

Kopan Course

No. 43

Teachings by Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche
at the 43rd Kopan Course
December 2010

Lightly edited by Gordon McDougall, October 2012

© Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche

Contents

Lecture One: 6 December	5
<i>The imprint exists but only as a mere label</i>	5
<i>No matter where we look we can't find the I</i>	7
<i>We can't even find the I that exists</i>	13
<i>Our illusioned mind causes us to suffer</i>	14
<i>Satisfaction only comes from seeing beyond this life</i>	15
<i>The three types of suffering come from holding the I as truly existent</i>	17
<i>We must meditate on the emptiness of things in our daily life</i>	19
<i>Coming here is the most important thing in your lives</i>	22
Lecture Two: 6 December	23
<i>Conventional Nature and Impermanence</i>	23
<i>The happiness of future lives is more important than the happiness of this life</i>	26
<i>With the perfect human rebirth we can achieve the four Mahayana Dharma wheels</i>	28
<i>Understanding how precious this life is stops thoughts of suicide</i>	29
<i>The path of the lower scope practitioner stops the eight worldly dharmas</i>	31
<i>Causative phenomena are like a star, a butter lamp etc.</i>	34
<i>Food offering</i>	36
Lecture Three: 7 December	37
<i>Meditating on the object of refutation while walking</i>	37
<i>"taking care of ourselves" means practicing the Dharma</i>	40
<i>The real I is not findable</i>	41
<i>Between eternalism and nihilism</i>	44
<i>The fear of nearing emptiness</i>	46
<i>Tea offering</i>	47
<i>Correctly searching for the I (cont): The fear of falling into nihilism</i>	48
<i>Realizing the two truths saves from nihilism</i>	50
<i>Geshe Jampa Wangdu: Emptiness and bodhicitta</i>	52
<i>The story of Geshe Jampa Wangdu</i>	54
<i>To develop lam-rim realizations we need bodhicitta</i>	56
<i>The guru is dharmakaya: The first verse Praise to Shakyamuni Buddha</i>	57
<i>Yamantaka appears as a butcher</i>	61
<i>All happiness comes from the guru</i>	62
<i>Praise to Shakyamuni Buddha (back to)</i>	63

Lecture Four: 8 December	65
<i>Doing a hundred things but the one important one: renouncing the self</i>	65
<i>Buddhas do not have a dualistic view</i>	66
<i>Oral transmission of “Chenrezig’s Request to the Buddha”</i>	68
<i>Oral transmission: The meaning of the Buddha mantra</i>	70
<i>Khunu Lama Rinpoche’s story</i>	71
<i>Oral transmission: The pronunciation of the Buddha mantra</i>	73
<i>Oral transmission: The Prajnaparamita Sutras</i>	74
Lecture Five: 9 December	76
<i>Liberating animals</i>	76
<i>The importance of a good heart</i>	77
<i>The four suffering results of karma</i>	80
<i>The need for purification</i>	82
<i>Liberating animals</i>	89
<i>The power of the Golden Light Sutra</i>	92
<i>The four harmonious brothers</i>	93
<i>The importance of a good heart</i>	93
<i>The Sixteen Human Dharmas</i>	98
Lecture Six: 9 December	100
<i>The seven-limb practice</i>	100
<i>Seven-limb: Prostration</i>	100
<i>Seven-limb: Offering</i>	102
<i>Seven-limb: Confession</i>	103
<i>Seven-limb: Rejoicing</i>	103
<i>Seven-limb: Entreating</i>	104
<i>Seven-limb: Requesting</i>	105
<i>Seven-limb: Dedication</i>	106
Lecture Seven: 11 December	106
Lecture Eight: 11 December	107
<i>The six types of suffering: Nothing is definite in samsara</i>	107
<i>The six types of suffering: Nothing gives satisfaction in samsara</i>	110
<i>The bodhisattva’s motivation</i>	113
<i>The six types of suffering: We have to leave this body again and again</i>	116
<i>The six types of suffering: We have to take rebirth again and again</i>	117

<i>The six types of suffering: We go forever from higher and lower in samsara</i>	<i>117</i>
<i>The six types of suffering: We have to die alone.....</i>	<i>118</i>
<i>Motivation for the refuge ceremony.....</i>	<i>120</i>
<i>Refuge vows.....</i>	<i>120</i>
<i>Dedication</i>	<i>125</i>
<i>Refuge in the Buddha: What to practice and avoid</i>	<i>126</i>
<i>Refuge in the Dharma: What to practice and avoid</i>	<i>127</i>
<i>St Francis.....</i>	<i>128</i>
<i>Refuge in the Dharma (back to).....</i>	<i>129</i>
<i>Refuge in the Sangha: What to practice and Avoid</i>	<i>130</i>
<i>General Advice on what to do and avoid with refuge.....</i>	<i>132</i>
<i>Vajrasattva initiation</i>	<i>133</i>
<i>Vajra Armor transmission</i>	<i>135</i>
<i>Red Tara initiation</i>	<i>136</i>

Lecture One: 6 December

THE IMPRINT EXISTS BUT ONLY AS A MERE LABEL

[The lecture on the 5th of December was inaudible]

[Rinpoche recites *Lama drompa chom den da...*]

All the rest expresses the different names, the different qualities of the lama, all the rest is, except the last one, *chak tsel lo*, which is “I prostrate with my body, speech and mind.” So, from the beginning, the lama is very deep subject, most profound; it has secret meaning.

The great enlightened being, the deity Heruka, Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo mentioned in the first stanza of *Calling the Guru From Afar*: “May the guru understand me.” *Lama Kyen, Lama Kyen, Lama Kyen*; he says this three times, “Please understand me, please understand me, please understand me.”

Gyal-wa Kun Gyi Yeshe, that’s describing the real meaning of the lama, the guru. *Lama* means “one with peerless qualities.” There’s nobody higher than that, there’s nobody higher than that by quality. Just that word, that’s the meaning of *lama* in Tibetan or *guru* in Sanskrit.

Of *Gyalwa kun gyi yeshe*, the *gyal-wa* is victorious, which means a buddha has victory over the enemy, the four maras: the mara of afflictive delusions, the mara of the Lord of Death, the mara of the aggregates. There are pure aggregates and impure aggregates and the impure aggregates—our aggregates—are caused by karma and delusion, action and disturbing thought, in Tibetan, *nyon-mong mon-pa*, disturbing thought. You can add one more word, “obscuring”: disturbing, obscuring thought.

What is disturbing is obscuring. Instead of freeing us from suffering, instead of freeing us from hallucinations, all the cheating mind, all the wrong concepts that cheats us and cheats others, deceives us and deceives others—instead of freeing ourselves from that, instead of awakening us from that, then we delude ourselves. Instead of awakening, we delude ourselves, we obscure ourselves. So, that’s disturbing, obscuring thoughts. That’s the Tibetan term, *nyon-mong mon-pa*. It describes what it does to our mind, what effect we get from that; it disturbs. Disturbing is the main thing, obscuring your mind, deluding our mind.

That’s how we have been suffering all the time for beginningless rebirths, not only from this morning, not only from our birth in this life, not just that, but from lives before that. Why we’re suffering in this life is because this is a continuation of the past lives which were all also suffering lives.

If the past life was not suffering, we couldn’t suffer in this life. But the past life was a suffering life; it had delusions and that’s why we have delusions, why we are born with delusions in this life.

It’s not just a question this life and the past life, but it’s been like that from beginningless rebirths, life has been like this, have been suffering because of the delusions, the wrong concepts, because of the mind being under the control of that, dictated by that, controlled by that.

Then your actions of body, speech, mind being under that control, delusion, under the delusion, not wisdom, not under the control of the pure mind, the wisdom, the compassion, so forth, not like that, but under the control of delusion, so that becomes cause of suffering, actions of the body, speech, and mind.

This is how it's been from beginningless rebirths, that's how we have been suffering. These aggregates we have are caused by karma and delusion, they are under the control of karma and delusion, so that's why they are in the nature of suffering; that's why our life is pervaded by suffering.

These aggregates are pervaded by suffering because they are under the control of karma and delusion. These aggregates are contaminated the seed of delusions, the imprint, which is in nature of imprint. I just remembered her question from yesterday about imprints.

So that's the short answer, the very short answer to her question. Sorry, this is taking us away, but when we think about imprints, when we question what imprints are, how imprints appear to us, how we can believe them, I have no idea.

In any case, the imprint that appears to us appears as not merely labeled by mind; it appears as a real imprint in the sense existing from its own side, a real imprint, by using the ordinary people's term "real." In the philosophical texts, in the Dharma texts, the Buddha says it exists from its own side or by its nature or inherently, truly existent. But the meaning is the same. It's just different ways of expressing it, but the meaning is the same.

If it appears to us in that way, as a "real" imprint, and not only that, but secondly our mind *believes* that it is true, that's the second mistake. The first mistake is appearing wrong way, the first mistake is the imprint appearing in a mistaken way. The second mistake is our mind believing it to be true. That is a total hallucination. That's a total hallucination. It is totally non-existent right there from where it is appearing, it is totally non-existent right there. There's not even an *atom* of that exist from its own side. There's not even an *atom* of that exist from its own side; it's totally empty.

So, that's the emptiness, that's the ultimate nature, the emptiness of the imprint.

Because the way it appears and the way we hold on to it do not exist at all, even the slightest, even atom of that, that *doesn't* mean there's no imprint. There *is* an imprint. What that imprint is, is nothing else except what is merely imputed by the mind. The way the imprint has been appearing to us [is something different], but what exists is only what is merely labeled by mind, only *that*. Other than that the imprint doesn't exist *at all*, it doesn't exist from its own side at all.

The imprint exists. I forget what I was trying to say. The way the imprint has been appearing to us from not just now, not just from today or this morning or yesterday or from childhood and birth, but from past lives, from beginningless rebirths—the way it has been appearing is as something real, and then, besides *that* mistake, that hallucination, we allow our mind to hold on to that as really true. This is what has been appearing to us from beginningless rebirths up to now, this is the way we have let our mind hold on to that, but it is *totally* empty, non-existent, completely empty.

The way we've been believing from beginningless rebirths up to now, the way it's been appearing and the way we've been believing, the way we've let our mind hold onto it as true from beginningless rebirths up to now, that is *totally* non-existent, *totally* non-existent, empty.

Here we are talking the very heart, the very truth, the very nature of the phenomena, what it really is—what is true and what is false; what exists and what doesn't exist, what is the correct understanding and what is the wrong concept. Relating to the thought, this is wisdom and ignorance. So this is first object, truth and false.

The whole world's suffering—all the global problems, all the individual problems—is mainly due to this ignorance, not understanding what's the truth and what's false in life.

We don't see the truth. We don't see the very nature of phenomena. I'm not talking about every sentient being; I'm just relating it to us, to ordinary sentient beings like us, like myself. I'm not using all sentient beings. Of course many sentient beings through meditation practice, by purifying the mind, by collecting extensive merits, by developing guru devotion, get these realizations and see the truth, the very nature of the I and aggregates and phenomena and so forth.

Then there are arya beings, the arhats, the meditators who achieve the right seeing path and the path of meditation, who directly see emptiness, the truth of the I and phenomena, the aggregates and then other phenomena, and there are of course arya bodhisattvas who directly see emptiness, and of course no question there are buddhas who see the emptiness of all the phenomena, every single phenomenon including emptiness of the emptiness.

As I've mentioned, I'm explaining this on the basis of, related to the imprint of what's false, what's the truth, and the wisdom, the truth that realizes that wisdom.

So what I'm saying is this is the cause of all the individual suffering and global problems, causing sentient beings to circle in the samsara, in one of the six types of realms continuously from beginningless rebirths up to now. And they are still in cyclic existence.

Maybe I'll say this first, hopefully now it's okay to mention this. For most people it might be okay.

I mentioned about the imprint, the way it's been appearing from beginningless rebirths up to now, in that way, appearing as a real one, existing from its own side and not merely labeled by the mind. I described it like that.

NO MATTER WHERE WE LOOK WE CAN'T FIND THE I

From beginningless rebirths and from our side, the mind has never realized that it is false, it is a totally wrong belief. This is the ignorance that has been with us from beginningless rebirths up to now. It's just like this with all the rest of phenomena. Even with our own I, the self, it's like that; it's *totally* wrong, *totally* wrong, even relating to the I. That leaves an imprint. That's an example, the I, ourselves—the I that exists is what is merely imputed by the mind—*that* exists. I'm not saying that the I doesn't exist.

The I *exists* but it is nothing else except what is merely imputed by the mind. How the I, the self, exists is extremely, *extremely* unbelievably, most unbelievably most unbelievably subtle. It is most, the most subtle one, it's merely imputed by mind, nothing else than that—that is what exists, just that.

We can see that it is totally empty, totally empty of this real I that we have been believing in from this morning, that we have been believing in from birth, that we have been believing in from beginningless rebirths, it is totally empty. The I that exists is *totally empty* of that real I. It is not at all that I that we've been believing in from this morning, "I have been doing this, this, this, this, this, this, this, this. I have been doing meditations, doing the Kopan Course. I'm staying in Nepal, this very poor place, but very holy; very poor, but very holy!" [Rinpoche laughs] The total opposite of New York! Or Los Angeles.

I've just come from Los Angeles. I watched it from the airplane; it's *so* vast, unbelievably vast, like the sky, amazing. But you don't see New York so much like that, as spread as that. Amazing.

So what I'm saying is that the I has been appearing as a real one, in the sense of existing from its own side, in the sense of not merely labeled by the mind, not merely labeled from the side of the mind.

When we're born, we're born with that appearance, with that hallucination of ourselves, we're born with that hallucination of ourselves, with that hallucination of our I, in the same way we had that hallucination in the past.

From beginningless rebirths, this hallucination has been there, this I has appeared as a real one. I'm just using the common people's term but there are also other terms, "truly-existent one" and so forth. From beginningless rebirths up to now, up to this second, we have held this hallucination, this I which has *never* come into existence, *never* come into existence even for one second. This real I has never come into existence even for one second from beginningless rebirths. It's always empty, from beginningless rebirths up to now. That's the reality.

That's the emptiness. It's totally, completely empty, completely non-existent from beginningless rebirths. From the very beginning it's been empty this way. *That* is the truth, the ultimate nature of the I.

The next mistake is we let our mind hold onto this hallucination, this false I, as real. We see this false I as real, as true. Not just this morning, not just from birth, but from beginningless rebirths, we have held this total wrong belief of this I that has never come in existence from the beginning, even for a second, but this hallucination holds onto it a hundred percent, that this is right, true, not only now, not only this moment, but from beginningless rebirths. That is the *totally* wrong belief.

Actually this subject should come much later, after bodhicitta. In the Mahayana teachings, there is the graduated path of the lower capable being, and then the graduated path of the middle capable being, and then the graduated path of the higher capable being. Then after bodhicitta comes the last subject, emptiness. [Rinpoche laughs]

It's safer for guiding the mind, and so for the lower intelligent being, there may be some danger of falling into nihilism, thinking that nothing exists at all. The understanding doesn't stay in the middle way, even though it's explained but the idea is not understood and we slip, we fall into nihilism.

There's eternalism, but then we can fall into nihilism where nothing exists—no karma, no reincarnation. I'm just saying that for some people this can be a danger. I think maybe here, however, after so much meditating on and thinking about or discussing reincarnation and karma, about life, you have some understanding about what life is, the *real*, real discussion about life, what the really life is, so it comes to this one.

This ignorance, holding the I that doesn't exist the wrong way, is a *huge* issue, it is a *huge* issue, it is the biggest issue. The mistake is the biggest mistake; the hallucination is the biggest hallucination. We don't see the truth, we don't see the I that exists. What we have been believing, the way it has been appearing to us and what we have been believing is totally, totally false. It's not there; it's totally false. If we look, it's not there. If we check, it's not there.

Neither the aggregate of form nor the aggregate of feeling are that real I, that real me. We always point our finger here [Rinpoche points (possibly to chest)] [thinking this is] “me.” Or somebody calls our name or says, “Hi!” and we say, “Are you calling me?”

I don't know whether you do this, I'm not sure, I don't remember but when you're unhappy, do you say, “Today I'm so unhappy” and point here? When you're happy, you do this, [Rinpoche points] but when you're unhappy, you do this. [Rinpoche points (possibly to another area of his body)]. I'm not sure. But you definitely point like this. You point here, you point here, but wherever you point, there's no I there—outside or inside, wherever you point, wherever you touch, the I's not there.

What I'm saying is that the aggregate of form is not that real I, but neither are aggregates of cognition, of feeling, of recognition [discrimination]—recognizing, cognizing this and this and this and this, is not that real I. Then, the compounding aggregates, there are the six principle consciousness and the fifty-one mental factors. As far as the body and the mind, the mind has six principal consciousnesses, and then these fifty-one mental factors, so if we take out feeling and cognition, the rest of the mental factors are what is called “compounding aggregates”—aggregates that compound the result. This present mental factor compounds the next second's result.

The compounding aggregates are not the real I and the aggregate of consciousness is not the real I. Even all together, even all these five aggregates together are not the real I, the way it's been appearing to us from beginningless rebirths and the way we've been holding onto to that a hundred percent, entrusting that a hundred percent from beginningless rebirths. There's no question at all that we have totally believed that from beginningless rebirths.

This collection of five aggregates is not this real I, the I that has been appearing to us from beginningless rebirths, the I that we've been holding onto as true. This collection—all the five aggregates together—is not this real I *at all*.

The collection of the five aggregates is the base to be labeled I. It's not the I because it's the *base* to be labeled I. There are two different phenomena, the base and label I. The collection of the five aggregates is the base and the I is the label that's imputed onto that base. There are two different phenomena; they do not exist separately but they do exist differently. We have to understand that.

The collection of the five aggregates is not *at all* the I, not *at all*. The collection of the five aggregates is what is to be received, and the I is the receiver. The I is the receiver and the collection of five aggregates is what is received. So, they are two different phenomena.

Or we can say that the I is the possessor and the collection of the five aggregates is the possession, and so they are two different phenomena. It's very important to as much as possible understand that those two are two different phenomena. There are many ways we can see it, and one is the aggregates as base and the I as label.

I don't remember exactly but in Lama Tsongkhapa's *Middle Lam-rim* there are ten examples, ten ways of showing how those two are two different phenomena. Each way points to how we can't find this real I anywhere on the collection of the five aggregates. We can't find the real I at all. From the tip of the hair down to the toes, there is nowhere we can find this real I that we've been believing in from beginningless time, believing a hundred percent that it exists. Until now from beginningless rebirths we have been believing in it but if we look for it we can't find it, from the tip of the hair down to the toes, even the toenails. [Rinpoche laughs] Even the tip of the nails.

Of course we have to meditate, we must meditate so it becomes clearer. We always point here [Rinpoche points to himself] always here inside, we're not pointing outside the skin, [showing we think] the I is there outside the skin. We're not pointing like this, we're pointing inside. But as I mentioned already, from the tip of the hair down to the toes, we can't find here inside, nowhere inside can it be found. There's nothing we can point to and say, 'Oh, the I is here! Oh, the I is here!' We cannot. We can't find it by going to hospital and having an operation on our chest, asking the doctor to operate on our chest and then look for the I.

I was surprised that operation was never done in a hospital, looking for the I, paying a billion dollars and asking the doctors to operate, saying, "If you find the I, then I'll give you billion dollars!" [Rinpoche laughs] We cannot find it there at all.

For sure there's nowhere we can find it, but particularly in the chest, where we've been pointing all the time, not there *at all*. Even though the anger arises from the heart and not from the head, but not this heart, not this heart where you do the operation. Even though the anger, attachment, jealousy, compassion, devotion doesn't come from the head, doesn't come from the brain down, doesn't go from the brain to the heart, we feel it comes from the heart. Even though it's like this but the I cannot be found even there. So I want to mention this one. My guess is I don't think it's been discussed yet in science.

There was one a person in Tibet where I lived three years who didn't have a head. I didn't see this but my guru, His Holiness Song Rinpoche, told me. This person didn't have a head but if he wanted to be under the sun he made a gesture or if he was hungry or something he rubbed his stomach. Maybe for food he put a spoon of food, *tsampa*, here through the neck. His Holiness Song Rinpoche told me that.

Now to prove that, I saw in a Dharma text by a great lama from Amdo, Gungtang Tenpai Dronme This lama's like a sun shining in this world, benefitting sentient beings and the teachings of the Buddha, unbelievable, like only one sun but it dispels all the darkness in the world. This lama's benefit is like that to numberless sentient beings.

So anyway Gungtang Tenpai Dronme mentioned in texts I have seen that in Kham there was a person without a head, he described it in the text, so that I don't think it's come in scientific knowledge that person can live without a head. Because in the West, everything's to do with the brain, everything's through the brain. But of course, in our daily life, anger doesn't come from the brain; attachment doesn't come from the brain. From your own experience I'm sure you must know that. It doesn't come from the head; you feel it from the heart, but not the heart there. Devotion, a positive mind, a negative mind all come from the heart.

These stories should help us understand reincarnation, the continuity of the mind, even about the person who doesn't have a head but is still alive, who can still communicate with the hands.

As I mentioned, both the negative thoughts and positive thoughts we feel arising, coming down from the brain, we feel from the heart, it's very gross experience.

So now the next one, it's very important here, this real I that we believe in now—the way this has been appearing to us and how we have believed it to be from beginningless rebirths—this real I, the way it appears real is as existing from its own side, not merely labeled by mind. Then our mind holds onto that, entrusting that to be really true, not only now, not only this life, but from beginningless rebirths. *This* real I we can neither find *on* these aggregates *nor* can we find anywhere.

We can neither find it on these aggregates—we can make that clear [when we search for it.] We can neither find it on these aggregates *nor* can we find it anywhere. This second point, we can't find it anywhere, that analysis is very important.

I've explained this here but we have to meditate on it, we have to analyze by ourselves, how this real I doesn't exist anywhere; neither on this nor anywhere does it exist. That means we can't find it anywhere; that proves that it is a total hallucination, that this I is totally false. It is totally non-existent, *totally* non-existent, *totally* non-existent.

