards offerings, this is one, concentrating on making offerings for purification. This second one is from the seven limb prayer. You can think yourself as the bodhisattva Kuntu Zangpo. He is a bodhisattva who made incredible, infinite offerings, transforming the body in great numbers in different realms to great numbers of buddhas. Visualizing yourself as bodhisattva Kuntu Zangpo prostrate like this, and in the hand visualize that you are offering a jewel, and from the jewel rays radiate. They bring different offerings--the rays come and on the top of rays come different

offerings, different objects for the different senses, like this. There is nectar to bring beautiful scented flowers, a very scented blissful nature, and scented sweet incense. There is light, blissful nature light, and blissful nature music, different types of music. Each different offering is made, such as beautiful divine robes, and all these are in a blissful nature. Just by seeing, just by listening, just by touching, just by tasting--there are also blissful offering cakes. Then as you have visualized the rays coming from the jewel, a great number of them, then again from each of those offerings again there are more offerings, like from the music, more music increasing, from that increasing more, more, and more music. Also from the flowers, light rays come and more flower offerings. Like this from each offering, increasing more and more like this. You can think visually this is like infinite space, infinite sky and all is a blissful nature, an offering to the merit field, the holy object that you are visualizing, such as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas, surrounded by all holy beings. You can also think like this. These are mentally transformed offerings. Besides the actual material offerings these are mentally transforming offerings that create so many benefits and merits, equal to the number you visualize.

I think I stop there.

9 am

So the quotation on bodhicitta takes time also, because it doesn't make the subject go quickly, so then after some time only it gets to the part of the Mahayana meditations. Then maybe as it comes to the meditation there is a little bit on the benefits of bodhicitta again.

Generally the purpose of beginning the subject with bodhicitta is that even if the person doesn't know any other methods, any other meditation, having some understanding of the benefits of bodhicitta and knowing that this thought is a really pure thought and thinking that with this thought is impossible to give harm and that it only causes peace and happiness for other beings and oneself, besides not just creating negative karma. Is a pure thought that is useful to have. Also the nature of that thought is well contained, and it is the thought always dedicating, always working for other sentient beings, always dedicating and using everything that one has for other sentient beings. Always using oneself, always dedicating oneself for other sentient beings, always trying to gain the method for other beings to receive happiness and to receive peace. Totally the nature of this thought is like this. So if a person has a little bit of understanding like this, bodhicitta, this pure thought, is based on the mind being well contained. That mind being well contained cuts off so many problems. Almost half of the life problems. So the person knowing just a little bit of the benefits of bodhicitta is fortunate. Even just bringing up the thought of bodhicitta, this realization, is a good thing, a good mind, seeing it as beneficial. Even having a little understanding of that, the person is lucky, fortunate. He is more fortunate than the person maybe who has been doing some other meditation for years and years, but has no understanding of bodhicitta or the benefits of bodhicitta, nothing. This person who knows a little bit about the benefits of bodhicitta, who thinks bodhicitta is a pure thought, is a good thing, he is more fortunate, I think, than the other person.

Then especially besides just thinking it is good, by understanding and hearing the benefits of the knowledge of bodhicitta, bringing up the thought, the wish to receive bodhicitta. Through this understanding, wishing to receive bodhicitta, thinking, "Oh, I would like to receive this realization, this bodhicitta." That person is incredibly lucky, an extremely fortunate person. The person just wishing it creates infinite benefits. I think the person may get tired.

As I said before, in Shantideva's teaching and in Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's sutra teaching, the person prostrating, with the hands prostrating like this, thinking always to cultivate bodhicitta for all other sentient beings, even just this creates infinite benefits as infinite as space, because the object for whom you generate bodhicitta is sentient beings and the number of sentient beings is infinite. Comparing those benefits and the number of grains of sand of the Pacific, that number of jewels in the universe, that number of Buddhas, that number of eons. That's what I mean. Just even wishing, even bringing up the thought to achieve bodhicitta, even wishing it, the person is incredibly fortunate. As it has that much benefit, the person receives that much higher understanding, creates that much benefit. Therefore, concerning many of these details at the beginning of the quotation on bodhicitta, a little bit I will try to explain as much as possible. I can't really explain, it is impossible--I can't really explain but I know one or two words due to the blessings of the gurus, so with these one or two words, I try to make noise! Like a chicken ... not a chicken ... baby chicks! I think that is a good example.

Even if the person doesn't know how to practice bodhicitta, doesn't know the method, just even within a few days, two or three days, even if the person receives even just that thought, the person is that lucky. The merits that the person creates within two or three days of the course, that is something that, even though he lives two hundred years in the West, his whole life studying, perhaps he may not create even a small part of that merit in all his life.

Therefore all this rest of the meditations starting from the meditation on way of following the guru and the perfect human rebirth, all this part of the meditation, and also emphasizing that part of the suffering meditation, particularly the suffering of the evil destinies, the suffering of samsara--all these are methods if you want to receive bodhicitta. By practicing these following meditations, each of these, actually what we are doing is that we are actually trying to understand the method that makes us receive bodhicitta. Before we talked much about the benefits, now we are really going through the method, we are practicing those following meditations. This is like hearing so much about New York, for example, so many things are there, and then afterwards you understand more and more and your mind cannot stand it any more, you want to go to New York right away, you cannot wait. Anyway then you take the actual path, make the actual trip, and then try to make money to get the tickets, then go by taxi to the airport, and take the airplane to India--like this gradually. Without making the money for the ticket, without having a ticket, without all this, one cannot get there--just by wishing you can't get there. So just like the person who is making arrangements for that trip, just to go to New York, just like that, you are practicing these following meditations to be able to achieve the infinitely beneficial, pure thought of bodhicitta.

As we discussed yesterday, in order to achieve enlightenment the dualistic mind has to be purified. In order to purify the dualistic mind it is necessary to achieve bodhicitta. In order to achieve bodhicitta it is necessary to train the mind in all these following meditations, so therefore, starting from beginningless mind, from the perfect human rebirth, all these are methods, as is bodhicitta, to purify and cut off the dualistic mind. Just a simple example. When a person's leg is bitten by a snake, wherever there is poison, that place has to be taken out through surgery. For instance, this is one way of saying--as we get confusion in the mind when we meditate on suffering, one day meditating on suffering, how it works, then not really understanding the point of the meditation, and the mind gets confused, conflicted. A simple example is surgery. For instance, in surgery cutting the skin where there is poison--that is done in order to bring peace, in order to cure it. So even if there is a little pain, even though there is a little pain that has to be experienced in order to cure and stop the bigger danger, the heavy sickness or death that comes afterward, due to the poison. There are many

other heavy sicknesses that can be caused by the poison. For instance, if the person cares about the little pain of the injection, if the person doesn't understand that the injection is to cure, to stop the bigger danger that comes afterwards, if the person doesn't understand this and cares about temporal things, there is no way to be cured. So the wise person doesn't care about that; even though there is pain he doesn't care, because he thinks it is a method to cure and stop the bigger problem, such as the danger of death, and many other heavy problems. Therefore he bears it. This is recognized as clever; this person is wise.

It is important to know how all these meditations are the method to cut off the dualistic mind. People use dualistic mind, I don't think dualistic ... There are many different types of dualistic.

Therefore before listening to the actual subject, it is necessary to be possessed by the pure thought of bodhicitta, thinking that, "I must lead all sentient beings into enlightenment by releasing them from all suffering. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment. In order to achieve enlightenment I must complete the realization of the whole graduated path, therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path."

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it is a teaching that is well expounded by the two great philosophers, Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding of the teaching. This teaching includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

This commentary on the graduated path has four outlines. In order to show reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teachings and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines--the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path. The way of training the mind in the graduated path has two outlines--persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The last one is divided into three--the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being has two outlines--bringing up the thought seeking better a future life and following the method that brings happiness in the future life. Now the last one, following the method to gain happiness in the future life, has two outlines--refuge, which is the holy door of the teaching and bringing up the understanding belief in the karma that is the root of all perfection and all happiness.

(Page 62)
Refuge

Milarepa quotation. This is the essence of his teaching. Also we think that being scared, having fear of samsaric suffering, having fear of the impermanent life, having fear of the eight restless stages--we think telling and emphasizing that we should have fear is ridiculous, crazy. Like this. If we are not in samsara, there is no need to fear. If you are not in samsara then you are correct, if you are not living in ignorance you are correct, you don't need fear for samsara, you don't need to develop fear of samsaric suffering, you are correct. In regards you, you are correct. If you are not living in attachment and anger, you are correct. Even the person who tells you this should have the fear of samsaric suffering, that's crazy because he doesn't have samsara, he's not living in samsara where he

needs the fear of samsara because his samsara doesn't exist. If that were so then you are correct, then the other person who tells you is really crazy.

Milarepa was not that silly, not that crazy. Of course, I mean, it takes time--understanding takes time and I understand this, that it takes time. Everything takes time.

(BREAK)

Student: The eight restless stages—what are they?

Rinpoche: New York, Tokyo! I am joking. The eight restless stages means the eight unfree states that we used to think about in the meditation on the perfect human rebirth. It is just a different way of saying, restless and unfree.

Student: Could you say something more about how bodhicitta purifies the dualistic mind?

Rinpoche: That is this. The dualistic mind is an obscuration, so the obscuration can only be purified by creating merits. Bodhicitta is one of the best methods for making quick purification. So like this.

Student: Lama Yeshe referred yesterday to our mandala, saying we all have our own mandala, our embodiment.

Rinpoche: I think there are two types of mandalas--samsaric mandalas and mandalas of non-dualistic mind, two mandalas. Maybe Lama Yeshe was right, each person has a mandala, but perhaps most of our mandalas are maybe samsaric mandala. I am joking. I am not sure. Those pure yogis, meditators, holy yogis, for them the mandala is to take the result of the enlightenment. Our mandala is this, our mandala is to build ignorance.

Student: You said the mandala was to check the result of ignorance?

Rinpoche: I am saying the pure yogis and meditators, their mandala is to take the result, the enlightenment, but our mandala is to take the essence of ignorance, the essence of samsara.

Anyway, in this Milarepa quotation, he is talking with his experience as he followed the path, as he went through the practice of the graduated path. So what he is saying is that if you desire happiness besides in one present life, if you desire happiness in all future lives, especially enlightenment, then this is the fundamental thing what we should do at the beginning.

Paragraph 2

Like this. In regards to this there are two topics for the outline. The first one is taking refuge, which is the holy door of the teaching. Then ... first of all I give just a brief general description. First of all, this is important to understand. For instance, we visualize Guru Shakyamuni ... the main thing is this. The main purpose of taking refuge, the main thing is this. Each individual has the future buddha, and future enlightenment. Each of us has our own future buddha, like this. In order to receive our future Buddha quickly depends on actualizing ourselves to become our future jewel buddha, to quickly become it. This depends on actualizing the jewel of Dharma within our minds and becoming the jewel of Sangha. In order for us to become the jewel of Buddha, we actualize the jewel of Dharma within our minds, and become the jewel of Sangha. Without depending on others' help, we individuals alone can't do this, can't make this possible. Just like this. The person who wishes to become a doctor by going to school, University, and learning the subjects, who wishes to take the degree of a doctor, in order to do that he has to have all the knowledge and understanding of those subjects--writing letters, reading letters, knowing the different subjects taught in school. Then also the certificate, diploma. Then because of all this, because he has the degree, he can be called "doctor." But even though he wishes to, without depending on others' help, he can't do this by himself. He can't do everything by himself without depending on anything, without depending on

others' help. Just him alone, can he do it or not? He can't do it. Of course he has to depend on others, on many different teachers, schools and universities, different teachers, professors--he has to depend on many others' help in order to get all the knowledge and understanding and to get that paper, degree, or diploma. He gets the paper and those things, he receives his education, those things from professors, other doctors who went through the education, who studied those subjects, and also they themselves have also this development. That's why they have the title.

Just like this, in order for oneself to become the future jewel Buddha and actualize the jewel Dharma by becoming the jewel Sangha, we alone cannot do all this without depending on others' help. So who or what can help to actualize one's own three jewels. That is the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. For instance, the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha that we are visualizing. In order to actualize our own Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, we have to depend on others' help. From whom we can receive that help? Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and his Dharma and him being Sangha. In order to receive help, in order to actualize one's own these three jewels by the three jewels of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, that depends on taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has and is these three jewels. So in order to receive help or take refuge from them, it is necessary to follow or to take refuge.

First of all, in order to receive help from the three jewels it is necessary to follow them. In order to follow them it is necessary to take refuge. So taking refuge is the fundamental thing. As taking refuge is the fundamental thing, we should know how to take refuge, so that's how the subject comes. One way of thinking, the main purpose of taking refuge, is mainly to establish, to actualize one's own three jewels, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. This is one way of talking about the purpose of taking refuge, why taking refuge is important. Why this meditation is important, why this action is important. So like this.

Without depending on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's three jewels, without depending on the help of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's three jewels, just we alone cannot actualize our own three jewels. What we have been doing alone without depending on the help of the three jewels, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's three jewels, is this. From beginningless samsaric lifetime we have been always circling around from death to rebirth, from rebirth again to death, and again from that death again to rebirth, always circling around, always circling around, creating karma by continuously following the ignorance. So this is what we alone can do without the help of others. This is what we have been doing from beginningless samsaric lifetimes until now. This alone is what we have been doing and this is what we can do without depending on the help of the three jewels. So without depending on the three jewels there is no way to make it impossible to take rebirth in the evil destinies. Because without depending on the help of the three jewels one doesn't have the power, the method to guide oneself, to make the rebirth in the evil destinies impossible. For instance, the cause that stops the rebirth of the suffering realm is good karma, and creating good karma depends on the help or the action of the three jewels of other enlightened beings. These things are very important point that you will understand later on more clearly. Also, besides this, even to not be reborn in the evil destinies depends on the action and help of the three jewels, so why not, no question, in order to escape, release from samsara, there is no question, no question. Also, for instance, this is also very useful to think about. For instance, now in the human realm let's say, for instance, different people have different problems, so many different problems. In one village or city, there are all kinds of problems, if you check through, if you ask each person. They have all kinds in that city, people in that city have all kinds of different problems. Rich people have their own problems, poor people have their own problems--whether old or young people, they have different problems. However just

like this. Also in other realms of sentient beings, they also have different types of suffering. So oneself one cannot completely stop, cannot make it impossible to not experience that particular problem again.

For instance, one single problem for a couple, their relationship problem, is just one example, one particular problem. For instance, not satisfying each other is just one particular suffering. Oneself alone can never make it impossible to experience this again. This problem, this dissatisfaction with each other, this problem sometimes becomes very big, sometimes becomes invisible, like this. So when it becomes invisible this dissatisfied mind is a little smaller. At that time there is not much problem. When it gets bigger and bigger, and comes out, again it is a problem in the relationship. However the relationship problem temporarily may stop, even though it happened, it may stop for certain months, years, and certain days. Maybe even though it doesn't happen in this life, this relationship problem will arise with that same person--a similar problem will come in the future life when this couple meet again in the future life. However, being an animal or human being, when they meet together, as long as the dissatisfied mind is not cut off, not controlled, again there will be a similar problem, a relationship problem due to the dissatisfied mind. Like this. So continuously it comes, continuously it comes. So therefore, just like this, as long as the person is not out of samsara, always there is the dissatisfied mind. However they are born, these persons are continuously going to be in samsara, being born and dying in samsara, and whenever they meet together due to karma, due to previous karma, whenever they meet together, there will always be problems. It just continues.

Oneself alone can never stop even this particular suffering of samsara completely. What I mean is to make it so that it is never experienced again. Oneself alone can never do that. Because oneself alone doesn't have the method, the control, doesn't have the knowledge that controls that. So controlling that suffering is knowledge, and that knowledge cannot be received by oneself. That knowledge doesn't intuitively come within the person's mind. Same thing, in order to control even that particular suffering, to completely stop that particular suffering, to never experience it again, achieving that controlling knowledge also depends on creating merit or creating good karma. There is no way to create good karma and gain the controlling knowledge without depending on the help of the three jewels of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or the other enlightened beings. This is just talking about one particular suffering, just one specific suffering or samsara, without talking about the different types of infinite suffering. Thinking like this is very useful. So if one wants to completely stop this one experience of suffering, even to stop this, there is need of the help of other enlightened beings, the three jewels. Then there is no question, in order to stop the numberless billions of samsaric sufferings, there is no question whether we need the help of the three jewels or not. No question. Like this. So the fundamental thing is taking refuge. To take refuge we have to understand how to take it and the purpose and all these things. But if you go through the outlines it is clear; it is not complicated. Taking refuge, which is the holy door of the teaching, has outlines like this: the cause of refuge, recognizing the object of refuge, the reasons why it is a worthy object of refuge, and the definition of taking refuge or the way of taking refuge.

First of all we should know that the most important thing is the cause of refuge. In order to take refuge, it is necessary to have this cause. The cause is this. The first thing is the fear, the fear of samsara, the fear of samsaric suffering, and particularly the suffering of the evil destinies. This is the first cause, this is the cause that makes the person seek refuge. So because of this cause, the person seeks the object of refuge.

The second cause is the devotion that completely relies on the enlightened being, believing that besides being released from all suffering, he has the complete power and knowledge and infinite compassion to be able to guide me from all suffering--from the suffering of evil destinies, from samsaric suffering, like this. Why are these two causes so important in order ... like this. For refuge, why are these two causes so important? That is like this. Without having fear, the person doesn't seek the object of refuge, there is no thought of seeking refuge. That thought doesn't come. In this way the person also doesn't check up, the person doesn't know, doesn't understand the knowledge of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the power of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The person doesn't check up the complete power and knowledge and the infinite compassion the Buddha has. He doesn't check up the knowledge of Buddha. So as he doesn't check up and try to understand, as he doesn't try to understand, there is no way for devotion to arise. As he doesn't try to understand, there is no way to receive the understanding of the knowledge and perfect power and infinite compassion of the Buddha. Therefore there is no way for devotion to arise, which completely relies on the Enlightened Being. Completely relying on the fact that besides he himself completely being released from all suffering, he has the complete perfect power to guide me from samsaric suffering, from the suffering of evil destinies. So if there is no devotion to the buddhas having such perfect knowledge and power, if there is no devotion, the person doesn't observe karma, and the person doesn't follow the path. Even though it is explained to the person, he wouldn't follow it. In this way he doesn't get released from samsara and doesn't receive enlightenment.

Also one thing is this. In this way we understand a little bit how these two causes are so important--the fear of samsara, the fear of the suffering of the evil destinies or samsara. The fear and the devotion. Having strong devotion also depends on having strong fear.

For instance, if the person doesn't understand much about samsaric suffering, doesn't understand the suffering of the evil destinies, as the person doesn't have that much understanding of the suffering nature, the person doesn't have that much fear. As the person doesn't have that much fear, the person doesn't care about seeking the object of refuge. Even though the Enlightened Being has knowledge, even though it is explained to him by someone that the Enlightened Being has such infinite knowledge, he wouldn't try to understand that, he wouldn't put that much energy into understanding more deeply the knowledge of the Enlightened Being, the knowledge of perfect power. So therefore there is not that much devotion. By not having fear of samsara and the suffering of the evil destinies, it disturbs one from seeking refuge, from seeking the objects of refuge, and the arising of devotion and understanding the knowledge of the objects of refuge. So totally like this. Because of not having the devotion for those things, mainly due to not having strong fear of samsara, the person doesn't follow the teaching of the path as shown by the Enlightened Being. So in this way the person cannot escape from samsara. As the fear is that much stronger, as the fear grows stronger and stronger, the person not wanting to live in samsara, not wanting to get stuck in samsara, not wanting to suffer in the suffering of the evil destinies, so at least, as fear grows, this dislike and aversion for samsaric suffering comes stronger and stronger. Also in this way person, this aversion mind makes the person seek object of refuge more, and take refuge. So in this way also the person tries to understand deeply the knowledge of the Enlightened Being, the object of refuge, and in this way as the person's understanding grows also devotion grows, devotion in the Buddha having such perfect power, devotion to the Dharma and the Sangha. Devotion to the Buddha who is like the doctor. Devotion to the Dharma which is like medicine. Dharma is the path shown by the Enlightened Being, and the medicine is given by the doctor, so devotion to the sangha, the helper to attain enlightenment, to attain Dharma, is like the nurse who helps to take the medicine and also totally cure the sickness. So if the person has these two causes,

the refuge in the person's mind is that much more pure and stronger. How pure the refuge is in the person's mind depends on how strong these two causes are. If these two causes are all just words, just mouth, then the refuge of that person is just words. Refuge is not with feeling but refuge is just words, like this. So this depends on these two causes, whether the person has refuge or not also depends on these two causes. Generally, for us ordinary people, generally it depends on having these two causes.

It is useful to meditate like this. First of all you meditate on this, just briefly read it even though you don't remember, read the suffering of the evil destinies and then read the general samsaric suffering again. Do not just read the words but try to see the feeling, try to figure it out, try to understand the feeling, which is the main thing of the meditation. Not just understanding the words, but trying to understand the feeling. That is the main thing. Whether you use these words or not doesn't matter, as long as you have the method to understand the feelings of general samsaric suffering, the suffering of the evil destinies, as long as you understand the feelings, and see it, that is the main point. First like this.

Then think, "Just not being reborn in the evil destinies is not enough, not sufficient. I must completely release from samsara, from the whole boundaries of suffering, I must completely release from samsara because at the moment, although we are not born in the evil destinies, we are born as happy beings, it is still not sure, not definite for our minds, if we check up, it is not definite that we will never be born in the evil destinies. It is not sure, not really sure that after two or three months, or one year, we will be born as a fish in the ocean, and someone will be fishing and bring us home and fry us. It is not sure, not definite, we can't really tell. We have all kinds of karma created in this life, as well as numberless karmas in other previous lifetimes. If we check within our minds, we can't really say--being in the frying pan with hot oil, no way to escape."

I think in Sydney, in Australia, one day we went by boat somewhere. There was one young boy who was fishing. Lama Yeshe asked how many fish he ate each day, and he said two fish. He went there and went fishing. On the thread he put a piece of very tiny meat, and he threw it in the water and waited for some time. Then I asked him, "How can you understand if it caught a fish or not?" He said it would feel heavy if there was a fish. I think before we left, he found several fish. There was another man with him. As he got the fish he collected them in a plastic bag. Anyway, then my commentary becomes a little complicated.

"I must completely release myself from samsara. For instance, now I am born as a happy being, but still it is not sure that I am not going to be born again in the evil destinies as those suffering beings. However whether I am born in these six realms, I am always born in suffering, born in suffering or born with suffering, same thing."

Then you read the part of the knowledge of Buddha, knowledge of Dharma, and knowledge of Sangha. After you read this, then visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, who is the total embodiment of all buddhas. He is Buddha and he is the realm of Dharma and he is the Sangha. Then remembering as I talked about at the very beginning, the main purpose is to actualize your three jewels of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The main purpose is this. Not just releasing from samsara but actualizing one's own three jewels. Remembering this, doing this depends on the help and guidance of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's three jewels.

Then you do the recitation of the mantra and do purification because one thing is this. The main hindrance, the main thing that makes us not achieve our own three jewels is the obscurations, the delusions, the negative karma, so therefore we need purification.

Day Twenty-one
Tuesday, 26th November
Precepts

In order to take ordination, it is necessary to put the mind in the Dharma. Besides that it is necessary to cultivate the pure motivation, the precious bodhicitta in order for the action of taking ordination to become the cause of receiving enlightenment. Therefore think briefly like this.

“From beginningless samsaric lifetimes, my attachment that is attached to temporal comfort and the wrong conception of the self-”I,” the self-cherishing thought, these wrong conceptions have been causing me to suffer in samsara, particularly experiencing the suffering of the evil destinies numberless times. So far we are still under the control of these wrong conceptions. Always I have been controlled by these wrong conceptions. So far, because of those wrong conceptions, nothing such as enlightenment, such as the cessation of samsara, nirvana, bodhicitta, and the full realization of absolute true nature, none of these is received. Still if I don’t try to cut off these wrong conceptions, if I still follow these wrong conceptions, these wrong conceptions will continuously cause me to experience suffering in samsara, particularly the suffering of the evil destinies numberless times. Just as we have been suffering from beginningless samsaric lifetimes, just like this, as long as we follow the wrong conceptions, still we will be in the same circle. Besides these wrong conceptions continuously prevent future enlightenment. However, by checking how much it has harming us in the past and future it will follow without end that these wrong conceptions will continuously harm me by preventing me from achieving enlightenment, achieving nirvana, preventing realization, and even samsaric pleasure. By checking like this, we feel these wrong conceptions are just like poison, very frightening things, worse than poison, worse than flames, worse than hot red burning coals. However, as we are very frightened to touch the poison, very frightened to touch the hot red burning coals, just like this, the greater danger is worse to follow and to keep these wrong conceptions.

However, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha received enlightenment by avoiding these wrong conceptions through disciplines such as observing the eight Mahayana precepts when he was following the path. When he was an ordinary being it was the same thing, there is no question why we cannot do this. If this is his experience why can’t it be our experience.

Releasing oneself from samsara is not sufficient, just oneself releasing from samsara will not satisfy, there is still not time to relax, because numberless other sentient beings who are the field of my past, present, and future happiness and perfection are in the utmost need, the principal relative or helper. In order to achieve enlightenment at the beginning of the Dharma practice it has to depend on the kindness of sentient beings, and the same in the middle and at the end of the Dharma practice. However, any pleasure that is in samsara that can be experienced has to be received by depending on the kindness of sentient beings, no such pleasure is received without depending on sentient beings’ kindness. Therefore it is necessary to repay them for their kindness. Also most sentient beings are extremely suffering, extremely suffering by not having a leader leading them in the path to enlightenment, by not having the Dharma, not having the Dharma wisdom eye to know karma, what is right and what is wrong, what is negative karma, what is positive karma. So the lack of the

Dharma wisdom eye knows this, so they often create negative karma expecting happiness, which is completely wrong. Therefore, at the moment I have met the leader leading in the path to enlightenment, the teacher, and have met the Dharma and have a little bit of wisdom to know what is negative and positive karma and have the chance to develop wisdom. This time while I have such a precious chance, while I have such a possibility, without wasting time, life, I must make all sentient beings release from suffering and receive enlightenment. Now at the moment I don't have the capability to do that, and the one who has that capability, that perfect power, is the Enlightened Being, so therefore I must achieve enlightenment. That depends on disciplining the speech, body, and mind. Therefore I am going to take Mahayana ordination until tomorrow morning."

Visualize the object from whom you take ordination as Buddha surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas. At the end of the third repetition of the prayer do the visualization of receiving ordination. Visualize receiving ordination in the form of light.

PRAYER

Also repeat the prayer of the precepts thinking, "I am going to observe the precepts for one day as the previous Tathagatas observed the precepts before."

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

MANTRA

DEDICATION

Dedicate the merits, "Due to these merits, may the meaning of whatever the prayer contains be successful." Also while you are thinking of the emptiness of yourself, the emptiness of the way you see yourself, the emptiness of the way you see the merit, the emptiness of the way you see enlightenment and sentient beings, while you are thinking this then dedicate the merit, "May I quickly receive enlightenment by receiving the fundamental fully renouncing mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute true nature in order to enlighten all sentient beings by releasing them from all suffering."

The offering—first prostration, second the offering from the seven limbs. Offering—there are many different ways to offer. Yesterday, that was mentally transformed offering. That was one way for the meditators to practice, and also they create merit by visualizing the person as the bodhisattva Kuntu Zangpo. Inside the hand they visualize a jewel and then the rays come, many rays come from there and on the point of the rays bring the offerings, the different objects of the senses. Then from each of those offerings many rays come and each of the rays make offerings, again make offerings, the different objects of the senses. Again from those offerings many rays come with offerings. Then like this, they fill up all of infinite space. So like this, doing visualization like this has much benefit, it has much benefit.

Making offering to the holy objects doesn't depend on them actually receiving materials, like we ordinary people actually receive material. If we don't receive the material in our hand then even though the person has it, not like this, completely different. We ordinary people such as kings, they want to receive it in their hand. Just the other person mentally dedicating renouncing, mentally dedicating the mind renouncing, for ordinary people that is not sufficient, that's not the thing that

makes them happy. What makes them happy is physically, actually giving them material in the hand. But ordinary beings like the king are not happy with mentally transformed offerings because they don't get anything, that's why. However, for the holy object, for the Enlightened Being, the actual material thing doesn't have to be received in their hand, the offering doesn't have to be like that, like the ordinary people, completely different. Mainly, offering means renouncing from your mind, no matter where the object is, whether it is with you—for instance, one's body, making offerings then doesn't have to be like ordinary people, being with them or something, it doesn't have to be. However, offering is also called puja by Indians, but actually offering or puja means pleasing the gurus, pleasing the gurus or enlightened beings, that is the actual meaning of puja. If it doesn't please it doesn't become puja. Anyway, there is much to talk about.

So one fundamental thing that pleases them is this. That is renouncing attachment. That is one fundamental thing that pleases the holy objects—renouncing attachment, anger, and ignorance. So this is the fundamental thing and then according to the person's practice, pleasing the gurus, the enlightened beings, the holy objects, this has a higher meaning, there is a higher practice, higher things. Anyway, we talk about this fundamental thing. According to Vajrayana practice there is a higher way to understand this, to practice, to please—a transcendental way, a higher way. This is the fundamental thing. Usually like this. When we have memories of past things like friends, like what you did, things that you had, when we have memories, even though we don't have the actual thing in the present time, even by having them mentally we get attached, and by seeing the picture of them we get attached. So how this does this become offering? How does this help to purify one's own negativity, one's negative karma, to stop and purify the negative karma they have been collecting from previous lifetimes? How can this benefit them to receive enlightenment by becoming an offering? Being attached to these pictures that come in the mind creates negative karma, it reflects again in the mind, it reflects again with attachment. It is involved with craving. However, when we make mentally transformed offerings, that means renouncing the attachment, renouncing the craving that is in those objects, those beautiful objects of the senses. Also the object has to be visualized as beautiful as possible, such as flowers, smells, and incense, if you can visualize as best as possible that you create good karma. Also beautiful sort of goddesses, another way of saying goddess, you can also visualize the female human being carrying the different offerings, playing different music. As much as you can visualize them as beautiful, that much you create good karma. Because you are not visualizing attachment to make it arise but to renounce attachment. You are making offerings to renounce attachment, in order to use it as the opposite of the action of using it for attachment. This is the practice of trying to become the opposite of attachment, the remedy to attachment. So anyway, you transform it like this, and instead of getting attached to this, "I like," "I want," the mind completely sinking in the object, that kind of thing, absorbed completely in the object, instead of that you completely decide that without letting attachment arise, to completely dedicate that to the holy object we are visualizing, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by infinite buddhas and bodhisattvas, dedicate to them. While you visualize, if there is attachment arising, you think, "I am making offering to them, these belong to the holy objects, so should I be attached to these objects, it is nonsense. I cannot be attached to these things as it is offered to them." You can think like this. However, when you give, whether it is a physical offering or whether it is a mental offering, the less attachment that you have for the offering ... I mean perhaps ... if there is no wish, if there is no thought that by making these things offering to Buddha, to the enlightened beings, to create good karma, if there is no wish, no thought, then you don't do the action. Without the wish, without the thought, you don't try, you don't put effort in that, so that is not greed, that is not greed, that is not attachment. There is a difference. Just wishing doesn't mean attachment. However, for

the physically offered or mentally transformed offerings, there is attachment to those offerings, and that much the offering is pure.

So the main thing, the main purpose is to lose attachment. How the mentally transformed offering is beneficial is that it is a method to purify or lose the attachment that is usually attached. Also when the memories of other things, pictures of other things come into the mind because of the attachment that is attached to the object. It is the same thing with the physical offerings, the material offerings—mainly to lose attachment. So the actual thing, the actual offering is renouncing attachment, because these are things—not much material, but these are the fundamental things that please the holy objects. How do these things please the holy objects? Why does the renouncing mind please the holy objects? This is not their negative mind, this is my negative mind, but why are they pleased by me renouncing my negative mind? The whole thing is this. The holy objects, the enlightened beings, even the bodhisattvas, the whole time they are always concerned about other sentient beings' suffering, always they are concerned to release sentient beings from suffering, the whole time, day and night, always have infinite compassion for each of the sentient beings. They always spontaneously wish to release sentient beings from suffering, to release them from all their negative karma and delusions, all their wrong conceptions. To release sentient beings from suffering and wrong conception and for them to receive enlightenment is their main wish. Usually they wish like that, but from our side we often create the cause of suffering, we often keep ourselves away from the boundless state by continuously creating the cause of samsara. Our work is the opposite of what they wish all the time. This time what we do is, according to what they wish, it becomes harmonious, it becomes the same thing. This work that they wish is enlightening oneself, purifying oneself. So that's how, mainly because of their infinite compassion wanting all sentient beings, wanting oneself and all sentient beings to release from all suffering and reach enlightenment, because of this renouncing negative mind pleases them. Mentally transformed offerings.

So I think I stop here.

9 am

Think, "I must lead all mother sentient beings to enlightenment by releasing them from all the suffering and cause of suffering. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment. In order to achieve enlightenment I must complete the whole realization of the graduated path. In order to complete the realization of the graduated path to enlightenment I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path. It is necessary to listen to the teaching with the right motivation, the thought of bodhicitta."

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment. It was well expounded by the two great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga and it is a profound teaching, the essence of Atisha and Guru Tsong Khapa's understanding. This teaching includes the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

So, this has four outlines. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teaching. The way of listening and explaining the teachings and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment. The last one also has two outlines—persuading the mind to take

the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being has two outlines—bringing up the thought seeking a better future life and following the method that brings happiness in the future life. The last one has two outlines—taking refuge, which is the holy door of the teachings and bringing up the understanding belief in the karma, which is the root of all perfection and happiness.

So part of the subject is refuge. Taking refuge, which is the holy door of the teachings. So this has four outlines—the cause of refuge, the object of refuge, the reasons why it is worth taking refuge, and the way of taking refuge. So like this, four outlines.

Yesterday we talked about the cause of refuge. Like this it is very useful to think. Always when we do meditation on refuge it is useful at the beginning to briefly remember the meditation on suffering, either the suffering of the evil destinies or the general samsaric suffering. It is always useful to remember suffering at the beginning of refuge, because taking refuge afterwards, doing the refuge meditation, taking refuge, becomes more pure and more effective for your mind. If the person can remember the suffering before the refuge meditation, as I said yesterday, if the person meditates on suffering at the beginning or remembers it, then because of that, it makes fear grow and as the fear grows there is stronger devotion, and stronger desire to seek refuge. The stronger devotion that completely relies on the object the refuge, relies on the perfect being, is stronger, not just thinking, not just intellectually thinking, “Oh I am going to take refuge,” not just this. But with this intellectual thought at the same time coming with the feeling, the devotion, that much the fear, stronger fear grows by doing meditation on samsaric suffering. So the devotion is that much stronger and this devotion relies on the perfect being, on the object of refuge.

For instance, like the criminal person. In order to release from punishment, he knows how terrible it is, and he has that much fear. As he has that much fear, as there is that much fear, he tries that much harder to seek someone who has the power to guide him from that problem. Also his taking refuge in that person is that much stronger—it is not just words but comes with feelings. Besides the words, the strong feeling comes in his mind, really serious, the strong feeling. Just like this. The refuge becomes not just mere words, but it becomes, it helps to actually become the pure refuge, that much strong taking refuge.

Then like this. First of all you start the meditation on suffering, beginning with remembering negative karma, because if you don't ... I think I said it before ... for us beginners, especially we beginners, if we don't think of negative karma, check through karma, just meditating on suffering doesn't give much feeling to us because we don't see, we ourselves don't have the power to understand the future, we ourselves don't have it. Now at this time we don't have the power or the understanding of our future. The power of foretelling, of predicting, of understanding the future, of seeing the future. So therefore we may think these are the sufferings of other sentient beings, these are sufferings for those beings who are suffering, but not for me, never for me, sort of like it is impossible to happen for me. As you check up in the depth of your mind there is a feeling like this. This is for other suffering beings not for me. There is no logic that can prove that I will never experience this suffering, no logic, you can't find logic in your mind, there is no proof. It is just wrong conception. However the ignorance not understanding karma, the ignorance not knowing the nature of oneself makes you believe that you are going to be always like this, as you are now.

Somehow there is feeling that I am always going to be like this. However this is a mind that blocks understanding of the future. So anyway.

At the beginning ... what I am saying is that if you really want to make the meditation effective, helpful to your mind then it is useful to remember the negative karma, then after that do meditation on the suffering and then on the naraks. There are different types of hot sufferings, different ways of experiencing cold suffering—there is cold and hot, any suffering that is in the human realm can never be compared to that. The suffering we experience with this human body is nothing, it is still pleasure compared to the narak suffering. Then the animals, the general animal sufferings, each animal has its own enemies all the time, always. One animal is eaten by another animal, always like this. These are the general animal sufferings. Anyway, I am just mentioning the titles to you, just the titles, the example is clear, we don't have to repeat it as long as we know the feeling, that's important. Wherever we travel on the earth, in the sea, even in space, we always see animals attacking and killing each other, all animals have their own enemies, being eaten by another one. They are deeply foolish and ignorant and then they experience the suffering of being eaten by one another, the suffering of being foolish and ignorant, the suffering of feeling cold and hot, the suffering of feeling hungry and thirsty—generally this is how to think of the animal sufferings.

Then again this is general, but again according to the individual animal they have their own different sufferings. For instance, the animals on the earth with people also have different types of problems, sufferings. Those animals in the sea have other problems, like this. Animals have the individual suffering of being used for carrying luggage, for plowing land, in many ways, their skins, their hairs are used, many of them are used, are killed for meat, for certain things, some for bones, for many reasons they are killed. Many things. Individual animals have also different sufferings like this.

Then the general suffering of the pretas is the suffering of feeling hot and cold. Also they have the suffering of feeling hunger and thirst and the suffering of fear, the suffering of being extremely exhausted. For instance, many suffering pretas cannot carry, cannot even walk properly. However there is so much suffering, so generally it is like this. Then there are also three particular sufferings of pretas. For instance, after a long time they see food and drink from far away, and they see it when they come to the place, running with the suffering of feeling great hunger, running to the place where there is food. When they come there the food, the lake that the preta sees disappears, it dries, it is full of garbage, many hairs, and they are unable to drink. Before the preta saw a very calm, blue, very good colored lake, very clean, from far away. With such incredible suffering and craving, he runs to that place, and then afterwards it changes completely. Again this is another terrible suffering, he is disappointed. Even though the food and drink that the preta finds doesn't change, again there are karmically created protectors, fighting looking protectors, and they chase him away from the food. If the food doesn't change and if the karmically created protectors don't do this, even if they get the food, even if they get a little drop of water in the mouth, the mouth that is so tiny like the hole of a needle, the mouth has poison, so even if one drop gets in the mouth it dries up without going in the stomach. It dries up in the mouth. For some better ones, even if the food goes in the stomach, instead of becoming a condition for pleasure, it becomes a condition for suffering, burning the stomach, with many flames coming, like this. Also for the pretas, there is no definite place, even if they go around to seek food—we don't have the karma to see them, we don't have the control so we don't see them. Even if they see us, we don't see them, like this. But many yogis can see them, higher meditators can see them Also in India it is like this. There is one called "flaming preta" that I saw many times. At night time you can see it, you can see the flame in the forest. The place I lived in India was the forest, that's why. You can see the light but you don't see the actual being. From far

away you see a person with light going in the forest. Many times I saw this at night time. Also if you go to the place where there is light, if the light is somewhere there, then if you go nearby the light moves to another place, and you don't see anything there. Somehow it scares them off. Those suffering beings are scared of human beings. They feel very low when they see human beings, and they see them as very pompous, magnificent, and very powerful. This is just a general total descriptions of their sufferings.

When Guru Shakyamuni existed there was one young monk, a novice monk, and his mother was so much attached to the possessions. She had so much miserliness for her possessions so after her death she was born as a preta. Then one day this novice monk somehow had the karma to see this preta, and it was very frightening looking and he was scared, he was trying to get away. All of a sudden his mother was born as the preta, and she talked. "The mother from whom the son was born is me, and now I was born as a preta. It has been twenty-five years and still there has been much suffering of not finding ... much suffering. You don't need to escape." So the novice monk went to see Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to ask about this, what to do. The son, the monk found a method, because he was worried about how to help her in order to change her rebirth. He offered a piece of red cloth to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the sock of the mother. After he offered the piece of cloth to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and his Sangha, again the mother was born as a preta, and she went there and stole the cloth, and brought it home. Again the monk offered it to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and his Sangha. Again this mother preta stole it because of such strong incredible mischievousness, and could not give it away. Again she stole the piece of cloth. However by making this offering, before she was a very suffering preta not receiving enjoyments, not having any enjoyments. Afterwards she passed away and then she was born as a very rich preta with so many possessions, due to the karma of the offering. But she was still born as a preta. Even though the offering was made, it was stolen away. There are many stories of pretas.

Then after this you think, "I must escape, now I am not in this suffering but in the future I will suffer this, I will be born in these suffering states, so I must try something to not experience these sufferings, to not have this rebirth. I myself cannot do this, I don't have the power to guide myself from these sufferings, therefore I must take refuge in someone. I must take refuge in others who have the power to guide me from these sufferings. Therefore I must take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha." Then you think, "I must take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, but in order to take refuge whether I have those two causes, the fear of the suffering of the evil destinies and samsaric suffering, and the second one is devotion, which completely relies on the Buddha having the perfect power to guide me from suffering." Check up. "I must take refuge but whether I have these two causes in my mind," like this check up. "Then in order to take refuge I must recognize the object of the refuge." What is the object of refuge? That is the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Also the relative Buddha, the absolute Buddha. Also the Dharma has the relative Dharma and the absolute Dharma. Also the Sangha has the absolute Sangha and the relative Sangha. The absolute Buddha is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind, the nirmanakaya that is transformed by this absolute mind—those are the relative Buddhas, the relative jewel Buddha. The absolute jewel of the Buddha and the absolute jewel of the Dharma is the true path and the true cessation of suffering. The jewel Dharma is the real object that we take refuge in, the true path, the true path of the being who fully sees the absolute nature. This true path is the absolute jewel Dharma and this true path leads the being, leads the meditator gradually to the different levels, the cessation of obscurations—there are different levels of cessation of obscurations, like this.

Generally, just to have the general idea. There are five paths, so from the third path, the right seeing path, starting from there that is the first path where the being achieves the first cessation of the obscuration that can be purified by that path. This true path that fully sees the absolute nature removes the obscuration that is the opposite of this path. Then again, he continuously develops the wisdom fully seeing the absolute nature, develops that, and then that reaches the next level. When the meditator reaches the next level that true path that he has dispels and removes the obscuration that is the opposite of that path, that has to be removed by that path. Then again he develops the true path of wisdom fully seeing the absolute nature, still maintaining shunyata, still developing this wisdom, and again reaches the next level. Then another obscuration is removed, which is the opposite of this path, that level of the path. Again by developing the wisdom, the fully realizing shunyata, then again this leads the meditator to the next stage, again that path removes the obscurations and the subject has to be removed or purified by that path. There are many levels like this. By gradually following the path, the obscurations are gradually removed. It is not like this—all of a sudden everything is removed. Not like this. By following the graduated path, the obscuration has to be gradually removed by developing the wisdom fully realizing shunyata. So each time as the person receives each level and removes the obscurations of that path, that meditator achieves the cessation of obscuration. So then when that meditator, when that follower of the path, when he has completely removed the ignorance, he has achieved the complete cessation of ignorance by going through all these five paths, by completing these five paths. Then that being is called an arhat. That is the being who has completely released himself from samsara. This is not one who is in the boundless state, the nirvana state, the state of everlasting happiness, the boundless state, not bound by delusion and karma.

So totally, the different levels of cessation of the obscurations and the true path that leads the meditator to each level of cessation of obscuration, removing the obscuration and the realization of shunyata, these true paths are the absolute jewel of the Dharma.

Student: At the end of this person becomes a bodhisattva, at the end of the fifth path means arhat?

Rinpoche: Generally talking, without talking a specific Mahayana talk, generally talking not specifically talking about a Mahayana path,. Also generally talking about this, also those who achieve enlightenment are also arhats.

Student: So someone finishing the fifth path can also be called a bodhisattva?

Rinpoche: No, the being finishing the fifth path is not a bodhisattva, just finishing the fifth path doesn't mean the person has the achievement of bodhicitta. The arhat has completed the fifth path but has no realization of bodhicitta.

Student: Do you have to become an arhat before a bodhisattva?

Rinpoche: Doesn't have to be. It is a different being. It depends on the individual's fortune. Some follow the lesser vehicle path and become an arhat by finishing that path, then after a long time, many eons, then due to the enlightened being's they make the arhat understand by showing signs that they should follow the Mahayana path in order to achieve enlightenment. Then by working from that state, from that everlasting happiness, they follow the Mahayana path and they become bodhisattvas by achieving bodhicitta, then they receive enlightenment gradually like this. They don't have any more delusions to purify but they have still the mental, subtle obscurations to purify by following the Mahayana path. Without following the Mahayana path the subtle obscurations cannot be purified. The delusions can be purified by following the lesser vehicle path. Some fortunate beings who have higher fortune are higher intelligent beings, and all of a sudden without taking the lesser vehicle path they practice the Mahayana teaching and follow the Mahayana path by achieving the fully renouncing mind of samsara and bodhicitta and achieve the full wisdom of shunyata.

Student: They go through the same five stages with different motivations?

Rinpoche: Right. They follow the five paths but there is a difference between motivations. The five paths are the same for the lesser vehicle and the Mahayana path, but those followers, those meditators have different knowledge. The followers of the lesser vehicle path have less knowledge, and don't have bodhicitta. The followers of the Mahayana path have greater knowledge and also the meditators following the Mahayana path, as they are following this path, he has purified the subtle obscurations and also the delusions, the ignorance. There are many other types of negative mind, so he removed the obscurations, the subtle and gross obscurations at one time by following one path, the Mahayana path, like this. In that way the delusions are also purified and even the subtle obscurations are purified, removed, so as the person completes the five paths, that meditator receives enlightenment.

Student: What is the subtle obscuration? Is that like the "I" concept? Does the arhat still have the realization of an "I"?

Rinpoche: The realization of "I"?

Student: Not a realization—he still perceives an "I"?

Rinpoche: He still perceives an "I" because his "I" exists so he sees "I." He has the realization of the absolute nature of "I."

So a noble being or a transcendental being means only those beings, the definition of that is the beings who have achieved the cessation of the obscurations by achieving the true path, the wisdom fully realizing shunyata. These beings are called transcendental beings or noble beings, beings who have not achieved this true path, who haven't received any of the levels of cessation of obscurations, those are called ordinary beings. In Tibetan they are called *so.so gye.wa*.

So the absolute jewel Dharma and the relative jewel Dharma. The relative jewel Dharma is the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha that explain about these different levels of cessation, the five paths, and the ten grounds, the levels to receive enlightenment. However, that which explains about this true path and the different levels of cessation and explains about the knowledge of enlightenment and the nature of samsaric suffering, all these teachings and explanations are the relative jewel Dharma. The teaching that explains the graduated path to enlightenment, we can think also that this is the relative jewel Dharma.

Then Sangha the absolute jewel Sangha, that is those beings that I have just mentioned before, those transcendental beings, those noble beings who have the achievement of the true cessation of the obscuration and the achievement of the true path. Those higher beings are the absolute jewel Sangha, those are the real Sangha. Then the relative jewel Sangha, that is just one ordinary monk who doesn't have these realizations, who doesn't have the achievement of the cessation of obscuration. Just one of these ordinary monks becomes the relative jewel Sangha. The group of four are called the relative jewel, because without four, according to sutra, there cannot be ordination and confession; they have to be done in a group. There is the need of four monks for ordination, at least four is necessary, and then ten or other numbers. However there are purposes for granting ordination such as the thirty-six precepts and the higher full ordination. If there are two or three, ordination cannot be given.

The absolute jewel Buddha and the relative jewel Buddha has the same meaning as the guru. Also there is the relative guru and the absolute guru like this. This has the same meaning. The omniscient mind is absolute Buddha, absolute Guru, and in order to work for other sentient beings, to help other sentient beings, they take different manifestations, and that manifestation is the relative guru

or relative Buddha appearing in different manifestations according to the level of sentient beings' minds. They are called by different names but the meaning of Buddha and the meaning of Guru—the title is different, but if you are actually talking about the guru it comes to the same point. To be guided from the small, temporal problems, from certain specific dangers, it doesn't depend on the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, all three jewels, all three refuge objects. For instance, there are many stories about how just by taking refuge in the Dharma, the person gets saved from that danger, from that fear, from that specific danger. Just by taking refuge in the Sangha—there are many stories that happened of beings being saved from the different particular dangers, without taking refuge in all three.

For instance, even just taking refuge in the arhats without taking refuge in all three, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, just taking refuge in the Sangha, the arhats. There are many stories about how they guided them from different problems and dangers. In previous time there was one king in India. Somehow by magic, weapons poured like rain, by very strong magic from the King of Nagas. So as the king took refuge in one of the arhats, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's disciple, who had incredible psychic powers, all of a sudden all these weapons transformed into flowers and became flower rain. Like this the king was saved from danger. Also there were two brothers, and one of the brothers was called Kung-po, and he took ordination and received the state of an arhat in that life. His brother was going to the Pacific to get jewels. He was in danger, going by boat, by ship, and there was danger on the ocean, the ship was going to collapse. There was great danger. So as he took refuge in this arhat, his brother, he relied on him completely, on the arhats' help, and at that time he was saved from that danger by his brother. They released him from that ocean, from that danger, because in the ocean sometimes there are also spirits and somehow they wanted to harm him many times. When they dislike those business people they cause very heavy storms, many things, upside down, sinking, like this. Sometimes they give problems like this, offense. Also even in India, many times it happened in India in the Tibetan refugee camp at Mysore. That is the place where there are the most monks these days, and they are completing their study of philosophy and teachings. That is like the center, the main place, the main monastery, the most monks, where there is the chance to study all the different aspects of the philosophical teachings. But there are many dangers in that place. There are elephants, other animals, sort of like a pig, a boar, and they attack people. The wild elephants come many times. There is a very thick forest with so many elephants in the forest, with many dangers, and many animals. The Tibetans have fields, crops, and many times they have to look after the field at nighttime to keep away from the animals eating. Many times there were dangers, to the monks and laypeople, wild animals coming. When they meet them by accident they take refuge. Then as they say the prayer the animals usually just go away very quietly, they back or pass away, they don't attack like usual. Many times this happened to different people. I haven't been there but I was told by one guru who recently came from Mysore, from who I received many teachings on sutra and tantra. He explained to me all those different stories.