With the discovery of this real I's total non-existence—how it's totally non-existent here inside this body, in the chest, totally non-existent on these aggregates—with this total discovery then when somebody criticizes us, telling us, “Oh, you're so selfish” or “You're so bad” [Rinpoche laughs] it does nothing to us, it does nothing to us. When we analyze the effect of these things, it doesn't affect us at all. If somebody saying we're so selfish or bad it's nothing.

But if we believe there's an I there, this old belief that we've had from beginningless rebirths—even including today we still have this belief that there's a real I there inside this body—with this belief when somebody tells us we're so selfish or very bad, then we get angry, we get angry. Do you understand what I'm saying?

If we believe there's a real I there, then with this belief, when somebody tells us we're so bad, we're stupid, we're garbage, anger arises, and suddenly our heart experiences problems, we become disturbed, we feel disturbed, anger arises.

There are big differences in life because of the effect of holding this ignorance, believing there's an I on these aggregates or inside this body or chest. Depending on what other people say, attachment arises. If somebody says, “I love you” attachment arises.

But then, with the discovery that there's no I there, whatever the person says, whether it's "I love you" or "You're so bad" or "You're so beautiful," it doesn't affect us; it's nothing, it's nothing. So we don't get into trouble, we don't get defeated.

It's the same with the reality. The I that exists is what is merely labeled by mind. With this discovery you think of the I, yes, but as being merely labeled by mind. Even with that discovery, with that thought, you think of I but it's something which is merely labeled by mind, with *that* thought, while your mind's in that state, if somebody says, "You're stupid," "You're garbage" or something terrible, it's nothing, it doesn't have negative effect to us.

With our discovery of the I that exists, the I that is merely labeled by mind, even when we are thinking of the I, nothing other people say bothers us. It doesn't cause attachment to arise; it doesn't cause anger to arise. No matter how much they criticize us, it doesn't affect us.

But when we don't think that way, the minute we think there's an I there on these aggregates, in this body, in this chest—*not* with the discovery of the merely-labeled I, the I that exists merely labeled by mind—then depending on what kind of form we see, we get angry or we have attachment; depending on what kind of sound we hear, the language, we get anger or we have attachment. Life changes, life totally changes depending our state of mind. Whether we are thinking about what's true or false, we're still believing in the false I as a real one.

What I was saying before is this. All global suffering, all the global and individual problems, from beginningless rebirths up to now, are due to not having discovered the truth, that the false I does not exist *at all*, that there is not even one atom there. [Problems come from believing] this false I to be real, having *totally* the wrong belief, not seeing the truth.

The truth is that this merely-labeled I is like it doesn't exist. It's like it doesn't exist. For our mind, for the ignorance, it's like it doesn't exist. What exists we believe doesn't exist; what doesn't exist, we believe to be real. This is why the whole world is suffering; it's come from that. Individual beings' suffering comes from that, including the tiniest insect—ants or those beings we can only see through a microscope—including us human beings, all suffering comes from this ignorance.

Therefore, in this meditation course, in Kopan, here is a discovery, the most important discovery in life—to recognize what's false and true, and then to remove the root of suffering. Then we achieve ultimate happiness, liberation from suffering, the cessation of the oceans of samsara's suffering: the oceans of suffering of hell beings, hungry ghost, animals, human beings, suras, asuras, intermediate stage beings. We achieve the cessation of oceans of suffering of each realm, by ceasing the cause, karma and delusion.

We ourselves are able to achieve that and we are also able to guide others, to liberate others from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to full enlightenment.

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the past, present and future merits collected by numberless sentient beings and buddhas, may we, all sentient beings, us here, and all the rest of the sentient beings, including my own family members, friends, enemies, everybody, in all the lifetimes never be separated from the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and always collect merit by making offerings to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and receive the blessings of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the realizations from the root of the path, guru devotion, up to enlightenment,

especially bodhicitta and clear light, from the highest tantra, to actualize within us, in the hearts of all sentient beings, including us, everybody here.

What I mentioned before, what we cannot find is the real I on this, not only the aggregates themselves, but even that real I, inherently-existent I, or I existing from its own side, or I existing by its nature—it's all the same meaning. The real I can't be found, what we've been believing in until now can't be found—not only now, not only today, from birth, but from beginningless rebirths, it can't be found. We believe that this true I is real, that it really exists, but we can't find it on these aggregates from the tip of the hair down to the toes. Nowhere we can find it. We can't find it anywhere, not only on the aggregates but we can't find anywhere, we can't find under the ocean, we can't find in the sky, there is nowhere we can find it.

So when you look for money, you look for money in your purse, and you can't find anywhere, outside, inside, so then that means you don't have money, money's not there.

So same here, the I, this real I what you've been believing, what has been appearing to you, what you've been believing from beginningless rebirth, not there. So you're totally, completely cheated by your ignorance, you're totally deceived by your ignorance, the mind entrusting, believing this real I appearing from there really exists, so that totally cheated you, totally deceived you, deceived you from beginningless rebirth, and then from that all the delusion rises, motivated karma, and all the sufferings, all the oceans of hell suffering, oceans of hungry ghosts' suffering, oceans of animal suffering, human beings' suffering, oceans of sura beings' suffering, oceans of asura beings' sufferings, as well as intermediate state beings, so this, one has been suffering from beginningless rebirth, so time without beginning, one has been suffering in samsara like this.

I forgot what I was saying, I don't remember what I said. What did I say? [Student reminds Rinpoche] [Rinpoche laughs] Before that? Anyway, I don't know what I said.

WE CAN'T EVEN FIND THE I THAT EXISTS

We can't even find the merely-labeled I. That is what *exists*, that is what exists, but even *that*, if we look for it, we can't find it on this base, on these aggregates. The analysis is the same. The aggregate of form is not the merely-labeled I; the aggregate of feeling is not the merely-labeled I; the aggregate of cognition is not the merely-labeled I; the aggregate of compounding is not the merely-labeled I; the aggregate of consciousness is not the merely-labeled I. Even the collection of all these is not the merely-labeled I, so it's the same. We can't find the merely-labeled I from the tip of the hair down to the toes, nowhere. That's the same.

When we search on the base, we can't find it, so both are exactly the same. Not only the false I that we've been believing to be true from beginningless rebirths is unfindable on the aggregates, but even the I that *does* exist, the I merely labeled by the mind, even *that* is unfindable on the aggregates. Neither can be found, so it's the same. When we look for either, we can't find it, so it's the same.

The difference is that the merely labeled I *exists*; it exists in the world, it exists in this southern continent, this human world, it exists in the East, in Nepal, it exists Kopen, it exists in this gumpa, but we can't find it on the base. If we look for it on this base, these aggregates, we can't find it.

This merely-labeled I is sitting on this cushion *but* we can't find it on these aggregates, we can't find it from the tip of the hair down to the toes, neither in our nose nor in our ears, inside anywhere, in our heart—there is nowhere we can find it, this I that exists. Do you understand?

We need to not only analyze, but also by doing strong prayers to the guru and the lineage lamas of the path, to receive the guru's blessings in our heart, by entering in our heart through the intensive, continual intensive practice of purification, purifying the mind. Purification is not mentioned by scientists. Purifying the mind, the method to make the mind fully awakened, is not mentioned by the scientists. In all of scientific discovery purification is not mentioned.

Defilements are not mentioned, so purification is not mentioned. The development of the mind, those inner qualities, and how to do that, to achieve realizations, they cannot mention that. Collecting merits is not mentioned by the scientists. Maybe they mention collecting the cause of external success, but not for realizations, not creating cause by the mind, and so collecting merit is not mentioned. None of these means to develop the mind are mentioned: how to remove the cause of suffering, the three poisonous minds—ignorance, anger and attachment—these are not covered. They have not discovered these three are the root of suffering, where all problems arise from. Because this hasn't been discovered, how can they mention how to remove these three poisonous minds? It doesn't come into science, there's no path, no method to remove the cause of suffering. It's not mentioned.

So, of course, there's no way scientists can talk about ultimate happiness, everlasting happiness, liberation, besides no mention of the fully awakened mind, the complete qualities of cessation, all those gross and subtle defilements and the complete qualities of realizations—none of this is mentioned.

What I'm saying is that by receiving the blessing of the guru, entered in our own heart, through continual, intensive purification practice, we purify defilements and continuously collect extensive merit, the necessary conditions to meditate on the path. Then realizations come and our inner experience gets developed.

Then, we become a real scientist, a real inner scientist, a meditator inner scientist. On a deeper and deeper level we learn about mind and phenomena. Even before we remove the subtle defilements, when we remove the gross defilements, the disturbing-thought obscurations, we have unbelievable qualities, an unbelievable, extensive knowledge of the mind. Then, when even the subtle defilements have ceased, our mind becomes a fully-awakened mind. Only then have we completed all the knowledge of the mind, every single thing about it, both external phenomena and inner phenomena, the mind, everything, every single thing, and we have a direct understanding, a full understanding.

OUR ILLUSIONED MIND CAUSES US TO SUFFER

I've remembered something the Fifth Dalai Lama mentioned.

The defective view is thick darkness, the ignorance, blocking us from seeing things as they are. Unless we try to remove that ignorance, we won't even be able to see conventional things correctly, due to this hallucination.

Besides our mind being illusioned, being deluded, because our mind is obscured from seeing the truth, we don't discover the truth and then we continuously suffer, as I mentioned already. Then we constantly suffer, we constantly suffer. Nobody creates our suffering; there's nobody outside that creates our suffering, only ourselves. Only by following the ignorance, our ignorance creates our suffering.

This "defective view" includes the merely-imputed I. The second after this merely-imputed I appears to the mind, it appears back to our mind *not* as merely imputed. Even though a second before our mind has merely imputed this I, we're not aware of this, we haven't realized this. So what appears back to us a second after this is not according to reality. The I that is merely imputed by the mind appears back to us as *not* merely imputed, it appears back as a real I.

The I appears totally false, *totally false*; it appears back to us totally falsely in that next second. This happens because as soon as our mind apprehends the I, it sees it as real because of our previous ignorance. Previous moments of ignorance have left negative imprints on the mind and the next second after our mind merely imputes the I, it decorates this with a [sense of] true existence; it sees it as the real one, the truly-existent one, existing from its own side. This hallucination decorates the merely-labeled I that happened just a second before. This hallucination comes from our mind; it comes from your ignorance. We then let our mind hold on to it as true, as a hundred percent true, as a reality. We see this false I as a reality, as an I that truly exists.

That is, of course, the function of ignorance. We create our ignorance and that's the function of the ignorance, holding that as real, as truly existence. We decorate the base of body and mind on which we label "I"—this merely-imputed I—with the appearance of a real one. It's a hallucination, but we believe it's true. It's something we place over the aggregates, over the association of body and mind.

The example is a terrifying snake. There is a rope of mixed black and white color, coiled up on a road, but [when we see it in the dark] it has the appearance of a terrifying snake. So, just as the mixture of black and white and being coiled gives the false appearance of a real snake due to ignorance, the association of body and mind gives the false appearance of a real I. When we label the rope "snake" we are terrified. We see the mixture of colors and the way it's coiled and we don't understand it is just a rope. The mind labels it "snake" and that which was merely imputed one second, because of the negative imprint on the mind due to previous ignorance, is then seen as a real, *not* merely-imputed snake. We have decorated this real snake on top of the coiled rope and because of that we are terrified.

This proves how it is. On the base, the aggregates, ignorance labels and then believes the real I. After labeling, after it appears as a real I, the ignorance exaggerates it, conceiving it to be truly existing, and from this truly-existing, real I, we experience the three types of suffering, such as the suffering on pain, which, related to human beings, means the suffering of rebirth, of old age, sicknesses and death.

SATISFACTION ONLY COMES FROM SEEING BEYOND THIS LIFE

And then we are unable to find a desirable object; we have worries and fears because we are unable to find a desirable object; that's suffering of pain. Even if we find one we can't find satisfaction, like the famous Rolling Stones said. I'm not sure whether he's dead or he's still alive? [*Student*: Alive.] I

thought he was dead. Somebody told me that. Still alive. We can learn from him. [Rinpoche laughs] We can learn from him how these samsaric enjoyments, these samsaric pleasures, don't give us satisfaction. No matter how much we attain samsaric pleasure, it never gives us satisfaction. He put it in music. He played to the world by using his big guitar, "I can't get satisfaction." [Rinpoche laughs]

That's the *big* suffering, we don't get satisfaction. That's the *huge* suffering. Because of that, we can never be happy, and the more we have the more we want, whether we are a millionaire, a billionaire, a zillionaire or a trillionaire. I haven't actually heard of trillionaires yet, but normally you hear about lots of billionaires.

The more we have things, the more we find in the world, the more money we have—millionaire, billionaire, more and more money—the greater the dissatisfaction is greater. The dissatisfaction, the unhappiness, the depression is greater.

The dissatisfaction, the depression, much more heavier than beggar in the street who lives every day begging food and lives on that, and sleeps in the road, much heavier depression, much heavier unhappiness, much heavier dissatisfaction.

That's similar to the devas, the suras and asuras, how their suffering with the signs of death is a greater mental suffering than a hell being's suffering. Kyabje Chöden Rinpoche said that's because they know where they are now, they remember past lives' bad karma and they can see their future lives, taking a rebirth such as a human beings or even in the lower realms even in hell.

You can see the way they are now is they have hundreds, thousands, millions of times more sense pleasure than in the most developed human world so when they see they have to be born in the human realm, and not even the lower realms, they can't stand it.

So the Rolling Stones singer became known to the world, he became known to the whole world, young and old, and he had friends, everything, but with his experience of samsaric pleasure, he never got satisfaction, he didn't achieve satisfaction. He put that into words. He was somebody who had everything, he had achieved the greatest reputation in the world, everything, so that's a great teaching he expressed, a great lam-rim teaching for us.

We've tried everything what you can get in this world, everything, but we still couldn't get satisfaction. Then the depression is much heavier, deeper. The dissatisfied mind is so much greater than the beggar who just lives life simply, every day begging for food and sleeping in the street, who doesn't have that much. For us, life is full of worries, full of expectations, not happiness. We worry we will lose our wealth, we are full of worries about losing our wealth, and then we always want to be higher than others, we want always to be richer than others. We're always looking for that, always going for that. And when it doesn't happen, we worry, and we're afraid of losing what we have. Then there is so much mental suffering.

Of course, a person who has no attachment to this life can be happy. Even if there's no bodhicitta, even if there's no renunciation of samsara, but at least we think all the future lives, that the happiness of *all* our future lives is more important than this life's happiness. We think that this life is very short, so our main interest is the happiness in all the future lives, which are much, much longer, whereas this life is something very short, so there's no particular, special interest in it; we don't put

effort in that. Unless we do that, we give up all the happiness of future lives, we become careless, you don't put effort into the happiness of future lives but only this very short time life, and we waste our most precious human body, with which we can achieve any happiness—not only the happiness of this life, but the happiness of all the future lives and liberation from samsara, and even enlightenment. We can achieve whatever we want in every second, in every second you can create the cause.

If we don't use this precious human body just for this very, very short life, then we get satisfaction, we get satisfaction. Our material possessions don't harm us, they don't harm others. We let others have them, we give them to others, so there's no problem, we get satisfaction. Especially if we have a good heart, so there's no question if we have bodhicitta, the actual realization but especially if we have a good heart and cherish others, a good heart seeking happiness for others, obtaining happiness to others, if we have compassion, loving kindness for others.

If we have a good heart, then no matter how wealthy we are, we benefit, we help so many human beings, even animals; we help *so many* other sentient beings whatever wealth and resources you have. We help so many people in this world, the homeless or sick or who needs help, for religious reasons, anybody who needs help, even animals.

Then whatever we do or have becomes so meaningful. Every tiny bit of money we have, any amount of wealth, any good reputation or any degree of fame, even if we have a big name, whatever we have becomes beneficial for others. With a good heart, compassion, loving kindness, we're able to benefit the world, we benefit so many sentient beings. Our name—even if it is well-known in the world—our wealth and education, is all for the happiness of other sentient beings.

Not only do we get satisfaction, but we get fulfillment in our heart, fulfillment. Our life is filled with unbelievable *joy*, our life is filled with unbelievable *joy*, with happiness, inner happiness, and we fill the world with happiness. We fill so many people's hearts with happiness, we cause that to happen.

If we *don't* have a good heart, if we don't practice Dharma, if we don't do meditation, if we don't practice a good heart, then we have all these problems and life becomes totally all this suffering. All the wealth we have becomes only the cause of suffering, becomes only cause of unbelievable suffering, the cause of worry and all those problems. It is no benefit to us and no benefit to other sentient beings.

THE THREE TYPES OF SUFFERING COME FROM HOLDING THE I AS TRULY EXISTENT

So anyway, what I'm saying... What did I say? I'm talking about the worry and fear of being separated from desirable objects, of meeting the undesirable object, all the worry and fear and all that. All these are the suffering of pain, but all three types of suffering arise from this ignorance, holding the I as truly-existent. The three types of suffering arise from that.

The devas experience the five major sufferings of the signs of death, and the five major sufferings of the nearing signs of death.

Then the sufferings of the hell beings, all those heaviest suffering of the hot and cold and so forth, and then hungry ghosts, with the heaviest suffering of the hunger and thirst and so forth. And

animals, whose heaviest suffering is ignorance and being eaten by others and all the unbelievable torture and so forth for the blood, the skin, the meat. Because of that, they're killed, tortured, and so must experience the suffering of pain.

Besides the suffering of pain, there's samsaric pleasure. It appeared as pleasure to our mind. After our mind has labeled it pleasure, it appeared as pleasure but in reality it is only suffering. It is suffering but it appears as pleasure. That's why pleasure does not last. It can neither last nor increase because samsaric pleasure is only in the nature of suffering. That's why it does not continue, it does not increase.

For example, I'll try to finish this part... We are hungry, compounded by the action of not eating food. Then, the moment after we eat the first spoon of food, the discomfort has already started, the discomfort compounded by the action of eating has already started, but it's unnoticeable. It's so small it's unnoticeable.

If we continue the action, if we keep on eating, gradually this discomfort becomes noticeable, and then more and more noticeable. It started from small, after the first spoon of food, and by continuing with the action of eating, the discomfort becomes more noticeable and then becomes the suffering of pain. So what is labeled "pleasure" and appears as real pleasure—the way it appears to our hallucinated mind—in reality is only suffering. It is another suffering which has stopped the greater suffering of not eating. The suffering of not eating is stopped when another suffering, the action of eating, begins. Because that initially small suffering of eating has stopped a greater suffering of hunger, we label this feeling "pleasure." We label it "pleasure" but the next moment we are completely unaware we have labeled it, that it has been merely imputed by the mind by, compound. We are totally ignorant of that.

Then, the merely-imputed pleasure appeared as a real one, *not* merely labeled by mind. This is the appearance the very next second, and we let our mind hold on to that, seeing this as real happiness. Our ignorance exaggerates and then from that attachment arises, thinking how wonderful this is, exaggerating the quality of the food. Then attachment has its own projection, its own view, its own wrong view. This ignorance has its own projection, its own wrong view, that real happiness exists from its own side, which is *completely* not true, totally non-existent, totally non-existent right there, totally non-existent, total empty, non-existent. That's the projection of ignorance, the view of ignorance, then on top of that there's attachment. When attachment arises, it has its own view, projecting something beautiful onto the object or like that.

Then we create karma and delusion. We create karma, and that makes us reincarnate again in samsara, in the lower realms, continuously, on and on, to die and be reborn and experience the sufferings of samsara. This is how it has been from beginningless rebirths up to now.

This is an example. The whole entire samsaric pleasure is like this. In reality, it's only suffering. Our mind labeled it and then believes it's true happiness, but it's not. It's only suffering.

Then pervasive compounding suffering. Pervasive compounding suffering means these aggregates are under the control of karma and delusion. Because it is caused by that, this is the nature of suffering. It's pervaded by suffering and because of that it's contaminated, the second explanation. This is how the aggregates are the nature of suffering, pervaded by suffering. Pervasive compounding suffering refers to the contaminated seed of delusion, the imprint, the seed which has

been left as an imprint. This imprint is the seed of delusion, and from that the suffering of the body and mind happens. That seed compounds the suffering of the body and mind of this life.

That imprint, that seed of delusion, also compounds the causes the future rebirth, so it compounds future suffering as well. That is how these aggregates are pervaded by suffering. Not only this life's suffering, it also compounds future lives' suffering. So, this third suffering is the foundation of the two other sufferings, suffering of pain and suffering of change. It's caused by the ignorance. That was what I was saying.

It's a very deep fear, *nang-dak* in Tibetan, something deep fear, like the example of the great fear of the three types of suffering we experience when we see the coiled rope with the mixture of color, white and black, and not seeing it is a rope we label it "snake." First, our mind mistakenly labels the rope "snake" and then the next moment it appeared to us as a real snake. We let our mind hold on to it as a real snake. Then the fear arises, the three sufferings arise from this ignorance, this holding the I as truly existent, being labeling on the body and mind, the aggregates. The I appears truly existent and we hold onto that, and then the three types of sufferings arise as a result.

This is similar to the other example when we label the rope "snake." Of course, we're totally ignorant; we haven't discovered that it has been labeled by our mind. The second after it appears as a real snake, which is totally false, we believe in that, we let your mind hold onto that, and then fear arises; then we have the fear, "Oh, there's real snake!" Like that, we circle in samsara.

To understand how all this is totally false, to realize it, this example is given, the coiled rope that is a mixture of white and black that we label "snake." And then it appears as a real snake—it's a hallucination but we believe it's real—and then fear arises. All these are totally a hallucination, totally a hallucination, totally meaningless. So, it's *exactly* the same, *exactly* the same with the ignorance holding the I as truly existent, *exactly* the same—there's no such I there.

By believing there's a real snake, whereas it's *not* real at all, then fear comes. While this I is not truly existent, by believing it is, then from that the three types of sufferings arise. This is just giving an example.

So, I should stop here.

WE MUST MEDITATE ON THE EMPTINESS OF THINGS IN OUR DAILY LIFE

The point is that we must realize emptiness. We must study, listen to the teachings, reflect and do meditation practice as I mentioned before. By continually requesting the guru with the devotional mind to meet the Buddha, we then receive the blessings of the guru in the heart. With the continuation of this and then the intensive continual practice of purification, purifying defilements, and intensive continual practice of collecting merits, these conditions and meditating on the path, we meditate on emptiness. By realizing emptiness, we later achieve great insight. We are able to experience, to derive the rapturous ecstasy, this bliss of the body and the mind, by meditating on emptiness unified with *shamatha*, calm abiding.

From there, by developing that, by achieving the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, we achieve the arya path. Then with that, we directly cease the cause of suffering, ignorance, the defilements, by

actualizing the path, the right seeing path and with the path of meditation we directly cease the disturbing thought obscuration.

Then we're able to achieve the sorrowless state, the ultimate nature of mind, totally cease the disturbing thought obscuration, including the seed of delusion, the seed which is in nature of imprint. We achieve liberation, nirvana.

Or we enter the Mahayana path from the beginning, and then when we have achieved the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, we're able to remove the disturbing thought obscurations and also subtle obscurations, the Mahayana path, by actualizing the Mahayana right-seeing path and the Mahayana path of meditation. We are able to cease both obscurations and then be able to achieve full enlightenment like that for all sentient beings.

We're able to guide, to liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and we're able to bring them to full enlightenment. We're able to help sentient beings have the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, to actualize the true path within their hearts, and cease the defilements. We're able to help them, to liberate them and bring them to enlightenment.

Therefore in our daily life, by practicing mindfulness in emptiness, as I mentioned before, as I gave the example, when our mind is totally aware there's no I on these aggregates, totally aware of that, then whether somebody praises us or puts us down, it doesn't affect us, it doesn't bring our life up or down. There's continual peace, there's a continual inner peace, happiness, tranquility. We don't suffer due to these external conditions, so we don't create negative karma by delusion arising and we don't create the cause of suffering.

Also I mentioned practicing mindfulness, even if we're thinking of the I, but see that the I is merely imputed by mind, when we've discovered *that*, or when our mind is in the mindful meditation of *that*, then receiving material or not receiving material, receiving presents or not receiving presents, like a birthday present, or receiving praise or receiving criticism or a bad reputation—none of these things bother us; they don't make us suffer, and then we can overcome that. We don't create negative karma, we don't get angry, we don't get attached to things, and so we don't create the cause of samsara.

Whatever activity we are doing in the daily life, then practicing mindfulness [of] merely labeled I, merely labeled action, merely labeled object, so practicing mindfulness in this, how everything is merely labeled by mind. So whatever activity you are doing, so practicing mindfulness in this, so then during that time the delusion does not arise, the anger, attachment, ignorance during that time. Then that brings you to liberation, the antidote to samsara, it becomes antidote to samsara, whatever you're doing becomes antidote to samsara and it becomes antidote, it eliminates the ignorance, the root of suffering, eliminates, so like that, recognizing the hallucination is hallucination, this real I which is not there, this hallucination, which is not there.

Like this truly existent I that is not there, that is a hallucination, that is false, whatever action we're doing, this real action, this truly existent action, is the false. For example, if we're walking, walking as a truly existent action, real walking, *that* is totally false. The real I, real walking is totally false. The real I looking at it is false, real walking, the real action of walking, is a hallucination or it's false—it's the same.

And then the road we're walking on, the real road is not there. If we look, if we search where the real road is, we can't find it. It's exactly the same. Like the I that we can't find on these aggregates, we can't find the real road if we look for it. When we don't examine it, it looks like there's a real road there, but if we examine it, it's not there. So, the real road, we look at it as false, as a hallucination. We look at the hallucination as a hallucination. So, whatever activity we are doing, we look at it as a hallucination; we look at it like a dream.

A dream is a very good example. A dream is an excellent example. The I, a dream; the action, a dream; then the object, dream. We look at everything like a dream, as a continuation of last night's dream. The dream is *very* effective, a *very* good meditation, looking at everything like a dream.

In a dream, whatever we're dreaming, while we're walking, we're sitting, we're eating food—whatever we're doing—it's all labeled by our mind. It's all labeled by our mind but it's not there, it doesn't exist at all. We dream of winning a billion dollars in a lottery. We go there and we get a billion dollar, we put it in our bag, and the bag becomes very heavy. But we wake up and it's not there. It's like that. All this—the real I, the real action, the real road, the real eating, the real food—everything is false. We can look at it like a dream.

That's another way, seeing everything as like a dream. Whatever we're doing—I, action, object—what appears not merely labeled by the mind or existing from its own side, we look at it all as a dream. Keeping the mindfulness like this always as much as possible is very powerful, very effective. That's a very good meditation; it's very powerful. I'm not going to quote other quotations.

Another meditation technique on emptiness is seeing our ignorance as a magician person. The magician uses mantra or whatever, some substances, to hallucinate audience's senses. Then the ignorance leaves a negative imprint on the mind.

Onto everything that are merely labeled by our mind—the I, the action, the object, hell, enlightenment, samsara, nirvana—onto everything that is merely labeled by the mind, like the magician person this ignorance projects the hallucination of true existence. It projects the hallucination of true existence on the merely-labeled I, the merely-labeled action, the merely-labeled object, the merely-labeled hell, the merely-labeled enlightenment, the merely-labeled samsara, the merely-labeled nirvana, the merely-labeled happiness, the merely-labeled problem. This ignorance illusions us; this ignorance illusions us *completely* in our life. It decorates this hallucination of true existence on *every* merely-labeled thing—the merely-labeled I, the merely-labeled action, the merely-labeled object. It totally illusions us; it completely illusions us.

This ignorance is like the magician person and we are like the audience. The magician illusions the audience so their senses to see all things totally wrongly. Nothing is true. Ignorance totally illusions us like the magician, totally illusions our *whole* life. So that's another practice of mindfulness in the busy life. That's how to meditate on emptiness in our daily life, our busy life. Part of our mind should always be in this meditation, whether we're talking, whether we're driving a car, whether we're shopping.

The *heart* of Buddhism is the three principal aspects of the path to enlightenment, and emptiness, the right view, is a *very* important practice.

COMING HERE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR LIVES

I think I'll stop here. I started to explain the *Lama tonpa chom den de* but, sorry, I started but I fell down. Anyway, I started that ,but then [Rinpoche laughs] again, I got stuck in emptiness. So tomorrow maybe I'll say something.

It's good to have some understanding of the *Lama tonpa chom den de*. What I recorded, Pabongka's, first line from *Calling the Guru From Afar* explains what *real* guru means, guru, lama means—to get that final, ultimate meaning, the idea, to get the richness. Then the rest is easy to understand.

I want to say please understand everybody that your coming here is the most important thing in your life. What you're doing is the most important thing in your life. You look and see how much the world is suffering, how much suffering, how much it's been suffering, can you imagine? There's so much suffering, so much suffering, due to all these wrong concepts, due to ignorance. The whole thing is due to ignorance, and then of course, after that, there's the selfish mind. All these are due to the wrong concept. How many the global problems there are, how much individuals suffer—can you imagine?—it's all becoming more and more difficult.

All these wars due to misusing religion, all these many sicknesses, these many new sicknesses happening, the economic problems with so many people, families, losing their jobs, there is so much suffering. The famines, the dangers of fire, water, air, earthquakes—all this is caused by delusion, by the wrong concept, by ignorance, not knowing Dharma, not practicing Dharma.

Therefore, your coming here, can imagine how this happened? Coming here to learn Dharma, to meditate on lam-rim, the heart of the 84,000 teachings of the Buddha. The basic teachings of the Buddha, the 84,000, are divided into three: the Hinayana teaching, the Mahayana Paramitayana teaching and the Secret Mantra Vajrayana teachings. That is embodied in the lam-rim, the graduated path to enlightenment, which comes in the graduated path of the lower capable being and the graduated path of the middle capable being and the graduated path of the higher capable being. All that comes into, is embodied in the three principal aspects of the path to enlightenment.

The basis of the common path, the basis for the foundation, the basis for tantra realizations, the three principal aspects of the path to enlightenment, this is what you learn and meditate on to achieve these realizations. With the *renunciation*, whatever you do becomes the cause to achieve liberation from samsara, and with the realization of *bodhicitta* whatever you do become the cause of enlightenment. With the *right view*, whatever you do becomes the antidote to samsara; it doesn't become the cause of samsara. It is the antidote to the root of samsara, ignorance; it eradicates that, so it becomes the antidote to *that*.

So you're learning and meditating, you're trying to realize the *most* important thing in life, what to achieve, the most important thing for you, and most important thing for the numberless sentient beings: the hell beings, hungry ghosts, animal, humans—the most important thing to benefit them. What's the most important thing to benefit for them, you're doing that.

Trying to learn this, to meditate on this, to have this realization, this really is the *best* benefit, the *best* benefit, not only for you, but the *best* benefit for your family, the best benefit for your enemy, for your friend, the best benefit for all sentient beings. This is the *best best* benefit for all sentient beings.

This is the best to bring peace to all the sentient beings, to bring not only temporary peace but ultimate peace, to bring them to enlightenment. Can you imagine?

So I think it's really most amazing what you're doing. That you come here is really the most amazing, the best thing in life. The best thing in the life. This is the best thing that helps when the death comes. The best thing to help at that time is this, the lam-rim, especially bodhicitta. Now, in the future, yourself and others, the best thing. I want to mention that.

So that's it. Thank you very much. So dedication.

Lecture Two: 6 December

CONVENTIONAL NATURE AND IMPERMANENCE

The Buddha said:

Do not commit any unwholesome actions;
Engage in perfect, wholesome actions;
Subdue one's mind.
This is the teaching of Buddha.

One of my gurus, Kyabje Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, said that this shows the four noble truths. These four verses show the truth of suffering, the truth of the cause of suffering, the truth of the cessation of the suffering and causes, and the truth of the path [that leads to the cessation of suffering], which means to achieve that.

In the next seven or eight verses, the Buddha explained at the end of the *Vajra Cutter Sutra*, the teachings on the Perfection of Wisdom, expressing nature of our life, talking about the nature of the causative phenomena, conventional nature. I don't know the English term exactly, but it's the truth that appears for the all-obscuring mind, the conventional nature of causative phenomena, and then the ultimate nature of causative phenomena. Basically, this is the main focus, the main object of meditation, when you recite these words, your own life and then the rest of causative phenomena.

It's like taking medicine. We have sicknesses and then we become healthy by removing the sicknesses, so here to achieve ultimate happiness by eliminating true suffering and then the true cause of suffering, all the delusions and karma, this action, including the negative imprint of delusion, the seed.

Doing the meditation on these verses and the previous one shows the very heart of Buddhism, and then what practicing Dharma means, what meditation means.

Next, we lead our mind away from distraction by looking at causative phenomena, particular our life, the I and the aggregates and our, material possessions, the people surrounding us in our life, which are *totally* nature of impermanence, which are totally nature of impermanence, transitory nature, transitory, not only day-by-day, not only hour-by-hour, not only minute-by-minute, even transitory, it decays even second-by-second, and it decays, it decays even within second. That's subtle impermanence. Things do not last, but decay even within second.

That's conventional nature, the nature of the truth for the all-obscuring mind, ignorance, how it appears to it; it's the truth for that. Even that nature, in Tibetan, *kiin-dzob dem-pa*, that nature is impermanent, transitory; it doesn't last, it decays, even second-by-second, even within a second.

Then not only that, the ultimate nature of the causative phenomena, emptiness. It brings your mind from total distraction, from seeing things appear as permanent and then believing that they are permanent, and they are always going to be like this. Even when we see a beautiful flower, we believe it's going to be always like that. It appears permanent and we believe it; we don't think it's in the nature of impermanence.

While we're looking at it, the second when you're looking at it, it's getting older, it's decaying, it's changing. It's decaying second-by-second, even within a second, but we don't see that, and we think it's always going to be like this. These are concepts that we have.

When we look at it, myself as well, when we look at beautiful flower, our concept is of permanence. That is another totally wrong view, this is besides what we talked yesterday, that big hallucination, that *huge* hallucination, that truly-existent flower, existing from its own side, existing by nature—besides that huge, huge, huge hallucination.

Here it appears as permanent, and that's the way we think it's always going to be. We never think this is nature of impermanence. We never think this is. We don't see that this is changing, that it's nature is transitory, changing while we're looking at it. It's decaying, even second-by-second, even within a second, it doesn't last.

Then, after several hours, there's a visible change. The color changes, it gets wrinkles, it loses its brightness. After a day or many hours it gradually starts, the shape changes, the color changes, the brightness is gone, more wrinkles starts.

We start to see there's been a change when it becomes very gross. But the change is happening every day, every hour, every minute, every second but you don't notice it. We don't realize it, so it appears permanent and we believe in that way.

[Noise in background] Sorry for the noise, that's not part of the teaching. Or you can meditate on empty, [Rinpoche laughs] then it becomes a teaching.

This is our normal view, our concept of permanence and the sense that it is going to always be like that. When we meet our enemy, our enemy is always going to be like this—he's always going to be like this or she's always going to be like that. Or our friend, he or she is going to be our friend all the time.

We don't think so much like this, that the thing itself is changing. While it is a friend, she is changing. I'm not talking so much about changing *from* a friend—that's another thing—but while she's a friend, she's changing, while he's an enemy, he's changing. Nothing lasts.

What I'm talking about is useful. I'm describing, introducing the common view, how things appear to us ordinary beings, how we look at them, with what kind of concept, the wrong concept of permanence. Then attachment comes, grasping, Then when some obstacle happens, when somebody causes some obstacle or something, and we see the nature of change, how things are

impermanent in nature—when something gets broken or old or it changes, its color changes or it decays—because there’s attachment, we get upset, we get unhappy or angry. Somebody has disturbed us and we get angry with that person.

Because there’s attachment, when there is some obstacle to the attachment, when our attachment doesn’t get what it wants, then we get angry, so it’s all built from the basic wrong concept of things appearing as permanent and then us believing this, thinking it’s always going to be like this, beautiful or whatever. So, everything is built on the wrong concept. Then we harm other sentient beings, we get unhappiness and all that, and we suffer. Our wrong concept tortures us. Basically this is how we’ve been suffering from beginningless rebirths, not only this life. It’s not only the experience of this life, the sufferings not only this life but we have been experiencing these wrong concepts, we’ve been living with these wrong concepts, under the control of these wrong concepts from beginningless rebirths. We have been suffering from beginningless rebirths with those emotions. This is the negative emotional mind tortures us all the time, that never gives us any peace and also harms others.

This concept of permanence affects the nature of our mind with these wrong concepts. Because things appear permanent other delusions arise, such as attachment and so forth, so there’s no peace. Those disturbing thoughts arise, so there’s no peace in our heart during that time.

If we recognize how it appears like this but it’s not true, that actually things are in the nature of impermanence, changing hour by hour, minute by minute, second by second, even within second, attachment doesn’t arise. This is the way we look at the conventional nature, the nature of the *kun-dzob den-pa*, the truth appearing to the all-obscuring mind, the impermanent nature.

Then attachment doesn’t arise. It doesn’t allow it to arise or those other wrong concepts, the negative emotional thoughts. So it brings peace, tranquility, in our mental continuum. Our mind is not stuck with that object, like glue. Attachment glues our mind to the object. Attachment is like glue; it sticks our mind on that object, making it very difficult to separate from the object. That’s the one basic suffering in our life, the suffering of attachment; it’s very difficult to separate from that.

Because of that, we can’t let go, we get stuck to that. Then we do all kinds of things—hundreds, thousands of things—to not lose that object: we kill other sentient beings, we cheat other sentient beings, we tell lies and harm other sentient beings, *all* kinds of things in order to not lose that object, to always have that object. We do many hundreds and thousands of things that harm other sentient beings in order to get this happiness for ourselves. We so create so many negative karma to not lose this object, for this pleasure. This is how we live, this is basically how we live life. This is another description of life for us ordinary sentient beings, living life that brings only problems and suffering.

It’s good to look deeper, to not allow ourselves to be cheated by appearances, by the concept of permanence. We shouldn’t let the concept of permanence arise, which becomes the basis for attachment and other delusions, then we cheat ourselves, we deceive ourselves all the time.

We’ve never achieved liberation from samsara so far, we’ve never achieved the fully awakened mind and full enlightenment for sentient beings. So far, from beginningless rebirths, we achieved this, even though our mind has buddha nature, all the potential to be free from oceans of suffering of hell, hungry ghosts, animals, human beings, suras, asuras, intermediate state beings. We can actualize

the path, have realizations, all the things, you have all the potential but until now we have not utilized it.

There will be some noise, so sorry.[Rinpoche laughs]

It's good to think how it is the nature of suffering. Even if we can't think about emptiness at least if we can think about this conventional nature, the truth for the all-obscuring mind, and about impermanence it's very helpful. We can look deeper. I'm just using the flowers as an example, what we call a "beautiful flower."

THE HAPPINESS OF FUTURE LIVES IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE HAPPINESS OF THIS LIFE

When our mind becomes free from attachment, it has tranquility and peace, free from those negative emotional thoughts, those disturbing, afflicted emotional thoughts. We're free. That way we're not stuck with that, we're free, our mind is free. It doesn't cause delusions to arise, it helps us to achieve liberation from samsara and then to achieve enlightenment.

It's similar with life. Sorry, I'm just going to mention this, then I'll go back. It's similar with life. Don't just think one life, that in this one life we allow ourselves to be cheated, this concept thinking only one life, that happiness for this one life is the main object, the main goal, only this life. If we think that, then there's attachment and once there's attachment, there's anger when somebody harms that attachment, when somebody think and speaks and acts physically, doing something our self-cherishing thought doesn't like. Then we get angry.

If our attachment doesn't like somebody's way of thinking, speaking or physically acting, then we get angry, or there's jealousy, pride—so many negative emotional thoughts arise, thinking our goal of happiness in this life has been blocked. This is what happens when our motivation, our way of thinking, is just this life.

Then, even if we accept karma and reincarnation, our next lives seem sort of unimportant. Intellectually we might believe it but it's not important for us at this moment. Even though there might be future lives—not just this one but numberless—but this is not so close to our mind, it's sort of like secondary. It's not something important, so we become careless. This life's happiness seems the most important thing.

As I mentioned before, all those other negative emotional thoughts that arise, the source, the root, is attachment to this life's pleasures. This becomes the root. All those other negative emotional thoughts are like roots spreading out. Then all the problems, all the negative emotional thoughts, so many hundreds and hundreds arise from that.

Then life has no peace and we constantly suffer. Whatever we do with that mind, we can't find any peace, we can't find any satisfaction, we can't find any inner peace. Whatever we do, life is constantly suffering, dissatisfied, as I talked about yesterday.

So it's good to regard this life as just nothing; this life is just like one minute, one hour or minute, it's just nothing. There are so many other lives, so this one is just [one of so many.] like this second, this

minute, this hour, minute, now, the present hour, the present minute, but there are so many hours, so many minutes, so many seconds continually. It's the same with life; there is not just this life, but there are numberless future lives. As the Buddha explained, until we actualize the true path, the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness and directly cease the delusions, the disturbing thought obscurations, *nyön-driṅ*, labeled by mind and the simultaneously-born delusions—until we eliminate them, cease them completely, and then also the karma so that there's no more reincarnation, until we achieve that level, then we have to reincarnate. When that will happen is not sure. So this emphasizes talking about achieving full enlightenment.

So we should think that this life is something like that, very short, something very short; it's like last night's dream, just one time dream. It happens then it's gone; it happens and the next minute it's gone. Like the clouds in the sky that are there now and the next minute they're not there.

The mind, the awareness is not just this, the cause to achieve happiness is not just on this. There are numberless future lives until we achieve ultimate liberation from samsara. In the mind, instead of thinking of all those lives, even we intellectually accept them, but we see the happiness of all those numberless lives as unimportant, and just this life's happiness as much more important, and we focus on that. Instead of that, we should think of all the future lives and the happiness of *all* those future lives, and see that as important, then we change our way of thinking, and focus on that.

As I mentioned, this life is something like last night's dream, just one time, it's happened and then it's gone, like just one second of a day filled with minutes and hours, twenty-four hours, like that example. When our mind thinks how all the future lives are far more important, how it's much, much, much, much more important to cause happiness, to have happiness in those lives, when you think that, then this one life seems unimportant, like one second [we are experiencing] now from all the seconds we've had from birth. Even from today there have been so many seconds, so the happiness of this one second is not important compared with the happiness of all those so many numberless seconds.

When we change our attitude like that, instead of placing the emphasis on the happiness of this life, thinking it's important to achieve happiness in the numberless future lives, then our mind becomes so free, free from the problems of this life. When somebody praises us when our mind is like this, there is a total change, and even that becomes Dharma. This is the lowest Dharma, thinking that the happiness of future lives is important. Because of that, that one second [of praise] is unimportant, whatever happens is unimportant. So then when somebody praises us so much, so much, so much, so much, it's nothing to us, it doesn't bother us, the grasping mind, attachment doesn't arise. Our mind is free, our mind is free, our mind is free, it cannot cheat us.

If somebody criticizes us, how we're bad and blah, blah, blah, so selfish or whatever, it's nothing, it is nothing to our mind. We don't get angry. It's nothing because this life is just like one second so the happiness of this second is unimportant; like a childish want, it doesn't have meaning, sense.

Whether somebody says, "I don't love you" or somebody says, "I love you," both are nothing. [Rinpoche laughs] But then when we think of this life, when we didn't change your mind, when our heart did not become Dharma, the very bottom Dharma, at least the very first Dharma, seeing that the happiness of future lives is more important, then those words become so important to us.