Also there are so many stories of them taking refuge in Tara many times, who is the female aspect deity. Also taking refuge in Avalokiteshvara, the Compassionate Buddha. Taking refuge with the mind completely relying on one specific manifestation of Buddha. Many stories about being guided from dangers, different problems.

However in order to be guided from all the samsaric suffering and the suffering of the evil destinies it is necessary to take refuge in all three, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Just like the very heavy patient, the terribly sick patient, he needs all three—the doctor and someone to help and then the medicine. Just like this terribly sick person has to depend on these three, just like this. We also, in

order to escape from the fear of samsaric suffering and the fear of the suffering of evil destinies, we have to also take refuge in all these three, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Otherwise like this. If there is no medicine the doctor can't help, can't cure that terribly sick person. If there is no nurse, no person who gives the medicine and takes care the patient it is difficult, he can't help himself, so he has to be helped by someone besides the doctor giving him medicine. Even if the person has some type of medicine, without the doctor there is a big problem. Without the doctor who knows what his sickness is what medicine should be taken—if he doesn't rely on such a doctor then again there is a problem. There is the danger that he may take the wrong medicine. However he can't help himself. Just like this. So you have to take refuge by relying on these three, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. As I said before, the Buddha is like the doctor who shows the path to release from all suffering. The Dharma is like the medicine because it shows all these three, the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being, to escape from all suffering. The Sangha is like the nurse because it helps to attain the Dharma. So this is just briefly talking about the object of refuge.

Student: If we meet a tiger in the jungle in whom should we take refuge?

Comment: The tree!

Rinpoche: What about making prostration to the tiger! At that time, whatever the manifestation of Buddha that you can think of, that you can remember. In any time when there is danger and you don't have anything to do, when you are methodless, one most useful thing is bodhicitta. Of course praying to the Buddhas, in the different manifestations of enlightened beings, if you have a specific manifestation of Buddha that you usually meditate on, you can pray to him, by remembering the mind completely relying on him, like this.

Then one of the most useful things is bodhicitta. Dedicating your problems for others ... I don't mean, I am sorry, I don't mean give your problems to other sentient beings, but I mean taking other sentient beings' sufferings, problems on you. That is the most beneficial thing, the most practical beneficial thing. You can do both, praying and also doing this.

For instance, in Tibet there are some people who are going by boat. In Tibet they make boats of animal skin, anyway it doesn't matter. They have their own boat, then somehow there are some people in that boat, and it will sink, so one person who has a little bit better thinking, who is more concerned about other people than himself, he strongly wishes that he sink on behalf of other people, and that the other people will not sink, not have this danger, but that he may sink on behalf of them. He strongly wishes this, preferring this. This is a thought concerned with taking care of others more than oneself, strongly wishing this when the danger is happening. He is thinking how good it is if I sink on behalf of them, for them to not have the danger, like this. So what happened was this. Because when the boat sank, this man somehow didn't sink in the water, somehow he didn't sink, he was just on the surface of the water and he came on the land. Somehow the power of that pure thought—he didn't have any of those rubber things you tie here! But he had fantastic equipment in his mind. He wasn't sinking, he was on the surface of the water, and the rest of the other people who were concerned about themselves sank. There are many stories, many experienced stories of the benefits of bodhicitta.

Anyway, this is the power of the pure thought, this pure thought, the thought that is not involved in self. It has that much power. There are so many stories but this takes time. The most practical thing is this. Generally any time in life whenever you have problems, whenever you are experiencing the problems, whether you have the method, when you don't have the problem, you have the method.

The problem is that you don't have the method, like certain times being in an airplane or a ship where there is no method. However at any time this is very useful, it is always useful whenever the problem is happening, instead of scaring, "Oh, what to do," being scared and concerned only about yourself, which helps nothing, doesn't help even one atom. Somehow whether you have to go through that suffering or not, it is very useful, very useful.

Student: Is that relative or absolute bodhicitta?

Rinpoche: Forget about absolute bodhicitta! I am sorry. This is relative bodhicitta, the bodhicitta that we often try to cultivate, the thought of bodhicitta we try to cultivate, this pure thought is the relative bodhicitta. But however it is not important to talk about in this time. Talking about absolute bodhicitta is a Vajrayana teaching.

What I am talking about? Oh yeah, so it is very useful, whether you have to go through that or just for temporal reasons, it is always beneficial to think that at any time. Think, instead of scaring yourself, causing double suffering to yourself, think, "May I experience all the sentient beings' suffering by experiencing this particular suffering," especially you see that type of suffering, that particular danger, is not only you, there are many other sentient beings who are suffering like this at the present time. Also there will be many other sentient beings who will suffer like this in the future, so especially you think about those who are in the same danger, those who will experience this danger in the future, "May I experience all this, may I receive or experience all their dangers, problems, on me." Like this, praying like this, strongly wishing like this and praying like this. So in this way if you understand, if you have a little bit of understanding, if you have usually been making meditation on the graduated path, the brief subject of each path, the meditations that are explained in this book, if you have been making meditation a little bit like this, then at that time you have some idea, you have some power. This energy is due to the understanding of these meditations, especially part of the Mahayana meditation. There is energy, power in your mind. All of a sudden when this danger is happening, also all of a sudden we remember the method to use it, and also if your mind is not so much well trained, has not meditated so much on this, doesn't have that much understanding, it is difficult somehow to use this method.

For instance, in order to use this method the mind has to be a little bit powerful. There has to be a greater will. The thing is this. If you don't have that much understanding, if the mind is not trained in this meditation, especially the part of the Mahayana meditation, then even if you know, you can think like this, but somehow in the actual time when the danger comes, you remember and you use this method, and somehow instead of suffering for other sentient beings, using your problem to take other sentient beings' problems, sufferings, instead of doing this, the mind is so much concerned just to stop this problem. Strongly wishing oneself to be happy, to be released from this problem, this enemy, right away. This thought comes first comes and also the person remembers this method since the mind hasn't made much meditation and doesn't have that much understanding even though he remembers the method. Somehow he feels ... he doesn't have full confidence in it. Even though he remembers the method he cannot practice, think this way, he cannot change completely. The thought wanting to stop one's own problems is much stronger than wanting to experience others' problems, wanting oneself to experience other sentient beings' sufferings. Due to the mind not being trained in meditation, it doesn't have that much understanding, especially the Mahayana meditation. The mind doesn't have that much will, strong will, it has less power. So therefore even if the person remembers intellectually, even if the person remembers the method written in the notebook, somehow to do this the person feels afraid, to do this somehow the person feels afraid to practice this. Because there is not so much power and understanding, not making much meditation,

so there is not much power and energy in the mind. Actually, this practice of taking other beings' problems on oneself is great practice, a really great and profound practice, and to practice this profound Mahayana technique and teaching, the person has to have a greater will. That's why it is called also the Mahayana, great, because this technique signifies that the person who practices has to have great understanding, great will. So the person feels afraid even though he remembers the method, but one side of mind feels afraid. So it is difficult to use. Thinking like this, taking other beings' suffering, is making a big decision, dedicating yourself, you don't care, the main thing is you don't care for yourself, you are using it for other sentient beings, dedicating for other sentient beings in order to give pleasure to the other sentient beings for whom you are dedicating. Then when there is danger like this, it is useful to think, any time. Even though you have the method to cure that problem or even if you don't have that method, for instance, you are sick, you have diarrhea, whatever problem you have, you are taking the medicine, but while you are taking the medicine you are experiencing suffering. So if you are wise enough, if you have that much will, that much concern for other sentient beings, your suffering, your getting sick, becomes medicine for yourself, becomes medicine to destroy your attachment attached to the happiness of this life. Besides that, it becomes medicine to destroy the self-cherishing thought, it becomes really practical, effective, pure medicine.

For instance, tablets—sometimes certain medicine is so powerful, good, it cuts off pain right away, it is very powerful. But sometimes it is better to take medicine that has less power than a strong one. By taking a strong one sometimes it may cause problems. If you take so many tablets, even though it is good, best quality, if you take so much, there is the danger that it can make your health worse. Thinking it is the best quality medicine and taking so much without following the prescription, checking like this. But this medicine is dedicating yourself for other sentient beings, this medicine is using your suffering to experience other sentient beings' suffering, to take other sentient beings' suffering by yourself, to bring pleasure, peace for other sentient beings. This meditation, this technique, how much you do, how long you do it, how strong you do it, there is no danger like the tablets. The subject becomes a little bit strange, just like wind, wind blowing round! For instance, I am sorry! Let's say if the person ... the second thing is like this. I don't mean you should die, you should not take medicine, and should die, but even if the person, while meditating, thinking like this, while the person is sick thinking like this, even if the person dying has that many hours, the person has been thinking like this, dedicating, trying to experience other sentient beings' sufferings, dedicating himself like this, and has that much merit before death that he has created. This has much benefit, so much benefit. If the person dies, and while person was getting sick he was thinking like this, dedicating himself, if the person died while thinking like this, there is no doubt that the person would not be born in the suffering realm, no doubt, no question. Even if the person doesn't have actual bodhicitta, just even having the similar thought that is concerned more about other sentient beings than himself, this definitely helps, guides, bringing him less suffering at death time. Also no worries.

So just briefly talking about how to eat food. Generally according to the meditator, there are so many different ways to eat food. There are the Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana ways, according to the meditator—many higher, profound techniques to use. However for the action of eating food to become good karma, besides becoming the path to enlightenment, it is very useful to say some prayer, but a short prayer that is relative to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. You can do like this. Visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha at the heart, on the lotus, sun, and moon, then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is seated, and think that he is the embodiment of all the Buddhas. Generally it is like this. The reason we generally make offerings is to create good karma, to create merit, and to purify. Generally it is like this. The main purpose is that, one thing is that. Talking about the

opposite, if you eat food with attachment, it makes you be born as a preta. If you eat food with ignorance it makes you be born as animal. Anger makes you be born in the narak stage. There are many different types of methods to use in order to stop attachment, to stop ignorance, to stop the negative karma that brings those suffering results, the suffering rebirth. So it is also very good to be conscious and to make even the action of eating, even that small action, beneficial. Try to make the action Dharma. Do virtuous action as much as possible. In that way it doesn't become negative karma, so you don't have to experience the suffering result. Then you think, today there is no time to translate the prayer—the prayer is very useful and is relative to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Today I will just briefly tell about concentration. Thinking, remembering this, the attachment creates the negative karma to be born as a preta, or ignorant as an animal, like this. First you remember the opposite, the negative. If you are not conscious of this it is possible that your mind doesn't care. The lazy mind, if there is a lazy mind that doesn't care, have fear, doesn't dedicate. So think, "I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings, therefore I am going to make this offering to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha who is the embodiment of all Buddhas." Then you think that the food is not mine, is not possessed by me, but is possessed by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, it is for Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, completely dedicated. Instead of thinking that this my food, I should eat it, you strongly feel, think like this, completely dedicating it for Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Instead of that other feeling of this is mine, I possess this, I am eating for my pleasure. Instead of this, think strongly that I am making offerings to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, as it only belongs to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. So with this motivation, beginning with this motivation of bodhicitta, even if you offer the number of spoons that you take each time, it becomes an offering. Each time it becomes an offering. Each time it becomes an offering as you are concentrating. So in this way it is very good—you see that your action of eating food, because first you remember negative karma, and checking that stops attachment arising for the food, so with no attachment to the food, to temporal happiness, your mind is in the pure thought, it goes in the Dharma. It doesn't care about pleasure, your mind goes in the Dharma. Besides the mind going in the Dharma, because you are completely dedicating your offering to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the total embodiment of all buddhas, in this way your action doesn't involve the self, besides attachment. Also it doesn't involve the self, it becomes an offering. Also it becomes work for other sentient beings, you are creating this merit making offering for other sentient beings. As you are motivated. It becomes so many things, one spoonful of food, just one thing, becomes so many useful things. So as much as you take, being conscious, a big plate full of food, then the number of spoons is more! Maybe go to get more food! That much benefit you can create. Then you have to be conscious also here. Anyway, I am joking. Like this, it is very useful. Then as you are taking each time thinking, you can think that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha receives infinite bliss, you can think like this and also he is sending much light, radiating light like the sun, radiating and then purifying all your negativity by that light. Also you feel much bliss, you can think like this, and there are also other meditations to dedicate for sentient beings but I think that much is enough.

You can think also like this. If you want to think of sentient beings besides Buddha, if you are concerned with sentient beings, you can also think like this. In Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's heart there is also a lotus, a sun and a moon seat and all the sentient beings are there. All sentient beings are there. You can visualize them in the form of human beings like we are sitting, like this you can think. Then you are dedicating food, making charity for sentient beings, besides making offerings to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Think that as each sentient being receives this food, it becomes purification, and as they are taking this food, the food that they have received becomes the graduated path to enlightenment. All their delusions, their negative karma, all their obscurations are completely purified. Like this you can think, if you can concentrate like this. If you are concerned

about sentient beings, if you think you are missing something, other sentient beings, then you can think, visualize sentient beings at the heart of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. In this way you create so much benefit, besides making offerings, also making charity to sentient beings, and this becomes the bodhisattva's practice.

3 pm

Before I planned to just only to have one session in the morning, and not have to talk in the afternoon. Somehow Lama Yeshe suggested to amplify a little bit the part of samsaric suffering. Somehow it took a little time to get to that point, but however the fundamental understanding of the samsaric suffering, actually we started from the beginning of the course. I am not sure whether I can explain, amplify that part of the subject—partially from my side I don't have any knowledge, so however just we make one trip. So the plan changed, so sometimes, maybe not every afternoon, but most of the afternoons, maybe to talk a little bit.

(Page 62)

1. (a)(b) - *Nyon.drib*, the general meaning is the obscuration that mainly interrupts receiving nirvana, the boundless state of nirvana. *She.drib* means, as it is explained literally just from the word, obscuring one from fully realizing all existence. Obscuring, *drib* means obscuring. *She* means all existence, or it can mean the understanding of all existence. So it means to fully see every single existence. There is obscuration, there is mental defilement that obscures that, there is mental defilement that obscures us from fully realizing every single existence. *She.drib*. So that mental defilement that obscures us from fully realizing every single existence is called *she.drib*. The illusive mind that sees the dualistic vision, the illusive mind that sees or projects the dualistic vision has the defect of the impression of ignorance. It is like this. Just to make clear. The ignorance, the delusions, those different gross and negative minds, these delusions leave impressions on the consciousness. They leave impressions on the consciousness, and this impression causes the dualistic mind that projects the dualistic view. Even the higher bodhisattvas who have the full realization of the absolute nature, who realizes the absolute nature of existence, those higher bodhisattvas who have removed the delusions, who have removed the delusions, those who have the full realization of shunyata, even though they see every existence as a dream, even though they see phenomenal things, even though they see existence as a dream, not true, even though they see the phenomenal things as a reflection of moon in water, still they have the dualistic mind that projects the dual vision. It doesn't mean the higher bodhisattva believes in it, it doesn't mean that. It is just like the magician who has transformed the piece of wood into a beautiful girl. Just like him, he doesn't believe that appearance, because he realizes it is not true, he realizes, completely understands, that it is not true. It is just his transformation of the elements, with powers or mantras. He understands that that girl doesn't exist at all, anywhere, even though he sees that appearance of the girl. So that higher bodhisattva's mind that projects, the illusive mind that projects this view is called *she.drib*. This impression that is left on the consciousness is also an obscuration to receive enlightenment and this dualistic mind that came due to the impression is also an obscuration to receive enlightenment. So whenever the person receives enlightenment, the time of completely removing this dual vision, the time of completely ceasing the mind projecting the dual vision, that is the only time when that meditator, that higher bodhisattva, receives enlightenment. The higher bodhisattva, when he is on a certain schedules, in deep concentration of shunyata, at that time he doesn't have dual vision. When he is in the deep concentration of shunyata, he doesn't have dual vision. In the break times, when he is out of that concentration, when he is making purification, during that time when he is not in the

complete concentration on shunyata, during the break time—during the concentration time he doesn't have the dual vision but during the break time until he achieves enlightenment there is always dual vision, even though he sees the existence as false, like a dream, like a phantom. By continually doing meditation on the absolute nature, just like putting water on water, by continuously concentrating like this, gradually this dual vision and the illusive mind that projects this dual vision is purified, and gradually it is removed. So to fully realize all existence, to fully realize every single existence, the obscuration is the dual vision, that subtle dualistic mind.

Student: Do you mean by all existence, all relative existence or absolute existence or both?

Rinpoche: All existence, both.

(Page 63)

I A. 1. - *Ngo* means sort of self. *Ngo.wo.nyid.ku* is the essence of mind, the nature of the mind. Now at the movement, as we briefly talked about at the beginning, the possibility of receiving enlightenment, at that time we talked a little bit about the clear light nature of the mind.

(Page 3)

At the present time our mind is deluded, ignorant, and obscured by the temporal pollutions. At the present time why isn't the clear light nature of the mind Buddha, why isn't it Buddha's nature? The reason it isn't Buddha's nature is because of this. First of all, if this was Buddha's nature, then that mind that is deluded should be Buddha's mind. If that were so, then Buddha's mind should be deluded, Buddha should have the deluded mind. If that is so, then one doesn't make sense of Buddha, the meaning of Buddha is lost. The meaning of the Enlightened Being is lost. There is no such Buddha that still needs purification. If this mind nature is Buddha's mind nature, then this mind has to be Buddha's mind, and then it has to be the deluded Buddha, which doesn't make sense. One side is calling it Buddha, but one side is deluded. It becomes funny, because then the mind becomes enlightened and non-enlightened, then the mind becomes completely purified and completely obscured. Like this, it becomes funny, it doesn't make sense, it just makes more confusion.

Student: Before you said the bodhisattvas who were concentrating on shunyata have the absolute nature, yet when doing purification they have the dualistic mind. They merge in and out of samsara.

Rinpoche: They are still sentient beings.

Student: My definition must be wrong.

Rinpoche: Bodhisattva doesn't mean Buddha.

Student: Isn't a bodhisattva an arhat out of samsara?

Rinpoche: No, there are bodhisattvas who are out of samsara but some are in samsara. It depends on the level of realization.

Student: But when concentrating on shunyata do they realize the absolute nature, and then they come out of that and have the dualistic mind?

Rinpoche: This is like this—during the break time while concentrating the mind becomes invisible, so during the break time when it is not concentrating, the dualistic mind becomes visible, rises up again, becomes visible. So that's how the dual vision comes again. Like this.

Nick: He thinks you are saying while in concentration he is enlightened, but out of concentration he is not enlightened.

Rinpoche: I don't mean this. When the bodhisattva is concentrating he is enlightened and when he is out of concentration he is not enlightened. I hope so! I hope I don't explain like this. Not like this. When the bodhisattva receives enlightenment, that is the time when the dualistic mind and the dualistic vision is completely purified, ceased, impossible to happen again. It is impossible to have the dual vision again because the cause that projects this has completely ceased, it doesn't exist, it is completely purified, so it is impossible to have again.

So however, it is possible to get wrong conceptions thinking like this—my mind nature is Buddha's mind nature, and Buddha's nature is like this. If that is so, if the nature of the present mind is Buddha's nature then that mind that has Buddha nature has to be Buddha's mind, has to be the enlightened mind. If it is the enlightened mind then it has been enlightened from beginningless lifetimes, and then there is no reason why the present mind is ignorant. However, the ignorance, the delusions, don't come without cause. Anyway those negative minds, for all those different negative minds, there is no reason, no way for it to exist if the mind is already enlightened. There is no way for it to exist within the mind. These negative minds are causative, impermanent. It always depends on the cause. Also it is not independent, it is dependent and non-self-existent, is not self-existent. Also if there is a Enlightened Being who is still deluded, still ignorant, still suffering, still ignorant of the absolute nature of existence, still ignorant of realizing karma, if that is so then what is the purpose—there is purpose to try to receive enlightenment, it is useless if that is so. There is no purpose in following this specific path, no purpose in trying to stop the negative mind, trying to diminish the negative mind, trying to control it. However it becomes funny, totally it happens like this. The enlightened mind and also the non-enlightened mind becomes sort of like this, it doesn't make sense. However it is the opposite—the non-enlightened mind and the enlightened mind, the meaning is the opposite, the knowledge is different.

Student: Are both enlightened and non-enlightened minds sentient?

Rinpoche: Sentient, is it sentient? Without talking about ignorance it is the same being sentient, it is the same.

Student: So the enlightened mind is not sentient?

Rinpoche: Generally talking about, without talking about ignorance—

Student: Isn't ignorance non-enlightened mind.

Rinpoche: Yes, all non-enlightened mind is in ignorance. There is so much detail. There are beings who are out of ignorance. Just before I discussed the arhats who are out of samsara, out of ignorance, but who still have mental defilements, subtle obscurations, dualistic mind. They don't have ignorance and delusions but they are not enlightened yet.

Student: Not ignorant, not enlightened, and still sentient beings. When they become enlightened are they still sentient beings?

Rinpoche: When they become enlightened the sentient beings that we usually talk about, who are living in obscurations, their minds living in obscurations—they are not that kind of sentient being.

Student: Another kind?

Rinpoche: They are living beings.

Student: And as their body dies what happens to the mind, still having sentient nature?

Rinpoche: They don't have a body that dies, the Buddha doesn't have a sentient body that dies.

Student: But Guru Shakyamuni dies. This is part of his teaching?

Rinpoche: Then it is interesting. Sometimes you see the animals, and when you touch them they pretend they are dead, not moving, like this. They are like stone, they don't move for some time. They don't show that they are alive because they are scared to be killed or something if they try to

move around, but that doesn't mean—you see sometimes you may believe that he is dead but that doesn't mean he is dead. Sort of like this.

So this part is important that I am talking about because many people have these wrong conceptions so they don't check up, they just think like this. Somehow anyway, the definition is this, the reason that we try to become enlightened for the sake of sentient beings, if ... one thing is this. If we receive enlightenment then again we become deluded how can we continuously work for sentient beings? If by receiving enlightenment again we become ignorant, deluded like this, it doesn't make much sense. Also by receiving enlightenment we also cannot continuously, cannot make continual work for sentient beings, because again we would become deluded, ignorant. There is no such thing, therefore it is worthwhile to try to receive enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings because once this is achieved it is impossible again for the mind to become ignorance or to be deluded or dualistic. It is impossible because there is no reason, no cause. Nothing makes the enlightened mind dualistic again, no sort of negative mind can control enlightenment, no negative mind can control the enlightened mind. Negative mind prevents you from receiving the enlightened mind, negative mind prevents the mind from becoming enlightened, but once the mind becomes enlightened the negative mind can never control it. First of all there is no cause—that enlightened mind can never be controlled by the negative mind. If it could be controlled by the negative mind, that means the enlightened mind doesn't have complete control, the enlightened mind is not completely free. So therefore at the present time the mind nature is not completely free. So therefore the present mind nature is not the Buddha's mind nature, the present mind is not the Buddha's mind. There is no such Buddha who still needs purification, who doesn't have complete control, who is not completely free. So like this.

So far why hasn't the mind become the enlightened mind? That is because of delusions, mental defilements, subtle obscurations, the *she.drib*. Because of the continual existence of these obscurations, our mind has not been enlightened yet. So the clear light mind nature, our present clear light nature of mind, even though it is not deeply mixed with the delusions, the obscurations, it is obscured by the temporal pollution, by the temporal obscurations. The clear light nature of mind is obscured by temporal pollution—that means this. Temporal pollution means—it doesn't mean it has beginning, it means it has an end. It has the possibility to end or finish. It is not permanent so it is called temporal pollution because the present clear light nature of mind is obscured by the temporal pollution, therefore the clear light nature of mind is not completely pure, now. Now like this. By purifying the temporal pollutions, the present mind becomes the dharmakaya, the omniscient mind. By purifying the temporal pollution, the continuity of the present mind becomes the omniscient mind. So the continuity, through purification, the clear light nature of the mind becomes completely pure. At that time the clear light nature of mind, when the mind becomes omniscient, that is the time of becoming the svabhavakaya. That becomes the dharmakaya, it becomes the svabhavakaya. The dharmakaya has two—it is clear, the continuity of the mind that becomes the omniscient mind is also dharmakaya and the clear light nature of that mind is also dharmakaya. There are two dharmakaya—one is the clear light nature of mind, the clear light nature of omniscient mind, and one is omniscient mind.

Student: In Guru Shakyamuni Yoga practice it says we are supposed to merge our mind with Guru Shakyamuni's in the form of infinite space—

Rinpoche: Then how can our mind merge into Guru Shakyamuni's mind in the form of space? Right, difficult to understand. It is like this. If you are going to do a show in the theater then before that you have to train, isn't it. You have to dance, to act as if you are showing in the theater, before

that you have to train. You have to do similar things in order to train, to rehearse. That doesn't mean that you are an actress at that time. For instance, before that you need training, you need to do what is similar to what you are going to perform. Just like this example, similar to this example. Actually, this practice is not easy to understand, this point is not easy. You can understand, try to understand though this example. It is the same thing with armies—before they are in the actual war, they try to train, try to do similar things, try to kill each other, try to do similar things that they are going to do in the future, in that actual time. So that's how they become clever, that is how they build the skill to be able to cheat and control others. If you think through the example perhaps you can understand. But actually this technique is really a very profound technique. It is quite difficult to understand even though we explain the meaning. This is something that we can understand through purification.

Student: Is it incorrect to say the clear light shines at first in infinite space so first you start with infinite space, then when are sufficiently purified the clear light comes into space?

Rinpoche: Possible. Then I think at night time you do similar meditations to what you did this morning. First of all, if you remember the general samsaric suffering then after that you can start like I talked about this morning, remembering negative karma, then the result of negative karma, the suffering of the evil destinies that is to be experienced in the future. Then also the suffering of the three upper realms, the human realm, the sura realm, and the asura realm—you can remember this by reading the book. Then after you think that you cannot help to escape from these sufferings, then think of the purpose of needing to take refuge and these things, and that the object of refuge that is worthy is only the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Then you check up the cause of refuge, then the objects of refuge—you go through like this as we talked about relative and absolute like this. Then after that thinking of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha as you have visualized, you can think of Guru Shakyamuni and his realizations and himself being Sangha, like this. And also one purpose is to actualize your own three jewels, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Then visualize sentient beings. I am not sure whether I discussed this before, visualize also sentient beings, all sentient beings filled up the whole space in the form of human beings, but their nature is suffering. Their form is as humans but as they are suffering now in different realms, the nature is suffering. Like this. This is also one way of doing meditation, you can also think like this. Then do purification. First you make purification of yourself by reciting mantras, then after spending some time, from the heart you request Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, "Please grant me blessings to completely purify starting from the disbelief in the guru down to the subtle dualistic mind, the very last obscuration that prevents me from reaching enlightenment, the subtle dualistic mind, so please grant me blessings to completely purify all the wrong conceptions from disbelief in the guru to the subtle dualistic mind." This is the first one when you make purification.

The second time receiving the knowledge through the yellow light, you can request, "Please grant me blessings to receive devotion to the guru down to enlightenment right away." Like this you request. Then you make visualization of knowledge light coming.

Then afterwards when Guru Shakyamuni absorbs in this state, in oneness, you concentrate for some time. Try to concentrate, put whole your energy, whatever there is left! It doesn't matter even though there is no energy left to carry back to the West. Then try to concentrate as much as possible without the mind being distracted, also feeling infinite bliss. Then after you transform into Guru Shakyamuni Buddha oneness, then again you recite mantra while you are purifying all sentient beings. Then at the end you make the dedication.

I think that's all.

Day Twenty-two
Wednesday, 27th November
Precepts

Before taking the ordination it is necessary for the mind to go in the Dharma, and besides that it is necessary for the action of taking ordination to become the cause of enlightenment, therefore it is necessary that it be possessed by the pure thought, the precious bodhicitta. Think briefly like this. “Myself and all sentient beings have been experiencing suffering in samsara, particularly the suffering of the evil destinies, numberless times from beginningless samsaric lifetime. Still myself and all sentient beings have to experience suffering endlessly, being under the control of delusion and karma, due to the wrong conception of the self “I,” believing the non-self-existence of things to be self-existent, believing impermanent things to be permanent, and believing impure things to be pure. For example, believing that changeable things, things that are living in impermanent nature, which don't last even a shortest second, are unchangeable, and believing that the impurities such as one's own body—even though it is an impure samsaric body containing all kinds of impurities, and made of an impure cause, a physical cause—continuously believing that it is pure. Such wrong conceptions. However, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was also an ordinary being, but having met the Mahayana Guru and having met the teachings and observing the eight Mahayana precepts, he received enlightenment. Just as he did, we also have the possibility to receive enlightenment through observing the ordination. However, releasing oneself from samsaric suffering is not sufficient—all sentient beings are the field of our happiness, the place from which we receive our happiness and pleasures as long as we remain in samsara. Even when we are not in samsara, the pleasures, happiness, and peace are received by depending on sentient beings. All peace and happiness, present and future, is received by depending on the kindness of sentient beings, from the field of sentient beings. Also, mother sentient beings are the principal helper, the main helper at the beginning of the Dharma practice, and in the middle and at the end of the Dharma practice. Therefore, I must receive enlightenment in order to enlighten the extremely kind mother sentient beings who are suffering with the dualistic mind, with the delusions, spontaneously creating negative karma, and suffering. Therefore I am going to take the Mahayana ordination until tomorrow.”

Visualize the person granting the ordination as Guru Shakyamuni surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas, with joyfulness in the mind, wanting to take ordination to make all sentient beings, each sentient being, release from suffering and become enlightened. With this motivation repeat the prayer and take the ordination.

At the end of the third repetition think that you have perfectly received the ordination in the form of light.

PRAYER

Repeat the prayer of the precepts thinking that, “I am going to observe the precepts until tomorrow as the previous Tathagatas observed the precepts.”

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

Repeat the mantra reviving broken precepts and keeping the precepts pure.

MANTRA DEDICATION

Dedicate the merits thinking, “May the meaning of whatever the prayer contains be successful.” Also concentrate on the three circles—yourself and the merit and enlightenment, and also sentient beings—in emptiness. This is the way you see these three. Then think, “May I achieve enlightenment quickly by receiving the fundamental realizations, the fully renouncing mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute true nature in order to enlighten all sentient beings by releasing them from all suffering, due to the past and present merits and also the future merits of taking ordination.”

This fundamental motivation that I often repeat was set up by my root Guru, **His Holiness T. Rinpoche**, who is difficult to repay, so therefore somehow it is very tasty. It has a deep taste in it, and it is very effective for the mind. Sometimes we may find it difficult to keep precepts—for most people fasting can be easy, actually fasting is not usually a Western problem, fasting is sort of common, I think. Even if the fasting is not the problem there are other problems. Like getting up in the early morning, feeling cold, renouncing the warm sleep, the opposite action to attachment, things like this. There is attachment but you have to fight it in order to take the ordination. However, as much as we suffer through meditation, the body feeling uncomfortable, having pains or sickness, having pains from sitting in meditation position, always it is better that there are less suffering sentient beings. The individual, the one who is suffering, is just one person, one person suffering, but there are numberless sentient beings who are extremely suffering, experiencing greater incredible sufferings than the problems that each individual has. The choice is this. It is better that sentient beings not suffer and I suffer, rather than sentient beings suffering and myself being happy. Sentient beings are not in happiness now, it has to be created, has to be made by cooperation from one’s own side and from the side of sentient beings. We have to work in order to lead them to happiness.

So how that should be done. First of all, the only way is for oneself to achieve enlightenment. Without oneself releasing from suffering, from samsara, we cannot be an object of refuge. Whenever we are released from samsara, from suffering, from the dualistic mind, as we receive enlightenment, we become a perfect refuge object for sentient beings. As we become a perfect object for sentient beings’ refuge we can also guide the sentient beings from suffering, with perfect power, perfect knowledge, and infinite compassion. Therefore, now we are disciplining, controlling ourselves by taking the difficulties, in spite of the difficulties of renouncing attachment, renouncing samsaric pleasures, by going through the experience of the temporal problems. So actually whatever difficulty there is, the suffering or the difficulty that we are experiencing taking ordination, doing meditation, that is actually, as you motivated in this way, as I repeat, the whole suffering, the difficulty that we are experiencing is for sentient beings. We are experiencing suffering, we are experiencing the difficulties to bring about the most sublime happiness of enlightenment for other sentient beings. If one person such as me is suffering, and if that can be beneficial for each sentient being, why not? How fantastic that is. The thoughts wanting to do anything without difficulties, with happiness, always with happiness, are plentiful and arise easily. But this thought that may be more serious, wanting to suffer for other sentient beings, is extremely difficult to bring up. That is like a jewel, extremely difficult to bring up, a serious practice of exchanging oneself for others, instead of being concerned about one’s own comfort, being concerned with others’ comfort. Instead of thinking of one’s own comfort and wanting other to suffer, being concerned about other beings’ comfort, not caring about one’s suffering, like this. Exchanging oneself for others. It is necessary to

know these things and, if you can, remember these things when your mind get bored or when attachment controls your mind. Instead of attachment controlling you more strongly than necessary, it is extremely useful to think of these things.

There is not much time to talk about the offerings. However, usually if you want to make material offerings, besides mentally transformed offering, you can do the most simple thing. Whether you have an altar or not, some symbolic thing, a picture or something of the Enlightened Being such as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or whatever, whether you have that or not—if you have it, it is good for the memory and there are many other benefits. If you have an altar or something symbolic, a picture, a statue, each time you see you create benefits, you purify. Each time you see your altar it leaves an impression in the mind to again see more buddhas, to again contact the Dharma in the future lifetimes. As you have an altar you have to see it frequently or even once with devotion. However, whether you have an altar or not, the existence of Buddha does not depend on having a picture of him, having a drawing of him. The existence of Buddha does not depend on having a statue—that's not the definition of whether Buddha exists in that place.

The simplest thing we can offer without the trouble of the negative mind, attachment, is the water offering. This is the most simple thing. Whether you have seven bowls, six bowls, or one bowl, or one cup, it doesn't matter. First of all, you have to clean the bowl, just like you want to clean a cup for drinking. Just like when you serve a king you have to clean it. You have to clean it very much, just like this. As you offer food to a king, just like this, when you make offerings to the altar, to the holy objects, you have to offer it with respect, like you offer food to a king. Whether it is one mug, glass, or cup, first of all it is necessary to clean it well. Even just cleaning it creates merits, because the motivation is the holy object to whom you offer. When you clean the bowl you can think, "For myself and all sentient beings, may all wrong conceptions starting with the disbelief in the guru down to the subtle gross mind be purified by cleaning this bowl." Then whatever you clean the bowl with, think that the realizations from the devotion to the Guru down to enlightenment are cleaned. Like this. Then, you cannot put an empty bowl on the altar. Before putting it on the altar put a little bit, a drop of water inside. I don't remember the karma of putting an empty bowl on the altar—finding it difficult to receive enjoyments in the future lifetime or being born in the dark eon where there is no buddha existing. I don't remember but there is some karma like this. Therefore it is necessary to put a little bit of a drop of water in, and then you say this mantra, "OM AH HUNG," while you put it in. Then you put in lean water—if you can, put in some other element that produces a good color and a smell; that's also very good. Also when you pour, pour very gently, not making noise. If you make noise when pouring water there is danger that the mind becomes crazy; this creates karma that makes the mind crazy. If you put first of all a tiny bit, then after it doesn't make noise. Then not completely full but not half, something that doesn't spill out—leave space the size of a grain of rice, a little bit empty, on the edge inside.

I think I will stop here, the rest I will talk about tomorrow.

9 am

"I must achieve enlightenment for the sake of all mother sentient beings, therefore I am going to complete the realization of the whole graduated path. In order to complete the whole realization of the graduated path I must complete the listening and thinking and meditating, the teaching of the graduated path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path."

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it is a teaching that is well expounded by the two great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa's understanding. This teaching includes all the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

So, this has four outlines. In order to show reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening to and explaining the teachings, and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path. The last one has two outlines also—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower Being, the graduated path of the middle Being, and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being has two outlines—bringing up the thought seeking a better future life and following the method that brings happiness in the future life. The second one has two outlines—taking refuge which is the holy door of the teaching and bringing up understanding belief in karma, which is the root of all perfection and happiness.

So, the part of this subject that we have been discussing is refuge, the first outline. Whether one has refuge or not, how strong, how pure the refuge that one has is, that can be discovered by checking the cause. Checking whether one has the cause within one's mind. Through this one can discover whether one has the two causes that is the actual refuge. Since one has these two causes, the person is taking refuge because these two causes cause the person to take refuge. Whether the person recites the prayer, taking refuge, whether the person can say the prayer or not, since one has these two causes—the devotion that completely relies on the perfect being who has the perfect power to guide one from the suffering of the evil destinies and from samsaric suffering, and having the fear of either the suffering of evil destinies or samsaric suffering. This is the actual way of taking refuge. If one has these two causes, this devotion, then one has already taken refuge. So check whether your mind has these two causes, these two understandings. These two causes actually come from right understanding. So check whether your mind is qualified by these two or not. If something is missing, if fear is missing, then you need stronger meditation on samsaric suffering, the six realms, meditating on the suffering of the evil destinies or samsaric suffering, general samsaric suffering. Then if the devotion is not so strong, if devotion is missing, then it is necessary to check, to find out more, understand deeper, make more meditation on the knowledge of the Buddha, the knowledge of the Dharma, and the knowledge of the Sangha. Understanding the knowledge of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha is the thing that increases devotion. The more we understand the knowledge, the more we study, and the more we meditate. The more we understand his knowledge, it causes devotion to arise, so it is very useful. If devotion is not so strong, this is the method to increase the devotion. So in order to take refuge, first of all one has to recognize the object of refuge. The object was briefly explained before, so we don't need to repeat.

Yesterday we were talking about the four *kayas*. *Kaya* is a Sanskrit word which means holy body. So yesterday we briefly talked about the *svabhavakaya*—how the present clear light nature of mind becomes *svabhavakaya*, the completely pure nature of omniscient mind. However, at the present time it is temporarily obscured; the clear light nature of mind is impure because it is obscured by the temporal pollutions, so by purifying the temporal pollutions this clear light nature of mind becomes pure, completely pure. When it becomes completely pure it becomes the *svabhavakaya*—at the same

time this present mind that is obscured by the temporal pollutions is completely purified and become omniscient mind. Like this. Just like this. A white cloth that was dirty before, obscured by temporal dirt, because of temporal dirt becoming dirty, kind of black, because the white color is temporarily obscured by the dirt. When the cloth becomes completely clean of the dirt, at the same time the color of the cloth, which is white, is also cleaned. At the same time when the cloth is cleaned, the color of the cloth becomes clean—before the white color cloth was invisible, temporarily obscured by the dirt, and afterwards when the cloth is completely the white color becomes bright, as there is no obscuration of dirt. Not seeing the color white before the cloth is cleaned doesn't mean the white color didn't exist and after it is clean it comes out. It doesn't mean that. It has always existed, but it was temporarily obscured by the dirt. Just like this, the clear light nature of mind is always there, but the clear light nature of the present mind is obscured by the temporal pollution and the clear light nature of the omniscient mind is not obscured by temporal pollutions. The difference is this. Also our future, each individual's future clear light nature of omniscient mind is completely purified of temporal pollutions.

So briefly like this. Svabhavakaya is also dharmakaya. This omniscient mind is also called the transcendental wisdom dharmakaya.

(Page 63)

I A. 3(e)

Tsan.zang is the sign of the holy body that signifies that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is a holy being. *Pe* means example. There are certain holy signs of the holy body that signify that he has such attainment of realizations, and that is called *pe.j'a*. To talk about each one, thirty-two and eighty, takes much time and is difficult to translate. It is well explained in the *Abhisamayalankara*, the teaching given by Maitreya to his disciple Asanga. The Tibetan title is *Do.da.gyen*. This philosophical teaching has so much detailed explanation. If we want to study the lamrim more deeply then we have to study those teachings, such as the *Madhyamaka* philosophical teachings, which have so many details explaining shunyata, written by Chandrakirti, a follower of the great philosopher Nagarjuna. There are many teachings written by Nagarjuna on shunyata with so much detail, so much logic. By understanding and studying those texts, you can really understand without mistake, so much more clearly, relative and absolute truth. You can understand both what is relative and what is absolute truth. There are six different texts written by Nagarjuna on shunyata, then Chandrakirti, the follower of Nagarjuna, who also had perfect realization of shunyata, wrote the *Madhyamaka*, which explains about shunyata and includes Nagarjuna's texts. It has so much detail. Then the *Do.da.gyen* ...

Student: Is that the *Abhidharma*?

Rinpoche: Yes, the title is *Abhidharma*.

Do.da.gyen is a teaching given by Maitreya. Maitreya is the future Buddha, the founder of the Buddhadharma after Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, who will descend into the world and again spread the Dharma. This teaching was given by him to his follower Asanga in the pure realm called Tushita. By studying this you can really get a broad understanding of the knowledge of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. There are so many details to go through. As we talked about yesterday, there are the five paths—just one path has so many details to understand. Within one path there are different levels of realization to achieve, different states to go through, gradually like this, in each of these paths. However, the person needs the understanding of all these paths to really go through it. To fully understand the lamrim, to completely understand the graduated path, one has to also study those

teachings. Without studying those philosophical teachings there is no way to get the complete understanding, no way to get the broad, deep understanding of the path, and also of the knowledge of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. If you want to study the knowledge further and deeper, if you study the *Abhidharma*, it explains much detail. Maitreya explained so many details.

However practicing any of those teachings is practicing lamrim. It is still practicing lamrim; it is not something that is excluded from lamrim, something separate from lamrim, it is not like this. In the lamrim there is nothing missing. It is the teaching that helps one to receive enlightenment, and none of these teachings are missing in the lamrim. Any teaching that becomes a cause or helps one to receive enlightenment is included in the lamrim, in the graduated path. Now we are starting. However, even if we don't know what is explained in those deep philosophical teachings as explained by the great philosophers Nagarjuna and Maitreya, or Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom, even though we don't have that much understanding, even having a little understanding of the knowledge of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha as we are talking about, as we are going through the explanation, even just having that much little understanding is highly fortunate, better than knowing nothing. It is so much better, the person is so much more fortunate than one who knows nothing about the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, or who, in his lifetime, has never heard of such a thing as the Buddha, Dharma, or Sangha. Even on this earth, hearing that there is Buddhadharma, hearing that the Buddha descended and gave the path showing the Dharma—there are great numbers of human beings who die not even hearing of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in their lifetime, not to mention knowing the knowledge of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. So not hearing, not understanding, not even having a little understanding of the knowledge of the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, how can they take refuge? It is impossible to take refuge. But at the beginning, as you start to study a big subject with very deep explanations that goes through much logic in the philosophical way, before that, it is necessary first of all to study the condensed summary of the teachings, the simplified condensed teaching of lamrim. This is necessary at the beginning; it is the most important thing at the beginning.

(BREAK)

Student: Is it possible to attain these philosophical realizations through meditation? Must one study the philosophical, the *Abhidharma*, or can one, through meditation on lamrim, come to these realizations?

Rinpoche: Whether you study those teachings or not to receive realization you have to practice lamrim. Without practicing lamrim, there is no other way to receive realization. But you can't receive enlightenment without knowing all those teachings; you can't receive enlightenment being ignorant of the teachings.

Student: What is the name of the text Chandrakirti wrote?

Rinpoche: *Madhyamaka*. Actually *Madhyamaka* also includes and explains the teaching written by Nagarjuna, and also the one written by Maitreya.

Student: Is it different from the one Asanga wrote?

Rinpoche: Yes, Asanga, yes—fundamentally it is not different, it is just a way of saying—the way the text is written is different but fundamentally it is the same.

Student: How does one know when one is ready to study those texts?

Rinpoche: My suggestion is that to really benefit your study of those teachings, first of all study lamrim, which is condensed and simplified, which has the subjects condensed and simplified. First of all study and practice, meditate—study means many things again, it means listening, checking, and meditating, doing these things together. First of all, it is very good to spend some time on the

lamrim and try to have just the general understanding of the subject the lamrim contains. Actually the lamrim includes the whole teaching, even though it is only two or three pages, it includes all the teachings. Try to have the general understanding of the fundamental paramita path. Then with this understanding as you are practicing and studying, which means also practicing, then as you start to study those philosophical teachings, whatever you study in those teachings becomes medicine, everything becomes effective and very useful for your mind. Everything helps meditation.

Student: How is the great mirror wisdom and the omniscient mind different?

Rinpoche: That is taken as an example by the enlightened beings ... for instance, it is like this. In the mirror, if you look in the mirror, you can see so many things there, even though the mirror is small. Like when you put up the microscope, you can see so many things, but just the microscope itself is small ... [comment made that Rinpoche actually meant “telescope” not “microscope”] It is not my fault, doctors! I am joking. Anyway, for instance, when we look at an object, at a tangka, at the same time you can see so many colors and things there, just like in a mirror there are so many things together. This ordinary mirror can be transformed—this impure, ordinary mirror light wisdom can be purified and this can become the enlightened being’s, our future buddha’s, mirror like wisdom. Actually it is the omniscient mind—all wisdom is the omniscient mind. The mirror like wisdom that fully sees every single existence all at once, together, like this.

(Page 63)

I A.4

(a) Here different examples are given of the transformations, the possibilities of how the Buddha can manifest.

(b)(c) This is just an example; it doesn’t mean that all the statues, all these transformations are nirmanakaya. Nirmanakaya is only the one who appears in the form of a bhikshu. The aspect that Guru Shakyamuni took when he was born as a prince, in that period, in that life, the aspect he had as a human being in the form of a monk having those holy signs, such as the hair knot and other holy signs—that aspect is the nirmanakaya. But it is possible that the enlightened beings can manifest as statues and those things according to the karma of sentient beings.

So this is the part of the subject that isn’t finished yet. The objects of refuge, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, each one has a relative and absolute truth, like this.

Then the third one, the causes of refuge and the objects of refuge. Then the question comes, after discussing the objects of refuge, how it is worthy of being an object of refuge? How is the Buddha a worthy object of refuge? There are reasons why it is a worthy object of refuge. There are four total reasons to prove that the Buddha is the perfect object of refuge. First of all, the Buddha is the perfect worthy object of refuge, the Buddha is worthy of taking refuge in because the Buddha himself...if the Buddha himself as not released from suffering, from all fear, he couldn’t guide other beings from fear. Like two people who are both in prison. One person taking refuge in another prisoner can’t be helped. The other prisoner cannot guide him, cannot save him, cannot save the other person from the fear of the prison, from the suffering of being in prison. So not like this. The Buddha is a worthy object of refuge because he himself is released completely from all suffering, all fear. For instance, two people are taken by a river, two people are sinking in a lake. One person asks the other person, “Please guide me from this danger. But that person cannot help because he is also in the same problem, same suffering. So therefore the object in which we take refuge should be out of suffering. If the object of refuge is not released from suffering then even though we take refuge

he cannot guide us. Even though we take refuge to release from all suffering, he cannot guide us if he doesn't have power and complete control. If he doesn't have complete control the method is missing; if he doesn't have perfect knowledge he doesn't have the different perfect methods to show different beings. So because the method is missing, he can't guide. So the very first thing to check up in whomever we take refuge in to escape from suffering, is that whomever we take refuge in, whomever we rely on for our life, whomever we give our life to, the very first thing, the most important thing is to check up is whether he is completely released from suffering or not. Like this. If he is not released completely from suffering that means he doesn't have complete control, and it means he doesn't have perfect knowledge, and that means he has no perfect method to lead other beings, release other beings from suffering.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is a worthy object of refuge because he can guide us from all fears, which means from all suffering. Why? The reason he has that much power, knowledge, and method is because he himself is released from all fears, from all suffering. For instance, in previous time when Guru Shakyamuni lived in India, many other people tried to control and destroy him Guru by many sneaky arrangements. There were a hundred thousand maras, evil beings, trying to control Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in many ways. They tried to control Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, tried to destroy Guru Shakyamuni Buddha by throwing all kinds of different types of thousands of weapons, such as shooting arrows, lightning, falling thunder balls, earthquakes—in many ways they tried to destroy him—throwing mountains. In many ways they tried, so many ways. They appeared in the form of very frightening shapes, animals, all kinds of things. They sent spears, so many different types of weapons. Also there are special wheels, chakras, which they use whenever they wish to cut the neck, somehow due to some power the wheel turns around and goes straight to that person and cuts the neck by the power of thought. All kinds of thing like this. They tried many ways. They threw weapons, shooting Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, but instead of making wounds in Guru Shakyamuni Buddha everything became flower rain—for Guru Shakyamuni Buddha it was all like flower rain, like offering flowers, throwing flowers. However, as much as they tried, they could not shake Guru Shakyamuni's concentration; they couldn't shake his mind out of concentration. However many thousands of them were around Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, trying to destroy him, they couldn't harm anything. Later on, those maras thought that since in wrathful way they could not destroy him, maybe in peaceful ways they could destroy him, disturb his concentration. So they tried to manifest in the form of beautiful ladies without clothes on, dancing in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. But they couldn't disturb his concentration with a violent method or even with a peaceful method—whatever they tried to destroy him, they couldn't destroy his concentration; none of those methods could shake his mind out of concentration. Just his life story clearly shows that he has completely released himself from all his own suffering and fear.