Until our mind becomes at least that very first level of Dharma, seeking the happiness of future lives, then we will always have clinging, attachment to this life and so we will be concerned about everything people say to us or behave to us. Then every single thing becomes *so* important, it becomes a *huge* issue. Whether people like us don't like us becomes a huge issue. Even if they show their face... what's the expression?

Student: Scowling

Rinpoche: Like scowling. You know, how the face is like this, [Rinpoche scowls], kind of stiff. No smile, scowling.

Everything becomes so important, how people and even animals behaves to us, whether the dog wags his tail or not, everything! [Rinpoche laughs] Even the elements, the trees and weather. Everything bothers us, everything becomes so important.

When a person has a conversation with us you, we listen for how he says each word, and if there are some nice words, then attachment arises, but if there are some words that attachment doesn't want to hear or our selfish mind doesn't want to hear, then we get upset, angry, or pride arises.

Because of attachment, this life's happiness becomes the main goal. That's the main reason we're living your life, that's what we're living our life is for—the happiness of this life, the happiness of just this one very, very short life. It's just that, nothing else. There is nothing else other than this, no enlightenment, no happiness of future lives, no liberation from samsara, no ultimate happiness, no enlightenment, no happiness of other sentient beings, nothing, just the happiness of this very short life.

When we dedicate our most precious human rebirth, we can achieve any great meaning, any happiness whatever, all the happiness future lives. I think yesterday, you meditated on the happiness future lives, with the eight ripening aspect qualities, you meditated on that. The teacher, Steve, spoke on that.

WITH THE PERFECT HUMAN REBIRTH WE CAN ACHIEVE THE FOUR MAHAYANA DHARMA WHEELS

Seeking the happiness of future lives is one very, very, very, very, very important thing. If we have that, then Lama Tsongkhapa said that then we can make great success in realizations, these eight ripening aspects, qualities, of a human rebirth.

I don't remember the Tibetan but there's also the perfect human rebirth which has seven qualities, where you can practice Dharma and achieve realizations. Then there are also these four Mahayana Dharma wheels, the perfect human body which has four Mahayana Dharma wheels.

They are: in future, meeting the guru, the holy beings, being born in a [supportive] family, having the right environment and [collecting merit and making prayers]. With the place, the family we are born into, there will be no obstacle to our practice of Dharma, they are supportive of that, they support our Dharma practice.

The place where we practice is conducive and not harmful. Then we meet our virtuous friend, our guide who shows us the unmistakable path to enlightenment. Then, having done prayers, having collected merit, with these four Mahayana Dharma wheels, by practicing Dharma, we can achieve enlightenment. We can achieve these things in future lives. We can be born in a pure land, our consciousness can transmigrate to a pure land where we can practice Dharma and complete the realizations of the path to enlightenment.

There's the deity Heruka's pure land, Tharpa Kachö, the pure sky enjoyment, then the pure land of Vajrayogini, the female deity, Dakpa Khachö. If we get born there, we will definitely become enlightened there. If we're born in Amitabha Buddha's pure land, many lamas, many of my gurus say that from there we never get reborn in the lower realms, it's impossible. After you're born in Amitabha's pure land, you never get reborn in the lower realms. But my root guru, His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's younger tutor, wrote from here, from Kopan said that there you can practice tantra and can achieve enlightenment.

With this perfect human rebirth, we can achieve all those things, so, so many happinesses, and another perfect human rebirth where we can not only practice Hinayana Buddhism but Mahayana Buddhism, Paramitayana Buddhism, Sutrayana Buddhism. And not only that, also Buddhist tantra, Secret Mantra, Vajrayana. We can meet and practice the Mahayana, the Paramitayana, the sutra teachings, then achieve enlightenment for sentient beings. Then we can meet the Secret Mantra Vajrayana and we can achieve enlightenment in one lifetime. Then especially highest tantra, the fourth level of tantra, and practicing that allows us to achieve enlightenment in a brief lifetime of these degenerated times, the quickest, quickest way to achieve enlightenment. By achieving the perfect human rebirth in the next life we can practice all this.

With this precious human body, by practicing the Buddhadharma, especially bodhicitta, we are able to complete the path, complete the qualities of cessation, complete the qualities of realizations, then we're able to do perfect work towards sentient beings and liberate numberless hell beings from oceans of samsaric suffering and causes, and bring them to enlightenment, and then we liberate numberless human beings from oceans of samsaric suffering and causes, bring them to enlightenment, so like that, and numberless hungry ghosts, animals, suras, asuras, all that.

With this human body we can bring the happiness of this life to others, who are *numberless*, then the happiness of future lives, we can cause the happiness of all the future lives to others. You can cause ultimate happiness, liberation from samsara, to every sentient being. And with this precious human rebirth we can cause enlightenment to every being, full enlightenment to every sentient being.

This is most amazing! This human rebirth we have achieved this time is most *amazing*, it's really the most unbelievable thing, most *amazing*, most *amazing*, really. We have to meditate more on this and we have to think about all these unbelievable opportunities, what we can do with this human body, especially when we think about what benefit we can offer other sentient beings, it's like limitless skies, limitless skies of benefit to numberless sentient beings. We can offer limitless skies of benefit to every sentient being, limitless skies of benefit to all the numberless sentient beings. That's why this human body is most unbelievable, most unbelievable, most unbelievable, so precious, how precious it is, most unbelievable.

UNDERSTANDING HOW PRECIOUS THIS LIFE IS STOPS THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE

Perhaps due to some problems our mind is very weak, and we want to commit suicide. Our mind is very weak and there's not much to think about except committing suicide. At that time, we must remember these things, we must look at how precious this life is. Then our heart is filled with happiness. Instead of depression, we are filled with happiness and joy. Our mind is filled with happiness, and we can communicate much better with others with a happy mind. With an unhappy mind we can't communicate, our heart's blocked by a selfish mind. Our heart is blocked by a selfish mind and we can't communicate with others, it prevents that and so it's difficult to benefit others.

Sorry, so my talk went on. It went all over, like water on the ground goes all over.

So anyway here, the suicidal thought just came out. But I will just take the opportunity to mention this anyway. When a suicidal thought comes, we *must* think this. If we think of only one life and a suicidal thought comes, the mistake comes by thinking of just this one life. So when a suicidal thought comes, at that time we must think, we *must* think, there's reincarnation, there's karma, we must remember that, we must immediately remember reincarnation and karma.

There's a continuation of consciousness after this life, we *must* remember that. When we remember that there's a life after this, we see that what kind of life we have depends on karma. Good karma gives us a higher rebirth; negative karma beings a suffering rebirth, an evil rebirth, the lower realms.

The minute we think there's a next life, then the suicidal thought will be stopped. If we don't think that, if we don't think about the next life, if we only think about this life, then a suicidal thought comes and that's it. So it's just a second, minute, so that.

Life doesn't stop, consciousness doesn't stop, the continuity of consciousness doesn't stop. Even after we achieve enlightenment, the continuity of consciousness is always there, the continuity of consciousness is always there even after we achieve enlightenment.

Of the four schools of Buddhist philosophy, one of the lower schools, the Vaibashika School says when we achieve nirvana, arhatship, the consciousness ceases, there is no continuation of consciousness. That's according to the belief of that school. But however, according to the Madhyamaka School that is not the reality. I guess maybe due to karma the other schools think that way, but in reality it's not that. The Madhyamaka School doesn't think that way.

Not only after arhatship, even when we've achieved enlightenment, there's the continuation of consciousness. There's *always* the continuation of consciousness. If there were no continuation of consciousness, how could we benefit sentient beings after we achieved all those qualities, all those realizations? How are we going to benefit the numberless sentient beings from life to life until everyone achieves enlightenment, to work for them, to benefit them? There's the continuation of consciousness.

The minute we think there's reincarnation, there's the continuation of consciousness, the suicidal thought will be stopped. Otherwise there's a great risk, great risk. It's total nonsense. This most precious human body, which is most unbelievable—nobody has harmed it but we harm it, we destroy it, this thing that we have been praying for, for many hundreds of thousands of lifetimes. We have practiced pure morality for so many lifetimes, we have dedicated the merits to achieve this. We have practiced charity, to have all this wealth and means of living, we practiced charity in the past,

practiced giving, the thought of giving. We have practiced charity in the past, we dedicated the merits. That's why we have all this means of living.

Then some problem happens and we become so depressed, something the selfish mind wanted didn't succeed, something the attachment wants didn't succeed, and then we commit suicide. That totally doesn't make sense. It is totally the most ignorant thing.

But when we think about reincarnation, the continuity of consciousness, it reminds us of the lower realms, and there's no way we can think about suicide. It naturally stops that suicidal thought, that suicidal act.

What am I saying? This is good. This is very important. This life is something like a second or like last night's dream. It's something very short, and then there the next life.

THE PATH OF THE LOWER SCOPE PRACTITIONER STOPS THE EIGHT WORLDLY DHARMAS

I want to finish what I started to mention before. Without our mind becoming Dharma, this very last level of Dharma, the first Dharma, at least the minimum—this thought of a mind unattached to this life, like eight worldly dharmas— if we have attachment to that happiness, then all problems come.

Then, when there's no comfort, we experience unhappiness, we feel down. Because there's attachment to comfort, then there's dislike of discomfort, and so all the unhappiness and depression, all these things happen. Without this first Dharma, then there will be attachment to reputation, to become famous in the world, to want many people know us. We want to have fame. Without this transformation of mind, developing a mind detached from this life, this will happen.

When the mind becomes Dharma, there's no attachment. Anyway, first I'll finish. When the mind doesn't become this first Dharma, then there's attachment to reputation. Because there's attachment to reputation, to fame, there's dislike towards not having reputation and so there is unhappiness. There's attachment to praise, to other people praising to us, and when there's attachment to that, then there's dislike when other people don't praise us.

For example, say we give a glass of water to somebody and that person doesn't thank us, then we get upset. If we give a cup of tea or a piece of chocolate to somebody, we expect that person to say, "Oh, thank you very much. Thank you very much. I love it!" [Rinpoche laughs] If the person doesn't say it, our mind gets upset. [Rinpoche laughs] If the person didn't set up these words, the other person didn't put effort to say these things, then we get upset.

This is because of attachment to these four desirable objects [of the eight worldly dharmas]. Also not receiving material things such as a birthday present, or some other present—I'm not sure—and so forth. We have attachment to receiving material things. When our mind doesn't become Dharma, then there's attachment to the receiving material things, and because of that, when we don't receive things, there's a discomfort, there's dislike. There's a problem.

In the reality, when our mind does not become Dharma, when our heart does not become the very basic Dharma, detachment from this life, then you can see how in life we continuously suffer, even if we have the four desirable objects. Because there's attachment, the sicknesses of the mind, the painful mind, attachment, the "pain-sticking" mind, our mind gets stuck, it's difficult to separate from the object, so there's suffering, there's mental sufferings. When we don't receive the four desirable objects, this is suffering, and because of our dislike of not receiving thing, there's unhappiness. So, both of these are suffering.

This is a very, very, very, very important psychology, understanding nature of life. This is a study about life, a discovery of our own life, something we haven't discovered before.

Listen here. People are always looking for happiness. People are climbing Mt. Everest for happiness, people are jumping from airplanes for happiness. You go by airplane, then you come out of airplane, with... what do you call the bag?

Student: Parachute.

Rinpoche: Parachute? Or trekking bag. What do you call?

Student: Backpack.

Rinpoche: Backpack. So they all carry this and then everybody hold hands in the sky. [Rinpoche laughs] You hold the next person's hand, then that person holds the next one's, all in a circle. I see sometimes, a person fails and drops. Even if they have their parachute, sometimes the parachute doesn't work.

So anyway, in the sky, like this, this is all trying to find happiness in this life, it's not for enlightenment. They're not doing this to achieve enlightenment even quicker than tantra, to save the sentient beings, to rescue the sentient beings from suffering, it's not like that. [Rinpoche laughs] So people do *all* kinds of things.

I saw there was a machine, and a person is used as a bullet. [Rinpoche laughs] There's a machine and the person, I think it's a man, comes from machine like a bullet. It shoots very far from one mountain to another mountain, something like that. I've seen it on the TV. Anyway, going in the sky, going under the ocean, whatever you can do in this earth, also all kinds of ideas, whether it's the jumping, what's the other one, jumping off the high mountain? Huh?

Student: Bungee jumping.

Rinpoche: Bungee jumping. You go to the high mountain and then you jump. There are all kinds of things that people do for happiness, like climbing Mt. Everest the most difficult way. Normal people don't go there, normal people go the easy way, but there are people who choose the most difficult way, the way most people don't go normally. These people do all kinds of things to achieve happiness, to get a reputation, all kinds of way. What am I saying?

If the mind doesn't become Dharma, life is constantly suffering with negative emotions. What was I saying?

When our mind becomes the first level of Dharma, we are free from the painful, sticking mind, the attachment to this life, then our life becomes much more profound, deeper; our way of thinking becomes deeper. Our way of living life becomes deeper than most people in the world. When our mind becomes first Dharma, free from attachment, the painful mind to this life, we don't have attachment to those four desirable objects. That means we also don't have dislike to these four undesirable objects, our mind feeling depressed, being unhappy due to dislike to these four undesirable objects.

As Nagarjuna said,

When you equalize the eight worldly dharmas, the four desirable objects and the four undesirable objects equalize, it doesn't affect your mind, making it go up and down, such as when you meet undesirable objects, your mind goes down and you suffer.

This is a very important. This is the very basic Dharma, the very basic understanding of Dharma, the very basic understanding about life. When our mind becomes Dharma, these eight things, these eight worldly dharmas are equalized for us. Then whatever happens, nothing bothers us, so we always have tranquility, inner peace. We have a very content, stable life. Real peace and happiness start in our life when our mind becomes this first level of Dharma, this Dharma [seeking the happiness of future lives].

What I was saying here is that to have this is very important in our daily life. This life is something very short, something like last night's dream, or like one session of a dream or like one second. When we think about the very short-term appearance this life, then what happens concerning this life becomes unimportant. Whether there's happiness or no happiness, whether we face these four undesirable objects is not important, it doesn't bother us. What am I saying?

So, by thinking about numberless future lives not just one life, our mind is extended. What happens then, with that mind, all our actions—not only doing retreat, reciting mantras or studying Dharma, even actions eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing jobs—all our actions become Dharma. They are all those are done for the happiness of future lives, so whatever activity we do, everything becomes Dharma, everything becomes Dharma, everything at least becomes the cause of happiness of future lives. With the motivation of seeking the happiness future lives, with the mind detached from this life but seeking the happiness of future lives, whatever we do becomes Dharma, pure Dharma, and the cause of happiness of future lives, and therefore it is not wasted.

I just want to emphasize this and how we need this attitude that sees this life as over in a second and so the happiness of this life is not the main thing, how we must focus on the happiness of all future lives.

If we think about bodhicitta, the happiness of sentient beings and to achieve enlightenment for them, of course, that's the best. If not, then to achieve liberation, ultimate happiness, everlasting happiness, for ourselves is excellent. But even if we can't generate that attitude of seeking liberation from oceans of samsaric suffering and its causes, then at least we should have the mind seeking the happiness of all the coming future lives.

That is one thought. Then, when our mind becomes this first level of Dharma, whatever happens, whatever problems there are, it really doesn't bother us. It's not important, because we don't have much attachment, we don't have attachment to this life. Otherwise, there are *so* many things, *so* much that becomes problems to us. Every second we find problems everywhere, as I mentioned before, even with the elements, even with the material things, we find so many problems, not only with people.

When this mind changes, once this mind becomes Dharma, all these problems, all these *so* many life's problems are stopped. None of the many problems of life that now plague us exist for us anymore. Whatever happens in our life, it is no longer a problem, and because of that we unbelievable peace and happiness. So, what am I saying?

Okay, sorry, I didn't mean to go on about all that but just talking one, then another, then talking another one, then talking another one.

CAUSATIVE PHENOMENA ARE LIKE A STAR, A BUTTER LAMP ETC.

The Buddha said:

A star, a mirage, the flame of a lamp,
An illusion, a drop of dew, or a bubble,
A dream, a flash of lightning, a cloud—
See conditioned things as such!

These four lines are very, very, very important, the most fundamental, the most important psychology or meditation. I've already talked on emptiness, you have some idea. We should look at causative phenomena like a star. According to one commentary, then are no stars in the daytime. They're there at nighttime but in the daytime we don't see stars, so when we recite the word "star" in "look at all the causative phenomena like a star," what we should particularly think is this is how our life is—our I, our aggregates, material possessions, belongings, family members, friends, enemies, strangers, the main object of delusions. Thinking like this make us free from negative emotional thoughts; this is the best psychology.

The I that is merely imputed by mind, on this [is placed] a hallucination of true existence, something decorated, projected, make real. And then the action, whatever we're doing, is merely labeled by the mind, on this the hallucination of true existence is decorated, the "real" action, the object, then forms, sound, smell, taste, tangible objects. It's merely imputed by our mind, but then all this hallucination's projected, decorated, truly- existence, real. Everything appears real, appearing from there, from our ignorance, making our whole world false. It's merely imputed by mind but our mind makes everything to appear *real*, which is not there, which is *not real at all*, not even the slightest atom is there. Everything's completely, totally empty.

First you think, what should come out in your mind, the hallucination, the I, the action, the object and then your mind perceiving the object, and then naturally the meditator, the I, is naturally free from the real, true existence.

So the first thing, look at the hallucination, that which are hallucinatory, okay? Then how the arhats, the bodhisattvas and the buddhas *see*, how they see us and our actions, the objects, all the forms, sounds, smells, tastes, how although for us everything appears real, but how they see all this, us and all this, they see everything as *totally* non-existent, empty, *totally* empty, non-existent, not even one atom exists. So meditate on that. So I think especially the Buddha, totally empty.

So, the *star in the daytime* is related to the hallucination of truly-existence; it's like a star in the daytime. If you think this, if you meditate on emptiness like this, it's unbelievable. Emptiness is a big atomic bomb, a huge atomic bomb, destroying your root of samsara, ignorance.

When you throw atomic bomb, there's a huge noise, right? A huge noise. But here there's no noise. [Rinpoche laughs] It's unbelievable. This root of samsara has made us suffer from beginningless rebirths. So like this, if it's possible, if there's time, then meditate on emptiness a little. Okay? That's the first.

Developing right view is the cause of emptiness, so next there is [the analogy] of *defective view*. Defective view is like if our eye organ is damaged in some way and so we see illusions, such as hairs in front of the eyes, hairs dripping down in our food while we're eating, somehow seeing something not there because our eyesight is not clear

This is only one example of defective view. Here it means that the truly-existent I, the truly-existent action, the truly-existent forms, sounds, hell, enlightenment—everything—is false. All this appearance of true existent is like defective view. When in your heart you think that it's empty, that all the causative phenomena are empty, that comes to the point.

The next is a *butter lamp*. Butter lamps are made of many causes and conditions and then exist because of them. This is the same with all the causative phenomena, which are made by so many causes and conditions coming together. It depends on many causes. Somehow it helps that it's not independent. Okay? This is a gross way of thinking but it helps.

Then all this is like an *illusion*. Again the same as I told you yesterday, all these are like an illusion. Okay? So, look at your life. When you think that, it's like an illusion, keep that a little bit, meditate on life as like an illusion. Then in your heart, what you understand, all this is empty.

Then like a *drop of dew*. A drop of dew sitting on electricity wires or a flower or a branch can drop at any time. Similarly, at any time these causative phenomena can be stopped, they are in the nature of impermanence. So, do a little bit of meditation on this.

Then all this is like a *water bubble*. Kyabje Denma Lochö Rinpoche said the water bubble is very beautiful, very nice but it can be popped at any time. All this is like a water bubble; it can be stopped at any time because it is in the nature of impermanence. Beautiful bodies, beautiful this, beautiful that, are all like water bubbles; they can be stopped at any time, they can change at any time.

Like a *dream*, again is the same. All this truly-existent appearance seems so real but it is like a dream. It's merely labeled, it appears but do not exist, like a dream exactly; it does not exist *at all*, it's not there. Meditate on that and then in your heart comes emptiness.

Then *lightning*. When there's lightning you see things, but then it's gone. All this appearance of this life, all these causative phenomena, it's there for a very short time, as I mentioned before, a very short time. It happens and then the next minute it's gone. When the death happens, it's like that. The day when we think, "Oh, now I'm going to die," we see this life is like a flash lightning. It happens, it's gone, like lightning.

Then like *clouds*. This life changes. While you're looking at a cloud, it's changing, constantly changing, decaying, it's changing, and then it's also, next minute you look at it and then it's not there. Like that example, our life is a causative phenomenon; it becomes like that, like clouds. So here, it is in the nature of impermanence, like clouds.

This meditation cuts the three poisonous minds, including the ignorance, the root of samsara. Each time you meditate like this, the benefits are liberation, ultimate happiness, the cessation of suffering and its causes, then also the ultimate nature is the enlightenment. Like that, you free yourself from all the oceans of samsaric suffering and the causes. And then you're able to liberate numberless sentient beings from oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them in enlightenment.

FOOD OFFERING

I must achieve enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings. Therefore I'm going to make a food offering, making charity to all sentient beings and practicing the yoga of eating.

Then, all the food in the kitchen, on the table, whatever, all the food becomes empty as it is empty, then in the jewel vase, you can do the syllable DRUM then it becomes jeweled, then there's AH, OM inside, that becomes the tsog or the nectar. Visualize oceans of nectar, numberless oceans of nectar. Okay? Now you offer to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, that is all the gurus, that's all the Guru, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, all the statues, stupas, scriptures, everything; that's everything. So you offer and generated infinite bliss in the holy mind.

[Rinpoche chants] *Lama Sangye, Lama Cho...*

[Rinpoche makes the offering]

Then you can do the dedication after that. And then, like I did yesterday and the day before yesterday for the tea, you can dedicate like that.

That's it. Dedicate the merits. That's it. Then when you take the food, it has a blessing.