Then this subject goes another way, Guru Shakyamuni completely controlled thousands and thousands of maras, evil beings, just by love, with even no movement, without the slightest movement of his holy body, without even moving his body even a little. Just only by his love, his great love, he completely controlled all the evil beings, thousands and thousands of evil beings. Instead of harming them, destroying them, just by having this great Mahayana love, with this he controlled them, without one single movement, one single bullet, nothing. He completely controlled thousands and thousands of evil beings and afterwards they took teachings from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. They found it very amazing, wonderful, and this became a cause of devotion, because they saw the incredible knowledge that Guru Shakyamuni had. This proves that he has completely released himself from all fears, all sufferings.

Besides that, at that time there was one person called Magreda who always harmed Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, tried to disturb Guru Shakyamuni Buddha all the time. One day Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all his followers, the arhats, came to beg in one country. I think Magreda was Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's cousin. One day he sent a mad elephant, a very crazy elephant. Usually it destroys people when, so he sent this crazy elephant to the place where Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was. The rest of his followers, the arhats, had great psychic powers, and all of a sudden they flew away into the sky—only Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was left on the earth, on the path. But instead of the elephant destroying Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, as the crazy elephant came into his presence, just naturally it became controlled, so humble, respectful—just being in his presence it was completely controlled. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha subdued or controlled the mad elephant, without one single fear of this crazy elephant, like this. This proves he is completely released from suffering or fear.

Also there was one benefactor who had a very strange idea about how to harm Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. This benefactor's name was Kindu Bumbay. One day this benefactor invited Guru Shakyamuni Buddha for lunch. In those times benefactors invited the Sangha, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, for lunch. So this benefactor invited Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and his followers, the Sangha, for lunch. The benefactor dug a hole outside of the door where there is a path, and put a fire underneath and covered the surface with, dust expecting Guru Shakyamuni and his Sangha to fall down into the fire. As Guru Shakyamuni Buddha stepped over the hole where the fire was, a lotus appeared on the path, like a stone step in water. Then Guru Shakyamuni stepped over the lotus. Instead of sinking into the fire, falling down into the hole, a lotus appeared on the path and Guru Shakyamuni went into the benefactors house. The benefactor couldn't harm him, and couldn't harm his followers, the Sangha. Later, in the house, the benefactor put poison in the food and offered the poisonous food to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and his Sangha. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha sees everything clearly, so no problem. It is just a conception that from the benefactor's side he sees Guru Shakyamuni Buddha as an ordinary person, in an ordinary aspect. The ordinary way they see, they believe. This again goes to another subject.

Student: If we are only supposed to take refuge in liberated beings, as ignorant human beings we can't see difference, so how can we know whether to take refuge?

Rinpoche: Like this. When you take refuge in Buddha that includes everything, all buddhas who are in different manifestations. Just taking refuge in Buddha includes all the different manifestations of buddhas.

Student: How can we tell whether that manifestation is actually liberated?

Rinpoche: That recognition is very difficult, very difficult. That's why we should not trust so much the way we see things. Generally this is not the only reason; but this is one reason why we should not completely trust the way we see things. Because most of the time even though it is a right object even though it is a pure being, a really enlightened being, we see it as an evil person, we see it as a projection of our own evil mind. We can see like this. Also sometimes opposite—actually the other person has wrong understanding, wrong realization, wrong method, but from you don't recognize this, you think the person good because of your ignorance, not recognizing whether he has the right realization or whether his method is right. Not having this wisdom due to your own ignorance. Many times it is possible to see like this. This is one reason that we should not trust the ordinary aspect that we see, the ordinary phenomena that we see—all the time it is not correct. All the time what we see, what we judge is not correct. This is one way of talking ... I think that subject can come another time.

So Guru Shakyamuni, as he fully realized, told his Sangha, his followers, to not eat first. First of all Guru Shakyamuni transformed the poison into medicine. by blessing it. So nothing harmed him or his Sangha. This benefactor expected that he was a very ordinary being who could be easily killed or destroyed by poison.

There are so many other stories that happened in history; there are so many amazing, incredible stories. However, just this is to help our minds—how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is completely released from all the fears, his own fears. Therefore he is a worthy object of refuge. The total fear that he is released from is all the gross negative minds, the delusions, and the subtle dualistic mind. Those are the two main obscurations that interrupt receiving enlightenment. Those are the two great fears, and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is completely released from those two great fears. This example, these stories show that he is completely released from those two great fears, from delusion, and even the subtle dualistic mind. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, besides being released from all his own fears, is also extremely wise in method, in skill guiding other sentient beings from suffering.

The first reason is that he is completely released from all fears, and the second reason is that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is extremely wise in the skill of guiding the sentient beings from suffering. According to each sentient beings' karma, fortune, and level of mind, Guru Shakyamuni gives different types of method that fit to those different beings. It is not always an oral teaching; there are all kinds different methods. For instance, there was one king who was called the King of the Violin. He was called this because he had so much pride, thinking he was the best violin player in the world, incredible pride. So Guru Shakyamuni saw the time that he could control this king who had incredible pride thinking this, and who spent all his time playing violin, completely absorbed like ... I think you know. One day Guru Shakyamuni Buddha saw it was the right time to subdue and control him, so Guru Shakyamuni Buddha went outside of the palace in the form of a beggar, in the manifestation of a beggar. Inside, the king was playing with such big pride thinking, "I am the most wise person in the world," and all of a sudden he heard fantastic, most charming, such sweet music, a violin from outside, someone else playing. He couldn't stand it, because his wrong conception was that he was the best, that no other person could can play better than that. So all of a sudden he heard this incredible, fantastic sweet music. All of a sudden he discovered, "Oh, there is another one who can play much better than me," and all of a sudden his pride went down, his wrong conception changed. He saw the beggar playing all kinds of different sounds, up and down, middle and higher, all the sounds, fantastic sounds, with just one string. Just very simple, nothing, he was playing with one string, but like rock music he could produce any sound, more fantastic than the elegant violin of the king. He got a big surprise, and his pride was completely controlled. Through this violin, not just the sound, he understood and explained the teaching, and afterwards he invited Guru Shakyamuni and took teachings.

I think we stop there.

Student: Violin teaching or Dharma teaching?

4 pm

We briefly talked about how Guru Shakyamuni is released from all fears and suffering and is extremely wise and skillful in releasing other sentient beings from suffering, in guiding other sentient beings. Just to show, there are many stories, but it is useful to understand how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is extremely wise in the methods of guiding other sentient beings. Besides Guru

Shakyamuni knowing the methods that fit the person, also Guru Shakyamuni knows, realizes, the exact time, the right time, when the person is ready to be shown the method. If Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was not skillful in method, in guiding sentient beings then Guru Shakyamuni could not guide all the sentient beings. He would be like an armless mother who can't guide her boy who is taken by river. There are many other stories besides those we talked about before—there are many amazing wonderful things, his life story. There was one evil person called Tsong.me.takpa who killed nine hundred and ninety-nine people in his early life. Even though he was that evil, that negative, in that life due to Guru Shakyamuni's skill and method, slowly showing him events and showing him teachings, he received the mind fully renouncing samsara. Somehow there is a history of that person, telling the reason he had killed that many people. I don't remember the whole story. However, he used to be very evil, causing much harm to other people in that country, and somehow afterwards all these people were fighting each other and this man killed that many people of that country and the last one was his mother, whom he didn't kill. If he had killed her it would have become one thousand. Guru Shakyamuni showed him different methods, and slowly his mind become more ready and Guru Shakyamuni gave him teachings and afterwards as he received the mind of renunciation. He completely gave attachment for the happiness of this life and he went back to that country in the form of a monk after taking ordination. All those people again tried to destroy him in many ways when he was going along the path—all the people in that country threw stones, all kinds of things, but in his later life he never harmed anyone, he never reacted, nothing—he lived only in patience. After that, all that country people saw that he was an amazing person, that his life had completely changed, and that he had no anger, unlike before. He was not violent and as much as they tried to beat him, he remained patient, so later on all the people received devotion and respected him very much. By following the path in that lifetime he received the state of an arhat, nirvana, the boundless state, even though he had been that evil. This was the skill of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. There are many other things.

Also there are stories of very greedy people who Guru Shakyamuni controlled and subdued by showing different methods. There is also a story of how he subdued a person who was deeply ignorant, incredibly ignorant. This is the story of the noble Lamchungpa. In India, I don't remember name of the place, but in one country, one family, the mother had many children, and they always died. So one day she met one old mother and she explained the problem, and the old mother told her to let her know when she had the next baby. So later she had a baby and she told the mother. Then the old mother suggested that a young girl should take this baby to the crossroads, and wait all day there. She said that the young girl should, clean the baby's body and wrap it with white cloth and put a little bit of butter in its mouth, and then go to the road and wait there all day. Then the old mother suggested that if they saw any sangha members coming ... I don't remember. Somehow the mother suggested that she to say something to the young girl, to make prostration to the noble ones. So the young lady took the baby as the old mother suggested. She waited in the big road carrying the baby for a long time, and after some time some brahmins came and then she said what the old mother suggested, and prostrated to the noble ones. As they were coming along the path they prayed for the baby to have a longer life, and to fulfill the parents' wishes, and then they left. Then afterwards Guru Shakyamuni and his sangha came along the path and again she said the same thing and Guru Shakyamuni prayed that the baby may have a long life and may the parents' Dharma thoughts be successful. Then they left. The baby didn't die that day. The mother suggested that as the baby didn't die that day, the baby should be brought back home. So the baby was brought back home and afterwards she had another baby. This baby who was saved from danger of the death by waiting on the big road was named Noble Great Path. Afterwards this baby became an arhat by practicing the teachings.

Again after that, another baby was born and again she did the same thing—the young girl took the baby out wrapped with white cloth and with a little bit of butter in the baby’s mouth. That day the young girl was a little bit lazy—she didn’t take the baby to the big road, she waited on the small path, some corner. So she waited and waited and nothing happened. Guru Shakyamuni always sees sentient beings, so finally Guru Shakyamuni came along that small path. Again she prayed in the same way. Then Guru Shakyamuni prayed that the baby would not die. Afterwards, this baby was sent to learn things, to learn letters. The teacher taught two letters—*bu* and *su*. So when this child learned *bu*, he forget *su*, and when he learned *su*, he didn’t remember *bu*. He had so many problems. He was so ignorant. The teacher threw him out. The story is this, I am just making it a little bit short! Then he was sent to another teacher to learn another subject. That teacher taught him two words again—*om* and *bum*. So again, when he learned *om* he forget *bum*, and when he learned *bum* he forget *om*. The teacher said, “You are so ignorant, you are the smallest, most ignorant; it was much easier to teach your brother,” and then the teacher was exhausted. His brother the arhat Great Path checked up with his psychic power—and he had the karma to control him. He tried to check up whether he should subdue him in a violent way or a peaceful way. He checked up and discovered that he should subdue him in a violent way. So he took his brother and threw him out, away from the place, the monastery. He was terribly upset and he was crying very much. Guru Shakyamuni realized this while he was working for other sentient beings in a certain place with his psychic powers, and all of a sudden he came to that place where this boy was crying. The boy explained everything, how he was ignorant and how his teacher had said he was the smallest and the most ignorant—he explained everything. Guru Shakyamuni told him, “Your brother is an arhat, but he did not know the method to subdue you. I have completed all merits, all purification, but your brother did not complete all purification and merits.” Guru Shakyamuni asked him if he could clean the monks’ shoes, which were left outside the prayer hall. When they are inside, they leave their shoes outside the door. So Guru Shakyamuni asked him whether he could clean the monks’ shoes. Guru Shakyamuni taught him two words—*du* means avoiding dust, avoiding smell. Guru Shakyamuni taught him these two words and let him clean the monks’ shoes. I don’t know what type of shoes, but shoes. This was Guru Shakyamuni’s method of purification for this boy. This boy took much time to learn these two words, he took much time. He was cleaning the shoes for a long time, for quite a long time, and somehow he learned these two words by heart. Then afterwards Guru Shakyamuni said, “Now you don’t have to clean the shoes, you can clean the floor of the monastery.” After he learnt these two words Guru Shakyamuni changed the method and told him to clean the floor. Then he cleaned the floor all the time. After he finished cleaning one side, he started cleaning the other side. Whenever he finished cleaning one side there was dirt again on the other side, so he cleaned that side again. He cleaned the floor while he was saying these two words. The one day, all of a sudden, he realized the meaning. The dust is not the dust of the earth, but the dust of attachment. The dust is not the dust of the earth, but the dust of anger. The dust is not the dust of the earth, but the dust of ignorance. By just cleaning, by that method, he realized these teachings, he recognized all wrong conceptions clearly. Also he realized the incredible teachings, such as those on the mind nature, the absolute nature. Actually this is the method that Guru Shakyamuni wanted him to understand, so by teaching just a few words like that, by giving him that method, it subdued his deep ignorance, with which he could not even learn the two words *om* and *bum* before. After he realized these teachings, Guru Shakyamuni wanted to send him to give teachings to nuns—there were nuns that time. Guru Shakyamuni wanted him to give them teachings. The people around there knew how he was deeply ignorant, how he took much time even to learn two words. So Guru Shakyamuni sent one of his followers called Kung.ga.wa to tell the nuns his name—the one who cleaned the floor and the Sangha’s shoes. His name was Noble Small Path because he was taken to

the small path by the young girl and his life was saved. Kung.ga.wa said to the nuns, “Guru Shakyamuni gave the message to tell you that Noble Small Path is coming to teach Dharma.” The nuns thought he must be teasing them, sending such a person to teach who doesn’t know much Dharma, who hasn’t learned much Dharma. They wondered how could it be possible that he teach us Dharma? He was a little bit embarrassed because the nuns knew he was ignorant. The nuns expected that Noble Small Path wouldn’t have any teaching to explain. So in order to put him down, to shame him, the nuns went into the city and announced to everybody that they should come, saying, “If you don’t come tomorrow you won’t realize the absolute nature.” They announced this to all the people in the city. So many thousands of people came that day—some came with devotion, some were curious—with many different reasons they came. Then the nuns put up a very, very high throne, which he could not climb. So he came, and as he got up onto the throne many people didn’t see how he got there. Some people saw steps, but there were no steps, just a very high throne. So some people, even though they were looking at it, couldn’t figure out how he got there. I think whenever he was sitting on the throne, he sat in space. Then he said he would give a teaching that he had learned for some weeks—that he would explain that teaching, give commentary, I think for several months. He said he would give the commentary of the teaching he had learned by cleaning for many days, I think for six months. Among the listeners, there were many who realized the absolute nature. Many of them perceived different realizations like this.

Even the arhats who are out of samsara, out of ignorance, could not realize the method that fit this person. After they couldn’t subdue him, Guru Shakyamuni subdued him. This show how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is extremely skillful in guiding sentient beings, such as this person. There are many histories, and this is useful.

Then the third reason is that he is extremely skillful in guiding sentient beings, therefore he is a worthy object of refuge. There is no problem of Guru Shakyamuni not knowing. If you take refuge there is no problem of Guru Shakyamuni not knowing the method that fits the individual. The third one is that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has impartial compassion for all sentient beings. He does not have partial compassion wanting to help, having compassion, for his relatives, and not having compassion for his enemies—he has no such partial compassion like that. No such partisanship, having compassion for some people who like him, and not having compassion for those people who disbelieve him, who don’t like him—no such thing. He has impartial compassion, for all sentient beings. Not like we ordinary people, who have partial compassion that always helps the relatives and the other people who like them. We don’t have compassion for other people who don’t like us, who harm us. Besides not having compassion, we give harm back. There is a big difference between the compassion that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has and the compassion an ordinary being has. So because Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has impartial compassion, not discriminating, like this, if you take refuge, Guru Shakyamuni can definitely guide you. There is no question, no doubt. Because of this reason of having impartial compassion for all sentient beings, he is a worthy object of refuge.

Then the fourth reason. He benefits all sentient beings, those who benefit him or not. For instance, ordinary people help others by reasoning, “I should help this family, this person, because he helped me before, he gave me such and such, he called me for party, and so on.” There is always something—“He likes me, he says good things about me, he says nice things to people about me.” These people helped me, therefore I should help them; these people didn’t help me, therefore there is no reason why I should help them. Ordinary people always discriminate like this. Even if there are ordinary gods, spirits, such as those that the Hindus and Nepalese believe in, those who are still living in samsara, who have certain temporal power to help bring material things, it always doesn’t

work. If a person completely relies on them, the person doesn't always receive help. Also these samsaric gods and spirits don't have impartial compassion. Those who have a little higher power than human beings just give temporal material help to the person. Those who have a little higher power don't have this impartial compassion that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has. So that's how they cannot be worthy objects of refuge. They are not out of samsara and they help only the people who are offering to them, relying on them, but they don't help the people who don't like them, who disbelieve in them, and don't make offerings. They don't have impartial compassion and they discriminate. If you take refuge in Guru Shakyamuni Buddha there is no question, no doubt that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha will help you. There is no such thing as Guru Shakyamuni guiding the beings only if they have devotion or if they make offerings. There is no such thing as Guru Shakyamuni not guiding sentient being who don't make offerings and disbelieves, no such thing. Guru Shakyamuni helps and works for all sentient beings—those who benefit, those who don't benefit—for him it is equal, the same thing—those who make offerings, those who don't, those who believe in him, those who don't believe in him. That doesn't change his action of helping, that doesn't stop. Therefore, because Guru Shakyamuni benefits sentient beings, Guru Shakyamuni helps sentient beings without depending on sentient beings' benefiting or not benefiting. Therefore he is a worthy object of refuge. If you take refuge, Guru Shakyamuni will definitely guide you from suffering. There are many stories again. Anyway there is no time. The more the sentient being is suffering, the more strong compassion Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has.

So tonight, first you check up whether you have the causes of refuge or not—which one is missing, and which one you have. If the first cause, the fear of samsaric suffering, is not so strong, then again try to remember general samsaric suffering. If you can remember it, there are many different ways to think. You can think as we explained briefly on the suffering of evil destinies. It is easy to discover the human beings' suffering. There are about eight sufferings that is are mainly human beings' sufferings. That is easy to understand. As you can remember, you think.

Then if there is not that much strong devotion, after you check samsaric suffering, remember samsaric suffering, a little feeling comes up, "I myself cannot make myself release from samsaric suffering." also, "As I am suffering like this in samsara, as I have been suffering in samsara like this, there are numberless other sentient beings suffering in samsara. It is not sufficient that I release only myself from samsara. I should release sentient beings from all the suffering and the cause of suffering and lead them into enlightenment. At the moment I have no power to guide myself and other sentient beings. So I must depend on the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, I must take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha." Then you can remember the Buddha, relative and absolute, the Dharma, relative and absolute, and the Sangha, relative and absolute. Try to remember, then check on the Buddha, how he is a worthy object of refuge by going through four reasons—

1. He himself released from all suffering first.
2. He is extremely wise in skill to guide other sentient beings from all suffering.
3. He has impartial compassion for all sentient beings without discrimination of relatives and non-relatives.
4. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha works for all sentient beings without depending on sentient beings benefiting or not benefiting him.

These are the four reasons to discover, to see, how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is a worthy object of refuge, so it is necessary to check through each one like this. Then after that, remember Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's knowledge, the knowledge of his holy body, speech, and mind. By

remembering this, as much as you can remember, by remembering the knowledge, after you check with knowledge, up to remembering knowledge—this helps to increase devotion, so after you remember the knowledge then you do purification. Do purification and recite mantra like you did this morning or last night.

Regards samsaric suffering, maybe Doctor Nick or somebody can read it, so that it reminds you , it is easy.

Tomorrow morning, in the morning with the motivation I think I will go through the Seven Mahayana Techniques, little by little in the morning time.

Day Twenty-three

Thursday, 28th November

Precepts

In order to take ordination it is necessary for the mind to go in the Dharma, and besides that it is necessary for the mind to go in the Mahayana Dharma, which makes the action of taking ordination the cause of enlightenment. Try to cultivate the pure thought of precious bodhicitta. In order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings, it is necessary to achieve bodhicitta. There are two ways to practice bodhicitta. First, actualizing bodhicitta by actualizing oneself and others. Exchanging oneself for others. Exchanging oneself for others, the special training of compassion taking other beings' suffering on oneself, the special training of love by dedicating one's body and possessions and merits to others to receive happiness. Then great will and bodhicitta—this is one way. This technique to practice bodhicitta came from Shantideva, and gradually to Atisha's Guru, Lama Serlingpa, and then to Atisha. Then to Guru Tsong Khapa. The other technique of practicing bodhicitta is the Seven Mahayana Techniques. This technique was also received by Atisha from, I don't remember, perhaps one of his gurus, Rigpa Kujuk. This technique came to Guru Tsong Khapa. However the other technique, practicing bodhicitta by equalizing oneself and others, includes these Seven Techniques. The Seven Techniques doesn't include all the other techniques. However, according to the Seven Techniques, from the cause of knowing how all sentient beings have been one's mother, remembering their infinite kindness and repaying it, mainly from the fundamental meditations, those causes, it brings the result of great love and great compassion. From the great love and great compassion comes great will. Through the great will, bodhicitta is received. So that's how Seven Techniques of the Mahayana Cause and Effect means this—to achieve bodhicitta, the effortless thought wishing to receive enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings. This depends on bringing up the great will wanting to take complete responsibility for releasing all sentient beings from all suffering and leading them in the happiness of enlightenment by oneself also. Bringing this up depends on the Mahayana compassion, wishing to make sentient beings release from suffering by oneself. Also, it depends on the Mahayana love wishing sentient beings to be in the happiness of enlightenment and to do it by oneself. To bring up this Mahayana compassion and Mahayana love depends on remembering and on the thought repaying the kindness of sentient beings. That depends on knowing how sentient beings have been extremely kind from beginningless samsaric lifetime. That also depends on the thought knowing how all sentient beings have been one's mother from beginningless samsaric lifetimes. In order to achieve this realization knowing that all sentient beings have been one's mother numberless times, one must equally see that all sentient beings have been one's mother, the same number. In order to equally see that all sentient beings have been one's mother, it is necessary first of all to equally see that all sentient beings have been strangers in the same number, and also equally see that all sentient beings have been one's

enemy numberless times, and also equally seeing how all sentient beings have been one's relative numberless times. Without equalizing these three—the stranger, enemy, and relative—one cannot equally see that all sentient beings have been one's mother. To receive the pleasure and happiness of the crops it is necessary to cultivate them, and in order to cultivate the crops it is necessary to fertilize the place, to make the foundation. If the place is not fertilized, if the seed of the crop is just strewn on the unfertilized, wild ground, it doesn't grow well. Just like this, without making the foundation of equalizing sentient beings—stranger, enemy, and relative—we cannot receive those Seven Techniques, we cannot actualize them. Mainly, we must equalize the thought discriminating between these three.

In just one evolution, first of all there is the ignorance, the wrong conception of the self-”I” that is ignorance. From this, attachment to oneself rises. Also if there is the wrong conception of the self-”I,” seeing one's ”I” as self-existent, also there is the wrong conception that sees one's happiness, one's body, and one's possessions as self-existent. As there is the wrong conception seeing all ”my” things as self-existent, so there is also attachment to those things. As there is the wrong conception conceiving of my things, such as my happiness, as self-existent, also there is attachment to those things. So when someone disturbs my happiness, it is discriminated by ignorance. When someone disturbs my happiness, because of this attachment attached to happiness, when someone disturbs this, anger rises. Anger rises and then discriminates an enemy. Also, this is done on the basis of seeing the other person as self-existent. When someone helps my happiness then attachment discriminates that he is my friend or relative on the basis of seeing him as self-existent. When someone doesn't disturb me, doesn't help my happiness, that person is discriminated by the ignorance as a stranger. That is also discriminated on the basis of conceiving other person as self-existent. Like this.

This is one thing that we have been continuously suffering from in samsara from beginningless samsaric lifetimes. We are always suffering by discriminating like this. We are always creating negative karma. That's how we have always been creating negative karma—with attachment trying to help friends and with anger trying to harm the enemy, and always creating ignorance in terms of the object of the stranger. That's how we have been creating negative karma continuously, and that's how we have also been suffering in samsara, and experiencing suffering in the evil destinies numberless times. Still we are continuing. Still we are following these negative minds and discriminating and creating negative karma that causes us to experience samsaric suffering without end. Just like this, all other sentient beings, due to the wrong conception conceiving that the ”I” is self-existent, and due to attachment and anger, also other sentient beings have been suffering in samsara from beginningless lifetimes creating negative karma and experiencing all the suffering results. Still they continue. However as they are the field from whom I receive all my past, present, and future happiness, as I have such a precious chance now, having received a perfect human rebirth, having met the teachings having met a leader leading me in the path to enlightenment, therefore I am responsible for leading all sentient beings. I am responsible for enlightening all other sentient beings by releasing them from suffering. Therefore I must receive enlightenment, therefore I am going to take ordination.

Visualize taking ordination from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless buddhas. At the end of the third repetition think that you have perfectly received the ordination in the form of light.

PRAYER

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

MANTRA

DEDICATION

Dedicate the merits, “Due to the merits may the meaning that the prayer contains be successful. Due to the merits of taking ordination, the past merits and the future merits, may I quickly receive enlightenment by achieving the fully renounced mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute nature.”

9 am

I must achieve enlightenment for all mother sentient beings. Therefore I must complete the realization of the graduated path. In order to achieve the whole graduated path I am going to listen to the teaching on the profound commentary on the graduated path.

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it is a teaching that is well expounded by the two great philosopher Nagarjuna and Asanga, a profound teaching that is the essence of the great yogis’ Atisha and Guru Tsong Khapa’s understanding. This teaching includes all the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person’s achievement of enlightenment.

This commentary on the graduated path has four outlines. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teachings and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path. The last one has two outlines also—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The last one is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being has two outlines—bringing up the thought seeking a better future life and following the method that brings happiness in the future life. The second one also has two outlines—refuge which is the holy door of the teachings and bringing up the understanding belief in karma, which is the root of all perfection and happiness.

So refuge, the holy door of the teachings, has four outlines—the cause and object of refuge, and how it is a worthy object of refuge. So now the way of taking refuge. There is taking refuge by understanding the knowledge of the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, and taking refuge by understanding the difference. There is taking refuge by taking the vow, and taking refuge by now telling others. So there are several outlines like this. However, when you come to the meaning it will be clear.

So just briefly talking, first of all, about the knowledge of the Buddha.

(Page 64)

B 1

Paragraph 3

However, I am not sure how this part came here but however—each sentient being has a caste, we call it *rig*, but it means the clear light nature that makes it possible to receive enlightenment. I don't think caste is the right word. The Tibetan term is *rig* and this means the clear light nature that makes it possible to receive enlightenment, the clear light nature that is not oneness with negative mind or ignorance. Because it is not oneness with ignorance and delusion, it is possible to receive enlightenment, to become the clear light nature, the svabhavakaya.

Paragraph 4

For instance, when Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was giving the teachings, the three sermons, the three circles of the Dharma in India in those times, some said he gave the Dharma at the same time but at different places. The Four Noble Truths were taught at the holy place called Sarnath and the middle Dharmachakra, the teaching on shunyata, that subject was explained nearby Rajghir, nearby Bodhgaya for the higher intelligence beings. The Four Noble Truths were shown for the lower intelligence beings at Sarnath and then the last Dharma circle was shown at another holy place called Yungpagan. Also, the Vajrayana teachings were given by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the higher intelligent beings, in the southern part of India. There is one also holy place there where Guru Shakyamuni gave Vajrayana teachings. However, also it is possible that Guru Shakyamuni gave these teachings at the same time to the different disciples who have different level of intelligence, different subjects, but the teaching was shown at the same time with different manifestations. When he was showing the Vajrayana teaching he showed it in the aspect of the deity called Vajradhara to those who had the karma, the higher fortune to receive Vajrayana teachings, to see Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in the aspect of sambhogakaya. The Tibetan term is *long.ku*, this Vajrayana sambhogakaya. He gave teachings in the Nirmanakaya aspect in the form of a monk to some other disciples who had the fortune and intelligence to see him in that form. Not only this, but while he was giving teachings like this, also in other universes Guru Shakyamuni was taking an earthly body, taking birth as a prince in India. Like this, also at the same time, while he was giving teachings in another place, he was taking birth and again starting his to show, to give examples about how to practice Dharma for other sentient beings. First of all, just as he did in India, he pretended that he himself was a follower, born, and then got married, then afterwards took the form of realizing the suffering nature, then renounced worldly life, did six years austere retreat, then took the form of realizing shunyata and receiving enlightenment. There were about twelve events. After receiving enlightenment, he gave the Dharma circles, just like this, and at the same time that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was giving teachings in India, in other universes he was taking birth and starting again like that to show the Dharma. By his own example, by showing his own example through his life, of the purpose of practicing Dharma and the benefits one can gain by practicing Dharma, how one can release from samsara and all the suffering, showing the example like this and benefits of receiving enlightenment through his life, realizing mind nature—showing all these things through his example. He also did the same in other sentient beings' realms. When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha took the princely life and descended from Tushita, when he began the twelve deeds of descending from Tushita, taking the princely life, at that time also Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gave teachings in some other universes. In some places he took the form of receiving enlightenment, and did many different actions for sentient beings at the same time. All kinds of different actions of body, speech, and mind, holy body, speech, and mind, were done at the same time like this. His holy deeds are incredible—how he works for other sentient beings is incredible, unimaginable, not something we can guess or imagine. Besides Buddha, we cannot guess even the arhats' knowledge, even the noble bodhisattvas'

knowledge, or the knowledge of those who have not completed the path yet. We cannot even guess the knowledge of the noble bodhisattva who has just fully realized shunyata, fully realizes the truth,. Even after Guru Shakyamuni Buddha passed away, after he finished the twelve holy deeds, which ended with his taking the form of passing into nirvana, at this time while he was taking the form of death, passing into Nirvana, at the same time in other realms and universes he was giving teachings, taking the form of receiving enlightenment—many things were happening, many things were done sentient beings. He passed away because the merit or the karma of the people during that time to see Guru Shakyamuni in the nirmanakaya manifestation was finished. As it was finished, there was no karma, fortune, so he passed away, and after he passed away he did infinite work for the rest of the people, the rest of the students by manifesting in the form of different aspects of pandits, such as Nagarjuna. There have been many, such as Asanga, many different pandits who have much Dharma, spread much Dharma, different Dharma subjects such as the Vajrayana teaching, the Mahayana teaching, the Hinayana teaching—different subjects in different places for different disciples who have different levels of mind. Such as Shantideva, Atisha, and many other pandits.

Later on, the King of Tibet invited the great yogi Padmasambhava and also an abbot who granted ordination. That religious King of Tibet brought the Dharma to Tibet, established Buddhism in Tibet, by inviting Padmasambhava. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha manifested in many different aspects of yogis, very highly realize lamas, in Tibet. Sometimes in a female aspect, sometimes in a male aspect—in different aspects. Also as Guru Tsong Khapa—in different aspects like this according to sentient beings. Sometimes he appeared in the form of a monk, in the ordinary aspect of a person, sometimes also like a person, sometimes in a female aspect, sometimes as a crazy person, sometimes as blind, sometimes in the form of an animal. Whatever the method fits to benefit certain sentient beings, whatever fits. Sometimes for those whose minds were ready, he manifested as teachers explaining the Dharma, and sometimes also as friends, like this. Sometimes as a husband, sometimes as a wife, sometimes as evil—whatever helps that sentient being, whatever the karma to control, subdue other sentient beings' minds. Like this. Also, he appeared in the form of an animal, as tangkas, as statues—even that kind of non-living thing. The whole purpose is that slowly, gradually, as other sentient beings continuously increase their merit and do purification, by creating good karma more and more, as their understanding grows, they take better rebirth and again create more good karma and have a deeper understanding of Dharma and like this, gradually, according to those individual beings, gradually Guru Shakyamuni Buddha leads the sentient beings closer and closer to enlightenment. So there are many different ways to benefit sentient beings. There is no specific method. There is no such thing as, “This is the only way to benefit and work for sentient beings.” Because all sentient beings' mind is not at the same level; they don't have the same personality. All have different personalities and different minds, not same, different karma.

Student: Would you say gradually we gain choice of rebirth or is choice an illusion of the ignorant mind? Control over one's rebirth, this choice, is that an illusion of ignorant mind or does mind gradually evolve to a point when there is the choice to have a better body?

Rinpoche: I don't think ... for instance, even though let's say this time you were born in the West, I don't think to be born in the West again the person has to be out of ignorance. The person doesn't have to have complete control over ignorance because I am sure that a person whose previous life also was a Westerner doesn't have to be. Of course, the cause of always receiving the upper rebirth, the rebirth of sura, asura, or human being, is always good karma, but it is mainly due to the good karma of prayers, wishing to take that body, that rebirth. The person doesn't have to be out of ignorance.

(BREAK)

Student: What is the responsibility of the individual—it seems that Guru Shakyamuni is leading us to enlightenment—at each step what is the individual being's responsibility?

Rinpoche: That we have been talking about starting from the beginning of the meditation course.

Student: If you practice Dharma will you automatically be at the right place to hear teachings?

Rinpoche: Our responsibility is as the capability that we have. Now we are human being, and as we have that much better rebirth, as our rebirth is highly useful, as we have that much possibility, our responsibility is to try to understand that we are capable to understand Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's teaching and practice and actualize it.

Student: On Page 65 II Paragraph 3: "The positivity or negativity" We have been instructed on a number of occasions how to perform ceremonial actions because incorrect performance would cause negative karma. Is it possible to reconcile the written and oral teachings?

Rinpoche: The best way, most important thing, is of course the motivation. Whether the action becomes Dharma or not is up to the motivation. Even if the person is making prostration, whether it becomes Dharma or not is up to the person's motivation, that which goes in the Dharma. It means like this. In regards prostration, generally with pure motivation making prostration is good karma. As the motivation is that pure, that strong, there are more benefits of prostration. But also it is necessary to know the correct way of making prostration, because if it is done with a pure motivation there is good karma created. But there is such a thing, there are ways of making prostration that are incorrect. For instance, if it is done with ignorance, not knowing, just from that side of action it can be possible that it becomes negative karma because the person doesn't know it is done with ignorance. Like a fly jumping into the light—we think, "This fly is going to jump in the fire, and experience much burning and suffering," so in order to stop that we try to kill the fly. Thinking that he is going to jump in fire and burn and suffer but on the other hand we kill the fly—from the person's side he thinks he is doing some good thing but actually it is a negative action done with ignorance. Even though the person from his side thinks it is a good thing to do, actually it is an ignorant action. For instance, there is another example just to make it clear. The person knows how to make this physical action, how to make prostration, but the person doesn't think of the object of Buddha. He have any idea to whom he makes prostration, he doesn't have any holy object to make prostration to. There were a lot of people around in that place, that temple, and this Westerner wanted to show other people that he knows how to make prostrations that he learned from Tibetans, but in his mind there is nothing, no sincere mind—he doesn't have any object, just physical action. That kind of thing doesn't have any benefits. He has no object of the prostration, just wanting to show his physical action to other people. However, one thing is that his motivation is attachment that is attached to the happiness of only this life, expecting reputation. That action, when other people look at him as if he is religious person, doing some serious thing, that action looks like a form of religious action but actually if it is checked up, it becomes a cause of samsara. It becomes an action of attachment. It is not creating positive karma.

Student: I understand you to say that if the body position is not correct when we do prostration we could be born in the preta realm. If I have the proper impulse and my feet are two feet apart, how can it be a negative action, negative karma?

Rinpoche: Just having pure motivation is not enough, we need wisdom to know things. Because there are many things done with ignorance not knowing the evolution of karma. That is part of the action, but just having good motivation itself isn't good karma. Mainly the motivation makes the action pure. Whether it is negative, or whether action has benefits or not, most time this is mainly determined by motivation, but there are some exceptional actions. Even if there is no good motivation there are some exceptional actions. Even if there is no good motivation, due to the holy

object, even if the person's motivation is not pure in making an offering or something like this, there is a way that the person can create positive karma, even though the motivation is attachment or anger, whatever it is, because the object is so precious, holy, and powerful. So from the object's side, due to the power of the object, the person's action of making offering, whatever it is, brings benefits. It has a good result but if the person has attachment, rising attachment, or rising anger, that it has its own suffering result. There are some exceptions like this. Most of our actions are not like this. Whether an action is positive or negative is mainly decided, created by the motivation. For instance, in previous times there was a very precious holy stupa, and there was animal kaka around the stupa and one little fly flew around the stupa because of this kaka. Such a small positive karma, even though there was no proper positive motivation, the animal just followed with craving, somehow the stupa, the object, was so holy, so precious, because of the power of the holy object. Even though there was no such powerful motivation like that, because of that karma, afterwards, after a long time he was born as a human being and his name was Kintak Paigya—another long story. He was born in India and he lived quite a long time and afterwards he became very, very old. He couldn't work any more, and his whole body become very decayed with so many wrinkles. He couldn't walk properly, he had to rely on sticks. The whole family never liked him. They didn't want to take care of him, they wanted him to get out of the family. The family was always causing him problems, not wanting him to be at home. Then afterwards it was suggested by the family that he take ordination to become a monk, and he went to the monastery. He saw one arhat, the abbot. The Abbot told him you cannot become a monk because you are so old, you cannot do anything in the monastery. You cannot work for the monastery, you can't learn any prayers, you can't do anything, you can't help the monks, so you cannot receive ordination. So he checked up but he didn't find any cause, any good karma that he had created to become a monk. He was terribly upset and he came back. He came down to the gate and he beat his head on the door, bumping and screaming. He left the family but then they wouldn't accept him. He was terribly upset. However, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha realized this while he was working for other sentient beings with his psychic powers, and right away he came there and asked the old man, who explained everything. So Guru Shakyamuni checked up whether he had the good karma to become a monk. And Guru Shakyamuni accepted that he become ordained because he discovered this little karma, that in many previous lifetimes before, when he was a little fly, he went around the stupa once by following kaka. So Guru Shakyamuni found this little karma he had created and accepted that he take ordination and become a monk. So he was ordained. The arhats didn't realize this karma because this karma was very subtle and they only see the gross karmas—they don't see the karma which is subtle, they don't have that much power. Why they don't have that much knowledge? Because they didn't make complete purification. They are not completely out of all the obscurations. But Guru Shakyamuni has completed the purification and created all merits, so therefore there is not any obscuration, so therefore Guru Shakyamuni Buddha fully sees any subtle karmas. Like this.

Then again he lived and stayed for some time in that monastery. While he was there the young monks in the monastery often teased him because he was very old, very ugly looking because of old age—they never left him in peace. So he was terribly upset again. He thought, "When I was in the family all the family bothered and teased me; now I am in the monastery and the young monks tease me, never leave me in peace." Afterwards he got fed up and left the monastery. Before that Guru Shakyamuni could see that there was karma for him to be subdued. So Guru Shakyamuni gave the old man to be the disciple of a teacher. One day without telling his teacher, the old man escaped. He went to the river and he wanted to jump in. He wanted to die because he got so fed up with the young monks in the monastery and not having peace. He took his robes off and hung them on a tree and just before jumping in the river he prayed that the reason he for doing this was not because

he didn't want to practice Dharma, or to become a monk, but because he was always teased by his family and even in the monastery the young monks always bothered him, and he didn't have the power to control anything there. Therefore because of this, he was going to jump in the river and that he may receive again a better rebirth with rich enjoyments and possessions and much control and power. Praying like this he jumped in the river. All of a sudden the teacher checked up—he discovered that his disciple was missing from the monastery so he checked up with his psychic powers, and he realized that old man had jumped in the river, so with his psychic powers all of a sudden he came to the river and took the old man out. Then he asked why he had jumped. The old man felt shy, and couldn't talk to his teacher because he had left without telling his teacher. So afterwards he explained all his problems and the teacher thought that this old man didn't have enough strong renouncing mind for samsara, that was what was missing. Because of not having a strong renouncing mind of samsara, he was fed up with little problems, and saw little problems as big problems. So the teacher asked the old man to hold his robe, and they flew above the Pacific ocean from that place. The teacher was an arhat with incredible psychic powers. Afterwards, they sat down on a mountain, but the whole mountain was made of bones of water lions—big bones, big dead animal bones, like mountains, incredibly big. They sat down on the backside of the animal bones. The teacher pointed and explained to the old man, "This is your previous life's body." In his previous lifetime he was that animal. Also, I don't remember clearly, he explained the karma of why the old man was born as that animal. When the old man was the king of a country there was something wrong with the punishment—I don't remember. All of a sudden he pointed out—this is your dead body, and all of a sudden this old man couldn't stand it, all the hairs on his body stood up, and he felt such big, incredible fear. Just showing him his dead body, by that method, he received the fully renouncing mind of samsara, and just in that lifetime before his death he received the state of an arhat.

There are many ways to understand this story, as we are talking actually about how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is extremely wise in the methods guiding sentient beings—this story also goes there. Even those arhats who have such high psychic powers cannot see the methods that fit the person, but only Guru Shakyamuni saw the right method for that old man, his karma. The reason I continue to explain that is to help—just the subject we talked about yesterday, the outline.

Student: Is it possible to go back to a question that was asked here. Does one really evolve to where you have choice in body or is that a delusion based on our own ignorance? I heard the answer as ... it's not necessarily ignorance but rather karma. My question is quite involved—not a one-liner—but basically I'm wondering, is it all totally determined? For example, it seems that there are different levels of consciousness we can go to and one of these is our own buddhahood. Further, it seems as though a hierarchy has been drawn, through bodhisattvas, arhats, and so forth, but the general undercurrent I've felt here says that whenever we've experienced the insight of being one with the Thought Adjuster, or God, or Buddhas, whatever name you put on it, it's inferred that these experiences are delusions, based in ignorance and therefore, not valid reality. Now most of the time, I feel totally controlled, just as I feel I was guided here and I'm beginning to wonder whether my practice of thinking that I am actually eating each bite of food for all sentient beings, for example, is simply placating the ego that wants to feel it has some control. So, the question is, is it all totally programmed until we pass a certain level where we become one with the programmer?

Rinpoche: You mean while you are doing meditation, you are doing charity for sentient beings, that time you think you have a little bit of control?

Student: All we are doing here. The feeling says I have a choice ... I can do this or go into samsaric pleasure. But other times I feel I would be here no matter what I did, as though it's all determined by some part of consciousness. Do I have no control?

Rinpoche: It is determined by the level of your mind, but that level of mind is not permanent. Your mind doesn't exist always in that level.

Student: So when your mind goes to a very high level of consciousness you are actually there, you can't negate that by calling it ignorance or delusion. You can be there, but come back out of buddhahood. You can come out of that level of consciousness.

Rinpoche: How?

Answer: By not being in it.

Rinpoche: How many times you come back?

Answer: I can't get a solid flash on any particular previous life, but I get a strong feeling I've done it all before ... every dance. But going beyond being a point of consciousness seems to make you part of the programming, instead of the programmed, and there seems to be a thought adjuster out there directing it all, like a band leader. So about this feeling of being guided or directed, is it totally determined and are we therefore just placating our egos?

Rinpoche: If the karma cannot be changed, this discussion will come afterwards, but however it is generally like this. From the cause the result comes—as there is the cause and everything is there, the conditions, everything that brings the result out, when everything is gathered it brings the result out. It is simple, like this, very simple. How, even though previous karma was created, how is there the possibility to change, to stop experiencing the suffering result of the previous karma? That is like this example. For instance, it is always definite that the wheat we plant, the seed we plant, if it doesn't meet with hindrances, it is definite that this seed will grow, and bring stems, the result. Just like this, if any negative karma has been created, even though each negative karma has a certain result that will be experienced in a certain length of time, if there is a hindrance to that negative karma, that negative karma cannot produce the result. Just like this. For instance, the rice that was planted under the ground can be taken again and again and burned in the fire, made impossible to grow. Like this, even though negative karma was created, we can make negative karma not have any power to bring the result—we can completely destroy the negative karma through purification and creating merit, such as confession—by following the path one can completely make it not exist. Also, through purification, even though there is negative karma existing, the purifying method can us not experience the suffering result of that karma. If nothing is done to stop experiencing the suffering result of that karma, and since negative karma has definitely been created, whenever the conditions come together it is definite that that negative karma will bring the suffering result and the person will experience it—just like rice planted in the ground, whenever the elements become perfect, whenever it is ready, it is definite that the seed will produce the stems, sprout, leaves, and so forth. Just like this. If you think of the example then it is easy. That's how there is choice.

Otherwise, if there is no choice—for instance, in regards karma, we have created karma from beginningless samsaric lifetimes, and if there is no choice, if it is all fixed up, then what is the use of practicing Dharma, it doesn't make sense, then that means there are not any methods.

Student: But isn't there a space, like the story you told about the five hundred businessmen about to be killed and the man took on the suffering of killing, the being who was going to kill. Trungpa Rinpoche keeps saying it is all totally determined and totally hopeless and totally perfect and at the same time, totally determined.

Rinpoche: No confusion, that itself is true. It depends on your understanding. That is like, for instance, if your leg was broken that's already finished, you can't make yourself not feel it, you can't stop the experience of what you had before. It is finished. You cannot stop the past experience that happened, you cannot make it not happen in the past time. After it was broken ... before it was

broken, there was a method, if the person knew how, there was a method. Once the person falls down, there is no method, when the leg is broken there is no method to keep the leg perfect without breaking it. That time is finished. Whatever the person is experiencing or suffering in the present time is determined by karma, that is fixed by karma, but before the experience of that suffering there is a method to stop it, to not experience it.

Student: Since everything changes, couldn't the conditions come up some time in the future? I mean, since the heavier and more habitual the karma, the sooner comes the result, is it possible that purification just creates a great deal of good karma and since it is closer, we experience the results first, as long as we continue creating it. But as soon as we stop, we begin to experience the results of the bad karma. So, we can never really prevent the results of bad karma, only postpone them indefinitely.

Rinpoche: That depends on the method, the individual method, how much purification you make, and it depends on the way of making purification, your own method. There is a method to make the karma not bring the result by stopping the condition that makes the karma bring the result. Also due to continual strong purification, certain purification, this can make one never experience that suffering result, that specific karma. There are different ways like this—stopping the condition through purification, creating merits, stopping the condition that makes the karma bring the result, also stopping the suffering result of that negative karma by making continual strong purification such as by following the path. There are different methods like this, but the whole thing depends on purification, such as continual confession, things like this.

Student: But whether one does purification or not, isn't that dependent on previous karma?

Rinpoche: It does not only depend on previous karma. For instance, your lifetime practicing Dharma depends on previous karma but in this lifetime there is a possibility to make this karma stronger, like this. Even in this lifetime meeting, having the chance to hear the Dharma, is due to previous karma. There is a little karma created in other lifetimes, but this time, as we hear the teaching again, we create good karma and by increasing this good karma, by making strong practice that can control the negative mind, it can stop the continual experience of the negative karma.

Student: It is possible to be on and off the wheel of karma at the same time? Through purification you can be off and you can—

Rinpoche: You mean while you are making purification you are out of samsara?

Student: Yes.

Rinpoche: Not easy like this.

Student: Once you are into this pure mind, you are off the wheel of karma. As long as you experience karma your life is determined, all actions and thoughts determined by karma, and the only way to transcend karma is purification.

Rinpoche: Your experience or suffering is due to your mind. It is caused by previous karma, that's how it is determined by previous karma. If you think of the example, the leg broken, then you can understand. Before that there is the method, but once it is broken then there is nothing—it is finished, it is finished, there is no method to keep the leg not being broken because it is already finished, already broken.

Student: If Buddha manifests to kill the man who wants to kill five hundred people, if he manifests in human form, must I suffer karmically for that, or does the body he's manifested in get stuck with that? When Buddha manifests in that form is he off the wheel of karma?

Rinpoche: That doesn't have to be out of samsara. That doesn't have to be out of samsara, that power is mainly from bodhicitta. To do such an action that person doesn't have to transform such action, the person doesn't necessarily have to be out of samsara. Even if the person is in samsara, because of strong bodhicitta, he can make the action, even though it looks like a negative action, he can make it beneficial, make it stop the other person's negative karma, but that doesn't mean that he

creates the karma to be born in the suffering realms, because actually this is not a negative action, it is a positive action.

(Page 64)

2. Paragraph 2

I think questions you can discuss during break times. (Rinpoche referring to above questions here, not above page reference, but he read those paragraphs just before saying that.)

The knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body is like this. He has so many ways to manifest like this. Also many people, first of all, don't have any interest in the Buddhadharma, but afterwards they develop interest in the materials, such as tangkas, statues, things like that, then afterwards because the person sees things as very attractive and sees some good vibration, slowly, slowly the person wants to know something about that tangka or statue. Then slowly the person somehow starts to understand, starts to discover, to find out things. At the same time the person starts to understand the meaning of those symbolic things. In that way the person finds deeper interest and his mind comes closer and closer to the Dharma. So this can be possible also, this is also the method, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's method for such people whose minds are in that level. Only this method, by receiving materials, by having such material as this, only this method fits. Then it is possible that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha benefits in this way in order to bring his mind closer to Dharma. Totally, to bring his mind closer to enlightenment, to guide him from suffering. There are all kinds of different ways. Afterwards, first of all he starts with something like this, then afterwards as the person's understanding of Dharma grows, as his karma, the ability of his karma, practicing Dharma, good karma, this becomes stronger and stronger, his mind becomes less, more and more purified. Also Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's method changes, the method becomes higher and higher as the other person's mind goes to a higher level. Then gradually, in the form of the guru, in the form of the aspect of deities, it is possible that he will gradually give teaching like this. According to the level of the other person, as it goes higher and higher, Guru Shakyamuni also shows different level of methods, like this.

Each hair, each pore of his holy body has can manifest, can appear in numberless different manifestations to work for other sentient beings, for different sentient beings in different ways. Each of those manifestations can also manifest in numberless other different manifestations to help other different sentient beings, like this. By going like this, an incredible indefinite number can manifest and appear in different manifestations, to work for other sentient beings. Also, even if for one sentient being there is necessity to appear in different manifestations, for four or five, or sometimes hundreds even—to subdue one sentient being is possible. Atisha had one hundred and seventy-three gurus. Just for Atisha, all those gurus are manifestations of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha manifests in different aspects, in that many numbers, for Atisha. Just like this example, even appearing for one person in different manifestations and guiding them in different ways means showing different methods, but actually the aim is one—to bring that person to enlightenment, to lead that person to enlightenment, but showing different methods by different manifestations of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Sometimes giving different teachings according to the power or ability of the other person's karma and level of mind, as his mind is ready to receive the different methods. So Guru Shakyamuni, by appearing in different manifestations, gives different methods. In that way he guides sentient beings from suffering.