Then you see yourself as a servant. All sentient beings are the master; you yourself are the servant to all sentient beings, you yourself are the servant to be used by all sentient beings for their happiness, like how the elements, water, earth, fire, wind, sky, are totally, *completely* used by sentient beings for their happiness. Think, "However sentient beings want to use me for their happiness, I will serve them in that way."

That's it.

[Rinpoche chants] *Jang chub...*

Lecture Three: 7 December

MEDITATING ON THE OBJECT OF REFUTATION WHILE WALKING

[Refuge and bodhicitta]

Just a little thing to mention. Yesterday I talked about the emptiness. You understand there are two things if we look for but can't find, in Tibetan what is called *gag-cha*. When we look for it, it can't be found. That's the very famous thing mentioned in the texts.

I think that has two things. It is not only the object of ignorance, not only that, the *gag-cha*, the object to be refuted. For example, the real I, the real I in the sense existing from its own side, which is believed by ignorance, if we look for it on the aggregates we can't find. That's one thing, it's not only that.

Even the merely label I that *exists*, the I that *exists*, even *that*, if we look for it... [*Students ask Rinpoche to speak up.*] A lá. Now you can hear? You can't hear? You said you can't hear? This morning, you heard? [*Students say yes.*] Okay. Otherwise there may be some shops where we can buy extra ears. From body shops, maybe we can buy some extra ears that you can put behind. In the front, it doesn't look right; it doesn't fit. [Rinpoche laughs]

In Tibet, where I lived three years, in Pagri there's a temple where I stayed with the monk from Domo Geshe Rinpoche's monastery, who took care of me in Tibet, my teacher who took care of me. Outside one of the small temples, there was a Tibetan woman who had a very old tent where she lived. Pagri is a very, very cold place. Until I had lunch at twelve o'clock, around that time, my fingers could not come together, it was so cold, I can't put them together. Only after I had lunch, around eleven or twelve o'clock, then I could put my fingers together. So, it was very cold.

So anyway, there was a Tibetan lady living in a tent next to the temple. Sometimes she came out where the garbage was and we saw her from behind. People said she had an eye in her back but we tried not to look when close to her, but from a distance we would look. I think there was some sort of infection, some mark, like an eye behind. I just remembered that while I was making joke about going to a body shop to buy ears. I was talking about buying an ear and putting it backside and it reminded me of the Tibetan lady with the eye behind. [Rinpoche laughs] Strange, I never thought of that before. I mean, I don't remember that but this time remembered.

So, the object of ignorance is the I that has been appearing to our hallucinated mind and how we have been believing the I. The I we have believed in is not the I that exists. That false I that doesn't exist in the slightest we have believed in not just for this life but from beginningless lives. That is the I that doesn't exist and that is the false I, that's the ordinary object of ignorance.

Of course, when we look here on the base, the aggregates, we can't find, you can't find, so as I mentioned yesterday, I went into some detail, from the tip of the hair down to the toes, nowhere can we find, nowhere in the chest can we find. Neither on these aggregates nor anywhere does it exist. It doesn't exist anywhere; it's totally non-existent.

It's very good to have this awareness, the non-existence of this I is not there in the chest, inside the body or on these aggregates, it's not there *at all*. With this awareness, we can do the walking meditation, not related particularly to the walking but this mindfulness, the mindfulness way, emptiness, so it gives some idea that this is according to reality.

The way we saw it before was not according to the reality, it was the opposite of reality, against to reality, the false I. Now here, here is the view according to the reality. With this mindfulness then, that there's no real I there, we do the walking meditation. We do the walking with this mindfulness. For example, from here going to the Boudhanath Stupa, or coming back or circumambulating here, we keep the mindfulness in this.

So, who is walking? Who is walking is not *that*, it's not that, it's not the I that has been appearing as the real one, the one we've been believing in as true from beginningless rebirths, it's not that one we've been believing all the time, it's not *that* at all.

Now who's walking here is what is merely imputed by our mind, who's walking here now, going around, who's walking, not *that* I but who's walking is the *merely* imputed I, the I that is merely imputed by our mind, who's walking with that awareness.

It's the same while we're eating food, we can do the awareness of emptiness of the I like that. While we're talking, we can do it with this awareness, the mindfulness that the I is empty of true existence, there's no real I, all this I that exists is merely imputed. With this mindfulness, when we go from our room to see our enemy, it's very interesting, it's very good. We go to see our enemy, and sit down next to him. Or we invite our enemy to our home and have a party, making the best food, the best tea, the best chocolate drink. Inviting him, sitting down next to him, we use this mindfulness meditation, that this I is a dependent arising, it's a merely-imputed mind. There is an I but it's merely imputed by mind.

With that mindfulness firm, when we talk to the person, the enemy, and we hear the complaints he makes to us—when he shouts at us or complains to us—it becomes very interesting, *very* interesting. We're watching this movie and it's great fun. We're having great fun, it's a great fun movie; it's very interesting learning, discovering. Whatever way the person treats us—angry, unpleasant, telling us our mistakes and so forth—it doesn't affect us. It's nothing to us if we listen with this mindfulness, this discovery or this mindfulness.

You see, before we not only believed that there's a real I, but because we let our mind believe it's true, then there naturally arose a selfish mind, a self-cherishing thought, one that cherishes this real I as existing and not merely labeled by the mind, as existing from its own side. We then cherish this as something so precious, something very important. Its happiness is so important to us.

When we do that, of course it hurts. With that mind, whatever the person does hurts us. Even just seeing the person hurts us. Every single word the person says—even the way he says it—hurts our I, our real I; it hurts the self-cherishing thought, the real I that appears to us.

But with this second way of seeing things, with this mindfulness, we discover that there's no such I there, there's no real I there existing from its own side. The I *not* merely labeled by the mind is not there, that's one thing. And then, the I that exists, that other I, is a dependent arising, even when we meditate on that, mindfulness of that, what is merely imputed by mind.

If we don't have bodhicitta, then of course there can still be the thought of seeking happiness for ourselves, cherishing ourselves. But from my way of thinking, even if we don't have the realization of bodhicitta, it becomes much lighter. The selfish mind has become so strong, but now here with this mindfulness, there may still be the thought of seeking happiness for ourselves, but there is a *huge* difference compared with the self-cherishing thought we had before, cherishing this real I.

When we cherish the real I, what is cherished is something that doesn't exist, the false I that never existed before. Every single thing about that person, what he says, how he looks, hurts this real I that we believe in; it hurts the self-cherishing thought. Now, not cherishing the merely-labeled I, not cherishing the I that exists, that makes a *huge* difference.

Through mindfulness, with this discovery that not only is this real I not there but also that the other one, the I that is merely imputed by mind, is a dependent arising, even though there's no bodhicitta there, totally renouncing the I and cherishing others, even though there's still the thought seeking the happiness for ourselves, it becomes so subtle, and so when the enemy talks badly about us it becomes great fun, it becomes a great joke, it becomes great fun to us.

So mindfulness, practicing this while we're shopping, while we're having a meeting, especially when there's somebody who criticizes us, who goes against us or somebody who praises us so much, nothing affects us, the negative emotional effect doesn't arise, and this causes our mind to continuously feel great tranquility, peace. This is a great realization in our heart; it's a great holiday, a vacation, a vacation from that heavy selfish mind or from that ignorance, those disturbing thoughts, the obscuring, disturbing thoughts. We're having a great realization holiday.

Otherwise, even we go with all this excitement, with backpacks and a tent and all the delicious food and all this, when we go for a vacation on the snow mountains, or under the ocean, or we go anywhere [Rinpoche laughs] anyway, someplace we like most, we go with a heavy mind.

We go to the beach and stay in a six-star or ten-star hotel. There is external comfort provided but there's no holiday for our mind, for our actual life. There's no holiday, there's no vacation, there's no rest. This strong selfish mind is there, full of expectations, full of worries about what will happen, always worries and fears about what's going to happen. Something bad's going to happen in the future, all those good things aren't going to happen. The selfish mind full of expectations, worry, fear, all that, and then attachment. The mind is full of negative emotional thoughts, so there's no real vacation, no real rest, there's no real holiday in our life, even though all the comforts are provided externally, spending millions of dollars, billions of dollars or millions of dollars.

Recently when we came back from Mongolia, I went for a short retreat in Washington State, and then flew from Seattle to Los Angeles. Somewhere there I saw a newspaper where there was an article from Thailand. Where was that? Huh? What? [Rinpoche laughs] Thailand. The newspaper said there was a very wealthy Indian person, a billionaire, who built a billion-dollar house twenty-seven stories high. All the other houses around are very low but this one is twenty-seven stories, and there are swimming pools and a place where helicopters can land. He spent a billion dollars on it and it's unbelievably huge.

I don't know whether he is a bodhisattva or a buddha. But if he's an ordinary being, can you imagine having a billion dollars? We could help so many sentient beings. There's so much need of others. We

could give unbelievable help, to the homeless, to sick people, and especially give the Dharma or just help those who have so much suffering.

So anyway, what I was saying is if we're not practicing Dharma, if our mind is not in Dharma, not practicing meditation, then our inner life is filled with the suffering, no matter how much comfort we organize, no matter how much money we spend—billions of dollars—our heart is constantly suffering, especially the dissatisfied mind.

There is no holiday, no real rest from all the negative emotions. Not practicing meditation, Dharma, our mind doesn't become Dharma, there is no good heart. Then our life become meaningless, our life becomes meaningless, and all the wealth becomes meaningless. We don't make it meaningful, so it's wasted, especially not benefitting others.

“TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES” MEANS PRACTICING THE DHARMA

With this, I'm going to mention what “taking care of ourselves” means. When we say we “look after ourselves” or we “take care of ourselves,” what does that mean? I also want to mention that.

In our daily life, whenever we're practicing Dharma, at that time we're taking care of ourselves. Whenever we're practicing meditation, we're taking care of ourselves. When I say “meditation” mean lam-rim meditation, not what people call meditation, not just what anybody calls meditation. But lam-rim meditation, from guru devotion to tantric meditation, with the two stages, all done with the renunciation, bodhicitta and right view.

Then, even practicing Highest Yoga Tantra, secret mantra Vajrayana, because we're practicing it with the lam-rim, with renunciation, bodhicitta and right view, it becomes the cause to achieve liberation from the oceans of samsaric suffering and its causes, and practicing it with bodhicitta, it becomes the cause to achieve enlightenment. If we're practicing it with the right view, it becomes the antidote to samsara and also the antidote to the root of samsara, by eliminating, cutting ignorance. It doesn't become the cause of samsara, the cause of delusion, but instead becomes the antidote, that which eliminates ignorance, the delusions.

So, I'm talking about meditation like this, not just what anybody in the world calls “meditation.” I'm not including everything called meditation. There are meditations where we can destroy our mind; there are meditations where we can destroy our Dharma wisdom. There are practices people do that they call meditation but which actually cause us to be in samsara, cause us in particular to be reborn in the lower realms, by causing us to develop and increase delusions. That's not really meditation, but those individual people call it “meditation.” I'm not counting those things.

Whenever we're practicing Dharma in daily life, at that time we're taking care of ourselves, we're looking after ourselves. Whenever we're practicing meditation, like I explained, the lam-rim meditations, then we're looking after ourselves; we're taking care of ourselves.

Whenever we're practicing guru devotion, seeing the guru as a buddha, we're taking care of ourselves, we're looking after ourselves. Whenever we're practicing renunciation, we taking care of ourselves. Whenever we practice right view, we're looking after ourselves, we're taking care of ourselves. We're taking care of ourselves, we're looking after ourselves, we're protecting ourselves

from suffering and its causes, from problems, and by protecting ourselves from the cause of the suffering, delusions, we're protecting ourselves from anger, attachment, ignorance. That's the *real* protection; that's the real taking care of ourselves, looking after ourselves. Do you, understand?

So the definition of "taking care," or "looking after" actually means practicing Dharma. When we're not practicing Dharma, we're following the delusions, we're following anger, attachment, ignorance, we become their servant, we become their slave, we become a slave for the delusions, a slave for attachment, we become a slave for anger, then we try to harm our enemies, all the time making plans how to harm them, how to destroy them, how to no longer have any enemies in the world, making plans including wars. When it becomes very big, it becomes war. When our plan becomes to destroy all enemies and have power, then it becomes war and many millions of people get killed, many millions of people have to suffer for our happiness, so we don't have enemies. So many millions of people have to suffer, have to be killed, can you imagine? This is without counting the animals who die in the oceans and on the ground from the bombs we drop.

When we're following the three poisonous minds, when we become a slave to the three poisonous minds, then we're not taking care of ourselves, we're not looking after ourselves. By becoming their slave, by following delusions, then the delusion harm us constantly, constantly torturing us, constantly forcing us to suffer. By creating karma motivated by the delusions, the result is suffering now and in the future, continuously. Following ignorance, anger, attachment, the delusions, is regarded as taking care of ourselves, but that's the wrong understanding of taking care, it's a wrong view, we're harming ourselves, not taking care of ourselves.

When you follow the three principal aspects of the path to enlightenment, *that's* taking care of ourselves. Then, of course, on top of that there's the tantric path.

The best way of taking care of our life is living our life with bodhicitta. That's the best way of taking care, making our life most meaningful, most beneficial to us, most beneficial to others who are numberless. That is making our life most beneficial to numberless sentient beings. That's the best way of taking care of our life, with bodhicitta, protecting our own life with bodhicitta. That's the best protection.

THE REAL I IS NOT FINDABLE

What I was going to say is this. If we look for the real I we can't find it. We can't find this false I, the one not merely labeled by the mind, that exists from its own side. When we look, we can't find it either on these aggregates or anywhere.

Then *also*, when we look, we can't find the mere I which does exist, the I that is merely labeled by the mind. As I also explained yesterday, if we look for it on these aggregates from the tip of the hair down to the toes, we can't find it, we can't find it. As I asked yesterday, it is findable or not findable in this world? Yes? It's findable. I mentioned this yesterday. It's findable in the world. Where? In the East, at this time in the East, it is findable in Nepal, in Kopan; it's findable in Kopan, at this moment, in this gompa, in Kopan's gompa, in Kopan Monastery, on this cushion, on the chair, where the aggregates are. But if we look for it from the tip of the hair down to the toes, we can't find *even that, even that* I which exists merely labeled I on the aggregates.

So, the question is, if we look for the I, the merely-labeled I, on these aggregates, whether you can find it or not. I said we can't find it but what do you think? What do you think? Can we or can't we find it?

Student: No, no, no, no.

Rinpoche: Oh, I see. Thank you very much. Can we find it? Can't we find it? This merely-labeled I on the aggregates, can we find it or not? [*No response.*] Invisible. We can't find it? Can we find it or not? [*Rinpoche laughs*] Steve?

Ven. Steve: Didn't find it so far.

Rinpoche: So you can't find it on the aggregates? It doesn't exist on the aggregates?

Ven. Steve: No, I guess not.

Rinpoche: You should be able to find it. You should be able to find it because it is labeled *on* the aggregates, so it *exists* on the aggregates. It's *labeled* on the aggregates. It is *labeled on* the aggregates.

Ven. Steve: If it's labeled on the aggregates it can't exist ...

Rinpoche: So! [*Rinpoche laughs*] So you can't find the I not merely labeled by mind. Not only can't you find *that* on the aggregates, but you can't even find the merely-labeled one on the aggregates?

Ven. Steve: No, I don't think so.

Rinpoche: So the merely-labeled I doesn't exist on the aggregates? The merely-labeled I doesn't exist on the aggregates? [*Rinpoche laughs*] You cannot find the merely-labeled I on the aggregates, it doesn't exist on the aggregates. It doesn't exist, nowhere, so it doesn't exist anywhere.

Ven. Steve: The merely-labeled I?

Rinpoche: Yes, it doesn't exist anywhere because you can't find it on the aggregates. You labeled this "I" on the aggregates, but you can't even find this merely-labeled I, the one you labeled on the aggregates. The merely-labeled I you can't find there. You can't find it there, then you can't find it anywhere. Where can you find merely-labeled I? On the mouth or on the carpet? The aggregates are there, then you look for the merely-labeled I somewhere, you look for the merely-labeled in the bathroom or somewhere.

Ven. Steve: It's on the cushion.

Rinpoche: So it's on the cushion! [*Rinpoche laughs*] So you can find merely-labeled I on the cushion?

Ven. Steve: Yeah. [*Rinpoche laughs*]

Rinpoche: So, but not on the aggregates? So you can find merely labeled I on the cushion, right?

Ven. Steve: Yes.

Rinpoche: So, another question is does the merely labeled I exist on the cushion, right?

Ven. Steve: Yes.

Rinpoche: Your merely-labeled I, which part of the cushion can you find it? On the side of the bottom? Or the corner? The flat part? The side? This, or inside cushion? [Rinpoche laughs] Which part? Where can you find the merely-labeled cushion, sorry, the merely-labeled I? Can you find the merely-labeled I all over the cushion? So that's the question?

Can you find the merely-labeled I all over the cushion? All over the cushion there's a merely-labeled I? So that's the question. That means you find the I all over the cushion? You can't find the merely-labeled I in your chest or on the aggregates, but you find your I all over the cushion. So now the cushion becomes *very* important. [Rinpoche laughs]

So if somebody burns the cushion, the I doesn't exist? When somebody burned the cushion, the I doesn't exist.

Ven. Steve: No.

Rinpoche: What? There's still an I? If somebody burned the cushion, the I which exists, you said there's I on the cushion, or not?

Ven. Steve: The merely-labeled I is on the cushion. Yeah.

Rinpoche: There's the I on the cushion?

Ven. Steve: Yes.

Rinpoche: So when somebody burned the cushion, then the I doesn't exist?

Ven. Steve: If somebody burned the cushion, I would get hurt! [Rinpoche laughs]

Rinpoche: Because if, after the cushion is burned, are you hurt or not? After the cushion is burned, completely burned, become ashes

Ven. Steve: Rinpoche, you said that now at this time, the I can be found in Asia, in Kopan.

Rinpoche: Yes, yes, yes.

Ven. Steve: Now at this time if they burned the cushion, I would get burnt.

Rinpoche: So if the cushion is burned, you're burned?

Ven. Steve: Yes, while I'm sitting here.

Rinpoche: If the cushion is burned, then you're burned?

Ven. Steve: I think so, yeah. [Rinpoche laughs]

Rinpoche: You're burned, so that means there's I on the cushion, so if the cushion become non-existent, then the I become non-existent, right?

Ven. Steve: [not answering] [Rinpoche laughs]

Rinpoche: Anyway, you can check like that. If there's an I on the cushion, yes, I said there's merely-labeled I on the cushion, then if you check, you can do further, further research, checking whether merely-labeled I is all over the cushion or on one part of the cushion, or what? Where it exists.

BETWEEN ETERNALISM AND NIHILISM

I'm not talking about the real I, I'm talking about the merely-labeled I, so we need to do further analysis, okay?

Kyabje Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche said some learned ones say you can't find the merely-labeled I on the aggregates whereas some learned ones say there is a merely-labeled I on the aggregates. There are two different ways of saying this according to the learned ones. Anyway, continue to meditate, to do analytical meditation; it's very useful. To do further more analysis is good.

What I want to say at the end here is this. If we look for the merely-labeled I, from the tip of the hair down to the toes, that is not a meditation on emptiness. What I want to say is this. The second one, looking for the merely-labeled I, the general I, on these aggregates, on the base, that's not meditation on emptiness. The first one, searching the real I, the inherently-existent I, is a meditation on emptiness. But the second one, looking the merely-labeled I on the aggregates, is not a meditation on emptiness.

In the *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* (Tib: *Lam-rim Chen-mo*) as well as the *Middle Graduated Stage of the Path to Enlightenment*, the middle lam-rim, Lama Tsongkhapa mentioned this, using the example of the vase.

In the debating text, the vase is used a lot as an example, as there are a few examples commonly used, so they use a vase. So if we look for the vase, where is the vase is from the top [to the bottom], where is the vase?

Here we're looking for the inherently-existent vase, the real vase not merely labeled by the mind. When we're searching for that, *that* is meditating on emptiness. When we don't find *that*, when we realize that it's totally non-existent, completely non-existent, that that one do not exist from its own side, we have realized the emptiness, the ultimate nature of the vase and we're seeing the middle view.

The inherently-existent vase, which is the extreme of eternalism, we realize is totally non-existent *at all there*, not even an atom of that exists.

The result of seeing that the inherently-existing I doesn't exist, that it's empty of existing in that way, is *not* to see that the vase doesn't exist at all. This real vase, the one not merely labeled by the mind,

does not exist, that is totally non-existent. Seeing that, we see that the vase exists, that definitely happens, but we realize that the real vase existing its own side is completely non-existent, it is completely empty. That is the absolute truth and that causes the realization of the truth for the all-obscuring mind. As a result, the realization comes of the truth for the all-obscuring mind, (Tib: *kun-dzob den-pa*) or conventional truth, the vase as it appears to the all-obscuring mind, truth. That vase definitely exists, the realization comes that it exists but in mere name. It exists in mere name, merely imputed by the mind. The vase *definitely* exists, okay? It definitely exists but it's merely imputed by the mind.

Here, we're not talking about the real vase. The vase exists, but it's something most unbelievable subtle, most unbelievable, unbelievable, unbelievable subtle, merely imputed by mind. That's the realization of the truth for the all-obscuring mind.

Here, we realize how the vase exists; it exists in mere name, merely imputed by the mind. Because of that, the vase *does not exist*, the vase is *totally* empty, the vase is *totally* empty of existing from its own side.

While it's totally empty of existing from its own side, it's a dependent arising, existing in mere name, merely imputed by mind. So seeing the vase existing in mere name, emptiness and dependent arising, these two, are unified; dependent arising and emptiness are unified.

Here, what Lama Tsongkhapa explains is that the merely-labeled vase is not connected to the object of ignorance. We leave the object of ignorance, the real vase *not* merely labeled by the mind. We leave that, we don't question that. What we call "vase," where is it? We look here, there, is this the vase, is this the vase, is this a vase? Nothing of that is the vase, nothing of that is the vase—altogether there is not the vase, so where is it? We can't find the merely-labeled vase anywhere, the vase what you call "vase" we can't find it anywhere. We can't find it anywhere, we can't find it anywhere.

Then what happens, at the end what happens, it's not clear, it becomes very unclear, coming to the conclusion. The one before helps, by realizing it's empty it helps to bring the conclusion that the vase exists, it exists in mere name, merely imputed by the mind.

But why I say searching in this way is not a meditation on emptiness is because of this. When we look for the merely-labeled vase and we can't find it, it harms the conclusion that the vase exists, it doesn't make it clearer. So then that becomes nihilism, thinking that there is no vase. That becomes nihilism. So Lama Tsongkhapa says if at the end of the search for the vase we can't find anything then nothing is clear, there is nothing to recognize as "vase," and this is falling into nihilism.

Falling into nihilism destroys dependent arising. That's what Lama Tsongkhapa mentions but I will look to make sure it's clear. That's the essence of what it's saying but I will read and then mention again how Lama Tsongkhapa describes how when we fall in nihilism we destroying dependent arising.

With that way of searching, we think we're meditating on emptiness but it's like the enemy, the thief who harms us is right there with us, next to us, but we didn't recognize him and we believe our enemy is somewhere outside. Actually our enemy is with us in the room, but we think the enemy is

outside somewhere, then we shoot a gun outside. The enemy that's in our room, however, we think of as our friend. He's our enemy but we think, "This is my friend" and so we shoot the gun outside.

The texts mention giving an offering to a spirit to ward off the harm such as sickness, but even though the spirit is in the west, we make the offering to the spirit, the *L*, of a dough figure or something to the east. We make the offering in the west, asking the spirit to not harm us, and we make our present there in the west, but the spirit is not there. It's there in the east where it can't receive the offering. Actually, if you harm others you will receive harm.

If we plant chili, then a hot result comes. If we plant something sweet, like a raisin or something, then a sweet result comes. Like that, if we harm others, then as a result we will receive harm from others. And if we help, if we benefit others, we will receive the result of benefit, we will receive benefit from others. If we benefit others, then as a result, we will receive benefit, happiness, from others. If we send this *L*, this present, to the east but the spirit's in the west, there will be no benefit.

THE FEAR OF NEARING EMPTINESS

Similarly, if we never touch the object of ignorance, the real I, not merely labeled by the mind, if we never touch that but just this, the I, what we called "I," the merely-labeled I, then when we search for it we can't find it. Doing that, I don't think this causes fear to arise. This way of analyzing doesn't cause fear to arise. Why doesn't fear arise? Because this kind of analysis doesn't touch this real I, that which has always been appearing and we have believed to be true all the time. We didn't try to do it on that. That's left out, untouched. It's like keeping our enemy there but we believe it's a friend. It's like that. We shoot outside there, as it's mentioned, similar, we're look for the merely-labeled I, and can't find it. I don't think that causes fear to arise when we don't find it.

But this also makes difference I think, if we search for where this real I is, we see it's nothing in all the collection of aggregates, this real I we can't find anywhere from tip of the head down to the toes, then *this, this* will cause for very high intelligence, who has a lot of merit, who has very high intelligence, when we don't find that I, when we realize that it's totally completely emptiness, this will cause unbelievable joy, happiness. Tears will pour from the eyes, the hairs will stand up. It brings incredible joy, happiness for the highly intelligent ones.

But the lower intelligent ones have fear. So if we do get fear, that's a very good sign. The minute we get fear when we are doing this analytical meditation, that's a very, very good sign. That means our meditation is working, our meditation is working, our meditation is hitting the object of ignorance. That's why there's fear.

So because you have been believing this real true exist from beginningless rebirth, so can imagine? So of course you get fear. So now, now, only now, so now you think that which you have been believing existing from beginningless rebirth, now you think it doesn't exist. So when you start thinking that, then the fear arises, so fear arises, so that.

When you hit the object of ignorance, when you hit the ignorance, harm the ignorance, then the fear arises. Fear rises. You must realize you're so fortunate when the fear arises. So that means if you go through the fear, if you go through the fear then you're able to realize emptiness, you're able to go

through the fear, go through the fear, then you're able to realize emptiness, the ultimate truth, that you're seeing the truth.

What the Buddha mentions is that the way Buddha liberates us sentient beings is not by washing our negative karma away with water. And not with his hands, like taking the thorn out from the body, not in that way, and not by transplanting the Buddha's realizations, transplantation, not that way. How the Buddha guides us sentient beings is by revealing the truth. So in Tibetan it says,

By revealing the ultimate nature, the truth, the Mighty One, the Buddha
liberate us sentient beings.

Now here, what Buddha shows is the truth, "Oh, now you're seeing the truth." Then through that, by developing this, by actualizing this, then we can liberate all sentient beings from oceans of samsaric suffering and the causes, karma and delusion.

TEA OFFERING

Please have tea.

I must free sentient beings from oceans of samsaric suffering, the sentient beings from whom I have received all the happiness from beginningless rebirths, the present and all the future lives' happiness, including liberation and enlightenment. I have received all my past, present and future happiness from numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, numberless human beings, numberless suras, numberless asuras, numberless intermediate stage beings. I have received all the past, present and future happiness from each of them, from every single sentient being, all the hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, human beings, suras, asuras, therefore I must free them from oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment.

Therefore, I must achieve enlightenment, therefore I'm going to make the tea offering to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. So, the tea offering. Also if you want to elaborate like I mentioned during the food offering, during lunchtime, then you make charity to all sentient beings, then eating yoga, drinking yoga, tantric practice, yourself the guru deity, and like that making offerings. That's the tantric samaya's eating yoga.

Those who have taken an initiation, that's the part of samaya, so three things, this making offerings to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

This is a "mug of tea." This is something, tea from its own side, mug from its own side, so it's real tea and real mug, however that's a total hallucination. There's no such thing there; it's total non-existent, total non-existent, empty.

You label "jeweled container," you label it, or you do the same as I explained many times, from the appearance of the jeweled container, OM appears inside, then it becomes nectar. So like that. Then there is the tantric way, which is a more specific visualization but you can't do that as you need an initiation for that. So anyway, visualize numberless oceans of nectar.

So think of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, then all the Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Then you can also think of the statues, stupas, scriptures, everything, all the holy objects, you can think that. Then offer numberless oceans of tea, drinks, whose nature is infinite bliss, and generated infinite bliss within their holy minds. Meditate like that.

Then, due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by numberless sentient beings, by the buddhas and by oneself, one's own family members, friends, enemies, strangers—all the sentient beings—may they never be separated from the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and may they always collect merit by making offerings to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, then receive the blessings of Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, those realizations from guru devotion up to enlightenment, especially bodhicitta. May the clear light be actualized within oneself, one's own family members, friends, enemies, strangers and then all the sentient beings, in the hearts of all the sentient beings, without delaying even a second.

Lama Sangye, Lama Chö...[blessing]

[*Extended break in taping*]

This time the Tara prayer took a longer time. Sometimes I jump from the refuge and go over.
[Rinpoche laughs]

CORRECTLY SEARCHING FOR THE I (CONT): THE FEAR OF FALLING INTO NIHILISM

So just to finish this part.

When we are reciting the *Heart Sutra*, it says “there is no nose, no ear, no eye” and no all these things, sometimes fear can arise. When we are reciting the *Heart Sutra*, some small fear can start to arise. That's very good sign. It means our thought, our meditation, the way you think it's hitting, it is harming our ignorance. It's a good sign because it's harming to our ignorance, our enemy, the king of our enemies, ignorance. It's harming the object that believes what is non-existent to exist. So that's a good sign.

For the less intelligent, we who have less merit or less intelligence, if fear arises when we do a meditation on emptiness, then that's a very good sign. We must go through it; we mustn't stop there immediately. We don't need to be afraid. We might think, “Oh, I'm falling in nihilism” because in the teachings it talks so much how things exist and the danger to fall in nihilism. Then we get the fear, “Oh, maybe I'm falling in nihilism” because we feel we're feeling losing the I. What we feel is the I exists, we believe that appearance, and we believe in the I that has been existing from beginningless rebirths, this I, this real I, and for our mind, because we believe there's no other I. We haven't realized emptiness, so this I that exists is only this real I; there is no other I. This is what we believe. There's no idea there is the merely-labeled I, so the only I that exists is this real I.

When we do the meditation on emptiness, however, we feel we are losing this real I. This I that we have believed to exist in this way since beginningless rebirths we now feel we are losing. We feel we are becoming nonexistence, so for the lower intelligent practitioner of course fear arises.

Very *deep* fear arises, fear that is maybe bigger than meeting a tiger in the road. While walking the road, suddenly we meet tiger in front of us—of course we are going to be terrified—but this is maybe bigger fear than examples like this.

A deep fear arises from bottom of the heart, an unbelievable fear, a huge fear arises. Because we don't understand what's happening, what we're experiencing, so we think we're falling in nihilism and so there's unbelievable fear because in our mind there's no other I. We don't understand the merely-labeled I that exists; there's no idea. For us this real I is the only one that exists; it's not merely labeled by the mind, so actually that's the false I which is totally empty. It never came into existence; it's never been in existence from beginningless rebirths.

We fear we're losing that. We haven't heard the teachings, explaining that when this experience happens this is what will happen to you. Maybe we haven't heard teachings from these experienced teachers. We have some understanding of emptiness, but it's not complete about the experience, so due to that. Then unbelievable, deep fear arises, then we're so scared. We're so scared that we don't want to meditate on emptiness. Maybe we don't want to meditate on emptiness even for years because we're so scared.

Say, we're just about to realize emptiness. This is incredibly, unbelievably fortunate, seeing the truth, seeing the truth. We're just about to see the truth, to realize the truth. The main method, the Buddha's way of liberating us is by showing us this truth. The Buddha shows the truth and we realize the truth, and then we develop that wisdom, ultimate wisdom. It's so unbelievable; it's most fortunate, we are about to realize emptiness.

Then this obstacle happens. So we stop. Then it doesn't happen; we're so scared we can't even meditate on emptiness for years.

The bodhisattva Jetsun Monlam mentions in his teaching on the mahamudra, the experience of losing the I means losing the real I, the truly-existent I, not the I merely labeled by the mind. I don't know, I may not mention every specific word, but the general idea is this. This real I is that which is projected onto the merely-labeled I by the ignorance, by leaving negative imprint on the mind. That truly-existent I is an additional thing, something totally non-existent, something projected, decorated onto the merely-labeled I.

So losing that I means losing that additional thing, that hallucination which is projected onto the merely-labeled I; it means it doesn't exist. We're coming to realize that, we're coming to realize that which doesn't exist, coming to realize that it doesn't exist *as* it doesn't exist, *as* it doesn't exist.

So in that case it's not that we're falling in nihilism. That's totally wrong, that's totally wrong; we're not falling in nihilism. We're on the correct journey, we're on the correct journey to, we're in the correct process to realize emptiness, in just a second.

That is happening because we have an imprint from past lives, having studied the teachings or heard the teachings or meditated on them, so the imprint is left from the past. Then, in this life we have also heard the teachings, and during that time we also have guru devotion. We're doing that meditation, developing guru devotion to the gurus from whom we have received the teachings, we have made the Dharma connection. Being able to do this is a sign of receiving blessings of the guru in our heart.

Along with that, we're doing strong purification like prostrations by reciting Thirty-five Buddhas' names. It's unbelievable, unbelievable strong. Then there's the strong practice of collecting necessary conditions, the merits through mandala offerings, all that, and obtaining the guru's advice, the service to the guru, things like that, especially those that are the most powerful means to collect extensive merits in the shortest time.

We must go through the fear, we must go through the fear, we must let the fear be completed, knowing we're not falling in nihilism. As I already mentioned to you, why this is happening is like that. It is not that the I ceases, that the continuity of the I stops, is ceased; it's not that. That's impossible, *impossible*. Even after we achieve nirvana, even after we achieve enlightenment, there's always the continuation of the consciousness. Because there's always the continuation of the consciousness, it never ceases, never stops. Therefore, there's always the continuation of the I, the self. There's always the continuation of the I that is merely labeled by mind. There's always the continuation of *that* I. That never gets lost; it's impossible. That never ceases. That never ceases, because there's always the continuation of consciousness.

If the consciousness were to cease, if there were no more consciousness, no more continuity of the mind, then the continuity of the I would cease, but there's no continuity of mind ceasing. The delusions cease but not the mind itself. By completing the path, the remedy of the path, what obscures the mind, the delusions, *that one*, ceases. The delusions cease but the mind does not cease. We have to have all these understandings.

Then we can completely let go of the fear. We go through the fear, we go beyond the fear. Then we're able to realize emptiness completely.

REALIZING THE TWO TRUTHS SAVES FROM NIHILISM

As I mentioned before, by realizing the ultimate truth first, *don-dam den-pa*, the truth of emptiness, perfect wisdom, the truth of wisdom, absolute wisdom, by realizing that then we're able to realize the *kün-dzob den-pa*, how the I appears to the all-obscuring mind, the truth of that. As it appears to the all-obscuring mind, which in Tibetan is *kün-dzob den-pa*, although I don't know about the exact English word, which is usually called "conventional truth." I'm sure about that. It has been used but I'm not sure, whether it's making it clearer or more confusing, I'm not sure.

The existence of the I, how the I exists, is that it is a dependent arising, existing merely labeled by the mind. We're realizing that.

When we weigh something, what do you call this thing? When we weight, like gold or something, huh?

Student: Scales.

Rinpoche: Scales. So when we weigh, if there's something heavier on one side, then the light side goes like this—this goes up and this goes down. It's like that when we realize the ultimate truth first. As a result we realize the *kün-dzob den-pa*, the truth for the all-obscuring mind, the existence of the I.

So, instead of falling in nihilism, that there's no I at all, by realizing the correct view, correct emptiness, correct right view, correct Prasangika's school view—the correct view of emptiness means the Prasangika school's view—as a result of realizing that, we realize *kün-dzob den-pa*, the truth for the all-obscuring mind, how the I's a dependent arising, existing in mere name, merely imputed by the mind. And so we realize the two truths.

It's explained in the Madhyamaka teaching, realizing the two truths is like developing the two wings to be able to fly away like the swans. Like the swans develop the two wings, the king of the swans flies away by flapping them. By the power of the wind of the virtue, we go beyond, the ocean, we go beyond the ocean of samsaric suffering, we go *beyond* from that, we are free from that. We go to the other side, buddhahood, enlightenment; we become a buddha with limitless skies of qualities. We go there. We go to enlightenment.

For some people, these things can happen, so it's good to know beforehand what to do. Then we can make our fear most useful to liberate ourselves from oceans of samsaric suffering and the causes, karma and delusions. We can cease that, we can cease the cause of suffering, then we can cease the oceans of samsaric suffering.

It happened that a Western, sorry a Westerner, [Rinpoche laughs] a monk, has now become liberated; he's now become an arhat.

Anyway, he's not a monk now, he changed his mind. During the retreat he changed his mind. I think some karma from the past ripened, then he changed his mind during retreat. Anyway, he's a very nice person, he was a very good monk, but then the past karma ripened and he changed his mind.

He was at Nalanda, the Western Sangha's monastery. I think having a monastery for Western Sangha is very rare, very, very, very, very rare, because the Sangha are scattered, so having a monastery is extremely rare. But we have had this Nalanda monastery for many, many years.

It happened is because Vajrayogini Center, the lay center, caught fire, I think one wing of the building caught fire and because the fire destroyed one wing of the building, they got insurance money, so then they got Nalanda, this land with a building. I think maybe it's a hundred years old?

Ven Steve: Oh yeah, I should think so, easily.

Rinpoche: A hundred years old. Before that there were Christian nuns, a healing center or something?

Ven. Steve: It belonged to a Christian family, then they had a confession room upstairs for the family. And the priest came for the family.

Rinpoche: Oh, I see. So upstairs there's a confession room, then when the priest comes, they confess there. Not retreat! So the priest comes, and they confess upstairs, not downstairs. Downstairs if you confess, you go to hell! [Rinpoche laughs]

So anyway, so it's very, very fortunate, extremely fortunate, unbelievably fortunate having a monastery. It's so fortunate. Otherwise people become monks for a few months, then disrobe after a few months, a few weeks.

His Holiness the Karmapa, in his past life, came to the West, to the United States, and so many people got so inspired by seeing the Karmapa, that past-life Karmapa. In the United States, maybe a hundred people became monks during his tour. Then the next year when he came back, they had all disrobed because they didn't have a monastery, they did not have an example.

That's what I heard. So it's so fortunate having a monastery. I don't know other places. I mean the Western Sangha have different places, but not a real monastery that follows the Vinaya practice, the abiding summer retreat, then the confession practices twice a month, then *Ganye* after this abiding summer retreat.

For many years Nalanda has done that, starting with Geshe Jampa Tegchok. Steve was there for so many years. You were the leader, you were the prayer leader, I think after Pende.

Ven. Steve: Yes, after Pende

Rinpoche: After *big* Pende. [Rinpoche laughs]

So anyway, what am I saying now? I should go back. Huh?

Ven. Steve: About the monk, the ex-monk.

Rinpoche: Oh, yes, that's right. He total lost the I, and then he was unbelievably happy, unbelievably happy. Tears of joy came, like I explained in Madhyamaka text. It happened to him, joy, no fear *at all*, the hairs from pores stood up, there was incredible joy, and then I think every time he went to meditate, it made him laugh. He was alone in the room, but it made him laugh. I haven't heard laughing in the text.

I think, after realizing emptiness then your view are different about life; things are kind of like childish, all funny, it makes you laugh at your own life. It might be like that. Then you don't stop. Then every day you must meditate on emptiness, you must develop that experience.

GESHE JAMPA WANGDU: EMPTINESS AND BODHICITTA

One of my teachers was Gen Jampa Wangdu, one of the most successful meditators at Dharamsala, so who achieved *shamatha*, calm abiding, at Dalhousie. There's a group of meditators there; some are very learned, having finished studying all the five major sutra texts, all those things, in the monastery. He then realized emptiness in a cave down below where Tushita, our retreat center, is. You go to the other side, where's His Holiness the Dalai Lama's guru, Ling Rinpoche, lived in his past life, then you go down and there's a rock so dark inside that then becomes a cave. He lifted there for seven years and then realized emptiness there.

In another house up on the mountain, not *on* the mountain but on the surface, he actualized bodhicitta. I was told he realized emptiness by Geshe Rabten Rinpoche, who was my first Dharma teacher at Buxa, which was a concentration camp where Mahatma Gandhi-ji and Prime Minister Nehru were imprisoned when India was under British. So many people were put in prison and killed. I was there eight years as well as the abbot of Kopan, Lama Lhundrup. Monks lived there for ten years or more but I was there for eight years.

All four traditions were there, Gelug, Kagyü, Sakya and Nyingma, as well as other traditions but they are a very little group, not much because they all went different parts of India and Nepal. They built monasteries, so they were little groups. The majority at Buxa were from Sera, Ganden and Drepung, Lama Tsongkhapa's tradition.

What was I saying? Geshe Rabten Rinpoche, my first teacher when I came to India, introduced me to the debating subject like A,B,C,D, *du-ra*, the very beginning text. He was a great scholar and a great yogi who achieved very high tantra realizations, generation stage and completion stage, and had many, many disciples.

Lama Yeshe, who was kinder than all the three time buddhas, was a disciple of Geshe Rabten Rinpoche, so that's how I met Lama. When I went to see Geshe Rabten Rinpoche that very first day, Lama was there, sitting down below, looking very devoted, extremely devoted to his guru. There were big piles of texts on the table, not in the house, but outside the house, on the balcony. That side there was barbed wire, then there was a wall, so it was a tiny place. There was a bed [on the balcony?] and then a tiny path. Then there was a very high bed for Geshe Rabten.

Gen Jampa Wangdu was Geshe Rabten's disciple. When I was receiving the first teaching, the mahamudra from Geshe Rabten Rinpoche, he said that if I had any questions, I should ask Gen Jampa Wangdu, who had a very fresh realization of emptiness. He said that one or two times. At that time Gen Jampa Wangdu was staying in that cave down below.

Gen Jampa Wangdu himself told Lama Yeshe and me about bodhicitta. When we were at Dharamsala, he sometimes came, and that would be the best time for us, for both Lama and myself when he came. We heard very inspiring stories of people who had achieved realization, meditators who were living on the mountain, of who had what realizations, and then all the people in other places who had achieved what realization.

Those who take His Holiness the Dalai Lama as their root guru, they make offerings of their realizations to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Then who are disciples of, whose root guru is His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, the young tutor of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, they offer their realizations to His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche. So Gen Jampa Wangdu heard many inspiring stories, especially from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who explained to him all the time anybody who offered any success of realizations, and then we heard this from him. It's was very, very inspiring, very, very inspiring.

One time he told us that he never went to other people's house for his own purpose. He said he had never been to anybody's house for seven years ago, he never went for his own purpose to other people's house. He said that.

That did not mean he didn't go to other people's house. He's not saying that, he's not saying that. He meant once you have the realization of bodhicitta, there's no thought of cherishing the I; there's no thought of seeking happiness for oneself. There's no thought of cherishing the I, there's no thought of seeking happiness for oneself *at all, at all*. Then the heart, the mind has *completely* changed, *totally* changed into cherishing other sentient beings who are numberless: numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, numberless human beings, numberless suras, asuras, intermediate state beings, cherishing others who are numberless, *everyone*. Not one single sentient

being is left out, cherishing and seeking happiness for *everyone*, seeking happiness for numberless hell beings, seeking happiness for numberless hungry ghosts, seeking happiness for numberless animals, who are numberless, those small fish, big fish and sharks in the ocean, every single one. There are numberless, numberless shell beings at the beach; there are so many shell beings on the stones, there are *so many* shell beings. They are there in the dust, like sand, shell beings, so small, so many big piles stay on the beach, and then, of course, in the water.