Student: If a particular manifestation of Buddha appears to me, is that manifestation always aware of himself being used to teach me something? For example, dogs teaching.

Rinpoche: That is not a dog. Having manifestation doesn't mean that it is a dog. It doesn't mean it is a dog. For instance, many animals have the shape of plants, flowers, like mushrooms. Anyway there are not mushrooms, not flowers, so just like this.

Student: Does that mean Nagarjuna and so on, before they became manifestations of Buddha, had no individual karma or history, just created as if by magic? Had Nagarjuna reached a place in his karmic development where he could become a vehicle for Buddha's wisdom?

Rinpoche: Can be together, can be both.

3.30 pm

So part of the subject that we are talking about is the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni's holy body. Before we talked about how he can appear in many numberless different manifestations, such as in different aspects of living beings, and even in non-living things, such as symbolic holy things. Also Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself predicted before he passed away that in such a time, in degenerate times, he will manifest in the form of statues, stupas, and relics—in many different forms for those sentient beings who are in degenerate times. To be the holy object for those sentient beings, creating good karma. Because of the existence of these holy objects, he manifests in the holy objects so that sentient beings, by having those holy objects, somehow pray, and have devotion to them, and make offerings to these holy objects. This causes the sentient beings to create good karma due to this holy symbolic existence. For example, by making prostration and making offerings, or even just feeling devotion by seeing them. In many ways they create good karma, and their creating good karma is the cause of their future happiness, to find a better rebirth or again to meet the Dharma or actualize the meditations—somehow to lead the sentient beings to happiness. There are so many different ways like this that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha benefited sentient beings, especially in the form of texts. Also when Guru Shakyamuni took the aspect, the manifestation, of the nirmanakaya, when he went out, even when he walked, his feet did not touch the ground. He walked in space without touching the ground, a little bit higher in space, without touching the ground. Even the insects, the animals on the ground, which has been under Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's feet when he was walking on the path, even these animals got incredible bliss for seven days! We cannot be sure! Anyway. This is due to the vibration or power and blessing of Guru Shakyamuni's holy body. Even those insects, after they died, were reborn in the sura, asura, or human realm because those animals were not ordinary. Those who were under Guru Shakyamuni's feet were very fortunate animals who had created good karma. Whenever Guru Shakyamuni walked on the ground his feet did not touch it, and there was the figure of a holy wheel on the feet, which appeared on the ground, without touching the ground, but not kind of like when we walk on the ground, not like this. Also his robes didn't touch—not like the way we wear them, completely wrapped. Without touching the holy body, nothing, falling in pieces, coming down, he looked well adorned.

When Guru Shakyamuni came straight, even if there were other people on the other side, like this, on this side people saw Guru Shakyamuni Buddha looking at them, and on this side people also saw Guru Shakyamuni Buddha looking at them. Not like an ordinary person who has no choice, he always had a very subdued personality or action. Even just by seeing him, everyone was subdued—he controlled other beings' unsubdued minds that much. He gave incredible blessings, such pleasure in the mind, in other people's minds, those who saw Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Even just by seeing him the mind gets subdued, naturally there was devotion, naturally just by seeing, the mind gets subdued, naturally just by seeing it the devotion comes. As there are eighty minor and thirty-two

major marks, such as the holy sign of the wheels under the feet and hands—and under the feet there was no hole like our kind of feet, underneath the feet are flat. No holes, no instep. Those are the examples from the thirty-two major signs. Each of these are holy signs has a cause, such as incredible merits that were created when he was following the path. These are called *tsan.zang*, these thirty-two major signs that signify that he is a holy being. The eighty minors—Guru Shakyamuni’s holy body has very smooth hands, very soft and smooth, without nerves, not like our body, the nerves are coming out [Rinpoche means veins], wrinkles, no such thing, no black marks like this, no such thing. Each of this has a cause of so much merit created when he was following the path. Also it explains what is the cause of each of these holy signs. One reason this teaching explains each holy sign and cause is to understand the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, how he created incredible merits when he was following the path. By understanding that teaching we also create a similar cause, so when we achieve enlightenment we can attain the similar holy signs of the Enlightened Being’s holy body. The purpose is this. Each of the eighty minor signs signifies that he has the attainment of such realization like this. As Nagarjuna said in his teaching, of there are two types of arhats, the arhats who follows the Hinayana path, the Lesser Vehicle path, and even those followers who have the achievement of those paths, even the merit of Kings of the Universe who have such powers, such high enjoyments and possessions and the merit of all the ordinary beings in the universes, collecting all their merits and making it one totality, that much merit becomes a cause of achieving just one pore of the Enlightened Being’s holy body. Such a small part of the holy body, one pore. Even to achieve a pore of the Enlightened Being’s holy body, even a tiny part of that, that much merit has to be created—the merits of the arhats, those who have the attainment of the path, the meditators, the Kings of the Universes, and even the ordinary beings—that much merit is necessary to achieve just one pore of the Enlightened Being’s holy body. So now as there are that many numbers of pores on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy body, each pore has a cause, which is that much merit, such incredible merit. So a hundred times of all the causes that brings Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy body’s pores becomes the cause of one *pe.j’a*. *Pe.j’a* is from the eighty minor signs—one *pe.j’a* is one minor. From the eighty *pe.j’a*, that much merit is one hundred times the cause that brings all the pores of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy body, and that becomes he cause of just one *pe.j’a*. So there are eighty minor *pe.j’as*. So now one hundred times the cause, the merit that brings all eighty *pe.j’a* becomes the cause of just one of the thirty-two major signs—one *tsan.zang*, or holy sign. As I mentioned before, the wheels, the long webbed fingers—there are many other holy signs. Those are part of the *tsan.zang*, the thirty-two major marks. So just to attain the holy sign, the wheel, there has to be the merit one hundred times the cause of which brings eighty *pe.j’a*. So one thousand times the cause means the merit that brings all these thirty-two holy signs, one cause which brings the hair curled in the center of the forehead. In Tibetan this is called *dze.bu*. One hundred times of the one thousand merits that bring the holy sign in the center of the forehead, the curled hair, becomes the cause of the hair knot, the double head hair knot. Ten times one hundred thousand is called in Tibetan one *saya*. One million, so ten more is called one *chewa*. So one *chewa*, one hundred times of one hundred thousand, that much merit is the cause that brings the holy sign of the hair knot. This is the one cause that brings the hair knot, increasing it, making the number ten more and one hundred times one hundred thousand. This much merit becomes the cause of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy speech. So by creating that much merit, we achieve what we are describing in terms of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—you can think back to yourself, to achieve your future enlightenment, it is similar to achieve your future enlightenment, the hair curl and the holy speech.

Generally describing the knowledge of the holy speech is infinite, but to describe the knowledge of the holy speech, but however by creating only this much merit we attain the Enlightened Being’s

holy speech, our own future enlightened being's holy speech. The cause increases. Each tiny part of Guru Shakyamuni, as I said before, each hair, the pores, each tiny part of the holy body can benefit and manifest in numberless different transformations, and has the power of the speech to explain Dharma, explaining different subject, whatever is necessary. All of these different manifestations, each tiny part of Guru Shakyamuni's holy body, each of these holy signs, such as the hair knot, each single hair, each holy sign, each one of these has the power to have physical work, which means manifesting in different transformations. Besides that also they have the power to make the action of speech. Also each of them have the power to have the action of thought, which means each of the pores and hairs on each part of the body of all the different manifestations have the holy mind. Each of these are like any tiny part of the holy body, in different manifestations, and they can fully see how they have the same function as the holy mind, because each tiny part can fully see every single existence, all past, present, and future—everything can see so clearly.

For instance, the Enlightened Being's holy body can function as speech, as a holy mind, and as a holy body. It is the same thing with speech—there are also numberless transformations of holy speech working for sentient beings. The holy speech can also function as a holy body, just like Guru Shakyamuni's holy body can manifest and function like this. However the holy body has the power to function, the holy speech has the same power, the holy speech can also function as the holy omniscient mind. Just like the omniscient mind can work for sentient beings according to the personality or level of their mind or desire. So this is just brief—just that bit to have some understanding of how incredible the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body is—we cannot imagine, we cannot guess. And then the holy speech—even if all sentient beings put different questions to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, just by one action of speech, by giving one answer, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gives a different answer to each sentient being. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has that much incredible knowledge. And by giving one answer, each sentient being receives their own answer, a different answer—each sentient being receives their own answer, a different answer, as they put a different question. According to their question, they receive their own answer in their own language. Not just like saying, I speak in American, in English, in a perfect language. Anyway like this. Each of the disciples, the listeners, hear their own language no matter where they are from, whatever different language they have, they hear the answers in their own language. Also at the same time the manifestation is shown according to their level of mind, and they see Guru Shakyamuni Buddha differently from the other disciples, from other living beings. Also there is no such thing, no matter where the sentient beings are, how far, how close, there is no such thing as finding Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy speech very far away. When they hear the Dharma, when they hear Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy words, it is just always close, near them. There is no such thing as him speaking very far away. Even though they see Guru Shakyamuni as far away, when they hear the words, he sounds very close. Also, he answers in a different language at the same time, according to the level of the person's mind. Like this. Without any effort he answers, and not just answers, but answers in a way that can really benefit that person, and subdue his mind.

For example, when Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was giving the three circle sermon. For instance, when he was giving the teaching on the Four Noble Truths, he called one of the disciples and said, “This is impermanent.” When he said this, some of the other disciples heard, “This is empty of self entity, selfless.” Also someone heard, “This is emptiness, the emptiness of un-connected.” For instance, there were wrong beliefs like this. Certain causative things that people believed existed without depending on the cause and the parts, believing that things exist without depending on a cause, without depending on a relationship, on cause and effect. Some people understood that emptiness is disconnected from cause. Someone heard, “This is true suffering.” Like this, each being

heard differently according to the level of his mind. Someone understood it is voidness, and someone realized the absolute nature of that, while someone else realized it is impermanent, like this. That much knowledge which we cannot imagine. For example, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's disciple arhat. When Guru Shakyamuni gave teachings he checked with his psychic powers from how far away he could hear Guru Shakyamuni's holy speech. With his psychic powers he went to a very far place, to the planets, to check up—and he could still hear the teachings as if Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was there. It was so far it was difficult to measure. However, he could hear Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's teaching wherever he went.

Then the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy mind. Generally there are so many details explained, and this is still nothing—there are so many details explained in the philosophical teachings, so many details on the mind and realizations explained. However, this is just to have some understanding, not to be completely blank or empty, just to have a little understanding. However, the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy mind is divided in two—understanding and compassion. Totally talking it is divided in two, knowledge and compassion. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy mind—like we see the apple in our hand, a fruit, like this Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy mind sees all the past, present, and future, every existence that happened, that existed in previous times. And of course, in the present time and everything that will happen, what will exist in the future. He sees everything not in different times but in all three times existence—he sees so clearly like we see the fruit. If you put fruit in the hand, it is seen clearly, sort of like this. We cannot compare, we cannot say it is like this because we still cannot even see clearly the fruit that is in our hand. We cannot see underneath the fruit, and we don't fully see inside—whether it has worms or not—we don't see it, even though it is so close in front of our eyes, we can't see it clearly.

For instance like this. Like the discussion before about mirror like wisdom—this is like this, omniscient mind, this wisdom has the mirror, and even if the mirror is small, it can give a great reflection of the things that are there. It can show many things it from there. At the same time the mirror like wisdom of the omniscient mind, while seeing the present, seeing every single existence in present time, at the same time clearly sees the whole past as well as the future. Like this, another example. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind sees so clearly all the people here, all the numberless sentient beings, each of the sentient beings' minds. He can read each sentient being's mind. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind can read, see besides us, even right at this moment, in the present time, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha sees it. All sentient beings' thoughts, whatever they are thinking, whether is beneficial thought, pure thought, whatever it is, he sees everything so clearly at the same time. This is talking about only the present but at the same time the omniscient mind sees all the numberless sentient beings' minds and different thoughts. Besides seeing the present, at the same time the omniscient mind can fully see the continuity of all these minds, the beginningless continuity of all these numberless sentient beings' minds—he can see so clearly at the same time. The continuity that came from beginningless lifetimes, each continuity Guru Shakyamuni can see so clearly, all the past things. Just that, Guru Shakyamuni can see each of our previous lives, our beginningless previous lives, each one. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind sees so clearly each of our previous lives which are beginningless—he can see so clearly at the same time while he is seeing the sentient beings' thought. At the same time Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind fully sees all our future lives, all numberless future samsaric lives at the same time. Like this. Without any mistake, not one single mistake. So just like this, talking about material, physical things, each atom of all physical existence, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind can see. For instance, like this. In the universe, if all the forest in the different countries were cut and burned for a long time and then put in the ocean and stirred for a

long time, and then we asked Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to take each piece, and say where is this from, from which country, and where is that tiny piece from, from which country. His omniscient mind has such power, such understanding, such incredible knowledge that could perfectly tell us without one single mistake that this piece came from such a place, such a country, growing like this, the shape of the plant like this, the leaves like this—he can tell, describe everything. However, there is no such time, not even a minute that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s omniscient mind doesn’t see, doesn’t read our thoughts, doesn’t see us, doesn’t see one sentient being, doesn’t see even one atom—there is no such minute or second that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s omniscient mind doesn’t see. It spontaneously, without effort, sees everything. There is no resistance. For us if there is a curtain put here we can’t see each other, but there is no such resistance for Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s omniscient mind to see.

In previous times in India there were some Hindus, I think there was one Hindu religion called Kundiju. There are many hundreds of different Hindu religions but there was one person called Shakya—Shakya is the name of one caste. One person died. These Hindu religious people believe that somehow through certain methods, maybe saying mantras, that one can bring the consciousness back to the dead person’s body and give it food. There is a custom like this. So they did this, and the people really believed that he was the real Shakyadhara. They thought he was a real person, that he had really come back, but Guru Shakyamuni didn’t see that he came back. Guru Shakyamuni told them that another spirit had entered the body—there are different types of spirits that come to enjoy smells, that live on smell. Because there was some kind of movement there, they believed that the person’s consciousness came back, but Guru Shakyamuni told them it was not the real person but it is a spirit. They didn’t believe what Guru Shakyamuni said. Guru Shakyamuni told the people in that country that if it is not true, if you don’t believe, from each family you should bring wheat in a small sack—put grain inside and put the names of your families with the grain and then wrap it up with a piece of cloth. Each family should bring this grain with the names of the families wrapped with the piece of cloth. Each family brought it. Guru Shakyamuni picked each one up out of the big collection, without opening it, and read the letters, Guru Shakyamuni can clearly tell without doubts and difficulties, and he said, “This is from such a family,” like this. He did this for each person, mentioning the name of each family without reading the letter. So then after that, those people really believed Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and really received devotion.

Generally I am trying to go through the subject as fast as possible, hoping to go faster, but it is taking a little bit of time. Without describing this a little bit, however, things do not become clear, don’t become real and also for most people it is the first time hearing this so it is quite difficult to make the subject really short and go quickly. But however it looks like the time is finishing; more subjects are coming and more subjects are finishing than other courses. Other courses sometimes end up at karma and refuge. Twice we ended at the part of refuge and karma. However as I describe there are some repetitions which are emphasized in order to not forget, to remind you, to exist stronger in the mind. Generally however, hearing the repetition from the Dharma subject is different than hearing of similar problems. In the West when we live in cities it is different. Also Dharma explains problems, but Dharma explains the nature of problems, why there are problems; it is different, it makes it more understandable. The other problems that we often hear are different, the effect is different, and the way we understand is also different. We understand another way. So it only causes confusion in our minds instead of understanding the problem. What I am saying is that I try to describe a little bit but during the meditation time when you do meditation on the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy body, speech, and mind, try to remember as much as possible. This makes your listening time useful, if you can remember during meditation time and if that

becomes a cause of devotion to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—whether we have devotion or not Guru Shakyamuni Buddha doesn't care. For Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, if someone cuts his body piece by piece, then waits for some time, then again cuts a piece, and again waits for some time, and again cuts, he still loves that person. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, from his side, is equal. As I said at the beginning, before I talked about the eight worldly Dharmas how the meditators and great yogis make equal each happiness and suffering, the uninteresting and interesting sounds, how they make it equal for their minds, so no confusion arises. Just as I told at the beginning like this Guru Shakyamuni doesn't find any difference between them—both people are equal. So just like this, whether you have devotion, whether you believe or not, it doesn't matter, from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's side, he doesn't care. However, for our purpose, not for him but for our purpose, this is to get out of the cause of suffering, the suffering that we dislike. The whole purpose of remembering this knowledge is for ourselves, to make ourselves competent, to get support. Support means to make ourselves free from the suffering by developing devotion to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. That devotion comes only by understanding the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

When you do meditation on refuge, before purification, like you have been doing before, begin with samsaric suffering—then you don't have any capability or power to guide yourself from suffering, so you need to take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the perfect objects. Also check the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy speech, body, and mind, the knowledge of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Then, after you think of the knowledge, you can do purification, because after thinking about the knowledge somehow there is the feeling, some understanding, and due to some understanding there is some effect, some movement in the mind, some devotion according to the level of the person's mind. After that when the person does purification with that strong devotion, the purification becomes that much stronger, more effective—as the devotion is stronger, the purification becomes that much more perfect. What I am talking about is the usefulness of your listening and my talking—as much as you can remember, try to use for meditation. Then try to explain a little bit the details—even just to have devotion to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, such a perfect being, by understanding a little bit of his knowledge, thinking. Even if we have just that much devotion, even a little devotion, by having a little understanding of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's knowledge, thinking how fortunate, how great, creating good karma, that much the person is lucky, higher than numberless other human beings who don't know anything about Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's knowledge, who don't hear about it.

Then I think at night time maybe Doctor Nick will read the Equilibrium meditation—he will read slowly and the rest of the people try to meditate, like this. First you do Guru Shakyamuni purification, begin the meditation with purification because doing purification helps to clear, to understand. It should be done like this—yourself in the center, your father here, your mother here, and your enemy behind you. If you want to keep it in the front, it doesn't matter. Your friends are in front and also strangers, and all are surrounded by the rest of sentient beings in the form of human beings but in the nature of suffering—whatever, preta, narak, human beings, sura, asura—in nature suffering but in human form, infinite as space. Then after a short purification time, you do meditation, a little bit is good, one hour. The time spent for meditation, checking, the whole purpose is to equalize all sentient beings, to destroy discrimination, to destroy the thought that discriminates this and that, this and that, which is the cause of the usual problems in the world, in the relationships, and especially which is the main disturbance for peace. Trying to see all sentient beings as equal—the equalness of enemy, the equalness of friend—equal, whatever ignorance, wrong conception doesn't find reason to discriminate, the purpose is this. Just briefly talking.

Day Twenty-four
Friday, 29th November
Precepts

From beginningless samsaric lifetime until now, we have been experiencing suffering in the evil destinies, in the human realm. Even if we were born in the sura and asura realms numberless times, we suffered due to delusions, such as anger, attachment, ignorance, and due to karma. Then we created negative karma with these negative minds, not equalizing all mother sentient beings as the stranger, enemy, and friend, and following ignorance. As attachment comes, as anger comes, we have followed it right away, listening to whatever it says. Following it, we discriminate as the anger feels, as the attachment feels, and we, the person, follow whatever the negative mind says and believe whatever the negative says, whatever the negative mind feels, discriminating, “This is stranger, friend, enemy,” like this. By discriminating like this, instead of bringing peace, making our life more happy, we make our life more complicated. Our has always problems with the enemy, and attachment that is attached to the relatives—that is also confusion, also a problem, but we don’t recognize it. We don’t recognize this as a problem, we believe it will last forever. We intuitively believe that this relative will last, we have complete trust. So afterwards when the relationship gets broken we get shocked. Then there is more suffering, double suffering. It is like this. The object that we discriminate as friend and as enemy doesn’t exist. The friend that we think about, discriminate, doesn’t exist on any part of his body, and the enemy that we discriminate doesn’t exist on any part of his body. We can completely see how it is not true.

First of all, going back to the source, the original creator, which is the ignorance that sees the “I” that doesn’t exist anywhere. The “I” that ignorance sees as independent, as self-existent. It doesn’t exist anywhere, on any part of any atom. Even in meaning, it doesn’t exist anywhere. It doesn’t exist on any part of the group, inside or outside, anywhere. It is completely wrong. The way the ignorance believes in the “I,” the object that ignorance believes in, that “I” is something that doesn’t exist. Just like believing that the fruit, the orange, wasn’t born from the tree, wasn’t born from the earth depending on anything, on the elements, without depending on any creation, just existing by itself. Just like this. Such an orange is nowhere existing, just like this. The way the ignorance sees the “I,” is like this. It doesn’t exist anywhere. So as ignorance believes that the “I” is self-existent, so also attachment rises on the basis of seeing the “I” as self-existent. So same thing, similar evolution, as there are my possessions, my things, my happiness, my body—as there is a conception of a self-existent “I” because of my wrong conception of the self-existent body, possessions, and happiness, on the basis of seeing my things as self-existent, there is attachment attached to my possessions, my things. The object, the attachment, the wrong conception believing and thinking of my happiness, possessions, and body doesn’t exist. As we think of oneself, similarly it is like this. Also the wrong conception perceives or believes and sees other people, other living beings, non-living beings as self-existent, so when a person disturbs my happiness, there is anger that rises caused by that wrong conception. So on the basis of seeing that person as self-existent, as anger rises, we get angry at that person. Similarly, on the basis of seeing the other person who helps my happiness as self-existent, attachment rises, and as attachment rises I am attached to the person. Similarly with the stranger, also seeing the stranger as self-existent and discriminating him as a self-existent stranger because he doesn’t harm, and doesn’t help. Attachment arises, discriminating the person on the basis of seeing the person as self-existent, attachment arises for that person discriminated as a friend, and anger arises on the basis of seeing as self-existent the person we get angry at, anger discriminates him as the enemy, like this. However the object of the anger, the object of attachment—as attachment sees it, as anger sees, it doesn’t exist. It is a completely false object that doesn’t exist anywhere. The

stranger is the same. The way the ignorance sees it, it doesn't exist anywhere, and the reason it doesn't exist anywhere is because the negative mind, the creator, the discriminator, are false mind, all false mind. Just like the defective eye that sees two or three moons. Just like a defective eye sees a piece of wood from far away to be a person, this is a completely false mind, a false object, which doesn't exist anywhere. Just like this, the negative mind that discriminates is a completely false mind, and the wrong conception, the ignorance on which the negative mind is built up, that also is completely false. Then going back to the source, the attachment to oneself is also completely false, a false conception. As it is a false conception, the main source, the wrong conception that discriminates "I," this "I" is this and this and this, this wrong conception causes oneself to see the "I" as self-existent. However, this wrong conception is completely false, completely false.

So all the minds that are discriminators of each object are false discriminators, false minds, illusive minds, completely false minds. How can false minds see the right object? Because of these reasons, the object that we discriminate doesn't exist. However, from beginningless samsaric lifetimes, even though they don't exist, by following the false mind, always believing that the false mind is completely true, believing that this wrong conception is true, this is the thing that makes the life crazy, this is the thing that makes life always up and down, many things. However, also even from the object's side, the friend is not a true friend, the enemy is not a true enemy, and the stranger is not a true stranger. Why? If the enemy is a true enemy, the person should be the enemy for all time. If he is a true enemy he would have been an enemy from beginningless samsaric lifetimes, without any change, without changing into a stranger or a friend, all the time enemy. Same thing, if the friend is a true friend, he should have been a friend all the time, from beginningless samsaric lifetimes without change. Also, if these three are true objects, as we discriminate, the enemy should be continuously the enemy. He should be the enemy even when we achieve enlightenment, if he is a true enemy, and if he is a true friend as we discriminate then he should be a friend all the time without changing. Same thing with stranger. But this is not true, this doesn't happen. A friend not always being a friend is another problem.

The reason it is not true is because the enemy changes; even though he was the enemy before in his earlier life, later on he became the friend. Then again he becomes the enemy as the conditions change. Then sometimes he becomes a stranger, and sometimes he becomes the enemy again. Always like this. Even if he has been the enemy all this life, in many other lifetimes, for just this reason he has been the enemy all the time in this life, this doesn't prove that he is the true enemy, because in other previous lifetimes he has been the friend. Like this. He has been the friend, like this. Also the enemy changes within one year, within one month, within one week, within one day even within one morning it changes, even within one hour it changes just by talking, due to some conversation. First of all impatience or dislike arises with that person, and then after some time by changing conversation, by talking about something, by changing the conditions—for instance, we discriminate him as enemy because he tells me something that I dislike, or he does something that I don't like. The reason is something like this, a very temporal reason. However right after one or two minutes if the person apologizes, if the person says good things about you, how you are good, then all of a sudden other the person's mind who disliked him before, who was impatient, who discriminated this person as the enemy, all of a sudden it changes and he thinks how good this person is. He tells me such good things, his mind changes, his conception changes all of a sudden, due to the temporal condition or the way of talking, depending on the words, the way the person acts or behaves. Even within one hour, or a half hour, it changes, doesn't last. It is clear if you think of similar situations. Our life has been like this. So just as the enemy changes, first like this, same thing, the friend always changes. This is quite easy for us to understand, because we have been doing

this, we ourselves have been changing like this. Also, we see that our friends many times have been changing. Also our friend changes, and even though he is the friend of this life, it doesn't mean he is a true friend because in previous lives, for the same reason, he has been also our enemy. The friend also changes—last year enemy, this time friend—even in one month, one day, one week, one hour, even in a half hour, it changes as the conditions change.

For instance, when we are attached or discriminate “friend” due to certain conditions and then all of a sudden the friend does something, the opposite of what our wish is, does something that we dislike, because of that condition that friend is no longer a friend, then he becomes the enemy as our anger arises. These things are just discriminated depending on the temporal conditions. So it doesn't last.

It is the same thing with the stranger, it always keeps changing. Sometimes friend, sometimes enemy, sometimes friend. It has been changing from previous lives until now—even the stranger changes, even in one year, one month, one day, one hour—it changes like this. Also as these three have been changing from previous lifetimes until now, they will continuously change no matter how much we truly believe in them. These three will continuously change as long as we are in samsara. They change in our mind, the change is created by our mind, our own conception. It is just a matter of the way of looking at it. These three will continuously change also in the future. Therefore, as they change in the past and will continuously change, there is nothing to trust in. As the negative mind discriminates these three objects, there is nothing to trust in, no logic to trust in. As all these three continuously change, circling around, always changing, there is no reason to trust, no reason to be attached to the friend, to get angry with the enemy. There is no reason to get attached to the friend, believing him to be friend, and no reason to get angry with the enemy, believing him to be enemy. There is no reason to bring up ignorance towards the stranger. There is no reason to believe in a true friend, and bring up attachment, to believe in a true enemy, and bring up anger, and to believe in a true stranger, and bring up ignorance. There is no reason to believe like this and no reason for these negative minds to arise. Why is there no reason to be attached to the friend? Because also this friend has been our enemy numberless times, numberless times, numberless times, numberless times. The reason that the negative mind gives you in order that you believe that this is friend is, “Because he helps me, tells me good things, because he gave me such and such, money, possessions, this and that. The enemy is my enemy because he says bad things about my relatives, because he took my possessions, borrowed my things,” all kinds of things like this. These are not the true reason, they are the temporal reasons, they don't prove anything, like this. If this is the reason then it is the same thing with friend. Also in numberless times, in previous lifetimes, the friend also has been harming you, like this. Sometimes not harming you, not helping you, sometimes helping you, not harming. As we discriminate “friend,” it is the same thing with “enemy.” This enemy, in other previous lifetimes, numberless times has also given me help, clothes, food, a place—this person also did everything, helped me with everything. As this friend has helped me, with nothing missing, this enemy helped me in previous lifetimes with nothing missing. So both are equal in terms of being a friend—the friend and enemy that we discriminate are both equal in terms of being friend, enemy, or stranger. Like this. Because both have same the reason of harming and helping. Both persons helped us numberless times and both harmed us numberless times. In regards help, there is nothing missing—it is not so that this friend gave more help and gave many jewels that the other person didn't give me. No such experience is left that we have not experienced yet. There is no such thing, nothing is missing, in regards receiving help. So those two are exactly equal—being friend, being enemy, are exactly equal with being a stranger.

Just like this, every sentient being has equally been stranger, enemy, and friend. There is no new enemy or friend or stranger to find out, to receive. Actually it is like this. But by checking with logic, by checking how the reasons discriminate like this, how they are true or not, how the objects are true or not, how negative minds are false, by checking like this, the actual thing is that all sentient beings are equal in both of these three names. “As we ourselves have been discriminating, creating negative karma and suffering in samsara, also other sentient beings are suffering like this, creating much negative karma, following the negative mind, creating much negative karma with the friend, enemy, and stranger. That’s how sentient beings are continuously suffering in samsara. They are completely stuck in the mud of samsara. Therefore, besides releasing myself from samsara, releasing myself from the mud, I must release all sentient beings from their suffering and lead them to enlightenment. To do this I must achieve enlightenment first. Therefore I am going to take the Mahayana ordination until tomorrow morning.”

PRAYER

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

MANTRA

DEDICATION

Think, whatever meaning the prayer contains, may it be successful. Also think that due to the merits of taking ordination, the past and future merits, may I receive enlightenment quickly by achieving the fully renounced mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute nature in order to enlighten all mother sentient beings by releasing them from suffering.

9 am

As this is one time that we are having the chance to hear the Mahayana teaching, being born in such a period in which there are Mahayana teachings, and from our side having received the perfect human rebirth, and having the capability also to understand and practice—this is not enough. The subject that we are going to listen is the Mahayana teaching, and the person who is going to listen to the teaching has to be a Mahayanist. How should that be done? That has to be created by the mind. It does not depend on the way the person is dressed, or where the person is sitting. It is necessary at this time to make the action of listening to the teaching the cause of enlightenment. How to make that the cause of receiving enlightenment? By the pure motivation, bodhicitta. Not just the mere word, not just the mouth bodhicitta, not just dry word bodhicitta, but with the serious thought of bodhicitta, with feelings from the depth of the heart. Totally thinking, “I must lead all mother sentient beings to the most sublime happiness of enlightenment by releasing them from all suffering. There I must achieve enlightenment. In order to achieve enlightenment I must complete the whole realization of the graduated path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path.” Then as there is such a pure thought that is cultivated, even one hour of listening, a half hour listening, however many hours you listen, even if you listen all day, you never waste time, it is always meaningful.

So the listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it is a teaching that is well expounded by the two great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching that is the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa’s

understanding. This teaching includes all the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

This commentary on the graduated path has four topics for the outlines. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening to and explaining the teachings, and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path. The last one also has two outlines—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being has two outlines—bringing up the thought seeking a better future life and following the method that brings happiness in the future life. The last outlines has two things—taking refuge, which is the holy door of the teachings, and developing understanding belief in karma, which is the root of all perfections and happiness.

Then now, the part of the subject that is refuge. The first outline has four things—the cause of refuge, the object of refuge, the reasons why it is a worthy object of refuge, and how the Buddha is a worthy object of refuge. So part of that we briefly talked about, not just being completely empty, we talked little bit.

So now part of the subject is the way of taking refuge, such as taking refuge to the triple gem by understanding their knowledge, taking refuge by understanding the differences, taking refuge by taking vows, taking refuge by not telling others, things like this.

Part of that we were discussing yesterday—the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. We briefly talked as well about the knowledge of the holy speech and the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind, as divided into two, knowledge and compassion. For instance, compassion—we ordinary people, even though we say we have compassion, we only have compassion when someone is in a miserable situation. When someone is terribly sick, when something happens, then we have a little bit of some kind of emotion. But usually when the person is not sick we don't have compassion, when the person is really well don't have compassion. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's compassion is not like this, up and down. Not like this; his compassion is not like our compassion, not like this. Especially if someone harms us, if someone tells bad things about us, bad words, then even though there was compassion before, afterwards there is no compassion. Then anger rises. There are no such things as this, no such changes to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's compassion. As I talked about before, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's compassion is equal for all sentient beings. For him there is no different feeling for two people—one who cuts his body into pieces and one person who caresses him. From the side of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha there is no different feeling, his compassion is equal for both persons. He does not have strong compassion for this person who is caressing him and less compassion for the person who cuts his body into pieces, no such thing. Even a bodhisattva doesn't have that kind of impartial compassion. Even bodhisattvas don't have impartial compassion like that. Not to mention the bodhisattva's compassion, we don't even have the compassion of the meditators who follow the Lesser Vehicle path, the Hinayana path—they have limitless compassion, and we don't have even that much limitless compassion. Buddha's compassion does not depend on whether we take refuge or not. His having the compassion to us to guide does not depend on whether we take refuge or not, whether

we like him or not, whether we have devotion to him or not, or whether we make offerings to him or not. It does not depend on this. Even the pure Dharma practitioner who has renounced this life, who is doing meditation, is practicing Dharma for other sentient beings. This person does not say, "I will do this practice for only those who like me." If even this beginner pure Dharma practitioner whose mind is living in the renunciation of this life, if even he doesn't have that kind of thought, how can Buddha have it? It is impossible.

We think we have compassion for ourselves, the thought keeping oneself dear, the thought of compassion for ourselves, wanting to release oneself from suffering, to be out of suffering. Comparing this feeling, the thought of keeping ourselves dear, comparing this to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's compassion—it is lost. The compassion we have for ourselves, our individual compassion that we have to take care ourselves from suffering, if you compare this to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's compassion, it is lost, there is nothing to compare. Our compassion for ourselves doesn't compare to even a small part, like an atom, of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's compassion. Generally, each individual takes care of himself more than any other living being, but still this compassion does not compare to even an atom of the Enlightened Being's compassion. Our compassion that takes care of ourselves, wants to release ourselves from suffering, is nothing to compare to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's compassion, even a tiny part of it. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's compassion is spontaneously, watching, looking all the time at sentient beings, without excluding even one. It is completed compassion, which means that there is no way to make stronger. That compassion is completed, as his mind has been training in compassion while he was following the path. As he has completed the whole path, also he has completed the whole compassion. The knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind is like this.

Then the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body, holy speech, holy mind, and the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's actions. There are actions of the holy body, actions of the holy speech, and actions of the holy mind. For example, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha appearing in the nirmanakaya manifestation, having incredible knowledge through his holy body, showing the knowledge of his holy body as we talked about yesterday, the manifestation of the thirty-two major and eighty minor holy signs. By showing these signs to other sentient beings and by showing those manifestations to other sentient beings, it causes other sentient beings to create merit. As other sentient beings see those holy manifestations, they receive incredible devotion, and they receive interest, wanting to be like that, wanting to attain the holy body that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has and wanting to attain the knowledge that he has. They want to attain the perfect pure holy body that doesn't have even one single atom of imperfection or ugliness. Showing those manifestations inspires interest and devotion like this. That benefits the sentient beings by causing them to create good karma, to create the causes that bring the holy body of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, which has incredible knowledge. All those holy signs signify his knowledge. By seeing the different manifestations they gradually create good karma, the cause of such an enlightened holy body, and then following the path and they gradually receive enlightenment. This is the way Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body benefits. Just one example of the benefits. Also it is the same thing when we see beautiful statues or symbolic things of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, this also gives the same interest. You want to be like that, to have such knowledge. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha benefits many people in that way, many people who have the karma to be benefited in that way, with such a method through symbolic things. This is according to other beings' karma. Also the other beings' karma changes as the level of mind goes higher and higher, and also by making purification as the level of person's mind goes higher and higher, the person's view also changes and becomes more and more pure.

For instance, at the moment, with this level of mind, we see tangkas and statues made of ordinary material things, but later on as we follow the path—I mentioned the five paths—as we follow and enter those paths, even in the first path, the path of accumulation, there are five paths to receive enlightenment. When we have the achievement of the first path, the path of accumulation, that meditator can see the statues in the manifestation of the nirmanakaya. He sees those things as the nirmanakaya, as actual living beings, and also can receive teachings from them. This is because the mind of the person who enters this path, who has received even the first path, is purified. So also the view becomes more pure. For the things he saw before as material things, symbolic things, statues, like this, stupas, statues, paintings, like this, he makes offerings to, prostrating, and in that way they benefit the person. When the person enters the path the whole thing changes, the person sees all these as nirmanakaya, so as the person's level of mind has gone that much higher, the method has gone that much higher, in that way it benefits, works for the person. As the person approaches the higher and higher path, such as the third path, the right seeing path, at that time the meditator sees the manifestation of the sambhogakaya. Then from there, he sees more and more enlightened beings. Anyway like this. As the person's realization of the path goes higher and higher, the view becomes more and more pure. So what I want to say is that the person's view becomes more pure seeing different aspects of buddhas, and that is also the knowledge of the action of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body. Like this.

There are two ways to understand things. We are discovering just the knowledge of the action of Buddha's holy body but another way to understand is this—whatever view we have now is according to the level of our mind. Whatever view we see when we look at people is a projection according to the level of our mind. This is also quite important to understand. Generally it is important to know that whatever we see is a creation of our own mind—it is not something that is really there, but whatever we see as good or bad, understanding that this is my view is very important. Rather than believing that it is really there without depending on the projector of your own mind. As you see, as you feel it, it doesn't mean it is true. We cannot trust our feelings. This is the whole confession, trusting our feelings, completely trusting in our own view, believing that it is really there, really such thing. Many times even just understanding helps so much for the mind, when life gets stuck in some problem. Sometimes unnecessary things become a big problem, and sometimes there is not really a reason, it is just a nonsense thing, but for the person it is a big problem, it becomes a big problem. In those times, even just remembering this, thinking this, is sometimes very helpful. It just cuts off the whole problem easily. For instance, just an example. There is one very holy statue in the center of Lhasa, a statue of Guru Shakyamuni. It has many stories. It is one of the most precious, famous statues. However many prayers that are done in the presence of that statue all bring success. Also there is special thing going on, there is a light that goes around the statue, so when the person is praying, the light goes around, and as the person is praying at the feet and the light comes down, if it meets together somehow the prayer becomes much more successful, it is recognized like this. However, there are incredible amazing stories about how it is precious. Usually in Tibet many people come from all over the place all the time, hundreds and hundreds, to see this statue. People who come to Lhasa, if they don't see this statue, it is like sort of a wasted, empty trip. They recognize it as an empty trip—coming to Lhasa from such a way and not seeing this holy statue. Many people go to see this statue, and there was one person who had created so much negative karma that he came into the temple but he didn't see the statue, and he didn't even see the butter lamps. There are many golden butter lamps there, big butter offering pots made of gold, and people are always bringing butter from all over the place for offering. Then afterwards I think he went to see a lama to ask why he couldn't see these things—I don't remember

clearly the story, but somehow afterwards he came once and he saw the butter lamps but still he couldn't see the actual statue, even the second time. There are many other examples.

That means the projection, his view, what he sees—even though most of the people saw something, he didn't see it. So what he sees wasn't necessarily true. It is a view projected by the level of mind that he has. Also there was one lama who was giving teachings to many people, and reading a text with many pages, a big, long Tibetan text. One of the listeners who had heavy obscurations didn't see the text, never saw the text at all. He only saw the lama eating meat; he didn't see the text the lama was reading.

(BREAK)

Question: How do you tell what is a projection or is everything a projection?

Rinpoche: Everything is a projection; everything seen by sentient beings is a projection.

Question: So from an enlightened point of view there is no concept whatsoever. In other words would an enlightened person see this tent, would there be any phenomena?

Rinpoche: Just a matter of pure projection and impure projection.

Question: Do enlightened beings see objects?

Rinpoche: There is not even one atom of physical phenomena that enlightened beings don't see. As we discussed yesterday, like this. Because the mind is not purified, things are perceived in an ordinary way. For the enlightened being, because his mind is completely purified, there is no such impurity that is perceived by them. For them, all the ugliness that we see is perceived only as beauty, the non-tasty, unsweet taste that we perceive, the unsweet taste is perceived as only sweet, only blissful. Only in blissful nature. Same thing with sound—the uninteresting, unsweet sound that is perceived by us is perceived by the buddhas as the blissful nature of sweet sound. It is the same thing with the object of contact.

For instance, with objects we sometimes feel pleasure, sometimes indifference, sometimes suffering. There are different feelings that we get by contacting object—unsmooth, rough, different things like this. Cold and hot, things like that. For the enlightened being, there is no such thing as hot or cold or rough, different things like this. They only feel blissful nature. For the buddhas there is no one single impurity the size of an atom, no such impurity. Why? Because he has completed the whole purification and accumulation of merits. That is the reason there is not one size or atom of impurity for buddhas. That is the result of making the complete purification and the accumulation of merits. At the moment we are ordinary being, so always everything, most of the things that we see, for us are in the impure view, always impure view. They are in the impure view because they are a projection of the impure mind. Also, there is continual purification and creating merits by following the path through meditation, and gradually the person's impure view and impure mind is purified, and becomes thinner and thinner. Such as, for instance, the great yogi Sakya Pandita, who is recognized as the transformation of the Buddha of Wisdom. *Sakya* is the name of one of the Tibetan sects. His guru was Takpa Ganzen. His guru took the form of being terribly sick for a long time, and the disciple Sakya Pandita, day and night, renouncing sleep, said prayers for his guru when he was sick, always looking after him, without caring about his own pleasure or anything. He perfectly followed his guru, renouncing his distracting actions. He did this for a long time without caring about the impurities, the dirtiness when his Guru was sick. Then he received the yoga practice, the guru yoga practice of the Buddha of Wisdom, the guru yoga practice through Manjushri. This means the guru yoga meditation to practice with Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom. Afterwards, practicing this guru yoga, renouncing even distracting actions such as sleeping and

laziness, completely taking care, offering service without discriminating between clean and dirty things, due to such strong purification he quickly achieved the guru yoga practice and he actually saw Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom, as his guru Takpa Ganzen. There are many things.

Actually this story is very, very long but the last part is very short. I think most people know it; the story of the great yogi Tilopa and Naropa. Anyway, it is a very long story. For many years, I think about twelve years, the Pandit Naropa had been trying to get teachings. He spent much time trying to find his Guru Tilopa, this great yogi who is the real Vajradhara. Vajradhara is another manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha actually. Some people may not understand what Vajradhara means. So just to find his Guru Tilopa, he spent much time. First he had very hard time finding him. There is a long story talking about the predictions he got in his dreams. Then after he met his guru, for many years, I think about twelve years, he followed his Guru Tilopa wherever he went. Instead of giving teaching, this story becomes bit long. At the beginning, the very first time he found Tilopa, he had doubt whether it was Tilopa or not, because outside he didn't look like Tilopa—like I explained Milarepa before, he was very ugly, poor looking. This was his appearance, a naked body, not having good colors, and he didn't look like a learned person, somehow he just looked very simple, like a beggar. A very poor beggar. Something very simple. So he had doubt about whether this was Tilopa, thinking maybe it was not. Sometimes when he asked Tilopa, sometimes he said yes, sometimes he said no. So he was never sure. But still he tried to follow him wherever he went, so instead of giving teachings, he always gave many problems, much work, not just simple work but work that causes problems between Naropa and other people, work that brings problems and causes fighting, people beating him, things like this, many times. Anyway, he followed Tilopa and again when they met together Tilopa told Naropa to do something. There was a collection, a heap of wood, and he told him to make a fire and ask if anyone can be burned, inside this fire. Then Naropa had to accept that he could burn himself. Then burning himself in the fire, sometimes instead of getting teachings, he got much pain and sickness. Then after some time he recovered. Besides this, also one day he followed Tilopa and when they met he told Naropa to jump out of a building, from the top of a very high house. Tilopa asked Naropa if there was anyone who could jump from there. Again he had to jump from the precipice of the roof. Again as his body fell down there was pain and he could not move, had much difficulty, but he didn't die somehow. After some time he was cured again, and again he followed Tilopa, and again they got together, and one day Tilopa told Naropa to bring the soup that was cooked in the family's house, in the pot. So he went to get the soup while it was cooking in the family's house. Then he had to bring the soup with the pot to Tilopa. As Naropa was going to take it, to bring it, the people who saw him taking beat him. Then after some time as he continuously followed Tilopa, there was a marriage going on, a wedding, and they were bringing the wife in the square carriage. As they met together, Tilopa sent him to catch the wife and wrap the breast. So again he went and grabbed and wrapped the breast. All the people attacked him and beat him, and almost killed him. He got in trouble like this many times, many times. He went through so much difficulty, but somehow he didn't die. He went through big problems, big difficulties, but soon got cured, the body got better. Once after some time, because it had happened many times, and he had much experience, he thought, "I can do this, it doesn't matter, I won't die." He thought this, expecting his guru Tilopa to bless him and cure him, and when he thought this, his pains didn't go away quickly. Somehow something was not right in his way of thinking. So that time his pain didn't go away, it lasted for some time. There were difficulties like this many times—he became so that he could not walk, with pains all over, having wounds, and then after one difficulty was done, again he was cured by the blessing of Tilopa, and again he told him to do another thing, to go through another problem. They again he got sick, got pain, and then again after the blessing he was cured.

Finally, after all these difficulties, one day as they were the ground walking, he asked, “If you want a teaching, first offer a mandala.” There was no water on that ground, so Naropa he peed on the sand and then shaped the sand and used it for an offering mandala. Then his Guru Tilopa threw the mandala in Naropa’s face. All of a sudden, after he threw the mandala in his face, all of a sudden Tilopa asked Naropa to look in the sky, and Tilopa manifested the mandala of the deity Heruka. Tilopa himself manifested, transformed into the mandala and the deity. He himself manifested in that way and initiated his disciple Naropa. After going through many difficulties, the last thing was this. The essence of the story is that even though Naropa saw Tilopa like that, ugly looking, actually was just a projection, just the way it looks from the other side, from the other peoples view. Tilopa was actually Vajradhara or Heruka. The proof of that was that he himself manifested in the deity’s mandala, as Heruka. Then, showing this clearly to Naropa, he initiated him. However at the beginning he gave him much trouble, not giving teachings always giving him many orders to do this and that, very difficult things. In one way this was checking whether he was a serious disciple and in one way this was purification before giving initiation. The main thing that we should understand is that the views can change, can become more pure and higher, as the level of mind goes higher through purification. There are many stories like this that happened in India and Tibet, stories of those ancient yogis.

The action, the knowledge of the action of the holy speech of the buddha is like this. In the realms of the suras there is no actual buddha in nirmanakaya manifestation giving teachings as happened on the human earth, in this world. It is difficult to have contact as human beings have, seeing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in the manifestation of the nirmanakaya, really receive teachings like this. But according to their karma they have a drum that doesn’t need anyone to beat. The drum is intuitive, and it makes a sound spontaneously, the sound of explaining Dharma. It talks about impermanence, selflessness, suffering, emptiness—like this, the subjects explained through the drum sounds, such explanation comes, because the suras don’t have the karma to receive the oral teachings directly. Also there are things, sometimes trees, also in previous times it happened like this. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha showed the teaching through the noise of the trees blowing in the wind for certain beings whose level of mind or fortune fits this method. He explained the teaching in that way, through many different methods. Explaining the teaching through the sound of the drum, things like this, persuades those who are a little bit fortunate, suras to create good karma, to be close to nirvana.

The knowledge of the action of Buddha’s omniscient mind causes sentient beings to create good karma by showing the different methods. Sentient beings creating good karma is the action of the Buddha’s omniscient mind. The enlightened beings’ benefit, work for sentient beings by showing different methods without impulse as we do things with impulse, they do these things without impulse, without effort. Just like this. When the moon rises above the earth in reflects in water—all kinds of different streams, lakes, dew on the grass, different types of water—but there is just one moon. As one moon rises it reflects without any effort everywhere, in lakes, streams, rivers, water dew—wherever there is water, it reflects. The reflection of moon comes without effort in numberless bodies of water at the same time. The moon doesn’t have to try to put effort to appear in each body of water. It doesn’t need effort. The way the enlightened beings work for sentient beings is like this. It is impossible to create good karma without depending on the actions of the omniscient mind. At the moment it will be quite difficult to understand, but slowly as we try to understand, we can understand.

The knowledge of the Buddha is just briefly like this.

Now the knowledge of the Dharma. We briefly talked about the knowledge of Buddha who has incredible, unimaginable knowledge of holy speech, body and mind. Even just one tiny part of his holy body, one pore, has infinite knowledge. Where did this infinite knowledge come from? What has created it? It came from the Dharma, from the jewel Dharma. If you want to understand the knowledge of Dharma and the Buddha that we have been talking about, that Buddha is created by the Dharma jewel, it came from the Dharma jewel, from the realizations such as the cessation of the obscurations, suffering, and the true path that leads to the cessation of suffering and the oral teaching that explains about the path and enlightenment and the nature of samsara. The foundation, the nature of suffering. From this Dharma, the Buddha who has infinite knowledge happened. Even just by thinking of this, we can think that the jewel Dharma has incredible knowledge, we can think in this way, understanding the knowledge of Buddha. The more we understand the knowledge of Buddha, that much more we understand the knowledge of Dharma. It is all the power of the Dharma.

Question: Does that mean, is there any way it is possible for Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to not give teachings to anyone who is ready from their side to receive them?

Rinpoche: It is possible that Guru Shakyamuni gives teaching, for instance, to you, whenever you are ready.

Question: Is being ready from my side the most important thing. Is there choice from his side?

Rinpoche: His choice comes with you. His choice comes according to your karma. If that did not depend on karma—our receiving enlightenment, our escaping from samsara is not up to Buddha, it is up to us. Up to the individual. If it were up to the enlightened beings there wouldn't be any sentient beings left. I wouldn't have to explain, and we wouldn't have to take the meditation course.

When we think of the knowledge of Dharma, even if you think like this, make the connection. First of all check up Buddha's knowledge, where the Buddha who has infinite knowledge came from. This came from the jewel Dharma, the absolute Dharma, the cessation of suffering and the true path that leads to that and the oral teaching that explains the path, explains the suffering nature, the path to enlightenment. Thinking like this is very, very useful, making connections like this. If you think in this way, if you understand the knowledge, you see a little bit of the knowledge of Dharma. Also thinking like this, we see the usefulness of practicing Dharma. Otherwise there is the feeling in the depth of our heart that Buddha's knowledge was not received from Dharma but is some kind of intuitive, eternal self-existent thing that is always there. Not coming from Dharma, not caused by Dharma, but something that is always there, self-existent. Instead of thinking in that way, it is more useful to think that it came from the Dharma. It just opens our wisdom, makes the benefits of the Dharma, how it is greatly beneficial for sentient beings, and how the Dharma is precious more understandable.

In the part on the meditative action of Buddha's omniscient mind there is the refuge prayer, *La.ma Sang.gya Lama.ch'o*, on page nine. This goes together. This has a relationship—by understanding the knowledge of how the Buddha's omniscient mind works for sentient beings, also you can understand the meaning of that prayer. Actually the meaning of that prayer is very deep, a very profound subject, something that go much deeper. For instance, you can think like this. First of all, the Guru is Buddha, the Guru is Dharma, the Guru is Sangha. Then in the book there is just the literal translation, word for word, that's why it comes "all creators is the Guru," because it is literally translated. That means Guru is the three jewels and these three are created by the guru, these three

came from the Guru. That is just general thinking, but you can think yourselves. For instance, my Buddha, my Dharma, my Sangha—one's own individual Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—to achieve one's own Buddha one has to actualize the jewel Dharma and the Sangha jewel. Without actualizing one's own Dharma and Sangha jewel, there is no way to actualize one's own Buddha jewel. Creating these three, actualizing these three, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, cannot be done by ourselves. We alone cannot actualize them. We cannot create them without depending on the creator Guru. Actualizing this doesn't happen right away; we have to build it within our minds gradually, step by step, by collecting merits. Then again gradually as we reach the higher path we actualize the Dharma jewel, the Sangha jewel, and also the Buddha jewel. Like this. So it depends on many things, but the first step is collecting merits. This is also good karma, therefore creating each single karma before that merit is not something we did alone, not something we collected without depending on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind, the action of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind. So that's how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's omniscient mind partially becomes the creator of our merit. So that is the absolute Guru. That's why in the teachings there is so much emphasis, so much stress, especially at the beginning of any teaching, no matter what sect, the Vajrayana, the Mahayana, all the perfections, all the happiness, including enlightenment, comes from the guru. Usually it is understood like this. But this is not an easy subject to understand right away, it takes time.

Also it is very useful to say this prayer when you make offerings, visualizations of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha as I explained before. It is very good to remember this prayer. There is another prayer but I will explain it afterwards. This prayer is very, very powerful and it contains an incredible subject and is very effective. You can say also this prayer, but the main thing is, of course, the essence of the method is the mind renouncing. But saying the prayer, remembering this, also creates good karma especially if you say it with a pure motivation—just saying the prayer with good motivation creates good karma, makes more understanding of subject, makes the person's mind more conscious.

3:30 pm

(Page 65)

Sutra quote. I think I said this before, but in terms of talking about the benefits of why we should continuously remember Buddha, is that continuously remembering Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or doing meditation on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha helps a great deal at the death time. One particular benefit helps is that the person easily remembers because of the impressions, because the mind has been trained in remembering, doing meditation on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, so at the death time, such a dangerous time, the person can easily remember Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. As he remembers Guru Shakyamuni Buddha the danger of suffering at death time becomes much less. He finds a better path for his mind. However at the death time whenever it happens, whatever is the best solution, the best method at death time is to find the better path, to have less suffering at death time and even after death. Whether the person has a Vajrayana method or not, whatever method the person uses doesn't matter, the essence of the whole method, no matter how profound, without remembering the guru there is no way to do anything. There is no way to use any method, any kind of method, technique, or different meditation. The essence is remembering the guru. So in the most dangerous time, what can help? What can help? The only thing that can help, the essential, method is remembering the guru. If I show the inside totally, the inner method, the inner method is this. Whether aspect, whether wrathful or peaceful, of whatever deity we meditate, the essence is this. Even though you don't have any particular different aspect of deity to remember, even the ordinary, usual guru from whom the person receive teachings and meditations, that ordinary form of the deity,

that guru, even just remembering that helps a great deal in this greatest, most dangerous time. The essence is this. As I told some stories before, talking a little bit before relating to this prayer starting from the knowledge of the Buddha's omniscient mind, these things. This is part of the subject from guru yoga. Some people will find it difficult to understand why he is talking about such things, but here we have all kinds of people, so that's why I am hoping it gives a little bit of understanding.

Paragraph 5

Anyway, this discussion will come afterward. It is not necessary I think to read the part of the knowledge of Dharma, this part of the subject. However it is useful to think that all the infinite knowledge that Buddha has all came from the Dharma; that makes it understandable. Thinking like causes the devotion in the Dharma to increase. Generally you can think like this. The jewel Dharma, the precious sublime Buddha, the precious sublime Dharma, Sangha, like this. The precious sublime Dharma, you can think like this. You can think about the absolute Dharma that we discussed, that is the main thing. The cessation of suffering, the true cessation of suffering, the true path, that is the main Dharma that we have to remember when we take refuge.

For instance, when we think of Dharma, when we take refuge by visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, we can think that all the realizations that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has are Dharma—all the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy speech, holy mind, and holy body, like this. We can think that this knowledge is Dharma. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has the achievement of the complete cessation of all the obscurations, including the subtle dualistic mind, and that is Dharma, that is Dharma. Then think of the path. There are five paths and ten levels. For instance, on the Mahayana path for a meditator it is like this. To achieve enlightenment one has to go through the five Mahayana paths. Then the ten levels are included in the five paths, starting from the right seeing path, part one, from there to the last part including the ten levels. There are ten levels. We can think of those when we take refuge in the Dharma; we can also think of the path when we visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. According to the path, we can think of the five paths, then the ten levels that start from the right seeing path to the end. When the tenth path is completed then that meditator receives enlightenment, like this. Also if you make it simple, instead of thinking of all these five paths, the simple way is to think like this. On the graduated path, everything is included there—the whole path is included in the graduated path, so just think that the graduated path includes everything, all the ten levels, all the other paths, the tantric path, the paramita path, like this. If you think of it all simply as the graduated path, it is helpful to the mind.

The names of the five paths, I think someone asked, just briefly, just the titles.

1. Path of Accumulation
2. Path of Application
3. Right Seeing path
4. Path of Meditation
5. path of Fulfillment

You can see that the meaning of the second path is realizing the meaning, actually realizing the meaning. When the meditator is on the first path the meditator creates so much merit and also listens to much Dharma and checks, thinks. Then in the second path that meditator is actualizing in the mind what he thought before, what he listened to—on the second path he actualized the meaning. Application doesn't mean the Path of Conjunction; this is a path that brings one to the

Right Seeing Path. When the meditator is on the second path, he has the realization of that penetrative insight, but this penetrative insight might be different from what you understand, this is not easy. This penetrative insight is the realization with shunyata, not a single shunyata realization, but related with samadhi realization—it is a concentration of shunyata and samadhi. Then through continual meditation on shunyata, the absolute nature, in just on one seat, while the person is going through that meditation, his mind reaches the third path, the Right Seeing Path.

When the meditator reaches the third path, the Right Seeing Path, within that there is the Unceaseable Path and the Path of Releasing. The Unceaseable Path becomes the remedy of 180 delusions and 108 mental defilements, the *she.drib*. When this meditator achieves the Releasing Path in the Right Seeing path, that much delusion is purified and removed. Then after that, through continual concentration on shunyata, the meditator receives the fourth path called the Path of Meditation.

Then again there are also paths like this. The Unceaseable Path of the Path of Meditation, the Releasing Path of the Path of Meditation, like this. The Unceaseable Path of the Path of Meditation becomes the remedy of 12 delusions and 108 mental defilements, *she.drib*, like this. Then when the meditator receives the Releasing Path of the Path of Meditation, that much mental defilement, that much delusion is removed.

Then the meditator still continues to do meditation on shunyata, and the meditator receives the fifth path, the Path of Fulfillment. Again there are a certain number of mental defilements like this. Also there is the Unceaseable Path and the Releasing Path of the Path of Fulfillment. Whenever the meditator receives the Releasing Path and the Unceaseable Path of the Path of Fulfillment, it becomes the remedy of the defilements. Whenever the meditator receives the Path of Fulfillment, he receives all realizations and achieves enlightenment.

This is according to the five Mahayana paths. It is useful to think about the knowledge, the benefits of the path. This is just to have a little understanding, a little idea.

Then the knowledge of the Sangha. Even for the followers of the Lesser Vehicle path, the meditators who follow the Hinayana path, there are five paths like this.

1. Path of Accumulation
2. Path of Conjunction
3. Right Seeing path
4. Path of Meditation
5. Path of Fulfillment

There are five paths like this to receive nirvana. However, even the meditator who has the achievement of the first path has such knowledge. He is able to manifest, transform for the sake of others, and has psychic powers, powers to foretell future things. He has certain knowledge like this. What makes the person enter the Path of Accumulation? The fully renouncing mind of samsara. Whenever the person has this, the person enters the path. If the person doesn't have bodhicitta, the person enters the Hinayana path, and achieves the Path of Accumulation. If the person has the practice of bodhicitta then because of the fully renouncing mind of samsara, through the practice of bodhicitta, the person can enter right away into the Mahayana Path of Accumulation, which means it is quicker to receive enlightenment.

Then when the meditator receives the second path, as he took teachings on the Four Noble Truths, as he listened, meditated on the Four Noble Truths, he actualizes and receives the realizations of the meditations that he listened to and meditated on before.

Then when the meditator receives the third path, the Right Seeing Path, he fully realizes shunyata. Right Seeing means shunyata, Right means right view. Fully realizing shunyata.

When the meditator reaches the fourth path, the Path of Meditation, there are about eighty-one delusions that this Path of Meditation gradually removes. This meditator who has the achievement of the Path of Meditation has that much knowledge.

Then the one who has achieved the state of an arhat has so much knowledge, such as incredible psychic powers, such as the ability to transform. Incredible knowledge. In previous times, one of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's disciples, an arhat, was giving teachings. The evil beings wanted to disturb the teachings, so they made rain. They manifested in the form of actresses, and they tried to disturb him, and they acted and danced in order to disturb the teaching. However when this was going on, the arhat put a flower rosary on the neck of the actress, transforming the evil being, completely destroying it—all of a sudden it became ugly, and didn't have the power to carry on acting as they had before. Those arhats had so much power, even in seven days, even in a short time, many thousands of people followers that they led in the path realized shunyata—they have that much power. However there is no time.

There are also ten levels and each level has so much knowledge to talk about. On the right seeing path they receive the higher, transcendental practice of charity, the paramita of charity. There are six paramitas like this. Also much knowledge. Also on the path of meditation, the meditator receives the higher transcendental special practice of the paramitas. For the bodhisattva who has the achievement of the first level, there are ten levels. On the first level he can manifest, transform into hundreds of different manifestations. The bodhisattva who receives the right seeing path and has the achievement of the first level can transform into hundreds of different manifestations, and each of the manifestations are surrounded again by hundreds of bodhisattvas who see one hundred eons further what is happening, what happened during those times, everything that happened during those times he can see clearly, this sangha has that much psychic power. Also they have the power to make hundreds of different concentrations, meditations, seeing hundreds of buddhas giving blessings. Like this. Also the bodhisattva himself can manifest and transform into hundreds of the Buddha's pure realms, and also has the power to give the Dharma in hundreds of different ways, also, such as ripening hundreds of sentient beings' minds at the same time.

Then this knowledge, this example. The bodhisattva who has the achievement of the right seeing path, who has the achievement of the first level has that much knowledge. Anyway, I am not going to explain the of the other levels. However, making total like this. As this bodhisattva has that much knowledge, he can do everything a hundred times more—ripening one hundreds sentient beings' minds, manifesting hundreds of different transformations, going to the hundreds of buddha's pure realms, seeing hundreds of eons in the past and future, like this. In the second level the knowledge increases thousands of times, like this. For example, seeing the things that are happening thousands of eons—before it was hundreds, now it is thousands—in the past and future. Also ripening thousands of sentient beings' minds, going to thousands of Buddha's realms, giving Dharma in thousands of different ways—like this it increases. Then the second level of thousands, then the

third level hundreds of thousands—that much increases the whole knowledge. Anyway, this increases down to the last tenth level. The knowledge becomes more and more. Whatever it is called, the millions and trillions, such as the ten times million is one che.wa, so a hundred times one che.wa it increases. It increases more and more down to the tenth level. The knowledge of the sangha who has the achievement of the tenth level is incredible knowledge that cannot be imagined. Anyway, these numbers are a little bit complicated in my mind!

Anyway, just for us to first to have a little idea of the knowledge that this path has. You can understand the details if you study the philosophical teachings, you can understand the details, so many details to go through. Then like this. When the meditator, the sangha, the bodhisattva achieves the eighth level, that is the level where he completely purifies all the delusions. Then there are three other paths left. The rest of the paths, the seventh path, is called the impure path. From the first path to the seventh it is called the impure path, and the three other paths are called the three pure levels, and then there are the seven impure levels. That means this. After the seventh there is no more delusion. When he reaches the eighth level there is no delusion, all is completely purified. The delusion only continues down to the seventh level. Down to that there is delusion existing. It has been removed gradually but still it is delusion, even if the sangha has the achievement of the seventh level, when he achieves the eighth level all delusions are completely purified. No delusions, only the mental defilements are left, the *she.drib*, the subtle obscurations are left. The three other paths are mainly the remedies of the mental defilements, the *she.drib*, the subtle obscurations. However, the Sangha has that much knowledge, the Sangha who has the achievement of this path, these levels. So briefly this is just a brief explanation on the knowledge of Dharma and Sangha.

Question: Does he determine himself in which level he is in?

Rinpoche: He knows. Maybe you check up what level you are in. Perhaps only one second is left to receive enlightenment!

So this is taking refuge by understanding the knowledge of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. However, Buddha the meaning, and there is just a difference in the meaning of Buddha. The Tibetan term is called *sang.gya* or *chang.chub*. This means fully seeing all existence, relative existence, absolute existence, and all the delusions. All the obscurations are completely purified, having the complete realization, and having complete purity—that is what *sang.gya* or buddha means. Usually the term *buddha* is a Sanskrit term. Generally *buddha* means realizing absolute nature. The literal meaning of *buddha* is realizing absolute nature, but it is not just realizing absolute nature, it is beyond that, much higher than that. *Buddha* or *sang.gya* according to Tibetan term—*sang* means all obscurations are completely purified. *Gya* means having completed realizations. Each word is to explain the whole thing that Buddha means, *sang.gya*.

Dharma is the thing that brings the result, the fruit of enlightenment. Actualizing that within oneself, the result is enlightenment.

And Sangha, the attainer of the Dharma, is like this.

So tonight do meditation, first of all begin with purification, read the part on the twelve links. That part on the evolution of samsaric suffering, the twelve links. Then first of all check how one has been circling around in samsara from beginningless samsaric lifetimes until now through the chain of the twelve links. Then as you see clearly how you have been suffering, compare this to other sentient beings, thinking, “Also they like me have been suffering like this.” Just before you do the

meditation you do the visualization of Guru Shakyamuni, and you visualize all sentient beings surrounding you in the form of a human being but in the nature of suffering, as they are suffering now in different realms. Then do the meditation on the twelve. Then after checking on yourself, check others, how other sentient beings are suffering. Try to see that they are more suffering in this present time than you are. Think like this. Then after meditating, checking through the twelve links, then think like this. “Only myself taking refuge, only myself not being born again in a suffering realm, that is not enough, because now at this time I am born as a human being but still I am not sure that I will definitely not be born in a suffering realm. So I must release from samsara. But taking refuge only to release myself from samsara is not enough. Because there are numberless other mother sentient beings who are the field of my past, present, and future happiness, from where I receive all my happiness and perfections, and they are extremely suffering, always circling in samsara through the twelve links.” Think like this.

Then first of all when you think how the sentient beings are the field from where you receive all your happiness, depending on how strong you think that, in the mind somehow a little bit of love comes, depending on how strongly you think of this. In the second time when the person thinks of sentient beings suffering, circling in samsara, being involved in the twelve links, they are extremely suffering, greater than the suffering I am experiencing now. Then because you think, first they are a field of happiness, and you see sentient beings in a kind of beauty, depending on how strongly you think this. Then when you think the second time there is more feeling, a greater chance to bring up a little bit of compassion. Also in this way because you thought I received my happiness from them, the second time thinking of their suffering, somehow there is the mind wanting to take care them away from suffering, wanting to release them from suffering. This mind comes. This is psychological. It is not necessary to explain now. Like this it comes, the mind wanting to keep them away from suffering, wanting to release them from suffering, wishing them to not have suffering, this comes. Then after thinking this, first of all thinking of them as a field of happiness, and the second time thinking how sentient beings’ are suffering more than me, being deeply ignorant. Then there is the thought, how much you strongly think, there is the thought feeling that their suffering is unbearable, wishing sentient beings to not be in suffering. Then thinking, then taking refuge. This time the cause of the refuge is not only the fear of suffering, not only the fear of samsara, but this time when you take refuge the cause of refuge is feeling unbearable that other sentient beings are suffering. Then taking refuge, doing purification, then taking refuge with the unbearable feeling for other sentient beings’ suffering.

So in order to make the sentient beings release from suffering, take refuge. This is the Mahayana way of taking refuge; the other is Hinayana refuge. Since one takes refuge thinking of the unbearable feeling of suffering and takes refuge in order to make other sentient beings release from suffering, there is an unbearable feeling, the fear of other sentient beings’ suffering, then devotion to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—these are the cause of Mahayana refuge. So this way of taking refuge is the Mahayana way of taking refuge.

After thinking this, make purification. First of all you start to make the light come and these things, briefly think of the Buddha’s knowledge of the holy body, speech, and mind. Also you can think of the knowledge of the Dharma and Sangha if you can remember. Just try to remember at that time. Then when you stop, after some time when you stop the recitation of mantra for purification, then you think that you are completely purified. While you are thinking of Buddha’s knowledge, you can’t do two things together.

Then in the next hour, without needing to read from the book as you have already visualized your parents here, then enemy, stranger—then you look at them. If you don't remember any enemy, any present enemy—if you have a present enemy use it for meditation instead of using it for bringing up anger, negative mind. If you use it for meditation then it becomes a helper rather than an enemy. If you don't have an enemy what you do is this. If you have the problem of not having an enemy, not finding an enemy, then it is easy, very easy, very easy. Usually what you don't like, for instance if there is so much attachment to words, to reputation, then the person who does the opposite things, tells you bad things, complains about you, easily becomes the enemy. Whatever you are, for instance if you are so much attached to friends and relatives, if someone does something in that way, if your personality is easy to get angry—you check in this way. First of all make the situation up. This is interesting because usually when we are in the actual situation we don't check up, completely controlled by the negative mind—we don't check up what's going on in the mind. But we are making the situation to not get anger or attachment, but to control it. Also it is very nice because your mind is conscious while you are creating the situation of what's happening in your mental room. One part of mind is checking, conscious, so it is interesting. Just like we see the television. Then check up, create the situation first, whatever makes you easily angry, attached—you create the situation then check how your mind is reacting. Check, try to recognize, how your mind discriminates, what reasons the negative mind gives you to discriminate this and this. Check after you find the reason given by the negative mind, whether it is true or not. Starting from the “I,” the wrong conception, self-attachment, check up like this. Also check up from the object's side whether it is true. Sometimes it is better if you check like this yourself, your own way of checking is better sometimes than from the book.

Day Twenty-five
Saturday, 30th November
Precepts

Before taking ordination it is necessary that the mind go in the Dharma. Besides that, it is necessary that the action of taking the ordination become a Mahayana action, the cause of enlightenment, and that has to be created by the pure motivation, the Mahayana thought, the pure thought. It is necessary that the mind be possessed by the pure thought of precious bodhicitta. Due to ignorance, the wrong conception conceiving of the “I” as self-existent, from this, the ignorance in the absolute true nature of the “I,” from ignorance in karma arises. As this ignorance in the absolute nature has no beginning, also the ignorance in karma has no beginning. As it has no beginning, also the ignorance in karma has no beginning. As they have no beginning, we have been circling around in the six realms of samsara from beginningless lifetimes until now. Still there is so much karma that has been collected with ignorance—to be born again in the suffering realms and also in the upper realms, but has not been experienced yet. So there is so much karma created in previous lifetimes and still we are continuously creating the karma with ignorance, still we are creating the karma that causes us to be born continuously in the six realms of samsara. However, as long as we don't cut off continuously creating karma with ignorance and as long as we follow the ignorance of the absolute nature, the ignorance of karma, we will have to experience the suffering in samsara endlessly because karma is definite, it is definite that it will bring a result. Whatever different karma, negative karma has been created in a previous lifetime, in the present time, it is definite that we will experience the different result. Also, there is no such thing as experiencing the karmic result of karma that wasn't created by oneself. If one could experience the result of happiness and peace and the cause wasn't created by oneself, but was created by other people, if there was such a thing, then we wouldn't have to observe or worry about karma, and we wouldn't have to purify negative karma—if there was such

a thing as experiencing the result of happiness that without the cause being created by oneself. If there was such a thing possible, there would be no reason to suffer, no reason to experience suffering, the cause of which was only created by us. If there was such a thing, also there would be no need of discipline, no need to control the mind. If there was such a thing, then if one living being received enlightenment, all the rest of the sentient beings could also receive enlightenment easily without trying to control and discipline the speech and body and mind. Without needing to put effort, to train the mind in the path to enlightenment, without doing meditation, without following the path, all sentient beings could easily receive enlightenment as there is one living being who receives enlightenment, and that result can be experienced by all living beings. However, such a thing is not possible.

Besides that, besides the fact that karma is definite, karma is expandable. Once negative karma is created, continuously it increases until it is completely purified. Besides the fact that karma is definite we will have to experience the suffering result continuously, as it has been collected from previous lifetimes. As karma is expandable, also for this reason we will have to continuously experience suffering in samsara, because the karma that is expandable is not just one negative karma. We have not finished all the negative karmas yet; we have not finished the experience of the result. Also, without creating the cause by oneself, one cannot enjoy the result. For this reason also it is definite that we will have to experience suffering continuously in samsara. There is no choice to not experience the suffering result of the karma that has been created in the present time and in other previous lifetimes. Also because of that reason there is no result, there is no such karma that, once it is created, is lost—no matter how long it takes, thousands of eons, billions of eons, no matter how long it takes, it doesn't get lost.

For instance, even now there are so many karmas that we have created before in many thousands and billions of eons and yet we didn't start to experience those karmas. Thinking like this, thinking of the past, how many times we have been creating negative karma and thinking about the future, thinking about these karmas, the evolution of karma, the nature of karma. "It is almost impossible for life to exist without experiencing karma. It is almost impossible that samsara can have an end. However, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was also a samsaric being before, and having met the guru and having met the Mahayana teaching and observed the eight precepts, he received enlightenment and enlightened numberless other sentient beings. Just like this, we, the individual, has the possibility to do the same. However, releasing oneself from samsara is not sufficient, because all sentient beings are the field from which I receive all my past, present, and future happiness and perfections. They are of the utmost need at the beginning, middle, and even at the end of Dharma practice. At the present time most sentient beings are extremely suffering without a leader leading them in the path to enlightenment, without having met the Mahayana teachings, without having the Dharma wisdom to see what is to be practiced and what is to be avoided. So they are continuously ignorant of the cause of suffering and happiness, and continuously create the cause of suffering, expecting happiness. However, at this time I have met a leader leading me in the path to enlightenment, I have met the Mahayana teaching, and I have a little bit of wisdom to know what to practice and what to avoid and I have the possibility to develop this, great possibility to practice Dharma as I desire.

"Therefore, as mother sentient beings are suffering while I have such a precious chance, the one who is responsible for helping mother sentient beings is me. As I am the son or daughter of mother sentient beings, mother sentient beings should rely on me. While they are suffering they should rely on me, the son or daughter of mother sentient beings. So the best way to help or repay the mother sentient beings' kindness, the most sublime way to repay and them is to lead them to enlightenment

and release them from all suffering. To be able to do this who has the perfect power, knowledge, and infinite compassion? Only Buddha has it, so therefore at the moment I don't have any capability, so therefore I must achieve the state of the perfected being. In order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all mother sentient beings, it is necessary to discipline my speech, body, and mind. Therefore I am going to take Mahayana ordination until tomorrow morning."

At the end of the third repetition of the prayer, think that you have received the pure Mahayana ordination in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, surrounded by numberless other buddhas and bodhisattvas. Think that you have received the ordination in the form of light, that the holy body is full of light.

PRAYER

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

Also think, "I am going to observe the precepts for one day as the previous tathagatas also observed the precepts."

Repeat the mantra to revive the broken precepts and to be able to purely keep the precepts.

MANTRA

DEDICATION

Think, "Due to the merits may the entire meaning the prayer contains be successful. Due to the present merits of taking ordination, and the past merits, and the future merits, may I quickly receive enlightenment by receiving the fundamental realizations, the fully renouncing mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute true nature in order to enlighten all mother sentient beings.

9 am

We were born as human beings this time, and have met the principal cause of enlightenment, the Mahayana teaching that has to be practiced on the basis of the practice of bodhicitta. However the essence of the Mahayana teaching is training the mind in bodhicitta, in realizing the absolute true nature, and not only realizing the absolute true nature, not only the meditation on the absolute nature, but the meditation on bodhicitta. This is the essence, the essential thing of the Mahayana teaching. Because of this the Mahayana path becomes the true path to enlightenment. That is because of the benefits and power of bodhicitta—not the power of the realization of the absolute true nature, not only the power of that. We have met this precious Mahayana teaching, which is more difficult to find or to meet than the general Buddhadharma. As we have met these teachings, the precious Mahayana teachings at this time, not taking the essence even though we have met the teaching—there are many essences, many different ways of taking the essence but the principal essence in the Mahayana teaching and practice is trying to receive enlightenment by training the mind in bodhicitta. This is the essential essence, the best essence, the most sublime essence. However it is quite a loss if we meet this precious method, the teaching that explains about the techniques, that explains about the practice of bodhicitta, the principal cause that brings enlightenment quickly, if we cannot train the mind as much as possible in bodhicitta. There is no

greater loss than that, in all the life, among all other losses in the lifetime. Not realizing the absolute true nature is not that as great of a loss as having met the Mahayana teaching and not training the mind in practicing bodhicitta. This is the greatest loss. Because without depending on the Mahayana teaching, without practicing the Mahayana teaching, it is possible to realize the absolute nature, but without depending on the Mahayana teaching there is no way to actualize bodhicitta. Just thinking like this, we can understand how it is important.

For instance, when a person follows the Mahayana path, that person benefits limitless great numbers of other sentient beings. Even before a bodhisattva receives enlightenment, and after receiving enlightenment, he benefits and enlightens numberless other sentient beings. Where does this power come from? If you check up, it comes from bodhicitta—not mainly from the realization of shunyata but mainly from the power of bodhicitta. How? For instance, even before entering the Mahayana path, when the person, the meditator tries to train the mind in bodhicitta, planning to receive enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings, any movement, any action, even the daily life actions of eating, sleeping, drinking, anything, besides meditation, besides the actual schedule, the actual time of meditation, even the movement of daily life, is always dedicated with this wish, this pure motivation, in order to receive enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings. Even before entering the Mahayana path, before receiving bodhicitta, while the person is trying to train, to practice, it is always like this. Even before one receives enlightenment, the bodhisattva following the path benefits limitless great numbers of sentient beings as we described yesterday in the case of the sangha bodhisattvas who have the achievements of those paths. Besides oneself achieving enlightenment, one can enlighten numberless other sentient beings by releasing them from suffering. If you check up on this, it is due to the power, the wish that the meditator had, even before entering the Mahayana path, even before receiving bodhicitta. It is the power of that wish—all these are the benefits of that wish, the pure motivation. It is not mainly the realization of the absolute true nature like this.

For instance, even if one has the realization of the absolute true nature, one cannot cut off self-cherishing—still one is not out of self-cherishing thought. Self-cherishing thought has to be controlled by bodhicitta. As long as self-cherishing thought is not destroyed or controlled, even if there is the full realization of the absolute true nature, there is no way for the person to enter the Mahayana path, no way for the person to become a bodhisattva, only concentrating for a long time on the individual nirvana, everlasting happiness, living in that state for a long time, for many eons without working for sentient beings like bodhisattvas. So therefore, with understanding of the benefits of bodhicitta, the importance of bodhicitta, it is necessary to cultivate a pure motivation. “I must achieve enlightenment for the sake of all mother sentient beings, therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path to enlightenment.”

So, the listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it is a teaching that is well expounded by the two great philosophers, Nagarjuna and Asanga and it is a profound teaching that is the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa’s understanding. This teaching includes all the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person’s achievement of enlightenment.

This commentary on the graduated path has four topics for the outlines. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teachings and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines—the way of following the guru who is the

root of the path and the way of training the mind in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines also—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being is divided into two—the thought seeking better a future life and following the method that brings happiness in the future life. The second one has two outlines—taking refuge, which is the holy door of the teaching, and bringing up the understanding belief in karma, which is the root of all perfection and happiness.

Refuge has four outlines—firstly the cause of refuge, secondly the object of refuge. The cause of refuge has two things. Each object of refuge, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, has absolute and relative aspects. Thirdly, the reasons that the Buddha is a worthy object of refuge. There are four reasons, so the way of taking refuge is the fourth reason. So this I taking refuge by understanding knowledge.

We briefly talked about taking refuge by understanding knowledge, the knowledge of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, taking refuge by understanding the differences, such as the meaning of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Also, taking refuge by understanding the actions, such as that the Buddha is the founder of Dharma, his action is showing the Dharma, and the function of the Dharma is avoiding or removing the negativities. When the Sangha achieves the different levels of the path, other people see that they have the achievement of the path, that the Sangha has knowledge, so they get interested, the mind gets drawn, and the other person follows, tries to achieve similar realizations. That's how the Sangha helps one to practice Dharma.

Like Westerners studying Dharma, through studying Dharma they discover many new subjects in their own life, their own minds. The more they understand about mind, other people in the West see and understand that by this person going to the East and studying Dharma there is much evolution, the nature of mind, and many things, many other methods to solve problems. So other people also find interest—they see this knowledge that the other person has, and they also try to understand, following the method, trying to understand the meditations, trying to practice like this example. That's how the other student who studies Dharma in the East can help other people, showing his knowledge, his understanding, showing that he has the method to solve problems, showing that he has a relaxed mind, a calm mind, that the mind changes through the power of the Dharma. Just like that, that's how the Sangha helps the attainment of the path.

Taking refuge by understanding the different ways of thinking—such as that Buddha is an object to which to make offerings, Dharma is what should be actualized within one's mind, Sangha is the influence. Living together in order to begin Dharma practice by influencing each other. Taking refuge or making offerings to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha by understanding the way of creating incredible merits through these practices. Then for the Sangha, incredible merits are created by depending on groups. Dharma is not a living being, but also from Dharma one can create and increase merits by taking refuge and making offering to the Dharma. We take refuge by taking the vow. The Buddha is the founder of the actual refuge. The Buddha is the one who gives actual guidance. What is actual refuge? The Dharma is the actual refuge. The Sangha is the helper to attain the actual refuge. As I gave the example before, they are the doctor, nurse, and medicine. For instance, in the case of the Dharma, as we gradually receive the realization of each level of meditation, gradually our negative mind is controlled. For instance, when we achieve equilibrium

meditation, there is no thought of discriminating. No matter whether the person gives you a big sack of gold or a big sack full of kaka, from your side, the side of the person who has the achievement of this realization, there is no discrimination thinking, “He is my enemy,” “He is my friend.” There is no such thing, no such thought as this. The person who has the achievement of the realization always sees both people equally—his mind is not stuck to any of these people—to the person who gives him a big sack of gold he has an equal feeling. As he sees them as equal, he also has an equal feeling.

There is also taking refuge and not telling others. However, it is not necessary to go through the details, it takes much time. But there are certain instructions.

So the essence of refuge. The essence of refuge, whether the person has received it or not, the definition is made by whether the person has these two causes or not. With these two causes when the person takes refuge, relying on the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, then that person has refuge. That person has taken refuge even though the person cannot say any prayers. If his mind is living in that, qualified like that, he has refuge.

So after taking refuge, by taking refuge to Buddha what should one do. There are things that should be done, and there are things that should not be done. There are two practices. By taking refuge the instruction of attainment means that by taking refuge in the Buddha, any statues, any symbolic things of Buddha, statues, paintings of the Buddha, no matter what they are, even if they are not well done, the shape is not well done, even if they are not well painted, very ugly looking, with a very horrible shape, then putting them, putting them in the garbage, and putting the paintings that are well painted up very high. Things like this cannot be done, because both are symbolic figures of the Enlightened Being. Both are symbolic, but just because the painter didn't do it well, perfectly, it is not the fault of Buddha's holy body, it is the fault of the artist. There can be no discrimination when taking refuge in Buddha, in any of his holy symbolic things. However it is done, or painted, as long as it is a figure of the Buddha, even if the lines are not straight, not well done, we have to have respect. We have to put it in a higher, clean place, not using it for cleaning things, cleaning tables or cleaning the floor. We cannot discriminate like this. Thinking this is very well done and putting it up, and thinking this is not well done and throwing it out. This cannot be done. No matter how it is done, as long as it is a holy symbol of the enlightened being's figure, from your mind you have to think of it like that. It is the same thing with a statue, even if it is made of gold, diamonds, mud, plastic—whatever it is made of, as long as it is a symbolic figure of the Buddha, from our side from the person's, the meditator's side, he should try to see it as the actual living Buddha. same thing when you see altars, also the way to look at them, the way to see them, try to see them as you are really seeing the living Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—you have to look at it in that way. same thing when you make an offering, like this, with paintings and with statues also like this. From our side we have to respect them like this, without discriminating this is ugly, this is beautiful. Because Buddha himself doesn't have any ugliness; there is no such thing. Buddha is completely out of all the causes of ugliness so therefore he is also out of the physical ugliness. Mainly it depends on the person's devotion.

There were many times, many outspoken statues—not outspoken! I don't know whose language that is! There are many statues, and many meditators and even just laypeople who have very strong devotion, much devotion, who have created much merit, and they see the statues speaking to them predicting. Sometimes they give teachings—like this, many times it happened. Also in India and Tibet, many statues still exist. In many of the monasteries they have speaking statues. There is also

one Milarepa statue in Swayambhu that speaks. It was made by his disciple Rechung. Before Milarepa passed away he made this statue and the statue itself said, “This looks like me.” It is very well made. There are many in the monasteries such as many Tara speaking statues, and Avalokiteshvara, and Padmasambhava—many. They also exist in the family houses. This happens depending on the persons’ devotion, because he has created so much merit, mainly due to devotion. So it is possible, if we always try to look at the form of a statue, if we don’t change our view, don’t purify our view, always try to look in that way, then always we see in that way. If we try to see it as a real living Buddha by remembering the knowledge of Buddha then as strong devotion is there, as you try to look at it in that way, it becomes a method quickly to see the actual manifestation of Buddha. Or soon after to see those holy symbolic things as actual living buddhas having communication, like this. Also the previous pandits, such as Shantideva and Atisha, they had statues and painting like this, as real living beings they can communicate—they asked questions and received answers. When there was a big important period, when there was a big debate in the philosophical teachings among thousands of other pandits, when there were doubts and questions, they would ask and receive answers from the holy objects, like this. There are so many stories.

However, whether we see it as ordinary, or see it as actual living, see it with pure view as actual living, that is also the creation of another person’s mind, the projection of another person’s mind—and seeing ugly material is also a projection of another person’s mind. So how you want to see depends on here [pointing to head]. The definition is not only made by the object.

So practice what should be done by taking refuge in the Buddha, and what should not be done, practice ...

(BREAK)

Student: You used two Tibetan words to translate clear light nature, but meaning clear light nature. I was wondering if there is any difference, what is the difference in the sense of the two different words?

Rinpoche: *Rik* means clear light nature; all sentient beings have Buddha’s *rik*—that means the clear light nature.

Student: Does it mean it is one before it is purified and the other one after?

Rinpoche: It just means the clear light which creates the possibility of receiving enlightenment, the clear light nature that is not defected by the temporal obscurations. *Nug* is the purified one, that which is not obscured by the dualistic mind, which is not sentient beings’ mind, which each sentient being has not purified. That’s the difference.

Student: Can you explain the five *skandhas*?

Rinpoche: The five skandhas consciousness. First of all the skandha of form means the body ...

Student: But what does skandha mean?

Rinpoche: Aggregates, groups, like the aggregates of the atom. Each skandha just means group, many numbers together, like this. The skandha aggregates of form means the physical part, the physical body. Then the skandha of feeling is happiness, pleasure, suffering, or indifferent feeling. Cognition—recognizing this is that, this table, cognition is like this. The skandha of volition—there are different types of thoughts, such as wisdom and many other different types energy wisdom, many different types of thoughts. It will come later on, I will give more examples. There are skandhas of compounded phenomena. This is a literal translation from the Tibetan word. Also it can be also volition. Conception, like conceiving this and that, the skandha of cognition, the compounded phenomena. This includes two things. There are different types of thoughts, wisdom

and energy and many different types of thoughts that are not included in feeling, consciousness, recognition, and cognition is another thought. But the rest of the thoughts we have all included in the skandha of compounded phenomena; there are many other thoughts besides that.

Student: Is this something intuitive, that can't be expressed in words?

Rinpoche: No, no, it can be expressed. Like wisdom such as energy. These are not feelings, not recognition, not feelings, they are different types of thoughts. There are fifty-one different types of thoughts like this. Taking out the feeling and cognition, the rest of the other thoughts are included in the skandha of compounded phenomena. All that goes in that skandha. Later on when we go in the meditation on samsara, we can have more examples. Also it includes many different types of thoughts and the impermanence of the skandha is also compounded phenomena. But however, this particular skandha of volitional phenomena is also correct. So afterwards when we go through more examples of these different types of thoughts we will have a little bit clearer idea.

So by taking refuge in Buddha, what should be done, practiced. The second one is the practice of prohibitiveness. I will tell the meaning. First of all, by taking refuge in Buddha, once one takes refuge in Buddha one cannot take refuge in the wrong founder. "Wrong founder" means a founder who has wrong realization and who chooses the wrong path. The problem is this. If one takes refuge in the wrong founder who has the wrong path, if one chooses the wrong path with the wrong realization, then one gets a wrong understanding. Getting a wrong understanding misleads us into following the wrong path, and giving wrong understanding and wrong realization. It leads us in the wrong way. Instead of taking refuge to not be born in the suffering realm, to escape from samsara, following the wrong founder only makes create the cause to be born in the suffering realm. It only causes us to create the cause of samsara, so therefore this precept is explained. This precept is explained like this. When doctors give medicine to their patients, there is a certain diet that the person should not take, otherwise it doesn't help because of the person's bad sickness. So if the person takes a diet that causes sickness, however much the person takes medicine, it doesn't help.

For instance, when person has a fever, even if the doctor gives the best medicine, other things that decrease fever, if the person doesn't follow the doctor's instructions, if the person doesn't cut off the bad diet that increases the fever, harms him at that time, then he can't get cured. He cannot be cured soon. What happens is that he only gets worse and worse instead of getting cured. Just like this example. By following the wrong founder, you get the wrong understanding, and this is how the life is misled, the person is misled, misguided. Also because the person has the wrong understanding, the wrong realization, because of that there is no way to come to the right understanding. As long as there is wrong understanding, there is no way to come to right understanding. To receive right understanding, right realization, wrong understanding and wrong realization has to be removed. Those two cannot exist at the same time in the person's mind. The problem is this. So because they cannot exist at the same time, as long as there is the wrong realization, it stops us from having the right realization. With wrong realization, wrong understanding, all the actions become wrong actions, the cause of suffering, totally only the cause of suffering. By having the right understanding, the person goes in the right path. By going in the right path the person receives the right result, the perfect right result. Like this. The importance, usefulness, or necessity, the reason that, if the person takes refuge in Buddha, he can't take refuge in the wrong founder who has wrong realization—if you don't understand this then it is like the example of the patient and doctor, eating the wrong diet. Like this. The practice of prohibitiveness or stopping the wrong founder, this is the main thing.

Then for taking refuge in the Dharma, again there are two things. By taking refuge in the Dharma, any statue, any form, any Dharma book that explains knowledge of the enlightened beings, the

knowledge of the path, or contains meditation in order to receive enlightenment and everlasting happiness, even one page, even one sentence, we cannot put on a lower place than you. We cannot put them under the bed, we cannot use them for cleaning, we cannot use them on just bare ground, or on unclean places. If there is a torn book then put it all together, collect it all together and put it some other place. Or you can burn it with certain mantras or put it outside some other place. Also, even though it is not absolute Dharma, we have to think from the meditator's side. From our side we have to think that this is the actual jewel of Dharma that guides us from suffering and leads us in the path to enlightenment. Thinking like this, you respect the book, the holy book, the text, even just a torn page, you have to respect, putting it higher onto a clean place like this. Also in the altar you can't put all kinds of books there, Dharma books and books that contain wrong explanations—it is better for the meditator's mind to keep it separate. What you keep at the altar keep separate from other books. Keeping it clean and separate like this somehow helps the mind. Somehow the mind is not confused, you will have a clear, calm mind, not complicated. Somehow it helps. Anyway like this.

The way of thinking is like this—think that it is the actual jewel of Dharma, and by thinking like this you show respect. Also by thinking like this you get the feeling. Generally it is like this. We receive enlightenment by controlling the negative mind and we do this by understanding the meanings of what the holy texts explain. Our controlling the negative mind, all these things, actualizing, realizing, comes by depending on the holy texts that explains the knowledge of enlightenment, the path, like this. The nature of samsaric suffering. Therefore it is worthwhile to respect them.

Taking refuge in the Dharma, what one should not do, is to avoid as much as possible harming other sentient beings. This is what should be done once one takes refuge in the Dharma jewel. And once one takes refuge in the Sangha there are two things. Whenever we see any form of a monk, those who have red robes on, no matter whether the other person has realizations or not, no matter what the level of mind of the other person, that monk or nun, as we see them, even if they are not the absolute Sangha we should think like this, "This Sangha jewel, the helper, is my Sangha jewel helping me to receive enlightenment, helping me to actualize the path to enlightenment, like this." If you can think in this way it is helpful for the mind. Also it stops the discrimination. This is very helpful because thinking like this stops the discrimination which may cause the person to create much negative karma. There is heavy negative karma in discriminating the monk or nun who is living in ordination. Generally if you talk about karma, according to karma, our complaints, our judging, our criticizing the person who is not living in ordination, for instance, who is not living in the five precepts, and doing the same for one who is living in the five precepts—even between these two there is a difference. The one living in precepts is higher; his body, rebirth is higher, more precious than the other one not living in precepts. For the person who complains and criticizes, his action of criticism towards the layperson not living in the precepts—that karma is a little bit light, but the negative karma of action of criticizing the person living in precepts is much heavier, depending on the object, because the object is much higher and more transcendental than the other object. So the person who is living in more precepts, like thirty-six, or two hundred and fifty—that much more the person's body or rebirth is higher, more precious. So therefore, from our side creating negative karma like getting angry with them is heavier, because the object is more precious, because the object is heavier. So it goes like this. Anyway it will come in the part on karma so it is not necessary to explain now.

For the Dharma of action, the precepts, what one should not do, what one should avoid, is harming other sentient beings as much as possible, because the essence of Dharma is to benefit other

sentient beings, not harm them. As we always talk, the essential purpose of practicing Dharma is to enlighten other sentient beings from suffering. Then, by taking refuge in the Sangha jewel also it is like this. If there is a piece of red or yellow cloth on the road, usually the meditators who take refuge, following these precepts, no matter whether that cloth it is actually from a monk's robes, or from a lay person, from the meditator's side he has to respect it. With the respect from his side, he creates good karma, creates merit in that way. Not breaking the precepts and doing that on the way he creates merit. So when he sees it, instead of crossing over it, first of all he picks it up and thinks, "The person who wears this robe has a certain knowledge that I don't have, a certain knowledge to attain that brings everlasting happiness." From our side, remembering the knowledge of the Sangha, we should pick it up and put it a little bit higher above the road, like this. If the person's mind is conscious in refuge this helps many ways. Then the precepts—since one takes refuge in the sangha jewel, one should not follow the wrong helper who has wrong understanding—there is danger that he will mislead you. The thing is, if you follow him, there is danger that he may give wrong information, wrong understanding, make to lose or degenerate your right understanding, your realizations or your practice. This disturbs the Dharma practice, the fulfillment of the Dharma practice. It doesn't mean physically being together, but mainly the danger of the mind following his wrong conceptions. These are the precepts that one should do in order to receive the guidance and help from Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, in order to receive the refuge from the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—from the person's side this is what he should do.

(Page 66) Instructions in the Practice of Refuge

For a monk, at the time of taking ordination there are three people like this together. Even though all three monks are taking ordination for the first time, they are higher, elder than those who take ordination in the second hour. In regards time also they have to respect each other.

Benefits of Taking Refuge

There are three worlds, the world of form, formless, and the world of senses. Just like the ocean, the whole Pacific, can be counted by each handful, but the benefits of bodhicitta—I think my future life when I am born as an animal—the benefits of refuge cannot be counted like that. There are eight major benefits of taking refuge. This is just to have total understanding. As the person knows the benefits of bodhicitta by having this thought, the person sees that there are benefits of taking refuge. Therefore these eight are just roughly the total benefits as explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

1. "Buddhist" sounds like it is made by Westerners, taken from Buddha, because there is the name Buddha that fixed up Buddhism, then Buddhist. I don't think Buddhist is a Sanskrit word. However it is like this, it means inner being. Usually it is called like this. People who go to a monastery, people who say prayers, who have letters, usually are called Buddhist. They also think, "I am Buddhist." Usually they are recognized as Buddhist by ordinary people, usually they are called like that. Usually it is called that because the person knows the way to say prayers, the person has some kind of meditation clothes on, just judging from the outside and called Buddhist. In modern times usually people are called that but that doesn't mean the person is actually an inner being. That is not the definition of a person as an inner being. Anyway, no matter. Besides that, whether the person has a monastery or an altar, none of this becomes the definition of being an inner being, a Buddhist. Even saying the refuge prayer doesn't mean that he is an inner being, an actual Buddhist—that is not the definition. Even reciting this refuge prayer million of times does not make him the definition of him becoming inner being. Just only that. Even if the person has robes on, that doesn't mean he is an

inner being. Even if the person is sitting on the throne facing down, it doesn't mean that the person is an inner being, it doesn't mean that he is a Buddhist, an inner being. Even if the person can explain so well, can explain Dharma for years, still that doesn't mean that he is an inner being. Having many volumes, thousands of texts that the person learned by heart, that much subject, that many words that can be said by heart, that doesn't mean the person is an inner being. Inner being doesn't depend on how one looks outside. Whether one is an inner being or not is something that can only be found within his mind, by checking his mind; it cannot be discovered by checking his body, the way he is dressed. Whatever fundamental thing the person has to have, such as understanding the continuity of the mind and the karma, the life continues. Then having fear—this is generally talking, mostly talking for ordinary being—having fear of samsaric suffering, the suffering of the evil destinies, and understanding the knowledge of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—having that fear and having that devotion, completely believing in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha's knowledge. Such believing in the Buddha's perfect powers, knowledge, and compassion, like we talked before. Then, with this devotion completely relying on Buddha. Then following Dharma, the actual refuge, and thinking of the Sangha as the helper. Within the person's mind there should be strong fear that comes from the deep understanding of the suffering of the evil destinies and the deeper understanding of the samsaric suffering nature, and then the unshakable devotion that completely relies on Buddha, on his having perfect power, knowledge, and compassion to guide one the suffering. This devotion and fear, as it is that unshakeable, strong, that much the refuge is pure within the person's mind. So within the person's mind, when there are these two causes, that person is an inner being—so whether he is a Buddhist or an inner being or not, that is only defined by his understanding, by his mind. So we cannot really tell who is an inner being.

I think in the afternoon, I think I will try to come tonight. In the afternoon if you do meditation on general samsaric suffering, as you go through this, the twelve links, there are six and eight sufferings, there are six samsaric sufferings, also the meditation on the twelve links, how we samsaric beings are circling in samsara through the twelve links. Then if there is till time then you can do the checking meditation trying to equalize these three—friend, enemy, and stranger. Try to equalize them in your mind.