There are numberless ants, even in one mountain on the ground, in one large field, can you imagine? So unbelievable! So there's no question in city or in one country, there's no question how many ants there are in this world. Then how many in other worlds, then numberless universes, so how many ants in other universes, can you imagine? There is not just one universe; there are numberless universes scientifically mentioned and also in Buddhism.

Cherishing every single insect, big or small, all the animals, seeking happiness for them, seeking happiness for every single being, seeking happiness for every single hell being, seeking happiness for, cherishing every single human being. There are numberless human beings in the numberless universes, not only this, so cherishing every single human being, seeking happiness for every single human being. Like that, similar, numberless suras, asuras, then cherishing everyone, seeking happiness for everyone, so nobody is left out, no one is left, no matter how small they are, no matter how big, no one is left out. The realization is like that, most amazing, a totally changed mind. There is no thought of cherishing the I, no thought of seeking happiness for oneself *at all, at all*. So the mind is *totally* changed.

When Gen Jampa Wangdu said that, he didn't mean he'd never gone to other people's houses for seven years ago, he wasn't saying that. But he never went *for his own purpose*, for his own happiness, never for seven years ago. He wasn't the type of meditator who tells people, "Oh, I have this realization, I have that realization, I have this experience," he's not that kind of meditator. There are some meditators who if you ask tell you everything, but not him.

THE STORY OF GESHE JAMPA WANGDU

Some American scientists came to check the meditators in Dharamsala. They mainly wanted to check the heat, not the mind, not the realizations, mainly the heat the meditators achieved through *tum-mo* meditation. Those who practice the realizations of Six Yogas of Naropa, through their meditation are able to generate so much heat. I think the Western scientists discovered something unusual, so unbelievable the heat that can be generated. They checked that through the machines.

They requested the His Holiness' Private Office, and the Private Office sent a message to Gen Jampa Wangdu for the American scientists to check him. Some meditators accepted and they did the experiment. They were very good meditators, very successful meditators. They lived in mud huts, in the caves, and they had tubes, plastic, rubber, what do you call, what? Wires, here and there, and another one here, and then there, all over their naked bodies while the scientists checked. [Rinpoche laughs]

Some did this, but Gen Jampa Wangdu didn't accept. Even though the Private Office asked him do this, he didn't accept. He sent a message down to the Private Office saying, "If you don't let me to

stay here in peace and quiet, I'll leave from Dharamsala.” He's not the kind of a meditator who advertises his realizations, not like that

He lived in a monastery as a *dob-dob*. Dob-dob, in the book it's called the “monk police,” but anyway he was a dob-dob. Generally, what dob-dobs do is they don't study. They live in the monastery, but don't study and don't go for classes. Probably they do service, like offering tea or food to the monks. Maybe they have to do that, but not follow the twenty-four hour monastic program.

Of course, among the dob-dobs there can be some other holy beings; there can be bodhisattvas, but generally they do jumping competitions and carrying stones or something, and they fight to see who is the most powerful and all those things. They live in the monastery but they don't study. That's what he told us.

For example, one time there was an old monk outside debating place. Gen Jampa Wangdu said he picked up a stick and hit the old monk's knee and kept on hitting both knees with the stick. One time he said he did that. Then, in Dharamsala—I think this was one or two years before passing away—he took the external aspect of a kind of knee pain for I think maybe a few months. Gen Jampa Wangdu told us during those months with the knee pain, the knee pain reminded him of the old monk in Tibet who he beat with a stick continuously like this, on the knee, for a long time. He said that came very, very strongly in his mind.

One time, he was standing at the gate of the monastery holding snot or spit, his hand full of it, like this. [Rinpoche demonstrates]. And if somebody came through the gate, he hit them on the head. Sorry, to hit that person's head, not on his head, that person's head. Somebody comes through the door, then he hits.

An old monk came. So he was waiting like this, waiting I guess with excitement or something, so an old man, a monk came who had a bald head came, so he hit him on that. This old monk didn't complain. He very peacefully went on with no reaction, nothing; he peacefully went on. When Gen Jampa Wangdu looked at that old monk he saw he was actually Geshe Rabten's guru. That was his guru's guru! [Rinpoche laughs]

He didn't react at all; he very peacefully went on. And then after some time, after some steps, he slowly went like this with his zen. So he was watching Geshe Rabten's guru do that. [Rinpoche laughs] He was so great; his name was Jampa something, a great teacher.

Anyway, that's the story Gen Wangdu told us of how he lived the monastery as a dob-dob. Then later, His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's younger tutor, gave a commentary of the *Guru Puja, Lama Chöpa*, this most extensive highest tantra guru yoga practice. He gave a commentary on that at the monastery of the lama from whom they received this commentary. I don't remember. At that time, there were probably thousands of monks, thousands of learned monks from different monasteries. Lama Yeshe and Gen Jampa Wangdu went to attend that teaching.

Lama Yeshe said when he heard the teachings on impermanence, he didn't think that was the main teaching. There were different subjects. When he came to bodhicitta, not also emptiness, but when he came to bodhicitta, then Lama Yeshe told us that when he heard that, he thought *that* was the real teaching.

Lama Yeshe also mentioned that he realized emptiness in Tibet while he was debating in Sera Je Monastery. While he was debating, he realized emptiness there. Similarly, he had realizations of bodhicitta, all the lam-rim and then tantra realizations, the generation stage and the completion stage, the Six Yogas of Naropa, and he had those realizations, *tum-mo* and all this, the clear light, illusory body, those realizations of the completion stage. This is talking of the outward, the aspect. Of course, an enlightened being but outwardly this is what was shown.

So Gen Jampa Wangdu attended that teaching. The story is that outside he looked totally changed from that. He got renunciation, the renunciation of samsara. Then he left the monastery and he went to see the Kyabje Dorje Chang Rinpoche, a great lama who taught all the four traditions teachings, initiations, who was recognized as White Tara. He looked for guidance from Kyabje Dorje Chang who advised him to go to Pembo, to the Kadampa geshe's caves, to meditate on lam-rim.

Then he gave oral transmission of the teaching, taking the essence. This is where you don't need to eat food, you don't need to cook and you can live by taking blessed pills. So he gave those teachings, and then gave advice. So Gen-la went to Pembo, where Kadampa geshe's caves were and all day long did meditations, practiced the lam-rim all day long and *jor-chö*, preparatory practice. You know, you practice six preparatory practices and then meditate on lam-rim. He did this all day long.

Then he did a twenty-one day pill retreat, taking the pill, taking the essence where you don't need to make food and cook. He had great success, achieving the Six Yogas of Naropa, clear light, all these, in Dharamsala. What am I saying? So he said, after he realized emptiness, after fifteen days, how everything is like an illusion. That's according to his experience.

He realized emptiness and then meditated on that, then after some time, maybe after fifteen days, in the sleep while you're dreaming, you recognize the dream is a dream. While you're dreaming, you recognize this is dream. When you recognize this is dream, so many things appear to you, merely imputed by mind. So many things appear to you as something real existing from their own side but you know it's not true. You know all this is not true, it's empty. So it's *exactly* like that. You see everything as an illusion.

TO DEVELOP LAM-RIM REALIZATIONS WE NEED BODHICITTA

So anyway, sorry. I was just mentioning this but then it became his life story. So what was I saying?

I took the lineage of this teaching, Taking the Essence, in case it becomes rare in the future, but it's not rare. I took that lineage of teachings from Gen Jampa Wangdu, so that's how our relationship has become guru-disciple. Then after that I asked to him what the quickest way to achieve lam-rim realizations was. What is the quick way to achieve the realization of lam-rim? I asked him that.

His answer is *very* important to write down in your notebook or in your diary book, or in your diary book or notebook. He said, the quick way to have the realization of the lam-rim is to practice the antidote to the self-cherishing thought. Practice the antidote to the self-cherishing thought, that's what he said. It means bodhicitta, bodhicitta, cherishing others, cherishing other sentient beings,

seeking happiness for other sentient beings. That is what we must practice, the antidote to the selfish mind.

These two or three words, they are *perfect* advice. This is the quick way to achieve the realization of the lam-rim, do you understand? That's very, very true. And similarly, it's the quick way to achieve enlightenment. The answer to that is same. You understand?

What I'm saying, what I'm going to mention is that we must meditate every day, after we have the experience. We must meditate every day to develop the experience.

In Tibetan it's called "seeking meditation from right view." Here, if we didn't have a realization of *shamatha* before, now we need to practice *shamatha*. Otherwise we cannot develop the experience of the wisdom realizing emptiness. Now, on the emptiness, what we have realized, then we practice *shamatha*, calm abiding. That's what's called "seeking meditation from right view." If we have the realization of the *shamatha* before, then we meditate on emptiness, then seeking right view from the meditation.

We need to learn about calm abiding, *shi-nä*; we need to practice it, we need to practice it. By doing that, as a result, we later achieve great insight, we are able to derive—derive, not *drive* a car [Rinpoche laughs]—derive the rapturous ecstasy of the body and the mind by meditating on emptiness unified with the *shamatha*, calm abiding. We experience this during the second path, the preparatory path. Then from that we achieve the right seeing path, the path of meditation and the path of no more learning. When we achieve the right seeing path, the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, from there we start to directly cease the delusions, cause of suffering, delusion and karma.

If somebody had this experience then this is what you have to do, to develop, to go to enlightenment, in order to benefit sentient beings, to be able to do perfect work for sentient beings.

Sorry, I started this yesterday, but then I got stuck with emptiness again.

THE GURU IS DHARMAKAYA: THE FIRST VERSE PRAISE TO SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA

I was talking about the prayer, *Praise to Shakyamuni Buddha*:¹

[Lama] *tön pa chom dön dä de zhin shög pa dra chom pa yang*
dag par dzog päi sang gyä

To the founder, the endowed transcendent destroyer, the one
gone beyond, the foe destroyer, the completely perfected,

rig pa dang zhab su dön pa / de war shög pa / jig ten khyen pa

Fully awakened being, perfect in knowledge and in good conduct,
Sugata, knower of the world,

kye bu düil wäi kha lo gyur wa la na me pa / lha dang mi nam kyi dön pa

Supreme guide of human beings to be tamed, teacher of gods
and human beings;

sang gyä chom dön dä päi gyäl wa sha kya thub pa la

¹ Or Chenrezig's Request to Shakyamuni Buddha; it's not clear by the context. See the oral transmission below.

To you, the completely and fully awakened one, the endowed
transcendent destroyer, the glorious conqueror,
chbag tshäl lo / chbö do kyab su chbi wo
The subduer from the Shakya clan, I prostrate, make offerings,
and go for refuge.

There is some understanding of this “Lama,” the peerless one by quality. Lama means heavy by qualities, one who is heavy by qualities. Maybe here it means one who is dharmakaya, who has completed the path and achieved dharmakaya, whose holy mind has become dharmakaya. That’s the meaning of “Lama” here.

I mentioned this great enlightened being, Pabongka Rinpoche, in the first stanza of *Calling the Guru From Afar*, mentions that’s the real meaning, the very meaning of “guru,” what the guru is.

The wisdom of the great bliss of all buddhas, one taste with the dharmakaya,
Is itself the ultimate nature of all kind lamas.
I beseech you, Lama, dharmakaya,
Please look after me always without separation, in this life, future lives, and
the bardo.

I rehearsed that yesterday. I was describing the other day *gyäl-wa kun gyi*. I think yesterday I was reciting the *gyäl-wa kun gyi*, the transcendental wisdom of all the victorious ones. That means the Buddha, one essence in dharmakaya, one essence in great bliss, in dharmakaya, that itself is the guru. That’s the great bliss in dharmakaya, the transcendental wisdom of all the victorious ones is the one taste in the great bliss, dharmakaya.

That dharmakaya, *that is* the kind guru, one’s own the kind guru, that is *one essence* of all the buddhas, that is *one essence* of all the buddhas. That is the kind guru, that kind guru is the essence of all the buddhas, which means all the numberless buddhas.

The lama, who has embodied all the buddhas, from the bottom of my heart, not just from the lips, but from the bottom of my heart, I request. What the request is, please guide me without separation in all my life, in this life and next life, and even between that, in the intermediate stage—so *all* the time, *all* the time, guide me without separation.

Here, the meaning of “guide” is, “Please bring me to the enlightenment that you have achieved, please bring me there to your stage, enlightenment.” By guiding us in this life and the intermediate stage and in all future lives, without break, to never give up on us for even one second, continuously guide without separation, which means the guru is the final guide bringing us to our enlightenment.

Yesterday, I was saying that *gyäl-wa* describes the victory over the four maras. There are four gross maras: the mara of the delusions, the mara of the aggregates, the mara of the lord of death and mara of the deva’s son. That’s deva’s son, not s-u-n but s-o-n.

The deva's son is the *garab*,² who shoots the arrows of five delusions, interfering with people who are trying to practice Dharma, people who are trying to do good. He shoots five arrows of delusions, causes pride, attachment and the other delusions to arise.

So for example when we try to practice charity, when we're about to make charity by practicing giving, then he shoots the arrow of delusions, attachment, miserliness, and we stop. We're not aware, we haven't recognized there was this influence miserliness arising, influenced by the *garab*, the evil doer shooting the arrow of miserliness. Generally we don't realize this, we're not aware of it, and then we follow our miserliness and stop making charity.

Or if we're trying to live a pure life, in morality, the *garab* shoots the arrow of attachment which makes us develop attachment and our morality degenerates. Or we're about to take a vow of morality, but suddenly attachment arises and we follow that. We're not aware we've got *garab wongchu* harm, so we change our mind and don't take a vow, or things like that. That's just an example. All these negative emotional thoughts, anger, ignorance so forth and like that arise like that.

It is very useful to know these things. Usually what we do is, when the attachment arises, we don't want to live in pure morality or we don't want to take any vows. When attachment arises, we think 'this is *me*, this is me, this is how I feel, this is me', but we don't know that this is influenced by the evil doers, influencing our mind, we don't recognize that. We think, "This is what I feel, this is *me*," and then we totally change your mind, we totally change our life from living in the pure vows, pure morality. Our life becomes something else. This is just one example.

This is very useful. When we're doing our practice and delusion arises, if we recognize this, if you remember this and we know it is influenced by the evil doer, it's not our mind, we don't fall into that. Otherwise we normally feel, "Oh, now I feel this and I don't want this. We think this is our mind and so you fall into that. Then the realization doesn't happen; we stop the practice. So this understanding is quite helpful.

So there are four maras. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's right hand, his right palm is like this, touching the sun disc. This signifies controlling the deva's son, being free from delusion, completely free from delusion. The seed of delusion has been completely removed, purified. So then there is totally victory over the four maras, this means victory over the deva's son. The deva's son can no longer harm. The Buddha's hand with the palm on the knee like this [Rinpoche shows] has the meaning of total victory over the deva's son.

There are gross four maras and four subtle maras. So this victory is not only over the gross maras but even over the subtle four maras. I have seen the teachings but I don't remember now about the four subtle maras. They are the subtle defilements, the subtle imprints. We can think of their essence as what mainly interferes with the achievement of a state of omniscience.

The transcendental wisdom being of all the victorious ones is one essence in the great bliss in dharmakaya. That is like the ocean. You know, water goes in the ocean from all the rivers of the different countries and they come from the snow mountains, in many different forms, in rain and many different forms and it all goes to the ocean and becomes one taste. Similarly, numberless

² Garab (Tib; Skt: *prabhe*) literally means "joy" but I have been unable to find further reference to this name in connection with the maras. Alex Berzin cites the deva's son as Kama son of Krishna.

sentient beings become enlightened and their minds become one taste. When they become enlightened, their wisdom becomes one taste in great bliss in dharmakaya. It is all oneness in great bliss dharmakaya. The essence of all the buddhas, that which is the kind guru and the essence of all the buddhas.

The example I just explained, of the ocean, shows that. All the water come from different ways and then goes to ocean, becoming one taste. That is the great bliss of dharmakaya, the kind guru, the essence of all the buddhas.

That covers all the paths. When we practice Tara's path we achieve Tara's enlightenment. Or the same with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. If we practice Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, when we achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, at that time we also achieve Tara's enlightenment, we also achieve Maitreya Buddha's enlightenment, we also achieve Manjushri's enlightenment, we achieve also Chenrezig's, the Compassion Buddha's, enlightenment. We achieve all the numberless buddhas' enlightenment so we become one with all the buddhas. We become one with all the buddhas at that time.

We achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment but we didn't achieve Maitreya Buddha's enlightenment or we didn't achieve Tara's enlightenment—there's no such thing as that. Whenever we achieved one deity's enlightenment, one buddha's enlightenment, we achieve all the buddhas' enlightenment, we become one with all the buddhas. Our mind becomes oneness with all the buddhas' holy mind. We are all the buddhas, we become all the buddhas, and every buddha is also us. We become one like that.

Otherwise, it would be like this. There's one Tara guiding us but then there are numberless other Taras who are not guiding us. It becomes like that. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha guides us but then the numberless buddhas have no connection to us and so are not guiding us. Even while we're following the path, even while we're practicing Dharma, only Guru Shakyamuni Buddha guides us but no other buddha—Manjushri or the other numberless buddhas—guides us.

And because there are different sentient beings who achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, one Guru Shakyamuni Buddha guides us but the numberless other Guru Shakyamuni Buddhas who are achieved by other sentient beings, they don't guide us. So it becomes very strange, very strange. That means there would be numberless Guru Shakyamuni Buddhas who have separate minds.

So anyway, I'm not going to spend more time on this, but it would become very funny. There wouldn't be one aspect who is the manifestation of all the buddhas, one aspect but the essence of all the buddha working for us, this wouldn't happen. Then we couldn't accept that. There's one aspect embodying the essence of all the buddhas, which is their holy mind. The holy mind of this one aspect is all the buddhas' holy mind. Then we couldn't accept that, working for us. So this wouldn't happen. It becomes quite separate from reality.

So anyway, the kind guru, the great bliss dharmakaya, this kind guru pervades all the phenomena. Now this pervades *all* the phenomena. There's no place where there's no buddha. In the same way, there's no place where there's no guru, where there's no the kind guru, the great bliss dharmakaya. This is all the buddhas; it covers all the phenomena.

This has no beginning and no end. We can't say it started from there; it has no beginning. This great bliss, dharmakaya, the ultimate guru, the kind guru, this primordial mind has no beginning and no end; it pervades all the phenomena and has no beginning and no end.

As it is mentioned in the Guru Puja during the Invocation, phenomena are free the real—I use the same word, “real,” the truly-existent—free from coming and going. All phenomena are free from *all* the activities, the real, the truly-existent coming and going, and so forth. There's no such thing in the nature of phenomena.

It's totally empty, their nature is totally empty. There is no such thing as real coming and going, all the actions that appear, truly existent, exactly according to mind of the sentient beings who are objects to be subdued; the various sentient beings who are objects to be subdued.

This dharmakaya, the ultimate guru, the great bliss dharmakaya pervades all phenomena, this then manifests in *all* kinds of forms. For sentient beings, for living beings who have pure minds, it manifests purely in the aspect of the buddhas, with the thirty-two holy signs and exemplifications, in the nirmanakaya aspect or the sambhogakaya aspect.

And then for those who have impure minds, whose minds are obscured, it manifests in ordinary form. For ordinary beings whose minds are impure, whose minds are obscured, who cannot see the pure form aspect of a buddha, who can see only an ordinary form, an ordinary aspect, it appears in *all* kinds of unbelievable, numberless ways, in all kinds of ordinary forms without any effort to guide sentient beings.

Although pure, it appears as an ordinary human being having delusions, having suffering, having mistakes in actions. The definition of an ordinary form is having mistakes, having delusions, so even though there is no delusion the dharmakaya, the ultimate guru, shows the aspect of having delusion. Even though there's no sickness but the dharmakaya, the ultimate guru, shows the aspect of having sickness, of making mistakes in the actions.

The ultimate guru, the great bliss, the dharmakaya appears in human form like that, as an ordinary human being, a child, a male, a female, a king, a beggar, a prostitute, a butcher, but whatever form it is, it's *exactly* what is needed to guide that being. It manifests in the form of all kinds of animals to benefit them. It manifest as all kinds of pretas, there can be also hell beings, then there's spirits. It is not evil being at all but even though it's an enlightened being, it manifests as evil to those sentient beings who need that the method to guide them.

Most can't imagine the numberless forms. You can't imagine, can't imagine, can't imagine, to guide us, the ultimate guru, the great bliss, the dharmakaya manifests like that.

I'll just mention some part and I'll stop there. It takes time.

We've only talked about *Lama tön pa*, the first word. It's just most amazing. Can you imagine? How the guru manifests in ordinary form. There are so many stories of the different yogis; that happened to different practitioners.

YAMANTAKA APPEARS AS A BUTCHER

I'll give just one story so you get the idea. There was a monk in Tibet whose teacher died one day. The disciple looked in the teacher's house for some money to make offerings to the monastery to pray for the teacher but he couldn't find any money anywhere in the house.

Then he remembered the teacher usually went outside to a spot on the ground. He thought that maybe this is where the teacher may have buried the money so he went there and dug. He uncovered a frog and maybe a skull bone. There was also a bag of money and the frog was grasping onto it.

When he told his guru this, his guru [told him the frog was his teacher reborn as a frog because of his attachment to the money] and he advised him to take the frog to a butcher near the Potala in Lhasa. He did this, finding the butcher behind the Potala. The butcher took the frog and put it on the chopping block, then cut it in two, throwing half of it into the sky and eating the other half.

When the disciple reported this to his guru, a very high lama, he was delighted, saying, "Oh, that's *very* good, that's very good." He explained that the butcher behind the Potala was a buddha, an enlightened being, the deity, Red Yamantaka. Red Yamantaka is a wrathful aspect of the enlightened being Manjushri and Manjushri is the embodiment of all the buddhas' wisdom. So the lama said that this is Red Yamantaka, the deity, manifesting as a butcher. When he threw the half in the sky that meant the old teacher's consciousness was transferred into a pure land. That's why the lama said, "This is very good."