7 pm

So just a few words on the last part of refuge. Since one takes refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, whatever one drinks or eats, whether it is delicious, whatever one takes, before one enjoys the food and drink it is necessary to always remember to offer it before you take it. This is also what one should do by taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. It is good because this is one easy way to create good karma, because food usually is no problem—we always eat, three or four times a day! There is no doubt that we eat, so as we eat many times, ten or fifteen times in a day, whatever, this is an easy way to create good karma, just by the way we eat food. If the mind is not lazy and the person can be conscious of making the offering, then even if the person eats fifteen times or however many times, somehow his effort of eating at that time is not completely empty. However each time, if his mind is conscious, as he made the offering, remembering Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the knowledge of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, remembering that this is the object in whom he takes refuge. Even if you don't remember much, all of a sudden when you have the food in front of you, sometimes the mind gets completely occupied by the food and doesn't remember much—but maybe you can remember afterwards. But sometimes you can't wait even a minute. Even though you cannot think much, this is very useful, as I said before, visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha inside, at the heart, radiating, thinking that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is the

embodiment of all buddhas. If you think that he is the embodiment of all buddhas, by thinking like this, as you make offerings, it becomes an offering to all the buddhas, all the numberless other buddhas, even though you don't know the particular names, different manifestations. Just by thinking this, he is the essence, the embodiment of all buddhas, just making clear like this, making very clear. "Guru" is the first word that comes, and "Shakyamuni" is the second name. As "Guru" comes first, this is the essence. The embodiment of all buddhas is the guru. So this essence is the manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni, the manifestation of Shakyamuni Buddha, the manifestation of Lord Buddha. Therefore Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has a very deep meaning. Just these two words have great meaning. Logically just by remembering, even just remembering this title, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, with understanding of the Guru, meaning of the first one, the essence of all the Buddhas, like this if you think in this way it has so much feeling. So much feeling and also the person feels it is more real. Thinking like this, as you make offerings, incredible benefits are created, so much merit by the way. We don't cook the fool principally for making offerings—if you had to cook it principally for making offering, you would be lazy, not put that much effort. First of all we make arrangement for our own pleasure, but in that time if you can think like this, making offering, then by the way there is incredible merit created by the person. Each time as the person makes offerings, thinking like this, the mind becomes more and more conscious. There is a way to train the mind to make it more and more conscious. First of all of course the person would find it difficult to keep the mind always conscious, because there has not been training, but as the person tries one day, two days, a few days, one month, as the person tries to be conscious more and more, after some time whenever the person receives food or drink, whenever the person receives something, always the person remembers, the mind is conscious, because the mind has been trained. The person has been used to thinking like this, making offerings, trying to remember the object. There is a way, like this, that the mind can become more and more conscious. Also remembering this prayer is also very useful, so useful to meet again the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in the future lifetimes.

"May I not be separated from the three sublime preciousness," like this, "May I and all surroundings not be separated from the three sublime preciousness." That means the three jewels in all the lifetimes. "May I and all surroundings not be separated from the three sublime preciousness in all the lifetimes. And may we always make offerings to the three sublime preciousness and receive the blessings of the three sublime preciousness." This is a very useful prayer because going through the meaning is like this. All surrounding means your parents—for instance, just the closest person, the parents, then if you have children, any relatives around there, and then the rest of the sentient beings, it covers much—not only oneself but all surrounding means the relatives, then the rest of the sentient beings—not to separate from the three sublime preciousness, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Because by not separating from the three objects, this is the way our future lives can be always happy and receive happiness and peace, besides receiving enlightenment. In our future life if we can continuously make offerings to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, we have always the chance to create good karma to achieve enlightenment soon. Then receiving the blessings, that is the most important thing about Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Receiving the realization of the meditations, realizing one's wrong conceptions, receiving the graduated path, receiving enlightenment—the whole thing depends on receiving the blessings of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. So this prayer is also very useful to remember, because this is not only a prayer praying for yourself but also praying for other sentient beings, including your relatives, your parents. Then after this you can say this refuge prayer, "La.ma Sang.gya ...". Instead of saying "kyab.su.ch'i," which means take refuge, you say offering, like this, "ch'o.pa.bal." (Page 9) Then also even in other times when you don't eat or drink, generally you have to remember the three jewels of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha as much

as possible, as much you can remember in the day and night. Also it is very helpful to guide oneself from the fear, suffering, and hindrances.

So in regards refuge, things that should be done are briefly like this. As we stopped at the part of the benefits of refuge, the second one is refuge, the fundamental thing of all ordinations. Without refuge the person cannot receive ordination. That is the foundation—refuge is the foundation of the ordination. Also taking refuge purifies all the negative karma collected from previous lifetimes, no matter how heavy it is. Usually, even in Tibet, not only the monks but even the lay people used to make retreat by doing purification, doing meditation on refuge and also reciting the refuge prayer. They used to recite the prayer one hundred thousand times or four hundred thousand times according to the person who made the retreat, like this. This is very powerful to purify negative karma, any negative karma. Also because of negative karma, the object with whom we create the negative karma is not only sentient being, we create also very heavy negative karma with holy objects many times without knowing this is a highly realized being, many times we create so much heavy negative karma with objects, buddhas, gurus, bodhisattvas, with holy objects who have higher realizations. We created so much heavy negative karma also in other previous lifetimes, therefore especially with refuge, especially doing purification with the meditation on refuge, this can purify all these heavy negative karmas that we have been creating in previous lifetimes. It doesn't mean that through refuge purification we cannot purify the negative karma created with other ordinary sentient beings. Refuge and purification can also purify those general negative karmas—besides it can definitely purify the heavy negative karma created with holy objects.

The third benefit is finishing the karma and obscurations that have been collected from previous lifetimes.

Then the fourth one, quickly creating incredible merits. As I said before, the example of the handfuls of water from the ocean can be counted, but the benefits of refuge cannot be counted. By thinking like that we can understand. Anyway, generally it has incredible benefits and much to talk about.

Then fifth, the person whose mind is living in refuge cannot be afflicted by other human beings, even evil beings, non-human beings, spirits. There is not much time to talk about the previous stories that were experienced by other people whose minds were living in refuge—there are many stories about how the refuge protects the person, guides one from the fear and danger of life. However this is just one example. In previous times in one place there was a king, and the way the king punished the people in that country was that every time the person was a criminal, did something wrong, there was a cemetery and he left the criminal there. They took him to the cemetery at night time and left him there. Then the hungry ghosts, the pretas, and other spirits ate the body. So at one time the king found one criminal and he was taken to the cemetery and left there and there were a lot of pieces of cloth, torn pieces of cloth in the cemetery, he found a piece of red cloth. Then this person believed that this piece of red cloth belonged to the Sangha, must be a Sangha robe. Believing, thinking that this was a piece of robe belonging to a monk, and being so scared at the cemetery, alone, so scared, with nothing to do, no method, he put the cloth on his head and the whole night he prayed to the three jewels. Usually that place was a very mischievous place—the bodies that were left at night there no longer existed the next day. However, that night there was no fearful vibration, there were no spirits coming. No one disturbed him, nothing happened, and the next day he came back.

There are so many stories about the benefits of refuge that were experienced by other meditators, even by laypeople. Many times people got scared of bad dreams at nighttime. Especially, refuge is the best method to stop fearful dreams. Many times it happens. Many of our monks are experiencing this, for instance like this. Sometimes, I don't know what it is called in the West, sometimes when you sleep you can't breathe, you can't move in your body, sometimes you scream so much. There may not be a name in the West but it is an experience so they can't really contradict it. Sometime it happens in dreams you are going somewhere, and while you are walking, your body gets stuck, you cannot move, things like that. Also many times you can see that someone is really pressing down, you can't really move and you can really feel the feeling of heaviness. Sometimes, many times you can see that, and when you wake up you can feel that the spirit has left from some part of the body. However, in those times if your mind quite conscious, just now we are trying to visualize ourselves in the form of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, like that in those times if you can remember to visualize your body as the manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, that danger will leave right away. Somehow due to the power of the Buddha's omniscient mind, even just having the visualization of that manifestation, even this great power, that spirit cannot disturb, press down, it leaves right away. This spirit leaves, as well as any other fearful dreams. Besides the dreams, even in the life dangers, fearful other dangers in life, frequently remembering the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and taking refuge, which means always making contact with the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. This doesn't mean you have to say prayers, recite mantras—it doesn't mean this, it means your mind always makes contact with the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Generally it is very beneficial in the life, even in the lifetime, whether there is danger or not.

The sixth, bringing all success. Whatever the person wishes, bringing all success. Such as totally quickly receiving enlightenment, the benefits of taking refuge, like this. After this then the subject of karma comes, after the refuge. The relationship is this—why karma has to come after refuge, for instance, first of all, just like this example. I am the criminal, the guilty criminal, so I go to see the judge and then the judge is going to punish me because I am guilty. I go to see judge and tell the judge with such a strong feeling of sorrow, repentance, “Excuse me this time,” apologizing like this, strongly appealing like this. You see, just that, just appealing, just requesting like this doesn't help. That doesn't completely make you never be punished by the judge or not be punished in court. Just only that doesn't completely stop you from being punished in the future. So in order to help you to not be punished in the future, you should make the vow, make the promise, “I will never do such a thing again.” Make the decision in your mind, “I will never do such a thing again,” in front of the judge say this, and make the decision like this within your mind. Then if you make the decision like this, that is the thing that helps you to not be punished again. That is the main thing that helps you to never be punished again. Just like this, we have been creating so much negative karma that causes us to be born in the suffering realm. Just feeling the repentance of creating the negative karma and just praying without making the decision, without disciplining oneself, making the vow, just praying, that is not sufficient to cause us to never be born again in the suffering realms. So to never be born in suffering realm, besides that what is necessary? We need to make the decision to observe karma. That is the main thing, the main tool, the main method to stop us from being born in the suffering realm. So that's how karma comes after refuge, the explanation of karma. Then if you talk a few words about karma, for instance, there are some examples given, such as the ten immoralities, the ten invirtuous actions, and the ten virtuous actions. These are just example to have an idea which are negative karma and which are positive karma, so these examples are given. Then the essential way of observing karma, how to observe karma—as there are ten immoralities and ten moralities explained like this, the opposite of the ten invirtuous actions are the virtuous actions. However, how to observe karma—if we understand these things, then we try to avoid the immoral actions, the

invirtuous actions as much as possible, as much we can. How much, we can observe, abstain from that, how long we can observe that, that much number we can observe is that much good. It helps one's own life. That is the essential way of observing karma, that person's main method, his fundamental method guiding his life. It is not something with which I control you, not like this. These things have to be done with your choice, with your freedom. With one's own choice or freedom. Karma means action, action of mind which is thought or karma. Also the thought that puts speech, body, and mind in the action is karma. The thought that persuades the speech, body, and mind in the action is karma. So this karma, this action, whenever it is done, this leaves an impression, ability on the consciousness. Whenever the action is taken it leaves an impression, an ability on the consciousness. So the impression, whenever it is ready, when the conditions are gathered, whenever it is ready, then the result comes, whether it is happiness or suffering. So first of all karma is definite—just I will tell the first outline, karma is definite.

For instance, like this. From beginningless samsaric lifetimes until now we have been creating incredible numbers of karma. There are karmas that we have finished, experienced, and there are also incredible numbers of karmas whose result has not been experienced by us yet. So, if there are such incredible numbers of negative karma that have been created before many thousands of eons, many billions of eons, then maybe some of the negative karma, because there are so many negative karmas, maybe some of the negative karma can be lost among those other many negative karmas, maybe it can get mixed up, like we pour milk and water, and it can disappear, lost somehow, mixed with other karmas or something. I have got very interesting karma! [Rinpoche had a cold.] Just like this, such thing cannot be possible—we may think that it can be possibly mixed with other karma so we don't have to experience the result of that karma, maybe it is possible to get lost in that way, because it took a long time—but there is no such thing. Even though there have been also many positive karmas, maybe some are lost, maybe they become positive karma, and negative karma was created, so maybe it become positive karma, mixed. Such a thing is not possible. Just like this, there is corn, rice, beans, potatoes, all kinds of different grains, many different types of grains. Also different seeds of fruits, plants, like this. If you put all this in one pot, all mixed up, you don't keep this seed differently, separate, and then throw it on the ground. If you plant this without making it separate like this, just whatever comes you throw it like this, even though there are all kinds of different seeds all together, when it the beans grow with the rice, just because they are together the bean cannot become the seed of rice plant. The bean, when it is ready, will bring its own sprout. The rice, whenever it is ready, will bring its own leaves. Also besides that each of them have their own result, rice from rice, beans from beans, it is the same thing with other different types of grains, and with different types of seeds of fruits and plants. Because it is together it doesn't mean it gets mixed up. Whenever it is ready it brings its own plant and its own result, whatever the seed was, it brings its own result. If it is an apple, it brings an apple, an orange brings an orange, like this. Even though the seeds were together. Whenever each is ready it brings its own plant. Just like this external example of the inner karma, the collection of karma on consciousness, even there are numberless karmas that have been collected on consciousness, whenever each karma is ready, if it is negative karma it brings its own suffering result, if it is positive karma it brings its own result of happiness, like this. Therefore the karma is definite. Whatever the cause is, it is definite that it will bring its own result.

DEDICATION

Then by thinking that you are the creator of the merit and enlightenment, also think of sentient beings' emptiness of self-existence, then dedicate the merits thinking that due to the past and

present merits of doing meditation, keeping precepts, any merit that is created, and also the future merits, may I quickly achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's state, may I quickly become Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in order to lead all sentient beings to his enlightened stage.

In regards the ten immoralities, if you want to know a little more detail, one of our gurus, Geshe Rabten who usually lives in Dharamsala has also been giving teachings for Western students for many years, seven or eight years. He has a short condensed explanation on the Four Noble Truths and on the ten immoralities with a little more detail, so it will be very useful to read that pamphlet. It is very useful to know this, not only knowing the numbers, but also knowing a lit bit of the details of each thing. This is the way we learn about karma, how we recognize, how we understand karma, what is negative and positive action; this is important. Generally such details are explained in the teachings but this time we don't have time to go through all of it, so if you can read it by yourself it will be helpful for your understanding.

Day Twenty-Six
Sunday, 1st December

PRECEPTS

From beginningless samsaric lifetimes, myself and all sentient beings have been experiencing suffering numberless times due to the ignorance of karma. If we don't try to remove the ignorance of karma this time, when we have received a perfect human rebirth, we will have to experience samsaric suffering by circling around in samsara endlessly due to ignorance of karma and continuously creating negative karma with that ignorance. It is necessary to understand, to fully understand each single action—whether it is positive or negative, how it is negative, and how it is positive. Besides that, it is important to know that karma is definite and expandable, and that one cannot experience the result of a cause not created by oneself. Whatever karma has been created can never get lost. So in order to observe karma, there is the need to understand what is negative action, what is positive action, and how karma ties oneself in samsara. Understanding karma in these four outlines. If the person has that much deeper understanding of karma, understanding these four outlines, this strong understanding gives energy. As it gives energy to the mind, as this understanding increases the energy, how this understanding increases energy, as the person has deeper understanding of karma, the fear of creating negative karma increases in the person, the fear of creating the cause of samsara. Due to this deep understanding and the fear that arises caused by understanding karma, the energy comes. It is built within the person's mind. So as this energy rises more strongly, as it increases, the person can observe karma better and better. The person can discipline himself more and more strictly, purely, without much difficulty, as the person has that much energy, understanding, and fear. If the person doesn't have deep understanding, deep feeling, or understanding, then there is no understanding of karma, how it is working, the evolution of the understanding of these four ways. If there is not this understanding, the fear does not arise. As fear does not arise there is no energy. As there is no energy the person cannot observe karma well. The person finds it difficult to observe karma and becomes lazy. Even if the person knows it intellectually, the person is lazy because there is no energy, no fear of creating negative karma and understanding, so the person is lazy even though he knows intellectually. Also it is very useful, very effective for the mind to understand karma through understanding stories and examples. Generally the example of the outside seed, the grain, the seed that was planted in the ground, generally there is a chance even though it has the ability to definitely, always there is the chance to take the seed out, to burn the seed, to stop the seed from growing into plants by pouring hot water, by disturbing the

perfect condition that causes the seed to produce the plant, that causes it to grow, even though it is definite that it will bring the result if it doesn't meet the hindrance. So just like this whatever karma has been created, if it doesn't meet the hindrance, it is definite that it will bring the result, whatever the karma is. If the karma created meets a hindrance then it is possible that it won't bring a result, that the being, oneself, won't have to experience the suffering result or the happy result. Even though that much numberless karma has been created there is always the chance to stop it, to not experience the suffering result by completely destroying the karma which is like the seed by destroying its ability. Also we can stop experiencing the suffering result by not meeting the condition that makes the seed of karma bring the suffering result. For example, in previous times in India there were two people. There were two beggars, and one beggar was of the caste of kings, and one beggar was of the caste of Brahmin. The beggar who was of the king caste was wise in knowing how to beg, and other one, of the Brahmin caste, was not that wise in knowing how to beg. The person of the Brahmin caste went to beg food from the monastery before the Sangha had lunch, so he didn't get any food. Just before they started to have food he wanted to beg, so he didn't get any food. The person who was of the king's caste was wise and knew how to beg, so he went to beg food after they had lunch in the monastery. The monks gave a lot of food to this beggar. So this beggar asked the other one, the beggar who was the Brahmin caste, "Did you get food," and he said they didn't give him anything. The other beggar who didn't get any food said, "I wish to cut all these monks' necks and drop their heads on the ground." The other one who got food said, "I wish I were a benefactor and always making offerings for the food of the monastery of the Sangha." They had different wishes like this. However soon after that the other person, who was of the caste of the Brahmin, while he was in the street his neck was cut by the vehicle of the horse cart. As he was sleeping in the street, his neck was cut by the vehicle of the horse cart. The other one was also sleeping in the street. During that time in that country the leader died, and the people wanted a new leader from that country so they found the person who was sleeping in the street under the shade of a tree. Usually as the sun goes away, the shade changes, the shade doesn't stay in one place, but this person was sleeping under the shade of a tree and the shade never moved away—the shade was always there. The people found this amazing, they were really surprised at this person. They thought, "Now we have found such an incredible person who has such power," and they thought the best idea was to ask him to be the leader of the country. So afterwards he became the leader of the country and became very rich. As he wished, he had the chance to make offerings to the monastery of the Sangha for a long time.

This is how karma is definite. Positive karma was created by this person, and negative karma was created by the other person. Even just by wishing, there is karma, even just different types of thinking, wishing like this have different results, such as the suffering result the person who created negative karma experienced. Besides his neck being cut by a vehicle, also he had to be born in the suffering realms and suffer for many eons, since he had such negative minds towards monks, the higher objects. The other person who created positive karma also had an enjoyable, happy life, and in that life also created much good karma of offering like this, and in many of his future lifetimes he also received a happy life and had many enjoyments as he wished.

Also in previous time there was one monk who lived in the monastery who he didn't take care of the Sangha's possessions. There was a bed that they used for meditation in the prayer hall and he spilt tea on the Sangha's bed, on the cushions. The cushions became black from spilling the greasy tea. So because they became black and he didn't take care, he did this with a careless mind, in his future lifetime he was born with a black colored back even though the rest of his body was white. He had

black marks on his back side. His karma was like this. This was the result the person experiences, even though the cause was a small cause.

Also in a country there was a king. One family lost a cow, and the king pointed to the wrong person saying, "You are the thief of the cow, the one who has stolen the cow." After the kind died, after a long time, he was reborn as a monk. At that time another family's cow was lost, so again the king of that country sent the people to search for the cow. As they came along to this monk's place, the monk was dyeing clothes a red color in a big pot. The people who were seeking the cow came by and they saw the monk, and from their side they saw the monk cooking meat in the pot, and they saw it as real meat, so they pointed to the monk and said, "You killed the cow." The monk said, "I never killed the cow, I am dyeing cloth not meat," but the other people didn't listen. They really saw that the monk was cooking meat, and they couldn't believe what the monk said. They really believed that the monk had stolen the cow and killed it. As much as the monk tried to tell them, it never helped, and without choice the monk had to go with them and was put in prison for six or seven months. When the monk was king he put this other person in prison for six or seven days. Karma is also like this. From those two sides, the people saw what was in the pot differently; each of them saw completely differently.

But these things are not something that only happens to other people and not to us, not like that. Even now somebody is making lunch, a big lunch to give all of us and each person will take it. When each of us when we take it, some of us find it good, some find it delicious, and some of us hate it. There are different things like this. The food is made in one pot, it is the same food, but when we different people eat it we find a different taste, a different feeling. While some find it delicious, some find it terrible. This proves karma. Just this proves karma. A person experiences the taste according to the person's karma created in the past, otherwise there is no reason why this has to happen, why different people have to find different tastes. There is no reason because it is the same food. That's why there is nothing to point out in the food; different people finding it delicious, undelicious is mainly due to the person.

So at the moment oneself has a chance, a little bit of wisdom to know what to practice, what to avoid. By having met the leader leading one in the path to enlightenment, having met the teachings, there is the chance for this wisdom to grow. "Numberless sentient beings are the field from which I receive all my past, present, and future happiness, and all perfections, the sentient beings who are extremely kind all the time, who have been extremely kind from beginningless samsaric lifetimes, even now, even in the future, even after I receive enlightenment they are extremely kind. Numberless sentient beings are extremely suffering, suffering so much in the narak, preta, and being animals. Even right this moment, there is so much suffering, such as naraks, such as the terrible suffering of the body becoming inseparable from ice, and experiencing the suffering of cold, a billion times worse than the suffering of cold we are experiencing. Our experience of the cold suffering in the morning is nothing. Also in the sura, asura, and human realms most sentient beings are incredibly suffering by not having met the leader leading them in the path to enlightenment, not having the wisdom to know what to practice and avoid, and not having met the teaching and always creating negative karma, the cause of suffering. Therefore if I, the son or daughter of mother sentient beings, this time while I have chance, if I don't help them, if I don't help them, lead them to happiness and release them from suffering, then who will repay them if I don't do it, who should do it, who should repay their being kind to me? I must do it. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment first in order to enlighten all sentient beings, therefore I must discipline my speech, body, and mind, therefore I am going to take the Mahayana ordination until tomorrow."

After the third repetition of the prayer think that you have fully received the Mahayana ordination in the form of light, that your whole body is full of light.

PRAYER

Repeat the prayer of the precepts thinking, “I am going to observe precepts for one day as the previous Tathagatas observed the precepts.”

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

MANTRA

DEDICATION

Think of the three times buddhas, past, present, and future, “Wherever they dedicated their merits also I will dedicate the merit in the same way.” Seeing yourself and the merit and enlightenment and sentient beings as illusory, dedicate the merits. “May I quickly achieve enlightenment by receiving the fully renouncing mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute true nature in order to lead all sentient beings to enlightenment, due to the merits of taking ordination and past and future merits.”

9 am

“I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all mother sentient beings. Therefore I must complete the realization of the graduated path. Therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path.” It is necessary to have such a pure motivation before listening to the subject of the teaching.

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it is a teaching that is well expounded by the two great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching that is the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsong Khapa’s understanding. This teaching includes all the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person’s achievement of enlightenment.

This commentary on the graduated path has four outlines. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the author. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening to and explaining the teachings and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last outline has two—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path. The way of training the mind has two also—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth. The last one is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being has two—bringing up the thought seeking a better future life and following the method that brings happiness in the future life. The last one has two—refuge which is the holy door of the teaching and bringing up the understanding belief in karma which is the root of all perfection and happiness. So, taking refuge which is the holy door for entering the teaching, that part is finished.

The second one is bringing up the understanding belief in the karma that is the root of all happiness and perfections. Generally there are three outlines. Thinking of general karma and particular karmas and then after that, checking the karma, such as avoiding the negative karma and creating positive karma. Generally part of the subject is included in three outlines. Thinking of the general karma, the first outline also has two outlines—actually thinking of the general karma and thinking of particular karmas. Actually thinking of the general karma that is part of the subject that we have been talking about, such as how karma is definite, is expandable, how the result cannot be experienced without creating the karma, and how whatever karma is created can never get lost. In regards the topic of karma is definite, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said in his sutra teaching, “Whatever karma is created, the result will be received.” Whatever karma is created, whether it is a cause of happiness, whether it is positive or negative karma, it brings its own result. There is no such thing as creating nonvirtuous karma and receiving the result of happiness, or creating virtuous karma and receiving a suffering result—there is no such thing as changing the result like this, no such thing.

For instance, the second one, karma is expandable—just like if you think of the outside example it is easy. For instance, when planting rice, this one seed of rice can bring many hundreds of rice grains, can bring the result of many hundreds of rice grains. Just like this also karma—this is an external example but the inner evolution, the karma, is more expandable than the external example such as this seed. For instance, such as just a small karma, saying to another person, “You look like a dog,” or you look like this—saying this with a negative mind, calling someone a nickname with a negative mind. This karma brings the result that one will be born as a dog in many other lifetimes. For instance, also in previous times it happened that one man was discriminating to a monk who was crossing over the stream on the water. The person said the monk, “You are jumping like a monkey.” Because of that such small karma he had to be reborn as a monkey for five hundred lifetimes. Even if the karma is created very simply, very easily, just two or three words, it creates, it brings such a result like this that the person has to experience for a long time, five hundred lifetimes, keeping on taking the monkey’s body. For instance, if you think of this example also you can understand how karma is expandable. Just like the external example of the seed. For instance, even a tree, just one piece of small wood planted afterwards becomes a big tree with so many hundreds of branches. It becomes very big, with so many leaves, so many branches, like this. Karma is expandable is like this.

For instance, also in previous times when Guru Shakyamuni existed in India there was one family, one mother and father. The father was very wise in debating to control others, to make other people lose in a discussion. So the father debated once and the king wanted to debate with some other person on the philosophies. The father debated and he won the discussion and received many presents, gifts, and possessions from the king. Afterwards the father died and the mother had another son and the mother was scared that the presents, the possessions received from the king may get lost. The mother was scared that they may be taken away by other people. The mother suggested to her son that he should debate, and make the monks, the Sangha, lose. He was encouraged by the mother like this. One day in the path he met a monk. The monk asked him a question and he couldn’t give the answer, so he was really shocked. He came back home, and the mother asked him, “Did you control, did you defeat him?” The son said, “How can I defeat him? I couldn’t defeat him.” Afterwards the mother suggested to the son that he should go to live in the monastery and take ordination and study deeply all the philosophical teachings. The mother suggested that he try to have all this understanding so he could make them lose by debating, and he could control the Sangha. He did this, he went to the monastery to live and took ordination and did a deep study of the Dharma as suggested by his mother. Then afterwards again his mother, after a

long time, she asked again, “You should control them, make them lose.” The son said, “How can I control them, those Sangha are not simple. Besides they have the oral teaching, they have also realizations, how can I control them, how can I debate them?” Then mother suggested, “You should go to debate them and when you start to lose, call each monk a different nickname—you look like a dog, you look like a lion, you look like a donkey. The mother suggested different names. She said if he did this the people watching the discussion would think that he was controlling them, that he won, and they lost, that the other monks became lost in the discussion. The mother expected mainly a reputation for her son. The son really listened to his mother. He went to the monastery, and they made a big performance, with many people coming to watch and also many Sangha. Then he started to debate them. Afterwards he could not debate anymore, he was starting to lose his debate, so he remembered what was suggested by his mother. He called a nickname to each monk, “You look like a dog, a monkey,” eighteen different names of animals, one to each monk.

Then what happened—after some time in one part of India there was a big river, and there were maybe four hundred fishermen fishing at that place. They put a net out to catch the fish, very big net, and afterward the net that they put in the big river became very heavy. They couldn't hold it—even the fisherman were pulled over by the net as they tried to hold it. Other people had to help them hold it because it was so heavy. Afterwards everyone tried to see what was inside the net and afterwards they found an incredible big, huge animal with eighteen different heads—monkeys, dogs, lions, tigers—all kind of different heads. It had one body but eighteen different heads and thirty-six different eyes. The fishermen got such a big shock—this animal was coming through the river and while the fishermen were fishing it got stuck in their net. The other people around there were all watching, and the other animals. At that time Guru Shakyamuni was in some other place working for sentient beings and all of a sudden he discovered that this thing had happened, and he came to that place to predict to the people and the animals. All the people campaigned for Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, that Gautam Buddha is coming to watch—just like people coming to watch a movie, people campaigning like that—Gautam Buddha is coming to watch this scene. They fixed a place for Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to sit down and he sat down near this animal and blessed it to be capable of communicating. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha can bless in this way—animals usually cannot speak the human language but Guru Shakyamuni always blesses the animals and makes it possible for them to communicate in the human language that other people can understand. So Guru Shakyamuni blessed the animal to be capable of speaking and to remember his previous and future life. He asked, “Who is your invirtuous friend?” That means the person who caused him to take such a rebirth. The animal said, “My mother.” Then Guru Shakyamuni asked, “After that, where were you born?” He said, “I was born in the narak stages.” Then, “Now where are you born” and he said, “I'm born as an animal.” Guru Shakyamuni asked, “After this where will you be born?” and he said, “Again in the narak stages.” Saying this, the animal was also crying. Then the other people who were watching the animal asked Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, “What is the karma of that animal? How did it happen? The purpose of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha coming like this is mainly to explain about karma to other people—not only to benefit the animal but also all the people around, to explain karma. In that way those people realize karma and observe karma. It benefits in so many ways. So afterwards they requested Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, “What is the karma of that animal that made him receive such a rebirth?” Guru Shakyamuni explained the karma that was created by him in previous lifetimes, calling different the monks different nicknames. Such a small karma that he created by just calling nicknames made him experience different suffering rebirths for a long time. Again he was born in the narak realms, again born as an animal, again born as a narak—for a long time taking birth in suffering realms and suffering. Also like this, karma increases. If today we killed a little bug, one bug, if we don't confess, purify it today, in that same day, it increases. Tomorrow it

becomes double and the day after tomorrow again it increases like this. So during the fifteen days this negative karma of killing one bug continuously increases. When it becomes fifteen days, the karma becomes as heavy as the negative karma of killing a human being. The actual meaning of how it is increasing is like this.

So briefly like this—how it becomes negative in fifteen days is by increasing into eighteen thousand one hundred and eighty-four, that much negative karma, if it is not purified within fifteen days. Karma is expandable, and the result cannot be experienced without the karma created by oneself. For instance, sometimes people ... for example like this. If there are ten people going on the path in the road, and if there is a golden ring on the road, if somebody has lost a golden ring and ten people go on the road, they don't all find the golden ring. Maybe the last person finds the golden ring, but the other people who go before don't see this golden ring. Even though they come at the same time, only the last person coming sees it. Other people, even though they came together, didn't see it, but the last person finds the golden ring. Many times it happens like this, things like this. The reason all people don't find as the last person found is because he didn't carefully look—that is almost something but the main reason is that the other people didn't create the karma to find that golden ring. As the cause wasn't created, the result finding that golden ring cannot be experienced. They cannot experience it. The reason the last person found it because he had created the karma to find such a thing. That's why even though they are looking in the road and going together, one person sees it and another person doesn't see it. These things happen. Also many times it happens when we want to get certain materials, things, from another place, and some other people get it, and when we go there it is finished, something happens. Other people get it, somehow we don't get it. Even many other people can get it. We may talk about time getting late or something, but that is the only thing that we understand, that we can figure out. There is a reason beyond that, deeper, to check up. A deeper cause to find. That is the karma. This is an example of not experiencing the result of the karma that wasn't created by oneself. Because the karma wasn't created to find something, receive that material at that time, the result of receiving that material doesn't happen. So think about this example, which makes the evolution of karma understandable. Thinking about this example makes you understand about karma, and by thinking about karma it makes you understand our usual daily life, the deeper reasons. We understand the situation, that the things that are happening in daily life have deeper reason, causes, than what we think. It is not just because of time, because of things. For instance, sometimes material things in some people's hands lasts for a long time—there are many people for whom anything they have lasts for a long time. In some people's hands somehow things easily get broken, lost, always something happens. This is also because of karma. There is always a reason the person puts, this and this and that, because I dropped it, that is how it happened—but that doesn't give the full reason. That is not a sufficient answer, not a full reason. The full reason is because the person didn't create the karma that brings the result of having the possession last.

(BREAK)

Student: If you call someone a name, but with affection, only joking?

Rinpoche: Also how the karma is heavy also depends on object. There can be all kinds of things, sometime joking, calling with a negative mind—if it is joking it depends on the object, if the object is higher, depending on the object, the karma is heavy.

Student: It was a little monk.

[Rinpoche or someone commenting - unclear who said this] If you think it without saying it does still create karma.

Rinpoche: That's what you thought about your father.

Student: Recognizing the negative mind, is that itself creating merits or is the action of creating merits separate from recognizing negativities?

Rinpoche: Recognizing negative mind can happen, recognizing negative mind is not bad.

Student: Does that itself create merits?

Rinpoche: Not sure. Recognizing negative mind helps—it depends how you do it. If you stop rising negative mind then it is helpful after. If even though you know you are angry, you still carry on, then it doesn't help.

Student: Can one action have both positive and negative karma, in the sense that we are told of the intention as well as the result that causes karma. For example, in the process of charity one can stand on an animal, killing something. Is karma from the mind only? Irrespective of action, the result turns out or am I confusing things—

Rinpoche: Karma itself is the thought. For instance, there are things like this. The action of mind, also thought and the thought that puts the speech, body, and mind in action, that is also karma. Like this.

Student: You can create karma.

Rinpoche: First of all the mind thinks then that thought put the body, speech, and mind in action, movement, like this.

Student: If you create bad karma with calling someone a nickname or hurting them, at the moment if you become aware and apologize and try to make it good, you can work out the whole bad karma?

Rinpoche: It helps much. Your feeling, the stronger you feel repentance, the stronger you feel sorry for making a mistake, that much it helps. You see, to make any negative karma created lighter, smaller, that mainly depends, is mainly done by feeling repentance. The stronger you feel sorry for the negative action, that much negative karma becomes lighter, not so heavy. I will make it a little bit clear in the part on confession. For instance, when a person dies it is also because he has the karma to live that length of time, the karma was created in other lifetimes to live length of time having a human body. So when that period, when that karma finishes, there is no choice. Why the person has no choice at that time, why the person is not free is because he is under the control of karma, so the karma to exist with a human body is only that many number of years, that length of time, so when that finishes no matter how much he dislikes to separate from the body, there is no choice. Because that person cannot experience the result, even after that length of time, still living with that human body, existing with that human body. There is no choice because the karma that brings that result wasn't created by him to live after that length of time. That wasn't created, so therefore there is no choice, his life goes, works according to karma. Even if the karma, even if it has been billions, many billions of eons ago created, as long as it is not purified, confessed, well purified, then whenever the condition is ready, whenever it meets the condition, at time it becomes ready to experience. No such thing gets lost.

Then, thinking of particular karmas, such as thinking of evil karmas, such as thinking of positive karmas and the part on powerful karmas—thinking of the negative karma, that is, thinking of the ten immoralities, basically thinking of the ten immoralities. Among the ten immoralities also there are some heavy, some are lighter, like this. For instance, killing, stealing, taking misconduct—there are three bodily actions, immoral actions. Which is the heaviest one among these three—taking others' life, then stealing, then the last one is wrong conduct. Then also there is a way to find out light and heavy in terms of the action of speech and the action of mind. There are three immoral actions of mind and four immoral actions of speech. For instance, in regards action of mind, the heaviest one is heresy. Then ill will, then covetousness. Each of these actions has also to find out like this. For instance, killing has four limbs, the object, the thought, the action, and the goal. Each of these ten immoral actions has four of these things. For instance, just one example, the object whom I kill is

not me, different ... separate from me. The thought is the recognition, the object that I want to kill, that recognition, the specific animal that I want to kill, this is the thought. Then the motivation is either with anger, attachment, or ignorance. For instance, animal skins. Something you need from that. Then anger when killing the snake or tiger; anger, disliking mind. With ignorance, for instance, sacrificing the animal. This immoral action is done with ignorance, not knowing, not having the wisdom eye to know the karma, it is done believing that this is a positive action, done with ignorance not knowing karma, with wrong belief, believing that it is a positive action, that sacrificing is a positive action, an offering to the god, that's what they think. Many people sacrifice things like this, thinking this is a positive action and making offerings to the god. But they really don't know. If it is checked up they really don't know how that pleases the god. If that is questioned, what God is, checked up, there is nothing to prove. And how does that action help them. It is just only their belief but there is not any logical reason. Many people do these things and think that if they don't do them—some families who think they know a little bit about religion have a little bit of pride that they are a religious person think if it is not done God will not be pleased, God will punish us, God will give us harm and trouble. They think like this. They have such wrong conceptions as this. Before they sacrifice the animal, they throw water on the animal's body, on the backside, and if the animal's body shakes it means it is okay to be killed. If it doesn't shake it means it is not to be killed. That's what they believe. It would be silly to think that if someone throws water on the killer and they shake, then they are also ready to be sacrificed. There are many silly reasons but they have a really strong belief. Some people have things like this to say when questioned. Many people here, some families do this because they just take the example of the other families, and it is just a custom, their belief doesn't have any logical reason and also many people do it just as a custom, not so much as a religion. Sometimes they say if you don't sacrifice at the festival time then the other families complain, so therefore they have to sacrifice. Some people have reasons like this.

In India in one place there was a family and the father sacrificed a cow. After his death he was born as a cow in the same family seven times, and sacrificed seven times by his son. Actually, if you really think, karma is really incredible. You see, oneself, just changing the body, the mind is there, the father is there, because the body temporarily changes, the families don't recognize—very upsetting isn't it? The family had a back side to their house, kind of like the Nepalese, some kind of stones, marks where they sacrifice there. The family had behind their house and the father when existed sacrificed a cow. It happens many times. Families die there and are reborn as animals—this happens many times, because of such strong karma. For killing, the goal is the other animal, the object dying before the person dies, before the killer dies. If the object dies before that, then the goal is finished, the goal is actualized. This is just only talking, telling only one action of taking others' life, the immoral action of killing. But others have each of the four limbs.

Afterwards you can go through with details which makes it more clear. Maybe it is explained in other translations, other books. However, this time explaining all these things takes too much time. The result of the ten immoral actions also is briefly explained in this book, the different types of results that arise from each negative action. It talks a little bit about the karmas created, how the karma becomes heavy through the thought, with what kind of thought and action the karma becomes heavy. For instance, insulting another person with a strong negative mind, with strong anger, with such strong anger. That karma is heavy from the side of the thought. Also in regards to the action, karma becomes heavy from the side of the action, for instance, like this. When a person kills a goat, first of all beating it, torturing it in many ways, and not giving it food, then afterward peeling off the skin, torturing it in many ways, letting the animal suffer for a long time, causing the animal to suffer for a long time by torturing it in different ways—that kind of karma becomes heavy

karma from the side of the action. For instance, taking a piece of meat from the body, slowly, slowly, with the animal suffering for a long time—that kind of karma becomes heavy. Some people they burn the animal inside the fire and this causes the animal to suffer for a long time. Also being put in the hot water, boiling water, then cooking, the animal doesn't leave right away, the animal suffers for a long period. Then it is heavy karma from the object's side. That is karma. Insulting, beating those such as our parents, higher objects such as monks, higher objects such as those who have the achievement of bodhicitta, higher realizations, our gurus—the karma is heavy from the side of the object. For instance, even looking with the eye with dislike, with anger, not properly, not looking the right way, showing the part of the white of the eye, glaring. Even this action, such a small action, a very small action, but because of the object this karma becomes heavy—if the object is one's parents, a bodhisattva, the Sangha, or an object who has higher realizations, the karma is heavier. This is mainly from the side of the object. This is not just opening the big eye, like this. Looking sometimes at people like this, sideways, means this. This is just to explain—the action is small, the action is nothing, it is a very small thing, but this is to explain that also it can become heavy karma because of the side of the object. Then continual action. There is a way that karma becomes heavy by continual action, such as chattering, gossip mongering, always chattering—by always chattering it becomes heavy karma. Chattering with attachment, without any beneficial, important reason, talking with attachment, with negative mind, then gossiping, talking about unnecessary things. So doing this for a long time, the action becomes heavy. There is a way the karma becomes heavy that doesn't have any remedy, and that is this. The person who never does purification, who never create merits, even one merit, his negative karma is very heavy because there is no remedy. This karma becomes heavy because of not having created any merits, not having any remedies.

This is very useful to understand because this understanding of details clears up much about karma, what is heavy karma, and what is lighter. You can see the difference by understanding. In relation to the results of the immoral actions—ripening ... totally talking there are three types of suffering results. The result of each of these immoral actions, one result, is always to be born in a suffering realm. The first result is to be born in a suffering realm. It is called ripening, like fruit ripening, ripening karma. That is usually taking birth in a suffering realm. Then there is the result of karma that the person has to experience, even if the person is born in upper realm, born in the human realm, in the sura or asura. Besides the first result that makes the person born in the suffering realm, experiencing a suffering result, the person has to experience this even though he was born as a human being. For instance, just one example, taking others' life, explaining this one immoral action, the first result is the ripening result, being born in a suffering realm, but even though the person was born in the upper realm, because he caused other beings' life to be short by taking life, besides experiencing suffering in evil destinies, he has a short life as a human being. He is again killed by some other person or animal, like this. One result is this. This is the result experienced according to karma. The person having short life is the result experienced according to karma. He is experiencing the result of that karma. Then there is another result, a kind of reaction, a habitual action, according to the previous karma. A habitual action similar to the previous karma that is like this. For instance, taking others' life because the person did an immoral action of taking others' life in previous lifetimes, so in this lifetime, even after experiencing rebirth in the suffering realms, and besides experiencing a short life, gain he kills other living beings, he does the action again. This is the result of the other previous karma. For instance some babies intuitively like to kill insects whenever they see them, and they always kill insects. That is because of the previous habit of the previous karma, the previous action taking others' lives. So like this it always continues. It is the habit, acting again with a reaction similar to the cause. This is also one result. The same thing even with the little

puppies—just after they are born from the mother, after a few days, they know automatically about sexual intercourse, things like this, without being taught by the mother—that is the result of the previous karma. This is doing again which is the result of the previous karma, the previous action, doing sexual intercourse is a habitual action.

The last result of the karma of taking others' life, the possessed result, that mainly comes from the place where the person lives. It relates to the place. For instance, in the place where the person lives, there are famines, if the crops don't grow well and there are always problems in the means of living, in regards to getting food, if there is scarcity of food, food becoming less—like this difficult things happen from the side of the place. Each immoral action has a result like this. As I explained with this one action, the action of killing, the different results of this, similar to these four different results, each of the other immoral actions have.

These are very useful, understanding different results. From one negative karma there are four different types of different results to experience. They are very important to know and very helpful to the mind. In this way also we understand, many people question like this, “Why I should do this, why I should do that?” Many people think like this. Somehow they feel something is causing, forcing them to do it and they don't know why they are doing this and that, they say this. However by understanding the results of karma, there is an answer.

Then some powerful positive karmas, from the mental side, from the thought, the object's side, again there is a way to understand this. For instance, in regards charity, the Dharma charity of explaining Dharma, trying to explain about Dharma, making conversation of Dharma--this becomes Dharma charity. This positive karma of Dharma charity is more powerful than the positive karma of just making material charity. However, for instance, in regards offerings, material offerings and the offering of the Dharma practice, which positive action is more powerful—making material offerings or making Dharma practice? Like trying to control your own negative mind, practicing meditation, trying to control your own mind. The offering of practice mainly means, another way of saying, is offering your attainment. So this is higher, more powerful, much more powerful than making material offerings. Just as the great yogi Milarepa said, “I don't have any material offering, the father gurus' offering is offered by my attainment.” What he means is this. The best offering. among the offerings, the best offering is to the Guru or Buddha whatever, it is the same—that is one's own Dharma practice. Attainment means attainment of the realization, however, having the realization of the meditation is the highest and best offering. However, generally talking, controlling your own mind, keeping your own mind away from violent negativities. Practicing Dharma is the best offering. That is the best offering that really pleases all infinite Buddhas, gurus or all infinite buddhas. That is the main thing that they wish, what infinite buddhas and gurus wish.

Then making the karma powerful from the side of the thought, that is like anything—making one stick of incense, or offering one candle—even a small thing, just one stick of incense, one candle, as long as it is done with the motivation of bodhicitta that action, that positive karma, becomes very powerful. Offering one candle with bodhicitta motivation is much more powerful than making offerings, light offerings, many hundreds of thousands of light offering without the motivation of bodhicitta. The other one ,making candle light offerings, has much more benefit, is much more powerful, than offering many hundreds of thousands lights without the motivation of bodhicitta. No matter how much material is offered, it doesn't become powerful if there is not the motivation of bodhicitta. This is very important to know. There are different ways of making positive karma

powerful, so by knowing this you have the wisdom to make—even if you do one positive action, to make it powerful—not just positive action but to make it very powerful for purification.

In regards objects of offering it is also like this. One's parents is higher than other ordinary people, and those who are living in ordination, a monk or Sangha, are higher than that. Then higher than ordinary Sangha is those who have the achievement of bodhicitta, the full realization of absolute true nature, such as those who are arhats. As the object becomes higher and higher like this, also the offering action has that much more benefit, becomes that much more powerful. Then making offerings to the bodhisattvas and making offerings to the Buddhas has much benefit, because the object is higher. Anyway like this. Then making offerings to the numberless Buddhas, making offerings to the Guru has higher, double benefits. This is just to have some understanding, some idea, but with details it takes much time.

In the afternoon I think you do first do meditation on karma, trying to remember the different negative karmas that have been collected and created in this life, such as from these ten immoral actions. Count each of the actions, how many times it has been done, as you remember, count like this. Then after you went through life, check on the four outlines—thinking that karma is definite, after you found that much was karma created—some people may not find this, possible. Also not only thinking of the present life karma but also like this, “Of course I must have been collecting karma in my other previous lifetime.” Then after checking like this, think how karma is definite—as I explained try to remember as much as you can. With external example as I explained this morning, last night, these examples. Also the stories I explained, also if you can remember them it is helpful, very effective for the mind. The purpose of many times giving stories—sometimes rather than explaining the actual subject, just going straight through the subject, going through the actual stories that happened gives more feeling to the mind, makes it more real, more understandable, to have a deeper feeling in the subject. Otherwise even though the subject is planned straight, somehow there is not so much understanding or feeling. Like this. So also if you can remember the examples and stories it is very helpful.

Then second you check up how it is expandable, like how killing one bug increases like planting rice, and how the result cannot be experienced without creating the karma. Also from your side, can do all kinds of things, so you may have many more examples. Try to remember, and if you remember use it for meditation. Then any karma—even though it takes many billions of eons, doesn't get lost, as long as it is not purified, not confessed, not completely destroyed by following path. Then if there is still time you can read the part of the Mahayana meditation, how sentient beings have been your mother, that part of the meditation and how sentient beings have been extremely kind.

7 pm

Also there are differences in regards karma, throwing karma and completing, finishing karma, definitely experiencing karma, and indefinitely experiencing karma. Throwing karma means karma that throws the result. The term sounds a little bit funny but literally saying it straight, taking the word straight from the Tibetan term called *penchey le*. *Pen* means shooting like an arrow. Throwing karma—what is thrown is the result. For instance today with virtuous thought we make meditation, listen to the teaching, and we discuss Dharma conversations. However the positive karma was created with virtuous thought, so each time when we create virtuous karma, we create karma which throws the result, meaning it brings the result in the future, same meaning, it brings the result or throws the result. Also as there is positive and negative karma that throws the result, that throws the

suffering result. For instance, example like this. In regards positive, if you don't think about the negative karma we have created today, only talking about the positive karma, then the example is like this. Finishing karma, for instance—today our human life is finishing, today is one day in our human life, and it is almost finished. This is the result of previous karma. This is the result of previous karma, so this karma, today our human life, this karma is finishing, this karma is finishing karma. For instance, today how many pleasures we have received, the result of pleasure, how many times we have experienced it today, that is finishing karma. Because this is the result of previous karma and as we are experiencing this result, the karma is finishing. For instance, each time we are eating, drinking, as these are the result of previous karmas, while we are enjoying this, while we are experiencing this result, this karma is finishing while we are enjoying it. Such karma is finishing so this karma is called finishing karma. However, it is a result of previous karma, so as we are enjoying it, the previous karmic result is finishing. That is easy to understand. On certain levels of the path there is finishing karma, but there is no throwing karma. That meditator experiences the result caused by the previous karma but the meditator does not create extra negative karma, so that meditator doesn't create throwing karma. These things happen while the meditator is following the path, on a certain level of path, as we talked about the five paths. Such as definitely experiencing karma, such as an action that is continuously done. Such as negative action that is continuously done for a long time. Actions such as negative karma that are done without feeling, without strong feeling of repentance, without making any purification, without making any confession, actions that are consciously done, purposely done. There are also other details to talk about, however these karmas will definitely be experienced by the person. There is also karma that is indefinite to experience. Even though negative karma is created, without going through much detail, totally talking, if the person makes continual purification or confession, then the person doesn't have to experience the karma.

So just briefly talking about how to make confession, which will be very useful if you try to understand. By understanding these four faculty of remedies, the confession you make becomes perfect. Generally any virtuous action that you do, whether you recite mantra, make offerings, prostrations, or whether you do meditation on the graduated path, generally anything, like helping other people in the Dharma by explaining the Dharma, reading the holy texts, meditating on certain manifestations of buddhas or deities—generally all this becomes a purifying method. Such as mandala offering. However whatever the action, a Dharma action or a virtuous action, it becomes purification. Generally it is like this. But if we can, while we are making purification, making prostrations, reciting mantra, or making purification with light nectar, visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or any manifestation, other deity, if you can think, remember, and make the confession by remembering these four faculties of remedies, the purification becomes incredibly powerful because of the perfect confession. By making just total, the whole way of thinking, the way to make confession, just making it short, also as I have been explaining about the seven limbs, part of the offering is just briefly, something like that.

So now the prostration offering. In the offering it also includes the mandala offering but the mandala offering again it ... also there is so much details to talk about in terms of the meditation on the mandala offering. However if you want to know about it, it is briefly explained in the meditation course book, how to visualize, what to think. I think I will tell another time generally what possibilities, what you can do in the morning time, things to do in the daily life, what should be done in the morning time when you get up. I don't mean to do meditation on that, but what is possible, what easy things can be done to create good karma for purification.

So this time I will explain just the confession. This is very useful. As you are making meditation on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, doing the purification by visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, it depends on your time, first of all it is necessary however whether you make one hour or a half hour purifying meditation, or twenty-five minutes, fifteen minutes, whatever, even if you make ten minutes meditation, the motivation is important. To begin with a pure motivation is the most important thing, as we have been talking about all the time. Then if there is not much time, then you just think of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. If you can think of the meaning of each word it is very powerful, so helpful for the mind. As it comes in the word, first of all “Guru,” then “Shakyamuni Buddha.” First of all the essence comes, the essence of Buddha, the Guru, then Shakyamuni Buddha. Think that he is the embodiment of all infinite Buddhas. This is very important. First of all the motivation, then secondly Guru Shakyamuni Buddha being conscious of what you are thinking, and he is embodiment of all infinite buddhas. Then before you start to say, “La.ma Dron.pa chom.dan.da” and so forth, before you recite this prayer, take refuge in the holy object, thinking briefly thinking like this. First of all I will tell. “I will take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the three sublime preciousnesses, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha until I achieve enlightenment.”

Your mind completely relying on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, what feeling is necessary in the depth of the heart, what feeling is necessary to have pure refuge—the stronger your mind can completely rely on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, that much more your refuge becomes stronger and pure. Like giving your whole life, depending your whole life on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, just like the example for instance of the tourist who goes on an expedition to climb mountains because it is very dangerous so has to rely on a good friend. In order to not get into danger and to have the trip be successful you have to have a good friend, a really trusted, serious, sincere friend who doesn't cheat. This person doesn't know, has no idea of that trip, so the other friend who is really sincere and who knows, who has an idea of the trip, has experience, so the other one who doesn't have experience has to completely rely on him to not get in danger and have the trip be successful. He depends with his whole life on that person. Like this example, the feeling that one should have in the depth of one's heart is completely dedicating, completely giving, depending with your life on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Like whatever happens to me, whatever situation, miserable or happy, happens to me is up to you, is in your hands—if I am born in the suffering realm, the happy realm, it is in your hands, up to you, depending with your whole life on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. This feeling is necessary. Then saying this prayer, “La.ma Dron.pa Chom.dan.da.” Then you can recite ten, fifteen, or twenty times according to the time that you have. According to the time that you have. It is also good to recite this fifteen times. What you should think is what I explained at the beginning of taking refuge, and then it is necessary to make the prayer of prostrating or taking refuge. All these, taking refuge and saying the prayer, includes the first faculty of the holy object. There are four faculties of remedies to make the confession perfect.

The first one is the faculty of the holy object, which includes taking refuge through this form of thinking and saying prayers of prostration and refuge.

Then the second one is the faculty of seeing the delusions and negative karma as a fault, as wrong. If you talk about the feeling, the second one is feeling repentance, a strong feeling of repentance. Feeling sorry. How does the feeling sorry come—by recognizing it as a mistake, for instance, it is very useful to think like this. This is not so long, and it is easy and very effective for the mind. If the person has taken different ordinations or vows, such as the person who took ordination, precepts, the individual liberation, individual nirvana, such as the five precepts, or the eight, or the thirty-six,

or the two hundred and fifty precepts, like this. If the person has taken precepts then it is also useful to remember the bodhisattva's precepts and the Vajrayana precepts. However even though the person has not taken these vows in this life, it can be possible that the person took those vows in other previous lifetimes and broke them, and have the negative karma created by breaking the vow, this can be possible. It is okay to say because it can be possible that we took these things in other previous lifetimes. If you created them in other previous lifetimes, they have to be purified. If you can remember these things it is also very useful. Like this, especially if you have taken them in this life, "I have created so much negative karmas by breaking the precepts or the individual nirvana, the bodhisattvas precepts and Vajrayana precepts. I have created so much negative karmas by breaking many of these many times." Then besides this also remember the ten immoral actions. "I have created incredible numbers of these immoral actions, such as negative karma in this life." However, whether you are living in these ordinations or not, the general people not living in Vajrayana or bodhisattva's precepts or ordination, the most important thing to remember in order to receive the strong repentance is the subject of negative karma. For example, the ten immoral actions—then you know how many times you have created them, you have some idea. Otherwise without thinking of the specific actions you feel that it is not that great, not so strong. However, the most important thing to remember, especially for those who don't have ordination, are the specific things such as the ten immoral actions, those negative karmas. Think, "I have created so much negative karma many times, just even in this life."

(BREAK)

Rinpoche: If you go through the number of precepts you can remember—that's the purpose of saying it three times in the morning and even the prayer that is to remind us what precepts are broken. Also, remembering what is broken, then confess again to make the vow to keep. This is the main purpose of the prayer. I think I cannot talk on that.

Student: His Holiness did not say this, because Lama Yeshe said this today, I understood because I did not carry on in the ten days I had broken the vow. His Holiness ---- of released us from ---- (Dam Seg) said not do anything for ten days, so everybody broke ---- (Dam Seg) for ten days.

Rinpoche: Did you really understand what His Holiness said, that you should stop? He meant something else, he didn't mean to not say the usual prayers.

Student: All the logic school, everything, he said you must stop because Goenka went to see him, Goenka asked us not to say mantra just for ten days.

Rinpoche: It must be at the place where meditation was made, but he cannot be in the room, cannot be in the room.

Student: There is a rule to live only in the same place.

Rinpoche: Then if His Holiness has really specified, especially emphasized like that you should not say the prayers, should not think of the prayers, if he really emphasizes this, especially made it clear to not recite, say prayers to not think of the meditation, what the prayer contains, then maybe there is some reason. But he might have meant loudly saying these mantras and prayers. He cannot mean to not ... I am sure he didn't mean to forget all these things.

After remembering the negative karma such as the ten immoral actions created many times in this life think, "Right at this moment whether I die or not, death is more definite. Is taking rebirth in the suffering realm more definite or not taking rebirth in the suffering realm more definite? Taking rebirth in the suffering realm is more definite. If death happens right away I am definite to be born in the suffering realm. Also while you are saying this, just not only following intellectually the words without feeling. The most important thing is to have the feeling as you are saying like this,

remembering, thinking of the suffering of the pretas and animals. However it is more useful to think of the suffering of the naraks, as if you are seeing the suffering place where you are going to be born. Such an unbearable state, remembering the infinite ground, the hot red burning iron ground. Thinking, “If I am right away born there, what can I do, what can I do?” There is no method. Right away, all of a sudden, right away like this. All of a sudden there in such state, what can I do? Then thinking, “In this life I have created so much negative karma that makes me experience suffering in the evil destinies, such as in the narak realms, for numberless eons. This is still nothing—from beginningless previous lives I have been creating so much negative karma, such as the five extreme negative actions, heavy negative karma, such incredible negative karma I have created from beginningless samsaric lives. When I look at all these negative karmas it is something that, besides causing me to be born in the suffering realm, it will make it almost impossible to receive enlightenment.” Then think, “However the incredible number of negative karma I have created, I do not desire suffering, I desire happiness, I always want happiness, therefore I have to face this, to purify it, because my desire is like this. Therefore no matter how difficult it is for me to purify I have to purify all this negative karma in other realms—the sura and asura—in other realms it is extremely difficult. Therefore, where there is an easy chance is in the human realm. My human life is not long, my present human life is not long. It is not definite whether I will die or not right this moment, not sure. Therefore I must complete, I must purify, completely purify all the negative karma just before the second of death.” Make such a strong decision, have the strong feeling to make all this karma not exist. Then also request, think of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha as the embodiment of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the embodiment of all buddhas, and request. “Please grant me blessings to purify right away, right this moment, all the delusions, all the negative karma that has been collected from beginningless samsaric lifetimes.”

Then the next one is making a vow again, which means the faculty of not creating negative karma. However making the vow like this. For instance, last night I briefly talked about the usefulness of making a vow, a promise, otherwise it is not so much useful. If you don't make a vow you do the action again, and if you make a vow you are living in discipline, and that helps, that is the main thing that helps the person to not create negative karma, to not create the cause of suffering. You see, if the person doesn't make the vow, doesn't make the decision to not do it again, then the person has no discipline. He doesn't feel responsibility. So if you make the vow, the usefulness of making the vow or decision in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is very strong. By making the vow you feel responsibility, and also if you have made the vow you are living in discipline. If you have made the vow, living in the vow, you are living in discipline. Also by making the vow it is not easy to break it because the vow is made in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, in the presence of the holy object, so therefore from a holy object you have made the vow, the promise, and therefore there is a heavy responsibility, somehow it is not easy to break, to create negative karma again, it doesn't happen easily. Even if the person is in danger, close to creating negative karma, the person remembers that he has made the vow, this heavy responsibility. Because of remembering this feeling of responsibility, the person doesn't create negative karma. That's how it helps, that is the usefulness of making the vow. Making a vow is more powerful, and it helps more than just your own decision without making a promise in the presence of a holy object. If you just make the decision by yourself, “I am not going to do this again,” without making the promise in the presence of someone, then there is no feeling of shame. And also, even if you have made the decision by yourself, thinking that I am not going to do this again, the feeling is not that strong. You don't that strong feeling of responsibility. So after you have made the request to please grant blessings to purify, after that then you make the vow. There are different ways according to the person to make the vow; this depends on your capability, the power of your mind, how much decision you can make. You can make the

decision to not do this again in this life, to never do it again in this life, within one year, within one month, or today. Like this you can make the decision or vow. “I will never do today, I will really observe today,” like this making vow. For example, if the precepts are broken, then saying, “Today I will really observe them,” making the really complete decision, making the vow. This doesn’t mean I am going to do it tomorrow, I am going to break the precepts tomorrow, create negative karma tomorrow, it doesn’t mean this, it doesn’t mean making two vows like this. But making a vow for a short time is to help—even though we break precepts, tomorrow being unconscious, due to certain conditions, if we have made the vow today like this, then even if the vow is not made for tomorrow at least if something happens that karma is not so heavy, is not double. Besides just creating the negative action, then for instance, today I have made the vow, then if I create the negative action again, besides creating the negative action also it becomes telling a lie to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, as the vow is made to observe that day, so if you made the vow for a short period, today, then at least by meeting a certain condition it doesn’t become telling a lie, heavy negative karma. Even though the negative action was created, even though negative karma is not created, the rest of the action observing the karma or precepts is possessed by the present vow. So depending on the power of your mind you can make the decision like this. I think I will stop there.

Student: In the book it has the vow coming after purification. Does that matter?

Rinpoche: That’s okay Together to think like this is quicker, doesn’t take much time. If the person going to wait hours until the purification finishes, maybe he will forget. I think ... also for instance, if the vow is made with the continual feeling of responsibility to be conscious, it is important. Then only one thing is left. The faculty of remedy. The faculty of remedy to purify. For instance, in this specific meditation, while you are reciting mantra visualize. First of all purifying with white light, which is the essence is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s omniscient mind, like this you can think. Then purifying. Then the second time again visualize yellow light, whose essence is knowledge, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s knowledge, and receiving all knowledge like this. Then reciting mantra and visualizing, all these go in the faculty of purifying remedy. Generally this includes, as I said before, reciting mantra and visualizing like this, then after that if you start to do meditation on the graduated path that also becomes the purifying remedy. Generally the purifying remedy can be any action, even painting the figure of Buddha, making statues, making stupas, many ways. Putting colors on statues, stupas, many different ways. There are many different forms of purifying remedy. If the person has time to make it very effective, first of all remember the general samsaric suffering and the suffering of the evil destinies then remember Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s knowledge, then take refuge, then confession then make purification. If the person has time it can be done this way. Everything becomes so strong. Then the benefits of confession and each of these four have great benefits. Then there are also signs of how negative karma is purified, things like this. So those can be discussed, explained, tomorrow.

DEDICATION

Dedicate the merits, seeing that yourself and the merits and enlightenment and also sentient beings as a dream, empty of self-existence. While concentrating on this think, due to the past merits and present merits of taking ordination, doing meditation, listening to teachings, and also the future merits, may I quickly become Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, quickly attain Guru Shakyamuni Buddha by receiving the fundamental realization of the fully renouncing mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute true nature in order to lead all mother sentient beings to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s enlightened stage.

Day Twenty-seven

Monday, 2nd December
Precepts

“From beginningless samsaric lifetime due to the attachment that is attached to the happiness of this life, the wrong conception of the self ‘I,’ the self-cherishing thought, due to these wrong conceptions, I have been experiencing suffering by circling round in the six different samsaric realms numberless times. I will experience suffering in samsara by circling round in the six samsaric realms endlessly as long as I follow attachment that is attached to the happiness of this life, the wrong conception of the self-’I,’ and the self-cherishing thought. Besides myself, also other sentient beings who are the field from whom I receive all my past, present, and future happiness and perfections are of the utmost need at the beginning of the Dharma practice, and even in the middle and end. These sentient beings are extremely suffering in samsara, under the control of attachment that is attached to the happiness of this life, the wrong conception of the self-’I,’ and self-cherishing thought. At the moment, mother sentient beings don’t have the capability or the power to receive enlightenment by releasing from all suffering. Who is responsible for making sentient beings enlightened and releasing them from suffering? Me, the daughter or son of mother sentient beings. While the mother is suffering the one she should depend on is her son, and that is me—if I don’t help, don’t benefit, I cannot repay mother sentient beings’ kindness. So for all these reasons I must achieve enlightenment. Receiving enlightenment depends on observing precepts, disciplining speech, body and mind—therefore I am going to take Mahayana ordination until tomorrow morning.”

Visualize the person granting ordination in the manifestation of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless other buddhas and bodhisattvas and think, “I am taking ordination in the presence of them.”

At the end of the third repetition think that you have perfectly received the Mahayana ordination.

PRAYER

Repeat the prayer of the precepts thinking, “I am going to observe the precepts as the previous Tathagatas also observed the precepts.”

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS

MANTRA

DEDICATION

Due to the merits may the meaning that the prayer contains be successful. While you are concentrating on the three circles yourself, your merits, and enlightenment including sentient beings, as being empty of self-existence, dedicate the merits, “Due to the past merits, present merits of taking ordination, future merits, may I receive enlightenment soon by receiving the fundamental realization of the fully renouncing mind of samsara, bodhicitta, and the full realization of the absolute true nature, in order to enlighten all mother sentient beings.”

Also, in the confession after the request asking to grant blessings to purify right away, it is important as you start to purify by visualizing the purifying light coming from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. It is important to think that also all the obscurations and all negative karma that have been collected

from beginningless previous lifetimes are all completely purified, not existing at all. The empty feeling, the great empty feeling of the obscurations and all negative karma is important. However try to feel that the body is very light, completely deciding that all the obscurations and negative karmas are completely removed, nowhere existing. Purifying the negative karma, with confession, the method of confession, how strongly you purify depends on how strong a confession you make, and that mainly depends on how strong your feeling of repentance for creating negative karma. So how strongly you can generate this feeling, that much it purifies negative karmas. Also as you have that strong feeling of repentance, the will which makes the decision to not do it again also it becomes very strong, also this strong will arises. If the feeling of repentance is not so strong the will making the decision to not do again is also not that strong. If the feeling of repentance is just from the mouth, then making the decision is also just from the mouth. Just from the mouth but not with the feeling, not from the heart.

The confession benefits of confession are that making confession causes us to receive enlightenment. It purifies all negativities and is the remedy that is the opposite of anger and attachment and ignorance. The first, the powerful remedy is the faculty of the holy object that makes you not experience rebirth in the suffering realms. As I explained karma, negative karma has four different types of result. The ripening result is to take rebirth in the suffering realm. This is stopped by the first practice, taking refuge, which is the faculty of the holy object. The second one is the faculty of seeing the delusions and negative karma as a mistake, with a strong feeling of repentance. The benefits of that are stopping the experiencing result, which is similar to karma. For instance, the example that I mentioned yesterday, the person who, even though he is born as a human being, has a short life to live and even in this life gets killed by other people, animals, things like this. This is an experiencing result similar to the previous karma that he caused for other living beings. He took the other being's life in a previous lifetime, he caused the other being's life to be short so in this life the experiencing result is similar to the karma, he receives back the result of that karma. The second one is the faculty of seeing the delusions and negative karma as a mistake, the strong feeling of repentance to stop experiencing the result that is similar to karma.

The third one is making the vow again, making the decision. The faculty to not create the negative karma again. This helps to stop the result, whose is reaction similar to the previous karma. Because the person created negative karma, taking others' life, because of that karma, in this life even though he is born as human being he does a similar action again, taking others life by habit. So this karmic result is doing again that which is similar to the previous karma, and this gets stopped by making the vow again.

The fourth one, the faculty of remedy, the purifying method, that stops the possessed suffering result, such as born in a horrible place where there is scarcity of food, things like this. The suffering result relates to the place. This suffering result gets stopped by making the purification which is the faculty of the remedy. Making confession, continual confession, can make one completely not experience any of the karmic suffering result. It can completely remove the negative karma that has been collected from previous lifetimes. Just like that, the previous being who killed his father who is a noble being. I don't remember the name of the person, but he killed his father who is a noble being and had high realizations. Even though he killed such a holy object, through such powerful confession, continual powerful confession, he achieved nirvana in that lifetime. Also, the evil person called So.ne.takpa who killed nine hundred and ninety-nine people. Even though he has that much negative karma created in his life, by making continual powerful confession he achieved nirvana in that lifetime, and was released from samsara. There are also other examples.

The first thing is completely purifying, and the second is the negative karma becoming less powerful. For instance, if there is karma created, if there is negative karma that makes the person experience the suffering in the evil destinies such as the narak realms for hundreds of eons, by making continual powerful confession, instead of experiencing suffering for that many eons in evil destinies, the narak stages, the person may be born in the suffering realm just for a short time, a very short time. Just like one day or two days, a very short time, or sometimes also without needing to be born in the suffering realm, just getting sick in this life, maybe with a headache, some trouble, stomach pain, by having some trouble, experiencing some sickness, the person doesn't need to be born in the suffering realm and experience this for hundreds of eons. The experience of that karmic result is included in experiencing the temporal sickness. By experiencing that, the person finishes that karma, and doesn't have to experience the suffering in the evil destinies for that many eons. Also even by making continual powerful confession, the person doesn't have to go through experiencing the suffering result of getting sick, those things. Sometimes also by having terrible fearful dreams, even a little thing, the suffering result of the karma becomes so small, like that, terrible dreams. Just by that the person's karma finishes without needing to suffer for a long time. So also it is possible that the person who often make purification, continuously makes purification, confession in this life, gets many different sicknesses, things like that, this is definitely possible. Instead of experiencing the suffering karmic result in the future and for a long time, he experiences that suffering karmic result in this life quickly—it ripens quickly and finishes quickly in such a short time, like this. Also like this is possible.

The benefits of making confession. Making confession makes it less powerful, creating negative karma becomes less powerful, and the person doesn't have to experience the suffering result for that length of time. So sometimes it is possible when you make continual strong purification that there are a lot of problems, and that doesn't mean person is creating so much negative karma, that doesn't mean the person's practice is not benefiting him, it doesn't mean this. When making continual purification there are all kinds of different signs according to how strong the person makes purification, such as the person flying, such as the person seeing the sun and moon rising, such as bathing in the river, cleaning your body, drinking milk or curd, things like that. Also sometimes from the lower door all kinds of stomach worms, creatures coming out. Also seeing gurus, going to the monastery, and seeing altars. Then also many other things—receiving teachings from the guru, many other things. Also it is possible sometimes, if you do meditation on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, that you will see Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Whatever meditation you concentrate on either you see it as real or you see paintings, like this, depending on the person's marks and how strong purification he makes, there are many different signs anyway.

9 am

In such a time we have received the perfect human rebirth that is useful for working for enlightenment in each minute, besides the lifetime—the year, month, even the each minute. Besides with this perfect human rebirth, besides making oneself close to enlightenment by creating incredible merits, even in each minute and second. Also it has such a precious chance to create incredible merits, to cause sentient beings to release from suffering and lead them in enlightenment. However in such a short time, with this perfect human rebirth one can do such great beneficial work, one's own work and others' work. However all this power that makes the present perfect human rebirth highly useful, to do such unimaginable, incredible work for oneself and others, the main power is the bodhicitta, the practice of bodhicitta. Therefore it is necessary even in

the present time to work, one hour, two hours, listening to the teaching, to make it that much greatly beneficial as this perfect human rebirth has the chance or is capable. Therefore it is necessary to have the pure motivation just like bodhicitta, in order to listen to the teachings. Therefore think, “I must lead all mother sentient beings to enlightenment by releasing them from all suffering, therefore I must achieve enlightenment in order to lead all sentient beings to enlightenment, therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path.”

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it is the teaching that is well expounded by the two great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga, and it is the profound teaching that is the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsongkhapa’s understanding. This teaching includes all the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person’s achievement of enlightenment.

So this commentary has four topics for the outline. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teaching, and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment. The way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment has two outlines—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with perfect human rebirth. The way of taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. The graduated path of the lower being is divided into two outlines—bringing up the thought seeking a better future life and following the method that brings happiness in the future life.

We briefly talked about the graduated path of the lower being, starting from the perfect human rebirth, the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth, the great difficulty of receiving the perfect human rebirth, the shortness of human life and death, and the suffering of the evil destinies and refuge and karma.

I have one thing to make clear regards the subject we were talking about last night, finishing karma and throwing karma. For instance, there are different things like this. The example didn’t come, I didn’t explain it last night. Like this, for instance, there are animals such as nagas who have very high enjoyments, possessions, and that is result thrown by the previous karma but their life finishes by creating only negative karma. In their lifetime, they only enjoy the result of the previous karma, they don’t create additional virtuous actions, so their life finishes by only enjoying result of the previous virtuous karma in their lifetime, just only creating negative karma. Also just not animal, also there are different—like those whose life finishes by virtuous action even though the rebirth is the result of invirtuous karma. There are also animals like this, very few animals, and they have a life like this, finishing by virtuous action even though their rebirth is the result of previous invirtuous action. For example, the animals that are used by the bodhisattvas, by highly realized beings, such as a horse used for riding, and other animals. Because the person who used the animal is a holy object, because of the power of that, the animal’s negative karma is purified. This is mainly due to the power of the holy object. Also it is similar for a human being. Also there are both examples for human beings. For instance, a person like, for example, a butcher, his human rebirth is the result of virtuous action created in previous lives, but his life finishes by creating negative action. There are also human beings whose rebirths result from virtuous action and they also finish the life by creating virtuous action.

In regards karma, it is always useful for the mind, the more we try to understand about karma. Actually it is like this. Among study or research I think the best research is studying karma. The deeper understanding of karma that you have, you have more reason and more answers, and in that way you have unshakeable answers. Not only intellectually answering like the machine type is also making noise, not only yourself using like a machine, not only intellectually, but really having a feeling with it. Not only repeating what the other person says but also yourself having a feeling, having real understanding. In this way we understand ourselves more and more, better and better, deeper and deeper, and also we understand other living beings' life nature, deeper, clearer. It is like this. By understanding karma more deeply we understand this, for instance. Not only understanding what is on the surface of the ocean, not only seeing this, understanding what is going on the surface of the ocean but understanding what is inside, underneath the ocean. Different types of existences, jewels, animals, anyway, not only understanding what is happening on the surface of the ocean. However, the person has a deeper understanding that way, a deeper understanding about life, about mind, and the more the person understands about karma that much deeper the person understands about mind and also that person who has such a deep understanding about karma and those things, that is a really wise person. Also like this. The person who understands deeply, that much more deeply he understands about karma, and it is always helpful, always helpful, always helpful. It never causes harm and never causes confusion in the mind. However, without understanding karma, there is no way to understand life, no way to understand yourself, to understand other beings. There is no way to really fully understand, fully see it. No matter how much, how many eons, how many years you study in the Universities, those places that have big names, without understanding karma it is like this—most of the conceptions, most of the understanding about life, the philosophy, the understanding that is taught in schools is like this. When they look at the ocean, on the surface of ocean it is just blue, and also inside the ocean there is nothing. If they see the surface of the ocean they think the ocean contains nothing, nothing exists underneath the ocean. Just trying to figure out what they see on the surface of ocean and the same thing inside the ocean. Sort of like this. However, just intellectually guessing it, there is a limitation in the understanding because of the way of checking, the of studying. It is not involved in realizing, not involved in purifying mind, not involved in realizing it, realizing with full experience, not involved in these things. So it is difficult to understand about life. However, what I mean, the very useful thing is usually to read more about it. This is very helpful for your life, one very helpful thing—to read books about karma, books explaining about karma—these are really very useful. Because books explaining the teachings that talk about karma explain your life, explain your actual, real life, deeper, beyond what you understand. Usually it is very, very useful, if there are any books on karma translated in English. However as I said before, the outer cause, the inner cause. It is maybe possible to discover the outer external cause, perhaps that can be easy to figure out, but without understanding karma, realizing the inner cause is difficult. For instance, why does the person have such a beautiful apartment, a beautiful garden? Because they have made a lot of money, that's why they have got it, because they are very rich. Some people may question, because they have lot of money, things like this. But usually people don't see the inner cause. They don't see or check up the inner cause,. They think the reason, the answer is only that. The reason the family should have a beautiful garden all the time, a beautiful apartment. For instance, why this flower has grown. That is not the complete answer for why the flower has to be on this table, why the person left it there, how it happened, the person looking at the flower, the person enjoying the object of the flower, how that chance happened—the answer is not only because the flower exists there.

(BREAK)

Student: You say good to read books about karma, reading books you find different opinions about karma. How do you know the proper way to understand?

Rinpoche: You check up. If you have doubts then check with someone who understands.

Student: In meditation, is the time of death definite, due to the three causes, the time for life karmically ended or the conditions sustaining life being unavailable or carelessness or ignorance.

How do these differ? It sounds like the karma for that life period is ended.

Rinpoche: Different what? ... I see ... that is possible, for instance, even though this in present life there is a certain length of life that is created by previous karma, in this lifetime, for instance, we have created very strong negative karma that makes life short. Then because this karma is very strong, this can be caused by experiencing the result of that karma in this life and the life becoming short. This is possible. Sometimes there is a life hindrance even though the karma is not finished, the length of life not finished, which is caused by karma. Because of such heavy negative karma there is a life hindrance, so it is possible again by making purification, through certain powerful methods, that the hindrance can be stopped and again the person continues living. Like this.

Student: Didn't that hindrance occur due to karma?

Rinpoche: Of course.

The purpose of doing meditation on samsaric suffering, the total reason, the whole point is that if one doesn't realize that each of these realms are in the suffering nature—the three suffering realms are easy to understand; what is more difficult to realize is the three upper realms, the happy realms, the human realm and the sura and asura realm. Those are a little bit difficult to see how all the rebirths of these beings are in the suffering nature. That is a little bit difficult to realize; for example, the rebirth of the sura and asura, the rebirth of those samsaric gods, how it is in the suffering nature, this is a little bit difficult to realize. So like this. If you don't fully see how all the samsaric rebirths are in the nature of suffering, only in the nature of suffering, if you don't fully see this, then there is attachment, and if you don't fully see this there is no aversion to all the samsaric realms. If there is no aversion then there is attachment wanting to be born as a sura, attachment wanting to be born as a human being—attachment like this, wanting to be born as an asura, attachment wanting to be born as a beautiful bird. I am sure ... it is possible. Because of this attachment we have been taking animal rebirths numberless times. Many people think, for instance, when they see an animal, how beautiful it is, "I wish I am that animal." Beautiful puppies having long hairs, birds, just completely ignoring ... anyway, not knowing about karma. Also sometimes wishing to be a fish, so they can always can be in the water, so they can live in the water without coming out. Then you don't have to put on those things, these things for the feet, flippers. Especially you don't have to buy those things. You would be naturally born with them. You don't have to have a surfboard. But then what to do about the rest of the problems the fish has—by being a fish, how can this be fixed, arranged, like this. If one doesn't realize that all the samsaric rebirths in all the realms are only in the nature of suffering, then there is no aversion arising, and if there is no aversion arising then there is the possibility for attachment to the samsaric rebirth to arise. So because of this attachment to the samsaric rebirth, like these examples, which exists at the death time, which continuously exists, and especially rises up and becomes stronger at death time, this attachment obliges the person to take that body, whatever it is, a fish, a human being, and it becomes stronger at death time. That makes the person take that rebirth, like that, continuously circling round in samsara. So like that, just instead of seeing attachment as suffering trying to control attachment, continuously following attachment, then that's how the being, how we have been continuously been living in samsara. We are still not released from this. We are still not released from this bondage, from the boundaries of suffering, from this circling. If you understand the part of the twelve links, how they work, it is like

this. So in order to control attachment, in order for attachment to all samsaric rebirths to not arise, you need the method, the best method. The method is trying to realize that all samsaric realms of rebirth are in the suffering nature. So by realizing all samsaric realms of rebirth are in the suffering nature, aversion rises for all samsaric realms. If aversion arises, then the renouncing mind of samsara arises. So by receiving the fully renouncing mind of samsara, whenever the person achieves the fully renouncing mind of samsara through meditation on the graduated path of the lower being and the middle being, at the same time the person achieves the fully renouncing mind of samsara and the person enters the path. If the person has bodhicitta that person enters the Mahayana path, and if there is no bodhicitta then either person enters the Mahayana path, the bodhisattva's path, or the person enters the Lesser Vehicle path. The fully renouncing mind of samsara is the door of the path to receiving everlasting happiness, the door of the path to enlightenment. Without having the fully renouncing mind of samsara, if one cannot achieve even individual liberation, individual nirvana, the boundless state, if even this cannot be achieved without having the fully renouncing mind of samsara, then how can enlightenment be achieved, the great nirvana, enlightenment—how can that be achieved without having the fully renouncing mind of samsara? So therefore, to have a deeper understanding of how all the samsaric rebirth, all the realms are only in the suffering nature, this is important. So to have a deeper understanding, to have a deep strong understanding, a deeper understanding, it is necessary to hear the teaching and think, try to understand the meaning of what you understand, and as you have understood it, meditate, trying to fully see, fully realize it.

So this part of the subject is the graduated path of the middle being. First of all, what is samsara? The country is not samsara, the city is not samsara, wishing is not samsara, even clothes are not samsara, material possessions are not samsara. So I think we don't have samsara! We don't find it. Then is the person himself samsara? If the person is samsara then the person himself has to be suffering nature, has to be suffering. So how could we achieve nirvana? Who achieves nirvana? No one achieves nirvana because to achieve nirvana the person himself has to be cut out, has to be destroyed, because he himself is the suffering, he himself is the samsara. I am joking! However, there cannot be any person who thinks like this, so crazy, I am just imagining.

In previous time it happened like this. One of a high lama's managers, servant—I don't remember the name of the lama, he is a very highly realized lama who gives much teaching, who is the owner of the teachings—this manager of that lama went to another high lama, so the other lama felt that because this manager has been living together with the highly realized lama for a long time, so he must have received much teachings from him and have a great understanding of the Dharma. The other lama expected like this, thought like this. Then the lama asked the manager, "What teachings did you receive from him, from your guru?" He said, "I am just released from samsara, just released from samsara." With such a big surprise, such a big astonishment he said, "I am just released from samsara." The other lama said, "How?" Then he said, "I have just taken off my pants, laypeople's clothes," I think he put some robes on. He had just taken off his pants, so he thought now he is great, he believed that samsara was laypeople's clothes—the pants, coat, these things. This was his understanding of samsara. He thought that by taking that off it means he was released from samsara, renounced samsara, released from samsara—this was his understanding.

So also many people have the idea that samsara means a country, a city, and that only when they are in the city or market, they are in samsara, but when they are in the monastery they are not in samsara, or when they are in the countryside they are not in samsara. This is a big mistake. There have been people thinking like this, so that's why the examples are very useful. Examples of people who have made mistakes are very useful for us. Not like this. Even at death time when your body is

left on the bed, in your sleeping bag, you are still in samsara, even though your mind is not in the body, the mind is still in samsara, your samsara is still there, like this. There is no such break time for samsara! After death there is no such thing as a break—while you are in the intermediate stage, not having your samsara, only at the time when you take rebirth as a sura, asura, or human being, as an animal, narak, or preta, only when you take that rebirth, then again you have your samsara, sort of like having a break time between that—there is no such thing. There hasn't been even one minute of break time from beginningless lifetimes. Also we won't have even a minute of break time of not being in samsara until we are completely out of ignorance. Your hairs are also in samsara. Some people think it is so easy—you can shave samsara! Anyway, not like this. You can't shave samsara with a machine. However, what is samsara—the continuity of the skandhas caused by delusion and karma. That is samsara, that is samsara. To escape from samsara you have to stop continuously taking the aggregates that are caused by delusion and karma. So therefore in order to escape from samsara there is a method. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has shown the method. The main method is meditation. The person has to make, has to meditate or practice method that was shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—the Four Noble Truths, like this. Generally from the cause of sickness, the result of sickness comes. From the cause of the panacea, taking medicine, comes the cure of the sickness. Generally it is like this. Just like this example, generally from the true cause of suffering, true suffering arises, true suffering comes. By following the true path one achieves the true cessation of suffering. Just like this example, by the doctor explaining the sickness that the person has, as the person recognizes the sickness, the person receives aversion to the sickness, and the person checks up on the cause of sickness. So by realizing and checking the cause of the sickness, the person realizes the cure of the cause of sickness. To make the cause of sickness non-existent is peace. So then the person seeks the method to receive that peace, the cure of the cause of sickness. The person then follows the treatment. The person takes the medicine. Just like this, for example, the reason that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has shown true suffering first, before showing the true cause of suffering, is because without showing true suffering first the person cannot realize true suffering and the person doesn't seek the cause of suffering, doesn't check up. By not checking, the person does not realize the cessation of the cause of suffering is nirvana, perfect peace. Also if the person doesn't realize that it is perfect peace, the person doesn't have the desire to receive that perfect peace. So by not having the desire, the person doesn't receive perfect peace. That's how in that way the person is always suffering in samsara. So therefore Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has shown true suffering first in order that we will discover true suffering. Realizing true suffering makes us check up the cause of suffering—what is the cause of suffering, what causes it. From this they realize the cessation of that, and make the cause of suffering non-existent. Whenever they don't have the cause of suffering, they have complete freedom, complete everlasting happiness. By realizing this everlasting happiness, by seeing this, they have the wish, the desire to achieve it. Having this desire to achieve everlasting happiness makes them seek the path, what is the method to achieve this everlasting happiness. So then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has shown the true path, this is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's psychological method that brings everlasting happiness.

So first of all the meditation that we are going to talk about is true suffering. It is very useful to do meditation on the eight sufferings. This reason they made a certain number like this is because it is very easy for us to understand, to see the whole thing in the teachings. If there is no fixed number like this, for us it is difficult, for our ignorant mind it is difficult to see the whole thing, to see all suffering. So as explained in the teaching, the numbers make it simple for the ignorant mind, the baby's mind; this makes it very easy. Doing meditation on the eight sufferings is also very effective, very useful. Most of the eight sufferings are human suffering.

A. The Eight Sufferings

1. (a) The first one is how the rebirth is suffering. How even the rebirth is suffering, experiencing suffering. Such as Nagarjuna said, rebirth in the womb—see the quote on page 81.

(Page 81)

Paragraph 4 – When the mother runs the baby feels pushed, taken by the wind, also when she jumps it is like falling down. When the mother is lying down it feels like being pressed by mountains, very heavy.

Paragraph 5 – Just like when we make fruit juice, when we press the fruit, that is the suffering the baby has when it is coming out. Besides while in the stomach even the very first time when the consciousness takes place, there is suffering. Even when the conscious takes place in the mother's womb on the conjunction of the egg, even at that time, there is extremely great suffering. Just like being in hot boiling water, such incredible hot boiling water. Besides during those periods, there is incredible suffering when it is coming out, just like when we make fruit juice, such tight pressing, like this the baby suffers when it is coming out. Because of this incredible suffering it turns sort of blue, and the mother doesn't even recognize or feel the baby's suffering. This is the baby's own karmic suffering, it is his own karmic vision, his own karmic suffering. The baby's body, skin, is like a raw wound which with very thin skin on top—if anything touches it, he feels pain. When the baby is coming out, the feeling of the baby, the suffering of the body is like this. Whenever you touch there is much pain, incredible pain. Then when it comes in the cloth, even from the parents' side they try to use a soft cloth, but from the baby's side his own karmic vision he sees it as falling down, sitting in a thorny place, like this. When the mother touches his hand, the baby's karmic vision is like his body being cut by a sword, much suffering. If the baby has such karma.

Paragraph 7 - Usually what the last sentence means is that the baby has his own karmic suffering because the doctors, parents, and other people don't feel, don't see the baby's karmic suffering, because they can't read the baby's mind. If they could read the baby's mind, they could understand the baby's karmic suffering, but they can't read the baby's mind. So that's how they don't fully know the baby's feeling, what feeling he has. They only judge from the outside, only guessing—we make decisions like this, the baby doesn't have suffering, the baby this and that. As we see the baby in our view. However as I said before, as long as with this limited mind that even doesn't know one's own mind, besides knowing the baby's mind, not knowing even one's own mind, with this limited understanding mind whatever we see, how can we say for sure it is definite?

For instance, many doctors make mistakes like this. Because the breathing completely stops they decide that the person is completely dead and they put it in a box. Then afterwards at the cemetery the box makes noise. That has happened several times in different places. The person runs away—there were some stories in the recent year. Last year there were some stories. They don't know how it happened, how it became again living, how it became alive. After that change they don't have any answer, no answer. It became a subject that they have to check up. First of all they believed, they really believed as they saw, as they understood, with their limited understanding. But then everything they say, putting logical reasons, for instance saying that it doesn't exist because they don't see it, but then everything that they see has to have a logical reason, do they really see, understand. For

instance, they talk about conceiving consciousness, conceiving the mind, conceiving the baby in mother's womb, but then how? Conceiving the baby that has been always there, how? Anyway, again they use these words but there is no clear explanation, there is no clear understanding.

4 pm

As before there are five divisions, five different ways to discover how rebirth is suffering. The first one is suffering of rebirth. As we described this morning, while the baby is in the mother's womb, during that period, there is so much suffering in different ways. Even when it is coming out it is suffering. Even the time when it is out of mother's womb the baby is suffering, suffering from rebirth. The suffering of rebirth is together with the seed of the delusion. It is born with the seed of delusion—the rebirth itself is born with the seed of delusion. Therefore as the rebirth is born, it came with the seed of delusion... another way of saying this is that it is under control of delusion and karma. Therefore it is extremely difficult to use this rebirth and use this body for creating virtuous actions as the person wishes because the rebirth is taken with the seed of delusion, so the person has no control over this body. He is not free from this body, he has no choice, this body is incapable of being used for creating virtuous actions as the person wishes.

For instance, just an example. Even if you want to meditate for one hour without moving, it is difficult. We have to move because we have pains in the backside, in the leg, we can't sit in that position for a long time even though we wish we could. When we make prostration we get pains. There are all kinds of physical problems that disturb the practice. Even though you want to do it for long time, make prostrations for a long time, even though you wish you could, your physical body doesn't allow it. As the body gets tired, exhausted, it is difficult to create merit by making prostrations as you wish, for that length of time, the body is incapable of being used for creating merits as you wish. Why we are not free from this body, don't have control over it, is because we are not free from delusion and karma. Of course we do not desire to always get sick, tired, and hungry, also we don't desire having pains after eating ... anyway, all kinds of things. However much we do not desire it, we have to experience these things with this body since we have this uncontrolled body, since we took this rebirth under the control of delusion and karma. If we didn't take this rebirth being under the control of delusion and karma, all these physical problems wouldn't happen. Actually it looks like this. The person is the servant of his body. Instead of the body becoming the servant of the person, the person himself becomes the servant of the body because if not being free. Even though we do not desire to feel anything during the meditation time, even though we want to relax, we wish to relax without being eaten by bugs, there is no choice, you see. However we have to pay attention while we are meditating—even though is meditation important we have to pay attention. Even though we want to continuously meditate without being distracted by such things, we have choice because we cannot use the body as we wish. So therefore a lot of distraction comes. When the bugs bite we cannot concentrate, ignoring that. When we get tired, even though we try to meditate, we fall asleep. That is because we took the rebirth that is under the control of delusion and karma. Like this, it is easy to think that rebirth is suffering—even in the time while the baby is in mother's womb or coming out, even in those times it is experiencing suffering. Rebirth is suffering, the rebirth that is under the control of delusion and karma cannot be used for virtuous actions as one wishes. Rebirth is suffering because it is a place of suffering, it is foundation of suffering. "Place of suffering" means it is a foundation of suffering. For instance, how the rebirth is the foundation of suffering—if you didn't have this suffering rebirth there would be no suffering of old age, also there would be no suffering of sickness. If you didn't take this suffering rebirth, there wouldn't be all these sufferings of old age and sickness. If you didn't take this suffering rebirth there wouldn't be the

suffering of feeling cold and hot with a little change, this wouldn't happen. If you didn't take this suffering rebirth, suffering with cold, we wouldn't have to put on thick clothes, and suffering with hot, we wouldn't have to take off the clothes. If you didn't take this suffering rebirth there wouldn't be the suffering of feeling hungry and thirsty. As there wouldn't be that suffering we wouldn't be busy, always trying to gain a means of living. There would be no need to worry about food and clothes. Also as there would be no need to worry about food and clothing, there would be no need to make money, no need to have a job. What keeps people busy is the job, working, collecting money. That is because of food and clothing, and reputations. Also if you don't take this suffering rebirth there would be no need to worry about this body, because there is no suffering body, no uncontrolled suffering body, and if there is no body there is no reason for the person to worry about the body. Killing each other, fighting each other, wounding each other—that is also due to this suffering body, due to taking this suffering rebirth. Also there is no reason for those things to happen those things if you didn't take the suffering rebirth. For instance, even to travel to another country we have to make money, to meet the expenses for the journey, for the trip. That is also due to this body—if there was no body there would be no need to make expenses for the journey. We don't have to make money, we don't need money for our mind. Needing a ticket is also due to taking this suffering rebirth. No matter how much we don't want to pay, there is no choice, since we have this body, we are not free from it. So even if you go without a ticket, trying to be sneaky, you go to prison, that is also due to this! This is the fault taking the suffering rebirth. If you didn't take the suffering rebirth, that wouldn't happen. Also you wouldn't have to give bribes, or pay people. Also if you didn't take the suffering rebirth there wouldn't be this problem, the physical relationship problem. For instance, if you didn't take this suffering rebirth, you wouldn't have to go through treatment such as surgery and operations. The person has no choice, even if the person doesn't like it, he has to go through this experience. Also due to taking the suffering rebirth, you have abortions—that is also the fault of taking the suffering rebirth, like this. You put many examples when you do meditation on the suffering rebirth, like this. As you can remember, you put many examples, so it makes it more understandable how the rebirth is suffering. Even during the time of taking rebirth there is suffering, because it is the foundation of suffering, because of all these problems come since we took rebirth. During this whole lifetime since we were born until death time, no matter how long we lived, how many years, forty, fifty, seventy, eighty, no matter how long we lived, since we took rebirth until death, there have been all kinds different problems, physical problems, and all these things are based on taking the suffering rebirth. During the lifetime all these physical problems have come on the basis of taking the suffering rebirth. Rebirth is suffering because it is a basis of suffering. Old age, sickness, and uncontrolled death also occurs due to taking the uncontrolled suffering rebirth.

For instance, the person has to pay lot of money to get visas or extensions. This is also due to this suffering body. If you were free from it, free from this body, if you didn't have to depend on this body, all these things would be unnecessary. The person could exist for eons without any papers! Rebirth is suffering because it is the foundation of delusion. If rebirth is taken with delusion, with greed, ignorance, hatred, these three negative minds discriminate objects, seeing one as beautiful, one as a stranger, neither ugly nor beautiful, and one as ugly, like this. As rebirth is taken with these three negative minds that discriminate objects like this, by these three minds discriminating objects differently like this, the anger, attachment, and ignorance increases, having met the object. For instance, attachment increases having met an object of attachment; ignorance increases having met an object of ignorance; anger increases having met an object of anger. So if the rebirth that is under the control of delusion and karma is not taken there wouldn't be these problems, increasing the negative mind by having met these different objects. Taking the rebirth which is under the control

of delusion and karma becomes the foundation of delusions, because by taking that the three negative minds exist already, and they discriminate objects and they increase. All that increasing, during the lifetime and in other future lifetimes, is based on the suffering rebirth. By these three negative minds increasing in this lifetime, they will increase in the future life.

Rebirth also involves the suffering of having to separate from this body without choice, without wish. If the uncontrolled rebirth was not taken, the uncontrolled death would not happen. So death happening without choice, separating from this body without choice, is due to taking the suffering uncontrolled rebirth. Like this, if you can remember when you do the meditation on the suffering rebirth, if you can think like this and try to find more examples, try to see clearly by yourself, making longer commentary within your mind, this helps a great deal to understand clearly how rebirth is suffering, how rebirth is in the suffering nature and also, this is important, how any samsaric rebirth, not only any human rebirth, but any samsaric rebirth can be seen in the nature of suffering. To see this as clearly as possible, as deeply as possible, is important because this is one of the main things that makes us have no interest, and makes aversion for taking samsaric rebirth arise. If you don't have interest or aversion, there is no way for attachment to arise, and this is the main thing that cuts off the continuity of samsaric suffering. Without talking about the rest of the problems, just talking only about the beginning, rebirth, only talking about that suffering, it is an unbelievable, incredible thing.

Day 28

Tuesday, 3rd December

Precepts

[This was taken from Linda's shorthand, so perhaps she could help with any queries for the precepts session.]

Before taking the ordination it is necessary to possess the pure motivation. Just the pure motivation, just the mind going in the Dharma, is not enough. It has to be the pure thought of bodhicitta, the pure motivation of bodhicitta, which makes the ordination that is going to be taken a Mahayana ordination and the cause of enlightenment. Therefore it is necessary to think briefly like this. To just not be reborn in the evil destinies is not sufficient. That doesn't mean that we are certain after this life that we will not be reborn in the suffering realms. That doesn't mean that we will never be reborn in the suffering realms. Even if we are born in the upper realms, such as the human realm, as long as we are born in samsara, in the human realms and so on, we will always experience either the eight sufferings or the six suffering, totally the three sufferings. Even though one is not born in the suffering realm of the evil destinies, think of the way of experiencing the eight sufferings, such as rebirth, such as old age, such as sickness, such as the suffering rebirth as we talked about—that much incredible suffering rebirth. Just even thinking of the suffering of rebirth, just even hearing about the suffering of rebirth makes us discover that as long as we are in samsara there is no way to find true happiness. Even just hearing of this suffering of rebirth makes the renounced mind, the aversion for all samsaric rebirth, not only the human rebirth, arise. This is something that we don't want to take again. Just even thinking about this, that nature of the suffering rebirth is something that we have to cut off in this lifetime. So there is no question when thinking of the other sufferings, besides suffering rebirth and old age. There are many different ways of suffering of old age. There are also many ways of suffering—the body becomes decayed, the senses are lost, the person becomes less beautiful and more incapable of doing things. We can understand this by remembering the examples of old people who are suffering with sickness, such as the eighty-four, the four

hundred and twenty-four, all kind of different types of sickness that are experienced in the lifetime after the rebirth is taken. Even during the lifetime, if there was that much suffering and old age, if that was the only thing—but also there are sicknesses, all kinds of problems. There is also the suffering of death. Besides that, during the life there are so many other problems. Most of the time the life is ended by terrible suffering. If the person had happiness in the end of the life that would be something else, but there is no happy death, the mind is never relaxed. That is extremely difficult. At the beginning of this particular life, beginning with suffering and even in the middle, there are incredible different problems and also this life ends with problems. This is how samsaric life is.

Also besides old age and sickness, during the lifetime there are other problems such as the suffering of meeting ugly objects, dislikable objects, such as enemies. Usually there is the fear of being destroyed by fire, or being destroyed by water. For instance, in a country there are so many floods happening, so many thousands of people dying floods. There is the fear of being destroyed by fire. For instance, every building has that thing to extinguish the fire. In New York, every time, every day, there is the noise of the traffic siren. There is fear of fire, fear of water, fear of being destroyed by water. Also earthquakes—there are many things, there are many things. Fear of strong wind and besides having the suffering of meeting dislikable objects, like weapons and atomic bombs, the suffering of meeting dislikable objects that are non-living beings.

For people who fly, there is danger, and for people who go by ship there is also danger. For instance, those who are going by car also have to be very careful. There are so many objects, there are so many dislikable objects that we always worry about, always try to stop, always worry that we will meet with. With this worry we try to stop them, try to not encounter these dangers. For living beings there is the suffering of meeting enemies, or thieves, or other people who control us. There are many other different dislikable objects. There is the suffering of meeting fearful animals such as snakes, and other animals, even just little bugs. Even during the lifetime there are problems like this. That is how samsaric life is.

Then even though the person meets a beautiful, desirable objects—first of all the person has to worry, the person has the difficulty of not finding the desirable objects. People are busy, always people worried about finding the desirable object, the material things, finding the beautiful clothes that the person desires, the beautiful material that they see some other people have. You see such possessions and then you also would like to have such a beautiful object and you try to find it. When you don't find it you worry. Also, in the countries women are finding men, men are finding women, many other problems. First of all, the problem of not finding the desirable objects. Even if they are successful, if they find a desirable object, then again there is another problem. After getting it there are other problems. Even when material things become decayed, and change, the person doesn't always see it as beautiful, as the person saw it at the beginning. That beautiful view doesn't last. The person doesn't see it in the same way every time. The possessions become decayed, spontaneously the person loses interest in that object. Gradually it becomes a dislikable object because the person sees other, more beautiful objects. Things like this. Or always getting tired, fed up with always having that, things like this.

Then again there is the problem of separating from these material objects. The suffering of, even after the person has found it, having to separate from it. For example, it breaks. If you don't keep it well, people will steal it away—all these worries are suffering. Also in regards possessions, many times because of possessions, other people kill us, torture us, and control us because they want the possessions. Many times there is suffering like this. Even living beings, even if we find the desirable

object, the living being, friend, or husband or wife or whatever, the children, whatever, after that when we are together there are other problems—there is a problem of separating, the suffering of separation, always the worry of separation. Even when the parents go away there is worry about the children. When the father or mother becomes very old, and cannot live alone, they always need people around them because they feel very lonely. If they are very old also they are scared of death, not because they want to meditate, not for the meditation reason, but without choice. This is useless fear, nothing helps. The body is nothing to look at, there is no beauty, everything is finished, everything changed, all in essence changes like this.

Anyway, even at the time of when the person becomes very old, there is the worry of separation, that, “These people will leave me.” There are many things. Even during youth, even during middle age, there is much worry about separation. When the husband goes somewhere, to another country, when the husband goes outside, the wife worries. There is much other worry—maybe the husband will be taken by another wife or used by other people. Also the husband has the worry of separation from the wife. There is much worry. Besides the suffering of separation at death time, it exists even during the lifetime, like this. Such as divorce—afterwards the wife leaves the husband, the husband leaves the wife, and they go after other people—that is kind of a samsaric problem. That is a problem that happens during the lifetime.

The biggest problem is dissatisfaction. The worst pain, the biggest pain in life is dissatisfaction. Really check up how this is the worst sickness that makes the life unhappy—the dissatisfaction with material things, the dissatisfaction with the pleasures, the dissatisfaction with friends. If you check up the problem of divorce, for example—there are many other problems with one couple, the children, the parents—there are problems and most of the time the problems are based on dissatisfaction. If the person really checks up the creator of the problem, the mind, that is dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction, like this. Even without talking about other sufferings, this is incredible. Thinking of the eight sufferings, even though there are no details in my talk, just outlines, we are suffering in samsara like this. Also, numberless other sentient beings are suffering like this. In the present time, in this moment, numbers of sentient beings have worse suffering, greater suffering, such as the beings who are suffering in the evil destinies. Besides that, even sentient beings who are in the upper realms have worse suffering than us in this minute. The main thing is that the rest of them don't have the leader leading them in the path to enlightenment, they have not met the teaching, and they do not have the Dharma wisdom to see what is right and what is wrong. Even those who intellectually understand a little what is right and what is wrong are lazy, and cannot put it into action. However this time we are lucky that we can do something. Besides having the leader leading us in the path to enlightenment, having met the Dharma, having a little Dharma wisdom, that much we can actualize seeing what is the right action, what is the wrong action, what is the cause of happiness, what is the cause of suffering. Besides understanding that, we are also putting it into action, we are working. We have many higher possibilities to escape from samsara, to receive enlightenment, to enlighten other sentient beings. We have such a possibility, and we are also responsible to release mother sentient beings from suffering and lead them to enlightenment. When the mother is in terrible suffering, the son or daughter has to do something, has to follow the method to release the mother from suffering. So in order to receive enlightenment for the sake of mother sentient beings, the fundamental thing is disciplining the speech, body, and mind. Therefore we are going to take ordination until tomorrow. Also visualize the person granting the ordination in the form of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas.

At the end of the third repetition of the prayer think that you have perfectly received the Mahayana ordination.

PRAYER

Repeat the prayer of the precepts thinking, “I am going to observe the precepts as the previous Tathagatas also observed the precepts.”

PRAYER OF PRECEPTS MANTRA

DEDICATION

The problems are not heavy, coming in the tent and sitting down and having lots of fighting in the mind, always wanting to send letters to friends, talking to friends, going to the East, sorry, going to the West and seeing friends and doing all kinds of things. All kinds things are happening, like TV in the mind. We are always distracted, and most of our time is spent in that way. However, perhaps for the actual meditation, when someone is a little bit easy to concentrate on, even though we spend most of our time distracted, even though we have not been doing meditation properly but since that much time we took ordination with such a motivation. Even just taking the ordination for one day has been greatly beneficial, not only for this life, but also for other sentient beings. Somehow due to that power the person somehow can generate energy by taking the ordination, can definitely benefit each sentient being. So however, the time in life has not been wasted. That amount of time that you took ordination from the person, has incredible benefits. Then for instance, during Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s time, taking ordination, discipline like this, helps is to be born as human beings during Maitreya’s time, the time of the future Buddha, when he descends to give Dharma. We will be born human again to practice the teachings during the future Buddha Maitreya’s time, and become surrounding disciples of Maitreya. Also there are the benefits that we will again meet the Dharma. We will be born in the pure realms, or at least not be born in the suffering realms. So there are many benefits.

However many times the person has taken these, has not been lazy, has taken them all the time, the person has created incredible merit even though he didn’t spend the whole schedule properly in meditation like this. For the person who didn’t do this, it is a loss—he has lost that much merit, that much of the collection of merits. That much the person didn’t receive so there is a loss if the person didn’t take the ordination when he had the chance. This is like the example of the person who came to a jewel land and didn’t get any jewels. It is useful to do this sometimes in one month, even in the West, or three times in a month. If you really wish, if you have the energy, taking them once a week is also very good. Whenever you think you are capable, you can keep precepts. If you are not sure, if you feel there will be danger, if you have to go somewhere or do something, if are not sure at the beginning, taking them and then afterwards feeling not serious, having made the vow with an insecure feeling, and then not respecting the ordination and forgetting it—this is no good. This causes problem for ourselves. Whenever you think you are capable—taking it three times or even once in a month—this is very useful. Even though you don’t meditate for the whole month, you don’t have time to create merit for the whole month, taking ordination has incredible merits. However all these are practical methods that can help this life and help all future lifetimes, one’s own future lifetimes. If you want to benefit others this is the best way to benefit other sentient beings, and especially to bring peace in times of wars and atomic dangers, this can really help.

Otherwise as much as we create atomic bombs, it doesn't help, it makes more danger. This can really help, taking ordination can definitely help stop suffering.

In previous time there were many stories of while countries keeping precepts. The king had the whole country takes the vows on special days, and everything changed in the country. Before there were crops, much hail, many dangerous things, and food was scarce. Afterwards everything changed. Besides that, the people who took ordination cut off all those problems and closed the door of rebirth to the suffering realm. Even after death they were not born in a suffering realm, but born in an upper pure realm, some becoming arhats realizing the mind nature and things like this. Many times it happened like this.

7 am

LAMA YESHE - REFUGE & PRECEPTS

10 am

As Guru Tsong Khapa said in his holy teaching, “Please grant me blessings to realize that the perfect human rebirth that is received once is extremely difficult to find and that it is highly meaningful and that the thought of taking the essence may arise unceasingly all day and night.”

For the thought of seeking the essence to arise all day and night—what is the best essence, the highest essence that we can think that we should take with this perfect human rebirth that is received once? That is to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all mother sentient beings. The principal cause that brings this enlightenment, this achievement of enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings, is only bodhicitta. Therefore even of there is one hour, even there are a few minutes to train the mind in the pure thought of bodhicitta, the person is highly fortunate. Within a minute, a few seconds, the person creates unimaginable merits. In order to create that number of merits we don't have to rely on machines, we don't have to depend on external things. It is not a physical action, it is only a mental action. Wherever the person is sitting, wherever it is, whatever the person is physically working, this is something in such a short period that the person can easily create, it is only an action of mind. It is an action that is easy to do and besides being easy it brings such incredible profit, and brings other sentient beings into peace, besides oneself. Therefore think, “I must achieve enlightenment for the sake of all mother sentient beings, therefore I am going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path.”

The listening subject is the Mahayana teaching that leads the fortunate person to enlightenment and it is a teaching that is well expounded by the two great philosophers Nagarjuna and Asanga and it is a profound teaching, the essence of the great yogis Atisha and Guru Tsong Khapa's understanding. This teaching includes all the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all these teachings are set up for the practice of one person's achievement of enlightenment.

So this commentary has four topics for the outline. In order to show the reference, the knowledge of the authors. In order to bring up devotion, the knowledge of the teachings. The way of listening and explaining the teaching, and the way of leading the disciple in the path to enlightenment. The last one has two outlines—the way of following the guru who is the root of the path and the way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment. The way of training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment has two outlines—persuading the mind to take the essence with the perfect human rebirth and the way of taking the essence with perfect human rebirth. The way of

taking the essence with the perfect human rebirth is divided into three—the graduated path of the lower being, the graduated path of the middle being, and the graduated path of the higher being. So graduated path of the lower being is briefly finished, not just being completely empty.

Now, the part on the graduated path of the middle being. That has outlines also, such as why Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has shown the Four Noble Truths and the actual meditation on suffering and also why Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has shown true suffering first before showing true cause of suffering and before showing true cessation and true path. We people, according our desire, don't want to hear about true suffering, or the true cause of suffering. We don't want to know, we just want the true cessation of suffering right away without even following the true path. That is our usual desire. Something that is impossible to happen. Like this.

The graduated path of the middle being, the first outline, is why Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has shown true suffering first and the four noble truths, and after that the actual meditation on suffering. Then after that, the evolution of samsara, how all suffering rises from the cause, from the delusions, and then explaining the actual path that leads to nirvana. Part of this subject is the actual meditation on suffering that includes the four noble truths, the true suffering. So when we do meditation on samsaric suffering, doing meditation on the eight numbers like this is very helpful to the mind. It is very helpful also to not get attached to the human rebirth. So this is mostly human being's suffering. Also the asuras have much suffering. As asura is usually like this. *Sura* means god and *asura* means non-god. The reason is because asuras minds' are kind of more cruel than the minds of the suras. Like human beings whose minds are so cruel do not act like human beings. They are very evil, not acting like human beings, not living like usual human behavior. They act differently than usual human actions. They are recognized as almost non-human by people. That person is out of the usual group of human beings. Just like this, the asuras' personalities and behavior is different from the suras, and that's why they are called non-gods, asura is a negative word. However, they have terrible suffering of avariciousness, being jealous, extremely jealous of suras, being extremely jealous of suras having such incredible possessions, enjoyments, and powers. They have incredible suffering of jealousy. Just like a thorn, when they see the suras having such high enjoyments, possession, and incredible things, having what they wish, it is like a thorn, a needle going into the heart of the asura, so painful. Most of their suffering is like this. Also they have miserliness for their wives and also many problems of the suras taking their wives away, so much fighting. When they fight each other, the asuras get killed like human beings when their bodies are cut, but the suras are different. When they fight, unless the sura's neck is cut, as much as the rest of the body is cut, it is reborn naturally. They have karma like this. They don't die right away, by cutting the body in pieces, only by cutting the neck. So most of the time the suras control the asuras because the suras are more powerful. The realm of asuras, if you have read the explanation on the mandala, is the Mount Meru jewel that exists due to the karma of those gods. It is their karmic creation. For instance, Mount Meru has eight levels, four levels above ocean, and four under the ocean. The asuras are under the ocean, in the corner of Mount Meru. The suras are situated on the four levels of Mount Meru. And also that there are other gods, the god of senses, and they are situated on the four levels of Mount Meru, out of the ocean, on the top. However this Mount Meru, the mandala, is another subject, but however just saying two or three words—it can only be seen if the person has the karma to see it, or the person is free, or the person has psychic power like an arhat, or, like the suras, were karmically born there. It is a mountain of jewels. On each side there are different colors, because each side of Mount Meru is formed with different jewels. This is explained in the part on the mandala meditation so if you read it you can find the different names of the jewels.

There are four great continents and eight small continents, and the side of Mount Meru that faces the East is the great continent. That part is silver, so in the Eastern continent the sky is white, not blue. That brightness of the silver reflects the ocean and that's also why the sky is white. It is the same thing for the part of Mount Meru that faces the southern continent, where we are. That part of Mount Meru is, I think, lapis lazuli, a blue color, and that brightness reflects in the oceans, and because of that brightness the color of the sky is blue. The Western side is red and the color of the sky is red, because that part of Mount Meru is made of rubies. That brightness reflects in the ocean, and turns that part of space red. The color of space in the Northern continent is yellow, because the part of the mountain that faces it is gold.

On these different continents, the human beings who live there have different ways of living. They are not like us—they have an exact length of life, they are born at such a time and live for such a time, an exact length of time. On Northern continent the human beings live for one thousand years. There is no chance to hear Dharma in that continent, however much enjoyment they have. Also they don't have as many problems as we have in this world. On this specific continent, and for the human beings on other continents, the length of life is shorter than that of the human being on Northern continent. Also on those different continents there are differences between the lengths of life. Humans on the Eastern continent are twice as tall as human beings who are on this Southern continent. The length of the human body is like four or five times the length of this arm. As the body is double, the life is also longer. So like this. Anyway.

The space in each continent has different colors because of Mount Meru. So even though asuras are intelligent, have higher intelligence, with such strong karma they have no way to realize the mind nature, to realize the absolute nature, because of such strong karma. No matter how intelligent they are, they are so intellectual. The suras have very high enjoyments, enjoying nectars, and all their palaces are made of different types of jewels—even the ground is a jewel ground, made of lapis lazuli, for example. They receive things as they wish as they have very high enjoyments, everything they need, their life passes in distraction, always playing, enjoying, going outside to beautiful parks, surrounded by many hundreds of wives. Life finishes without the chance of practicing Dharma. The gods of the senses also have many problems and much fighting with the asuras. There are some gods who don't have that much power, who are controlled by other samsaric gods who have higher possessions, who are more powerful. They are controlled by them and they experience so much suffering being controlled by them. Also sometimes those powerless gods are deported from one place to another place because of not having power, things like this. Their worst suffering is at death time. There are five signs that they have to suffer through. Their one day is a human being's fifty years. For them it is one day, so they suffer the signs of death for seven days. Before death happens they hear a karmic sound. Then everything becomes decayed, everything changes, they don't want to sit on their bed, dislike arises. They become like a very unhappy person who cannot relax on the bed. Usually they have flowers to put on the body, beautiful, hundreds of bodies with light around them, beautiful colors, beautiful flowers, and at that time they become decayed. Like if you keep a flower for two days, it becomes old, like this. Usually the flowers don't change when they are alive, when they are put on, but at that time they change. Then, usually their clothes never smell due to their karma, therefore their clothes don't become dirty, but at that time their clothes become dirty and the body get dusty. Even though it looks magnificent during the lifetime, at that time it looks very powerless and decayed this. Usually in their lifetime they have many hundreds of girlfriends, and they enjoy, all the time playing together, going to beautiful parks, playing music, and at death time when these samsaric gods are going through the signs of death, changing, becoming decayed, their wives or girlfriends, the other gods, don't want to see them. They don't come nearby, they look

at the far side of the god who is experiencing the signs of death. They don't even touch them, and besides not touching, they don't come nearby, close, because they look horrible, ugly, and also there are smells, many things. Sometimes they put flowers on a long and give it to the person like this. Then they say, "After this life may you be born in the human realm." They pray that they will be born in the human realm. Then they give them the flower on top of stick. The god is very upset, with terrible suffering—the god who is experiencing the signs of death has incredible mental suffering. They do not come close to him, and other friends do not want to see him, there is so much missing. His mental suffering is sixteen times greater than normal beings' physical suffering. Not only this, but the reason there is such suffering is because when they are going through the signs of death, they see where they came from, what their previous lives were, and they can see also the future where they will be reborn—as animals, pretas, or naraks. They can see exactly the realm that they are going to be born in, what kind of suffering they will experience. So just before death, at time, there is no choice. The time is finished. So because they see future things, incredible suffering, even though their body is there, mentally incredible suffering, there is so much worry like this. Death is one of the great sufferings for them.

Then in the world of the form and formless gods, they don't have the two sufferings—the suffering of suffering and changeable suffering. The explanation will come afterwards. However they do have pervading suffering; this fundamental suffering they do have. Their suffering is pervading suffering, even though they don't have the suffering of sickness, pain, exhaustion, and fighting. They don't have these kind of problems but they have pervading suffering, because they are still living in delusion and karma, they are born with delusion and karma. Their rebirth is still tied by delusion and karma so even though they don't have the other sufferings, changeable suffering and the suffering of suffering, they have this suffering, not being free from delusion and karma. Even if the being born in those realms, in the world of the form and formless, during that time in that world of the formless there is no chance to practice Dharma. It is just like completely, deep sleep, the whole lifetime, since being was born until its death time, it only knows that he was born in the formless world, only remembers the birth time and the death time, but is not conscious during his lifetime. Just like complete deep sleep. After death time, as they are not free from rebirth, as they are not out of rebirth, as they are controlled by delusion and karma, they are not free from death, so after that according to their karma they have to be born in the vil destinies, in the suffering realm.

The cause of being born in the world of form and formless is as follows. The being experience the enjoyments, the happiness, the pleasures of the beings of the world of senses, and then the being is fed up, tired of the pleasure and then doesn't want to have pleasure. Then he has a kind of aversion, only aversion, and that aversion is just tired of the pleasure and then wishes to have an indifferent feeling rather than a pleasant feeling. He desires an indifferent feeling, because of aversion for the pleasure of the world of senses. Because of this wish and because of the aversion for the pleasure of the world of senses, still there is attachment, but the thing is this. The reason the person is born again in the world of form, in samsara, the reason the person has aversion for the pleasure of the senses is because the person doesn't have aversion for samsaric rebirth, the person doesn't have aversion for all samsaric suffering. The person only has aversion for pleasure that is in the world of senses but doesn't have aversion for all samsaric suffering. That person, for instance, that person doesn't have aversion for the samsaric rebirth of the world of form, and the suffering nature of the world of form. The person who has aversion for the pleasure of the world of senses doesn't have aversion for that, doesn't have aversion for the rebirth of the world of form and the suffering of world of form, the indifferent feelings that the being who is in world of form enjoys and feels. So besides not having aversion for that, there is attachment to indifferent feeling, attachment to having

indifferent feeling—no pleasure, no suffering. There is attachment, and this attachment makes him be born in the samsaric realm, in the world of form, even though he has aversion for the pleasure of the world of senses.

Similarly, after the being is born there, again he gets fed up with the indifferent feeling, “Now I don’t want to feel anything, nothing.” Then he wants to believe that nothing exists. He wishes this, he is attached to this. So because of this attachment, then again, even though he has aversion for the indifferent feeling, because there is no aversion for the attachment wanting to become nothingness, wanting nothing to exist, due to this attachment again the person is born in the world of the formless, even though the person had aversion for indifferent feeling, because that aversion was limited and didn’t cover all samsaric rebirths or samsaric suffering. Just like this. For instance, a person does not like Indian food because it is very hot, but that doesn’t mean the person has no attachment for all food, because when there is American food the person doesn’t see it the same way, and doesn’t have the same feeling. Just like this, the aversion for that particular food doesn’t help one to completely stop the attachment. In the world of form there are seventeen categories, and in the formless world there are four categories. Each time they change, their attachment changes, their desire changes, so as their desire changes each of these different kinds of attachment forces them to be born in the next category. However, now we understand that the main thing is attachment, which brings us round and round like this. It is like rocket that makes us land on the moon, the fundamental energy or food that makes us go so far. Attachment is like this. Attachment is the main thing. So I think that’s all.

3 pm

Before we were talking about what causes us to be born in the form and formless worlds. If I make the first thing, the first category, clear, there are four in the formless world. The first one is this. Because that being who is in the world of form gets tired, fed up with the indifferent feeling, not pleasure, not suffering, he doesn’t wish anything. So the first category, the reason the person takes birth in the world of formless is called the stage comprehending nothing. No thoughts, thinking, nothing. Just like those meditations trying to stop all thoughts, nothing appearing. This is the attachment that doesn’t want to feel anything, doesn’t want to think of anything, to comprehend anything. Due to this attachment, that being is born in the world of formless, in that category called the stage comprehending nothing. Then there is the stage called infinite space, which is looking at everything as empty as space. There are different categories like this. However, there is not such strong anger, attachment to those states—in those stages there no strong attachment, strong anger, no very gross negative minds like we have. Even if the person reaches such a stage, in the world of formless, that person is still in samsara and cannot escape from samsara, because in the person’s method there is something missing. The person’s method doesn’t become the remedy of samsara. So that’s why he can’t cut his samsara. Also through samadhi meditation and much those concentrations, the being receives rebirth in the realms of the gods, the world of form. Even if the person has the attainment of one-pointedness meditation, that doesn’t help. One who has one-pointedness meditation, who can concentrate without any distractions for a month, a year, however just that doesn’t help him to escape from samsara. We have also, many times, achieved this one-pointedness meditation in other lifetimes and have also taken rebirth in those realms of the gods. However, even though many times we have achieved this one-pointedness meditation, we have been reborn in samsara, or in the realms of the gods. Why? Because we don’t have the complete renouncing mind of samsara and the realization of the absolute nature such as bodhicitta. The main thing is we didn’t achieve the fully renouncing mind of samsara—that is the main thing that is

missing. So therefore, in order to escape from samsara, we have to have the renounced mind for all samsaric rebirth, all samsaric pleasure. Also, we need to see samsaric pleasure in the nature of suffering and bring up the mind renouncing all samsaric rebirth, doing meditation on the samsaric suffering in six. That is also very useful.

First of all, suffering is indefinite. That is easy, very simple. For instance, the person is happy, enjoying, happy in the morning and suffering in the evening—so nothing is definite. The person enjoying or showing happiness doesn't mean it is always like this. Nothing is definite. Before many people were very rich, and had a good reputation, but later on, after a few years, they became very poor. The whole thing completely changes, the whole situation completely changes. For instance, there are many examples in the West, and in the East, everywhere of changing. The suffering of being rich is not definite. For instance, when Tibet was independent many people were rich, extremely rich, and then after Tibet was overtaken by the Chinese and the Tibetans fled from Tibet they became very poor, and the people who were poor before became very rich. Like this, nothing is definite, nothing is definite. The main thing is this. As I have been talking about this morning, this whole thing is trying to look at all this suffering, trying to discover all this as being in the nature of suffering, samsaric rebirth, life. The main purpose of doing meditation, trying to look at the nature of suffering, trying to see the nature of suffering, is mainly to stop attachment, to control attachment. So in order to control attachment there are many other different ways to meditate, different ways to discover the suffering nature. As the situation changes like this—those who were rich before later on becoming terribly poor—there is nothing to be attached to in being rich, nothing to trust. Many times we see people who have a lot of possessions and are enjoying, looking very rich, enjoying that very much, and then after some time, after a few years, it is a completely different situation, the whole thing is changed, and they are having a lot of problems because they are terribly poor. Because it is not definite there is nothing to be attached to in those lives, even though we see that they have everything and that they enjoy the life. Why is there nothing to be attached to? Because it doesn't last, it is not always like this, we cannot enjoy life like that always. It is just for a short time.

For example, people who have a lot of beautiful apartment, lot of possessions, cars, many things. This is just like a dream, for short time. When we look at them we think they have such a good life, they have children, a husband, a wife, this and that, all things, everything, they have animals ... I have also animals! Whatever, we see like this. Usually we do not know the nature of life, the nature of their life, that their life is in the nature of suffering. Not discovering this, we get attached and we try to become like that, competitive. Also, some people wear beautiful clothes, a jacket, a woman's dress, and they are attached to it, and even though they have a lot of clothes to wear, there is no problem of catching cold, because of the attachment to the clothes they want to be like that. However, nothing is definite. As I said before, some people make so much arrangement, they have lots of things, things they bought, things they fixed, and without having the chance to enjoy them they die. Like this, nothing is definite. It is not definite that the person will definitely get the chance to enjoy it, to use it until it gets finished. Even if the person had much reputation before, a good reputation, after some time he can have a very bad reputation. In some years it can change, and he can have a bad reputation, people complaining about him. Even if people liked him before, afterwards people complain about him. Nothing is definite. Is not always sure that you will have a good reputation even though you have one at present. That doesn't mean the person will always have a good reputation in life. So therefore there is nothing to be attached to. As many possessions are collected, as much money is collected, nothing is definite. What comes after the collection is the finish. In the beginning is the collection, but what comes after is the finishing—that is its nature—

anything that is collected ends by finishing. So therefore there is nothing to trust, thinking that it will last for a long time. As it doesn't last, there is nothing to be attached to. Even with friends. From when we first meet, we cannot trust that the friend will always exist, that the friendly relationship will always exist. There is nothing to trust. We begin with meeting the friend, then afterwards we are separated. The nature is that first of all we meet, and then afterwards separate—so it is not sure that we will always be together with our friends, parents, husband, wife, children, or anything. It is not sure. Once we meet, ending by separation is the nature of samsaric suffering. Therefore because of these reasons there is nothing to be attached to. This doesn't mean, as some person may think, to not be physically together. It means there is no point in attachment arises even though you are together. The main thing that I am trying to explain is that there is no point in attachment arising, the main thing. As long as there is no problem of attachment, it doesn't matter whether you live together with all sentient beings for numberless eons, whether you become oneness with all sentient beings, with all your family ... anyway. Like this. If you know the reasons, if you know the nature what comes after meeting, what comes after collecting, if you know this samsaric suffering nature, then whatever things change, whatever happens, there is not much worry, not much upset in the mind. Why? Because there is not that much strong attachment because of understanding the suffering nature. If there is no understanding of suffering nature then there is strong attachment, for instance like this. If there is a divorce, a separation, or some problem even, usually there is much worry about separation, as I said this morning. That is because of not having the understanding of the suffering nature, not having the understanding of the impermanent life's nature. So therefore there is attachment, always wanting to be together. Not wanting to separate. Because of this attachment there is always worry, upset mind, the mind up and down. For instance, if the person has this understanding, frequently thinking that the time of death is indefinite, whatever changes happen around him, with his relatives, whether they die, whether they exist, whatever happens, the person who has this understanding, who frequently remembers the indefinite time of death, doesn't have that much worry, that much suffering. Because of that understanding, his mind doesn't have that much attachment. Because his mind thinks it is their nature that they die, that things happen, separating, always not being together, anything that has happened, his mind has no confusion, no problem, because this change is the samsaric suffering nature.

For instance, many people here sometimes have been rich, sometimes have been poor. Through this we can understand how there is nothing to trust in life, nothing to be attached to in life, because we have gone through this many times. For instance, it is clear. How many people we become friends with, how many times we have experienced it—first of all becoming friends, then becoming enemies. Then, as there is anger fighting with each other. So therefore there is nothing to trust, nothing to be attached to, however many relatives or friends we have. The main thing is that it doesn't last. For instance, some women even within several years change so many husbands, and some men have many different wives, always changing. These things show the samsaric suffering nature of not being definite. We were born in these realms of the gods, born as the gods of the senses, and also in the world of the form and formless. We were born there, but again we were born in the evil destinies, in our previous lifetimes. We were born as the gods of the senses, enjoying the objects of the senses, living in palaces made of jewels, with mirror reflections coming from the walls. Such incredible, such beautiful palaces—in places like that we were born. But after that, after finishing that period, we were born in the narak stages, in doorless hot red burning iron houses without even tiny holes to see through, everything completely red, burning, with nowhere to escape until the karma finishes, with nowhere to escape and having to experience suffering in the doorless iron burning house. After enjoying, after we had such possessions, beautiful places, t we were born like this in the narak realms. So therefore nothing is definite, even such high possessions, palaces.

Nothing is definite, so therefore there is nothing to be attached to. We don't have such high enjoyments and possessions now but generally there is nothing to be attached to because we don't always possess, have it. The same thing, we enjoyed such high enjoyments and nectars, being born as those samsaric gods. We enjoyed such blissful nectars, but again we were born in the narak realms drinking hot iron liquid water that burned our stomach. We were born as pigs, eating garbage. Besides the enjoyments that we have now on the human earth, the friends that we have, besides this, in those realms there are greater, higher enjoyments, everything has a higher quality. When we were born in those realms we were surrounded by many hundreds of friends, many girlfriends, husbands, wives, like this, and we always enjoyed being together, after that we were born in the evil destinies such as the narak places surrounded by the karmically created narak protectors, torturing us, giving us much suffering. Even when we had that many friends, always together, enjoying very much, nothing is definite. Therefore there is nothing to be attached to.

This is briefly how among the samsaric enjoyments, the samsaric happy life, the samsaric body and possessions, nothing is definite, nothing is definite. For instance, even the relationships—this time we have a relationships such as parent and child, enemies, or friends. These are also nothing definite, because we cannot always exist as parents, as enemies, or as friends. So nothing is definite, nothing is definite because things always change, circling round, therefore there is nothing to be attached to.

For instance in previous time it was like this. One of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's disciples, Sharipu, was begging, passing through one family. In that house there was only the son and his wife, their parents were dead. He saw that the son was eating fish and a dog was watching in front of him. He was carrying a baby on his lap. This arhat saw that the son was eating his father's meat—before, that fish had been his father. Behind the house they had a small lake, and they always used to eat fish. When his father was there, he took the fish from the lake and ate it, so after the father died, he was born as a fish in that lake behind the house. Then the son did the same thing, bringing fish from the lake behind his house. That day he got the fish who was his father. His mother who had died was very attached to the family so she was born as the family dog. The son had an enemy who was attached to his wife, so because of this enemy he was born as their baby. So now what's happening is that the whole situation is completely opposite. Sharipu discovered that the son was keeping the enemy in his lap, taking care of the enemy as best he could on his lap, and eating his father's meat and giving the bones to the mother dog. He was also scolding the dog, and telling it to get out. Like this. The whole thing completely changed. Then this arhat Sharipu really saw the suffering nature, the samsaric suffering nature, how nothing is definite. He said some words, how the son was eating father's meat, beating the mother, and keeping the enemy on the lap, and how this was samsaric nature.

We also have been like this. This is not only that person's story, but an example. We have been like this numberless times, circling around. That's how even in relationships nothing is definite. So therefore, as it changes like this, there is nothing to be attached to

Then second suffering is the suffering of dissatisfaction. Simply thinking like this, for example. For instance in regards parents. Our father is not only our father this time; he has been our father in numberless previous lifetimes. It is the same thing with our mother. Our present mother is not our mother for the first time, she has been our mother numberless times. She has been a mother to me numberless times. It is the same thing with the children we have. This is not the first time that they have been born to us, they have been born to us numberless times in previous lifetimes. Also, we

have been their mother and father numberless times in previous lifetimes. This is not the first time. It is the thing with the husband, this is not first time he is our husband. He has been a husband to me in numberless previous lifetimes. Also, this is not the first time she has been my wife. She has been my wife numberless times in previous lifetimes. It is the same thing with any other friend—this person has been my friend numberless times in other previous lifetimes. We have all met together, we have met again and again like this without beginning, and it is still not ended. That much has happened, but there is still no satisfaction. The father has been the father that many times, the mother, husband, wife, children, friends—same thing, but still no satisfaction. We think that whatever experience we have with other people it is the first time. But it is not the first time, it is a very old thing. This relationship that we have now is nothing new, it is very old. Like this. There is not one sentient being who has not been our child numberless times in previous lifetimes, not one sentient being who has not been our husband numberless times, not one sentient being who has not been our wife numberless times. It is the same thing with friends, and the same thing with father and mother. The whole idea of thinking this is the first time happens because the person himself doesn't see the past, so he thinks this is the first time we have contact, our first meeting. That is a completely wrong idea—nothing of this relationship is new. So therefore there is nothing to be attached to in the experiences that we have with other people, in the relationships or contacts we have with other people, because nothing is new, we have done it numberless times. It is the same thing, for instance, with food—if all the food that we have eaten from beginningless samsaric lifetimes are collected, it doesn't leave any space. It is infinite like infinite space.

It doesn't matter if it is Tibetan food, American food—whatever it is, nothing of this experience is new. We think this is the first time we are drinking Tibetan tea, but it is not the first time we are drinking Tibetan tea. As much tea and milk as we drink from animals, from the mother, if it was collected, all the tea and milk we drank—compared to this, the ocean is nothing, the Pacific is nothing. Still we don't have satisfaction, as much as we had. So therefore there is no reason for attachment to arise. It is the same thing with clothes. There are no new clothes that we never have put on before in other previous lifetimes. There is not one new experience of wearing different clothes, new clothes. Even in regards clothes if you collected all the clothes we have put on from beginningless samsaric lifetime, and the same thing with food, it would fill up all of space because our previous life has no beginning. It doesn't start from this life, the life before that, with no continuity of life—there is still no satisfaction, still there is attachment, so therefore as we has that many numberless lives, therefore there no reason for attachment to arise. These are very useful. I don't mean you should not eat, or wear clothes, I don't mean this—otherwise you cannot exist, and there is no way to practice Dharma, so I don't mean this. What I said before, is that there is no reason for attachment to arise. I am giving you the idea of how to think in order to control attachment. It is very useful sometimes when your mind is so dissatisfied, wanting more and more, when the mind has a big problem. You can relax, you can be happy with that number of possessions, the quality of your possessions. You can relax, be happy, but you don't make yourself happy, the person creates unnecessary problem, just causing more worry to himself. Sometimes, many times in our life there are many unnecessary words, troubles, the person just creating them by himself. Many times this is done, with not knowing, lack of understanding. There are big problems with possessions and with people, with relatives, and friends, wanting better and more. This is the biggest problem of life. If you think of yourself, think of other people, your friends, you can see it, all the problems are based on dissatisfaction, wanting a better friend, husband, wife, or possession, same thing, wanting better. Many of the problems are based on this dissatisfaction. So what I mean is that when your mind is so much dissatisfied, in such trouble, it is very useful to think like this, it is very useful to think of the samsaric suffering nature. For instance, if you are attached to one person

and your mind cannot be relaxed, cannot stand it, cannot be made happy, but it suffering, it is very simple to think, “This is not my first time having contact, not my first time seeing him like this. He has been my relative, husband, father, mother, child, friend, he has been these things numberless times in my previous lifetimes. Nothing happened, that much I have been together with him, but it made me be good. So the experience is nothing new.” If you that your see whole experience is not new, the strong attachment for life, with this fiscal mind, the wrong idea, thinking that this is the first time, after thinking like this, this attachment rising so strongly, all of a sudden it goes down if you think of the nature of samsaric suffering. Same thing with possessions, when you miss them so much, not getting them, missing them so much, not receiving what you want. This is very useful when you are so attached, also not only missing things but when you are so attached to the object, it is very useful to think like this. This is not the first time I have had this possession, I had it numberless times in previous lifetime, but it made me be good. These things didn’t help me to not have to depend on these things any more, they didn’t help in that way, they didn’t do me any good. These experiences are nothing new so why should be I be attached? This mind has less problem, and much more peace thinking like this. This is the suffering of dissatisfaction.

And the suffering of leaving the body again and again. Numberless times in our previous lifetime we received an animal body, and left it. There is not one animal body that we didn’t take, that we have not experienced. Each of the different animals body’s that we see, we took numberless times. As we took them numberless times we left them again and again. Same thing, preta, same thing narak realm, same thing with sura, asura, same thing with the human body—numberless times we took them and we left them. It is kind of a fearful, scary thing—for instance, how many times we took just the human body, numberless times we took it in previous lifetimes. If you collect it, it is greater than mountains, much greater than this whole earth, much greater than this earth, if you collect all our dead corpses. Whatever rebirth, whatever body in samsara is taken, nothing lasts, it has to be left again. No matter how beautiful, it is has to be left again. Thinking like this is also to make attachment to the samsaric body, beautiful samsaric body, not arise, to control attachment by thinking that it doesn’t last and it has to be left again.

Also, the suffering of joining again and again. For instance, can think in this way. The continuity of the mother, this present life’s mother and that mother’s mother, going back like this, doing this has incredible number—the mother’s mother. Also for instance, the suffering of after death again joining the intermediate stage, and after that suffering, taking the next rebirth and again dying, and again dying from joining the intermediate stage—always going round like this. Always joining like this.

In samsaric suffering, the high become lower. For instance, a president is not a definite person, always the president, always in a higher position. When we see his pictures, it looks like he is sort of a permanent president. This whole idea is completely wrong. However much the person is in a higher position in samsara, nothing is definite. It is samsaric nature—first of all being higher, then ended being lower, coming down. It is the nature of samsara. However, in the country, the king, the president, the person in the highest position doesn’t always last. This time he is the king, then next lifetime possibly he may become a dog. This can be possible. In the next lifetime he may be born as a sweeper. The lowest person. Nothing is definite. It always changes. Even in this life the person can have a higher position in early life, but in later life the person doesn’t have that position. The person becomes lower. Also on the planet beings are that much higher in space, with light on their bodies, karmically created light, but nothing is definite, because soon after also those samsaric gods are born in evil destinies where it is complete darkness, where they can’t even see their own bodies, their own

hands or legs. They are in complete darkness. Even if they are that much higher beings on the sun, the moon, these planets, that's also not definite, not sure, that it will always exist like this. In a time even those samsaric gods will have to be born in the lower realms. Suffering beings go higher and lower again and again, like this.

The next one is the suffering of not having helpers, companions. For instance, when we take birth there is no helper, no other friend who comes with us. We are born by ourselves, and when we die there is no other friend who comes with us, who helps us, we die by ourselves, the mind has to leave the body, just like taking hairs from the body. The body doesn't come, only the hair when you pull it like this.

So there are about six ways to meditate on samsaric suffering. These are very useful to have in order to see general the samsaric nature of suffering, and also they are very useful to control attachment. Whenever there is a problem of attachment it is very useful to think of these things according to the specific problem that we have. Remembering this is very useful, very useful.

So I think the first hour do meditation, and then the second hour, a few words.

7 pm

As there are six different ways to meditate on samsaric suffering, there are also three ways that include all the suffering of samsara in three, and there is a way to meditate on this also. There is a way to meditate on this. Tonight I think we don't need so much explanation as we have gone through the other sufferings, so tonight I think I quit! It is easy to understand after all this. Just a little bit talk like this. If one does not do meditation on true suffering, one doesn't receive the full or strong thought seeking nirvana. Like the person who feels thirst. His feeling thirst is that much stronger as he recognizes the suffering of feeling thirsty, that much more there is the strong desire to receive peace, to receive happiness by drinking water. By quenching the feeling of thirst. Just like this simple example. If the person understands true suffering that much more deeply through meditation, the desire of seeking nirvana, wanting to achieve nirvana, is that much stronger, that much more full. It becomes that much stronger. If our understanding of true suffering is not that deep, as we have such limited understanding of true suffering, also our desire seeking nirvana is also that small, not so strong. As the understanding of samsaric suffering is just intellectual, just words, then seeking nirvana is also just words. Even if one develops the thought seeking nirvana, if one doesn't check up the evolution, how true suffering is caused by the true cause of suffering, if one doesn't check up the evolution of the cause of suffering, how cause produces suffering, then one doesn't know how to cut the root of samsara. Without checking the evolution of the true cause of suffering, how the true cause of suffering produces suffering, without checking, knowing this, the person doesn't know how to cut the root of samsara. If you don't desire samsaric suffering, if you want to stop samsaric suffering, you have to cut the root, the cause of samsara. What is the cause of samsara? Delusion and karma. So this what is called the true cause of suffering. This is one way of talking—how karma is caused by delusions. Karma rises from the delusions.

In regards delusion there are six root delusions, twenty secondary delusions, like this. Just briefly talking like this. However going back to the source, the six root delusions, the fundamental basic thing is first of all like this. The six root delusions are greed, anger, pride, doubt, heresy, and ignorance. However, the fundamental thing, the main source, is ignorance, the main thing is ignorance. It is called *jig'ta*. This is the philosophical term. *Jig'ta* means changing, means the skandhas

one possesses are always changing. Looking at the skandhas, we believe in a self-existent “I” or “mine,” like this. *Jig'ta* means this, and this is ignorance. This is just one way of talking. Ignorance is also called *ma'rig'pa*. Ignorance, the unknowing mind, is also called this. Unknowing what? Unknowing the absolute nature of oneself, unknowing karma. According to the philosophical term the ignorance is mind, the conception that is completely opposite to the wisdom of the absolute nature. This is the main ignorance, the principal ignorance that produces ignorance of karma and others—that is the main principal ignorance that is the ignorance of the absolute nature, the meaning of that conception that is completely opposite to the wisdom of the absolute nature, the wisdom realizing the absolute nature. The reason those two conceptions are different, completely opposite, is because the object that the wisdom realizes, what this conception believes is completely different, opposite, just like this. Just like you see me, some people see me as a little boy, some people see me as a tiger! No interest in only talking about suffering. I am joking! Anyway, sort of like this, completely opposite. Even in one place, on this bed, on the same place, some people see a tiger and some people see a little boy.

If I talk about this ignorance without going into philosophical details, generally there are two things. There are religions that accept that things are self-existent, as this wrong conception perceives, and religious people accept this, besides conceiving of it, they accept it as their doctrine because of the philosophy of that religion. This wrong conception does not depend on the philosophical doctrines, or on that religious philosophy, that wrong conception—otherwise the wrong conception would not exist there. Anyway, there is a feeling of “I,” so incredible big, intuitively all the time there is a strong feeling of “I,” a strong feeling of “I” continually arising, so there is a strong conception intuitively arising. Also the feeling is so important. Something very solid, some very concrete thing. This feeling becomes stronger sometimes when you get fear. Usually when you check up you don't realize so clearly, you can't see clearly. Even though you try to see, it gets lost, you don't find it clearly. Sometimes when you are in certain danger, like falling down, at certain times when you get shocked, for instance, when a dog barks, then this wrong conception of the “I” becomes so clear, becomes so strong. At that time when it becomes so clear, if you check up, if you are conscious of how you feel with yourself, you can understand a little bit how real ignorance is, how you see your usual “I.” At that time if you are conscious you can see. For instance, at that time you get the feeling of the “I” as the most important thing, more than anything else. For instance, you almost don't see any other things except the “I.” It is the same thing when someone complains, “You are so bad, terrible,” like this, “You don't know Dharma, you are creating bad karma.” Anyway, when someone comes and says this, watch how your mind reacts that time. If you are conscious at that time, there is a way to understand how you see yourself, how you see your “I.” Especially when you are proud, when you have very strong pride. You see such an incredibly strong feeling of a concrete, solid “I” and also you are uncomfortable at that time. However you do not something that you create but something that is there, that is intuitively existing there, that is independently existing there. So strongly you feel it.

Our ignorance it feels that the “I” is concrete, sort of very solid, something very strong, something very heavy there, intuitively existing there without depending on a creator. The total feeling is not created by you, but intuitively exists there. The reason you feel sort of heavy, sort of really heavy, kind of concrete, is because this ignorance is a wrong conception and it perceives the “I” as completely independent. Because of this feeling, it feels completely independent. We feel the same thing like this with the body. Our ignorance perceives this body, and when we look at this body, when we feel this body, we feel the same thing—that it is concrete, solid, something real there. That is because mainly the wrong conception sees the physical body as completely independent, and

because of the way the wrong conception sees it, it makes it feel kind of real, concrete. It is the same thing with another person. When we look at another person, just in the second when we see the other person's body, we see something very solid, something that is real coming from the object's side. We believe this is really Doctor Nick, this is really Doctor Nick. Doctor Nick from his side, only from his side. It is the same thing when we look at any other person, when we see our mother, our real mother, there is something from her side, a real mother, like this. It is the same thing with everything—possessions, anything—they really exist from the object's side, only from the object's side. This is the feeling. Also they feel sort of concrete, solid. Why is there this feeling? That is because of the wrong conception that sees the object as completely independent, and self-existent. Because ignorance perceives it this way, you feel the object to be sort of a heavy, solid thing. This is in regards to discovering the way we see objects, discovering briefly like this, without talking much about philosophical logic or details.

It is the same thing when we hear sound, people coughing, sneezing, we have the same feeling. Besides seeing the object that way, when we hear a sound, the same thing. Something is really there, something completely, very solid, completely independent—that is the feeling when we hear sound. We think it is really there, really existing only from the object's side. It is the same thing when we touch things. Besides perceiving and listening, also when we touch, when we walk, we feel the same thing. When we walk on the ground we feel something very steep, something very concrete, something very steep, from the ground's side. Then it is the same thing with taste, a similar feeling with taste and sweetness—if you check up sweetness, it is the same thing. Also a similar feeling with taste. Also the object of ear, sound, taste, and also smell. Also these are similar, we perceive them in that way. When there is incense, when you burn incense, when you smell it, the sweet smell, only from the smoke's side, there is an independent smell. A real sweet smell appearing from the object's side. It is the same thing whatever we remember things, or people—anything that we remember, the way of perceiving them is the same. It is the same thing when we look at this tent—do you see the tent from your side or from the tent's side? It is the same thing. Then on the basis of this wrong conception seeing the “I” in the wrong way—your wrong conception is the fundamental thing. Then from this, greed, anger, and pride come, doubt comes, and those other negative minds come. Just like this.

For instance, the different organs of the senses are based on the body. If there is no body there are no different organs of the senses. All the delusions come from the wrong conception, this wrong conception seeing the “I” in such a way, as self-existent. This wrong conception intuitively always arises, day and night, even when you are conscious, working, sleeping—it is always there. This intuitive wrong conception has continued from beginningless samsaric lifetimes. Even during death time and after death, in the intermediate stage, and at the rebirth time, it continually exists. So without this, no other delusions can exist.

Just making it simple, on the basis of this wrong conception of ignorance, there is attachment. For instance like this. When we look the watch, the wrong conception sees the watch as self-existent even though it is not self-existent. On the basis of that, there is attachment, seeing the watch as self-existent, seeing that which is not there. The attachment discriminates on the basis of that self-existent view, and makes it more beautiful than what is there. When you have attachment, there is the feeling of sort of sinking into the object, like a thorn going inside the flesh. The mind absorbs into the object, like this. Then you do not want to separate from that, you want to have it. That's how attachment sees the object. This is the meaning of attachment, this is how attachment is.

Many people cut off wishing in trying to cut off attachment, That is completely wrong. If you cut off this wish there is no way to gain peace, no way to release from suffering because you have cut off the wish. So if you have to cut off everything, all actions, and the wish to control your mind, if there is no the wish to control mind, if there is no energy to control your mind, the mind never gets controlled. This person thinks that all wishes and attachment has to be stopped and that all thoughts are bad, that they have to be cut off, because they are the those same wrong conceptions. If that were so then eating medicine and eating poison should be same thing, because eating poison causes problems, so all food, every food should be cut off. According to that wrong conception, it becomes like this. Too much over-judging helps nothing, only creates confusion, makes the person complicated, makes him not know how to live life—attachment means this.

It is the same thing when there is anger toward the object. First of all the wrong conception sees the object as self-existent. Then there is an ugly view, it appears ugly, the opposite of beauty. As this appears anger comes, disliking the object. There are also different types of pride. All these different delusions, these five root delusion, come from the fundamental thing, the wrong conception, the ignorance not knowing the absolute nature of the self. All the twenty secondary delusions also come from this. With these delusions, as this ignorant conception produces the different types of delusion, then the different types of delusion produce karma. As these delusions produce karma, the person suffers continuously, circling round in samsara.

Then in relation to the karma that is produced by these delusions, there is unfortunate karma, fortunate karma, and immovable karma—three different types of karma. Fortunate karma means positive karma that causes one to be born in the upper realms and has the result of happiness. Unfortunate karma is negative karma that has a suffering result. Immovable karma is created by the gods who are in the world of form, the samsaric gods. Their virtuous actions do not change, the result ripens there, it does not take place in another realm. Movable karma is like this. For instance, the animals who belong to people who good care of them, loving so much, giving them all kinds things. For instance, in this lifetime a person does not keep the precepts but makes a lot of charity. So the person is born as a dog in such a family. The rebirth is as an animal, a dog, but they receive food, and have good enjoyments. Instead of charity bringing the result in the upper realms, having the enjoyments of being born as a human being, instead of bringing this result, it brings the result of being born as dog and having those enjoyments, still having good enjoyments. That karma doesn't bring the result of rebirth in the human realm, making charity, because the other karma of keeping precepts is missing. So the result ripens in the animal realm. This is movable karma, unfortunate karma produced by delusion. Due to this karma, the being takes rebirth in samsara with this wrong conception, with all these wrong delusions, again creating karma, and according to the karma person again takes rebirth as a person born again with wrong conceptions, and all these delusions, and again creates karma.

I think stop there.

The karma of those in the world of form doesn't ripen in other realms like the other example of a human being who didn't observe precepts but created good karma making charity. We create this in order to have a better rebirth, in order to have a happy better life in this lifetime or in the future. Instead of this result ripening in an animal realm, it moves, like this.

So as Guru Tsong Khapa said, "If one does not try to think of the shortcomings of true suffering, one does not develop the full thought seeking nirvana." "Think" means, in this case, understanding

or checking. “If one does not think of the evolution, how all suffering rises from a cause, one does not know how to cut the root of samsara. It is necessary to develop the renounced mind, aversion for samsara.” After that one, I don’t remember, sorry ... He said “I have the yogi have practiced in that way. I prostrate to you seeking nirvana, practicing like this.” Now I remember. After the word “It is necessary to develop the renounced mind, aversion for samsara, and have the understanding of what binds one in samsara. I, the yogi practice like this. I prostrate to you seeking nirvana, who should practice like this.”

This Guru Tsong Khapa’s quotation, from his teaching that explains how to meditate on samsara, and how to receive the renouncing mind of samsara.

So I think that’s all. Then a few drops. Then tomorrow at the time of the initiation in order to make it a little big clear I can explain tomorrow.

Question: Could you say which commitment is this initiation?

Rinpoche: Commitment. I see. You can never eat food, always sit down, cannot stand up. I am joking! The commitment of the initiation is to become Avalokiteshvara, leave your suffering body and become Avalokiteshvara. That is the commitment. That’s easy. Actually, I am not joking ... the person who does not have that aim doesn’t have to come, I am serious. This is the main aim, trying to release from this suffering body, this samsara. Trying to release from samsara and achieve the compassionate buddha’s enlightened stage in order to lead sentient beings. Not only for your happiness, but only for the happiness of other sentient beings—to lead them to the compassionate buddha’s enlightened stage. If one doesn’t have that aim, it is not necessary to come, better to not come. The fundamental thing is this pure thought of bodhicitta, wishing to receive enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings. We have been always repeating this every day. From your side also you may have repeated it, or you may have thought it. So this is the main thing, the fundamental thing. What is necessary is this motivation, and then we have been saying mantras, making purification with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—I think we have been doing this with just the mind relying on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and that itself is taking refuge, relying on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in order to achieve enlightenment, to escape from samsara, to achieve enlightenment. The mind relying on Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, that itself is taking refuge. We have already been doing that.

Then one thing is this. The recitation of the mantra—you can recite the short one and the long one. If you can recite the long one it will be very helpful for you. Maybe three times saying this long mantra and then maybe the short one, which has only six syllables, this maybe ... actually there is no reason why the person cannot recite one rosary. So fast, just six syllables. It doesn’t take even five minutes. It can be almost finished in a minute. If you can recite one rosary it is the best thing. If not, then recite this mantra twenty-one times—actually there is no question why we can’t recite one rosary one day. It is just since we have so much time to talk about, many things to do, sleep, so many other things to do, there is no reason actually, we just make it difficult. Like this.

That’s all I think, thank you.

DEDICATION

I am thinking to explain, as some people asked how to do it, usually in the mornings in the West, how the meditation should be set up, things like this, but I think tomorrow.