That means he's liberating all these sentient beings. He actually looked like an ordinary being, a butcher killing, but he wasn't that. In reality not, he was liberating their consciousness, liberating from the suffering and sending them to a pure land, where they can become enlightened, free from lower realms.

Anyway, that's just one example. There are so many other stories that explain about buddhas in the form of ordinary being, benefiting sentient beings.

ALL HAPPINESS COMES FROM THE GURU

The guru manifests for ordinary being like us, whose ordinary mind is totally obscured. He manifests in ordinary forms, in all kinds of numberless ordinary forms, then he guides us.

For example, His Holiness the Dalai Lama manifests for us and then gives advice, sutra teachings, tantric initiations, and brings us to enlightenment in that way. There have been many others like that in the past, such as Lama Yeshe, Kyabje Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche and Kyabje Denma Lochö Rinpoche. Some of you elder students met those great teachers. Besides His Holiness, there have been many others who have given us teachings and guided us, bringing us to enlightenment.

The guru not only guides us this time. Normally we just think of this life, but it's not only that. The guru, great bliss and dharmakaya, the kind guru, has been guiding you and guiding me, from beginningless rebirths. From beginningless rebirths, he has been guiding us.

This perfect human rebirth has been obtained by having practiced the cause, pure morality and charity and dedicated to receive this, all this is completely by the kindness of guru creating the cause

and achieving this result, everything. Then this time, the opportunity to practice not only the Hinayana Buddhadharma but also the Mahayana Paramitayana and Mahayana tantric teachings—including the four classes of tantric teachings, and especially the fourth one, the quickest means to achieve enlightenment—the opportunity to practice all this is from the guru’s kindness.

All happiness comes from the guru, this great bliss dharmakaya. The kind guru has guided us, this guru, great bliss dharmakaya *bound* with infinite compassion, *bound* with infinite compassion embraces us, embraces all the numberless sentient beings, and has guided us from beginningless rebirths. All the happiness we have experienced from beginningless rebirths up to now, all has come from the guru, from this kind guru, great bliss dharmakaya bound with infinite compassion to us and all sentient beings. All the present happiness has been received from the kindness of the guru. And all the future lives’ happiness, liberation from samsara and ultimate happiness, full enlightenment, all this comes from the guru, from the kindness of guru. It’s all guided by the guru.

When Shakyamuni Buddha manifested in this world he showed the twelve deeds, showing us and sentient beings how to practice Dharma. And why we practice Dharma, because we don’t like suffering. Suffering comes from cause of suffering, so therefore we need to abandon the cause and then we can be free from suffering. The cessation of suffering, therefore, is achieved by practicing the true path, which the Buddha revealed.

There are more than a hundred volumes of teachings of the Kangyur, the Buddha’s teachings, left in this world, teaching us how to achieve liberation and enlightenment, about suffering and the cause of suffering, its cessation of even the subtle defilements and the path. The Buddha left all these teachings in the world so we can learn, to guide us to enlightenment.

So, I think I’ll stop there.

PRAISE TO SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA (BACK TO)

So, what the word, “guru” or “lama” *really* means, we have to realize from our own side.

*[Lama] tön pa chom dön dü de zhin shog pa dra chom pa yang
dag par dzog päi sang gyä*

To the founder, the endowed transcendent destroyer, the one
gone beyond, the foe destroyer, the completely perfected,

rig pa dang zhab su dön pa / de war shog pa / jig ten khyen pa

Fully awakened being, perfect in knowledge and in good conduct,
Sugata, knower of the world,

kye bu düil wäi kha lo gyur wa la na me pa / lha dang mi nam kyi tön pa

Supreme guide of human beings to be tamed, teacher of gods
and human beings;

sang gyä chom dön dü päi gyäl wa sha kya thub pa la

To you, the completely and fully awakened one, the endowed
transcendent destroyer, the glorious conqueror,

chbag tshäl lo / chhö do kyab su chhi wo

The subduer from the Shakya clan, I prostrate, make offerings,
and go for refuge.

Tön pa refers to the founder of present Buddhadharma in this world, Shakyamuni, manifesting as the lama. *Chom* is destroyed, the destroyer of the four maras, the four gross and four subtle maras, and then all the two obscurations, disturbing-thought obscurations and subtle obscurations the obscurations to knowledge.

Dän, there's six ordinary qualities and sixteen transcended qualities, and the five transcendental wisdoms of the Buddha. *Dän* means having, possessing the five wisdoms: mirror like wisdom, the discerning wisdom, accomplishing wisdom, wisdom of accomplishment, wisdom of equanimity. It means possessing the four kayas and five wisdoms.

There's also another explanation of *dän*. In *chom dän dä*, *dä* is gone beyond, gone beyond samsara. Gone beyond samsara and gone beyond lower nirvana, so that means achieve enlightenment. So *dä* means gone beyond to enlightenment, beyond all this, then *de zhin sheg pa* means “gone as it is,” emptiness of all phenomena like sky, the dharmakaya, the holy mind directly seeing emptiness, directly seeing the emptiness of all the phenomena by being non-dual with emptiness—having totally cut dual view, being non-dual with the emptiness of all the phenomena forever, immovable from the emptiness forever.

So in *de zhin sheg pa*, “gone” refers to all phenomena being empty and “gone as it is” refers to directly seeing the emptiness and being immovable from that forever. In equipoise meditation, it means forever.

Then *dra chom pa* means having destroyed the enemy, the delusions, *chom pa*. That includes the subtle negative imprints. For example, Shakyamuni Buddha, having not only destroyed his own delusion but also destroyed or is the destroyer of the delusions of us sentient beings.

Then *yang dag par dzog päi sang gye*. *Sang gye* and *yang dag par dzog* have the same meaning, *yang dag par* means “all the gross and subtle defilements of the mind,” all the stains, and *yang* means “completely purified.” And *dzog* means that “because of that, all the qualities and realizations have been completed. *Sang gye* translates as “buddha” and consists of the two syllables, *sang* meaning “eliminated all the gross and subtle defilements” and *gye* meaning “developed all the qualities.”

Then *päi* is glorification, so having dharmakaya, that's what the glorification is, *sang gye*, because *sang* eliminated all the gross and subtle stains of mind and *gye* is completing all the qualities. So there's a *pal*, *pal* is glorified.

Then *gyäl wa* is victorious, the same as I mentioned before. *Shak ya thub pa la*. When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was in this world showing twelve deeds, Shakya was his caste. So *Shak ya thub pa la* refers to the Mighty One, *thub pa la* destroying all delusions, ceasing even the subtle delusions.

Not only that, the Mighty One is able to liberate us sentient beings from oceans of samsaric suffering and causes, the gross, subtle defilements. *Chak tshäl lo* means I prostrate with the body, speech and mind, my mind with the devotion, my speech with praising, my body with the prostration, in the manner of prostration.

Before reciting this, it's good to think of the meaning of "guru." Just think of the essence I explained so you understand the meaning of "guru" before chanting. Once you have the meaning of guru, meditate on it, and then the rest *tön pa chom dân dā de*. Think of all these qualities. From very bottom of your heart, totally rely on the guru, then prostrate to him. Then, you yourself become able to destroy all the gross and subtle defilements, to complete all the qualities of realizations to that state.

Then you are able to do perfect work for numberless sentient beings, liberating them from oceans of samsaric suffering and bringing them to enlightenment. You're doing this prayer for that.

So that's, okay. That's it.

[Dedication]

Lecture Four: 8 December

DOING A HUNDRED THINGS BUT THE ONE IMPORTANT ONE: RENOUNCING THE SELF

[Beginning of talk missing]

This subject is very unbelievably important, unbelievably important. I thought if this is chanted, it gives more time to meditate. Reading instead, yes, you pay attention of course, but I think if it is chanted, it gives more time to meditate.

[In meditation] we bring mind back from distraction with the self-cherishing thought or attachment, ignorance, the concept of truly-existence, from that distraction. Under the control of those negative thoughts, we can't bring our awareness back to the reality, we can't keep our thoughts on the nature of life, impermanence, the most important meditation realization, the beginning, foundation for all the rest of the realizations, most important foundation.

It's explained by Lama Tsongkhapa, that if we have the realization the perfect human rebirth, which is highly meaningful but it is just one time, and then the realization of impermanence and death, then all the rest of the realizations from the general graduated path of the lower capable being, the general graduated path of the middle capable being and the general graduated path of the higher capable being all come easily, including bodhicitta and the realization of emptiness.

Then, of course, on that foundation, then we can have the realization of tantra, the realization of the generation stage and the realization of the completion stage of the highest tantra.

Kadampa geshe mention that we may understand many hundred things and do many practices, but we can miss out one thing, and because of that we are unable to have a realization of the path to enlightenment. We understand so many hundreds of things and practices, but we miss out one. Because of that our mind's blocked; we are unable to have realizations.

This is through not having thought about the nature of the life, its impermanence; we have missed out on that. Because of that, the mind is always under the control of attachment to this life, then the heart doesn't become Dharma. This is the very first Dharma, the very beginning, the very first Dharma. That doesn't happen. Then there's no way for the second Dharma to happen, detachment,

the renunciation to the future lives' samsara. That doesn't happen. Without that basis, there is no renunciation; without *that* basis, there is no bodhicitta. Then we are totally blocked; we can't enter the Mahayana path to enlightenment.

So we miss out. The Kadampa geshe's advice warns us against doing many hundred things or doing many practices but missing out one thing. That's this. Not reflecting on impermanence and death blocks us from having realizations. That's left out of our thinking.

Without that, whatever we do—listening, doing meditation practice, reflecting—whatever we do, it becomes under the control of the attachment seeking the happiness of this life. Everything becomes service to that, working for the happiness of this life. There's nothing that becomes Dharma. Everything becomes worldly activities, the eight worldly dharmas, activities for that; nothing becomes holy Dharma.

By reflecting on impermanence and death, the nature of the life, the so mind becomes pure; it cuts the attachment clinging to this life. The mind become pure; this is first Dharma. Then whatever we do—listening, reflecting, meditating, and not only that, even eating, walking, even normal activities, eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing our job and so forth—it all becomes Dharma.

So, I will just chant in Tibetan. Then you can use the same. I don't know because English becomes different. Other languages like Chinese or other languages, you can do exactly the same we're chanting in Tibetan, you can do, it fits exactly. But in English it's longer. It's always longer than Tibetan.

This chanting can be done easily; it is longer. You can do a meditation on that. So, I will say in Tibetan, but you can follow the English.

BUDDHAS DO NOT HAVE A DUALISTIC VIEW

Look at the causative phenomena, which means our life: the I and aggregates, our material possessions and surrounding people, family, friends, strangers, enemies, all these things, all these are the main focus where delusions, attachment, ignorance and the anger arise; they are those main objects of delusion.

It starts to look at our hallucination of the world, how the I appears not merely labeled by mind, the real I appearing from there, and then look at everything as like a hallucination, as false: action, object, the aggregates, form, sound, smell, taste, tangible objects—whatever—and then mind, the perceiver, the mind itself, the whole thing, all the causative phenomena, everything, hell, enlightenment, samsara, nirvana, happiness, problems, our daily life—everything appears real, not merely labeled by mind, including ourselves, including everything.

Now we look at reality, emptiness, the right view. This is how arya beings see it, those bodhisattvas, and especially buddhas. They see the self, the I what appears to us, existing completely, totally, completely non-existent, empty, *totally* non-existent, empty, not even one atom exists. And the same with everything else: the aggregates, the I, the actions, all the forms, the sky, the trees, whatever, houses, people, here, the gumpa, all these things, as well as sound, as well as smell, taste, tangible objects—all these that appear real [to us, they see as] totally non-existent, empty, nothing there.

Especially buddhas. Buddhas do not have the dualistic view, seeing true existence. This may have a different meaning but buddhas don't have the hallucination, the truly-existent appearance. Buddhas don't have that. Arya beings, when their mind is not in equipoise meditation, have the hallucination, even though they have continual realization that things are empty but the appearance is there, the appearance of truly-existent; they have the hallucination.

But because buddhas have removed the subtle negative imprints, the subtle defilements, there's no projection of truly-existent appearance at all. It's completely non-existent. Truly existent objects completely don't appear to the buddhas at all, to who directly see the two truths simultaneously: the truth for the all-obscuring mind and the truth for the ultimate wisdom. They see the merely imputed I that exists directly as the same time as seeing the ultimate nature of that, seeing that as empty.

It's the same with all the rest of phenomena. So, meditate on how they see us and everything, meditate on that emptiness. Then you go like that.

[Rinpoche chants]

So chant and meditate, this is nyum nyum; this is nyum nyum, nyum nyum? Huh? [Rinpoche laughs] When you eat ice cream, or when you eat something very delicious, huh?

Student: Yum, yum.

Rinpoche: Oh, yum yum. [Rinpoche laughs] So this is yum yum. So something for the mind, otherwise, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, and that's it. So you don't get to think much and a very important subject is left out. You need to get something to your mind, to your heart to change it, to become the path to liberation, the path to enlightenment. You need it to transform your mind from harming yourself, harming the world, harming sentient beings, transforming that delusion into path, the renunciation and the wisdom.

Just before going through the prayer, I want to mention this. The prayer *Lama tön pa chom dän dä de... chbag tshäl lo*, when you recite this, it purifies many eons of negative karma, not just hours, not just days, not just this lifetime but eons. It purifies not just eons of negative karma, but even a hundred million eons' of negative karma; a hundred million eons' of negative karma gets purified. It's something most unimaginable. Not only a hundred million of eons' negative karma get purified, but on top of that, a hundred thousand times, it says. Normally some texts say forty-thousand eons, but I have seen in the Kangyur, the Buddha's teaching, it says reciting this Buddha's name, it purifies a hundred million eons' of negative karma, even that, a hundreds of thousand times. A hundred million eons' of negative karma get purified, but not just that, hundreds of times, then thousands of times. It's just unbelievable, the most precious thing to recite.

Even if somebody says, "*Sang gye la chak tsel lo*," "I prostrate to Buddha," with a happy mind, When you see a statue of a buddha or something, if you say, "*Sang gye la chak tsel lo*," with a happy mind, even just by that, for so many eons you don't get reborn in the lower realms, you don't get reborn as a hell being, a hungry ghost or an animals, just by that. This is mentioned in the teaching, in the Kangyur.

There's a more specific reference mentioned there but I don't remember clearly. But it's an unbelievable number your negative karma gets purified, you don't get reborn in the lower realms, even just simply by that, with a happy mind when you see a statue of Buddha, saying "*Sang gye la chak tsel lo.*" Even just simply by that.

This is what the Buddha said about this Buddha's name, but it can be done with the guru or on behalf of the guru, expressed in the aspect of Shakyamuni Buddha.

ORAL TRANSMISSION OF "CHENREZIG'S REQUEST TO THE BUDDHA"

I think I received this oral transmission from Kyabje Drongla Rinpoche.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

"The Bodhisattva, the Compassionate Eye-Looking One, stood up from the seat and placing the robes on the shoulder, put right knee put on the ground where Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was, then prostrated like this, and smiled. Then he requested Shakyamuni Buddha like this."

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

"The Destroyer, the Qualified One, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha."

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

Then there are a few syllables of the Prajnaparamita texts, the wisdom gone beyond, which has *great* merits. That means if you recite it, you collect great merit.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

The minute you hear, by just merely having heard this *Lama tön pa chom dän dä de... chbag tshäl lo*, just merely hearing this, all the negative karmas get purified.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

Then definitely, *definitely* you're engaged to achieve enlightenment, *definitely*.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

You're engaged to achieve enlightenment. That it means you're on the right track towards enlightenment.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

Not only that, those who are practicing tantra, those who are practicing *ngya* mantra, so mantra doesn't mean just only the reciting, not just that. *Ngya* means the whole tantric path to enlightenment.

So there's four classes of tantra: Kriya Tantra, Charya Tantra, Anuttara Tantra, Maha-anuttara Tantra. There's a path not mentioned there. The lower path has the yoga with sign and the yoga without sign. The yoga without sign is to do with yoga, emptiness. Then in Highest Yoga Tantra, there are the generation stage and completion stage. So the mind is totally transformed by the pure path. We see ourselves as the deity, totally pure, a totally transcended appearance. Seeing ourselves as the deity stops the ordinary thought we're an ordinary being.

Then the place is the mandala of the deity and all the enjoyments are the purest enjoyments of a buddha. When we become a buddha, our mind is the purest mind, free from gross disturbing thought obscurations and subtle obscurations which interfere with achieving the state of omniscience.

Then, for the enlightened being who has the purest mind, all the enjoyments are also purest, the purest enjoyments, like the skies. So unbelievable, like that, the purest; not impure, the purest, the purest enjoyments to their senses. So then the actions are the same.

During the path, even before enlightenment, when the very high tantric path of the completion stage is achieved, even before the unification of clear light and illusory body, for those great meditators, yogis, even the poison for them is like poison for a peacock; it becomes very helpful. It's not poison for them. For the peacock, poison becomes very powerful, makes it develop its colors, making them so bright. Instead of becoming poison, it creates the colors. What is poison to others helps them when they digest it, like the peacock.

Those great yogis, even if they eat *kaka*, it becomes nectar to their senses, pure like that, nectar. Great bliss is induced by everything that touches their senses. This is even before it happened, when they achieve those realizations. What appears ugly or dirty or something for us, for them appears pure view. That's due to the development of the mind, the mind becoming much more pure.

Everything pure because the mind is pure. Both are pure. That's the mantra. The meaning of mantra is "protecting the mind." The meaning of mantra is "protecting the mind," relating to the tantra is like that.

Then, by blessing the wind, channels and drops, by blessing them, we are able to bring the wind that is blocked in the right channel and the left channel, which is in those channels, then we bring into central channel and then we are able to experience, to generate the four blisses. Then we are able to dissolve the gross mind and actualize the subtle mind, the extremely subtle mind. There are different levels of mind: the gross, subtle and extremely subtle mind. So the extremely subtle mind becomes visible.

Then the great bliss non-dual with emptiness is experienced and this becomes the direct cause of the dharmakaya. If we're able to actualize this, then we are the practitioner who will achieve enlightenment in this life. This is what is called "clear light, simultaneously-born great bliss." Actually the term itself is secret, the name itself is secret, but hopefully there's some faith, so it might be okay to say it.

So anyway, that's the secret mantra. Each word has some meaning but anyway that's the mantra protecting the mind, saving the mind.

There are different levels [in Highest Yoga Tantra.] We achieve the isolation of body, the isolation of speech and then the isolation of mind during the completion stage. Then after the isolation of mind, there is the clear light, then the illusory body and then unification of these two. So the mantra that is our mind goes to a higher and higher level on the path, but it's all mantra.

When the mind becomes the omniscient mind with unification of no more learning, that's also mantra. That's the ultimate one, the unification dharmakaya and rupakaya.

ORAL TRANSMISSION: THE MEANING OF THE BUDDHA MANTRA

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

“May the one who's attempting to practice the mantra without obstacle be able to accomplish the secret mantra. Please explain this. This is Chenrezig's request to the Buddha.”

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

“Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said ‘Yes’ to the great bodhisattva,” the great bodhisattva means arya being, “the arya bodhisattva, the exalted, compassionate arya being, enriched of qualities, enriched of power. Spiritual son of the type please listen.”

There are different types, the Hinayana type, the Mahayana type and with the Mahayana there are the Paramitayana and the Secret Mantra type, so here the spiritual son is of the Mahayana type, like the king's son who will become the king in future and do the king's activities, guiding the population. The bodhisattva here is going to become a buddha and do the activities for sentient beings. That's the type; that's that process to become a buddha, then to benefit sentient beings.

To Chenrezig's request of what a bodhisattva is the Buddha replies that it's this, it is good to attempt to benefit *all* the sentient beings. This is what Buddha was telling Chenrezig.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

“Therefore, spiritual son or type, please listen extremely listen well and keep in mind, these few syllables of the Prajnaparamita, the wisdom gone beyond, which, just *merely, merely* listening, merely hearing, has *great* merit, purifying *all* the sentient beings' karmic obscurations.”

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

“Then life is definitely engaged towards enlightenment. Anyone is are attempting to practice secret mantra, tantra, without any obstacles can complete tantra, as I'll explain to you.”

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

Thus, the great bodhisattva, the great sattva, the compassionate arya being enriched in the qualities, requested to the Buddha like this, “Please explain the benefits, in order to benefit all sentient beings,” as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was abiding his holy mind in the equipoise meditation of

concentration, the concentration is called “Liberating All Sentient Beings.” The moment the Buddha’s holy mind went into the equipoise meditation, from the center of the two eyebrows, the white hair [appeared.]”

This length of white hair stays curled clockwise. If it’s pulled out it goes back and stays like this. My guru, His Holiness Song Rinpoche, explained about this hair, that it has to be white, not blue, not the other color. Many years ago I was painting the eyes of a buddha statue and I think I made this curl between the eyebrows a deep blue, like the hair. I was in the United States, at Geshe Sopa Rinpoche’s center. Geshe Sopa Rinpoche is my guru and was also Lama Yeshe’s guru from Tibet. Of the many ex-abbots and the present abbots, many gurus, many outstanding, very qualified teachers who fled Tibet, he was known also in Tibet among those many thousands of learned ones in each monastery, he was so known. Geshe Sopa Rinpoche taught in Madison University for many years, for maybe more than twenty years. He retired quite a number of years ago but he has been given teaching courses, two-month courses or one-month courses each year. I have attended most of his courses on Lama Tsongkhapa’s teaching, the philosophy of Lama Tsongkhapa, those very important texts.

So what am I saying? I was painting. Then I think I made this curl deep blue. But His Holiness Song Rinpoche explained it was wrong [and should be white.] I don’t remember whether it was related to that or not, but anyway it was explained during the teachings.

This is how it is explained. You can pull the curl straight out but when you let go of the end, it goes back and stays curled. This is part of the holy signs of the Buddha’s holy body. There are thirty-two holy signs and eighty holy exemplifications. To achieve that quality you need to collect, I don’t know, I don’t remember, merits, most unbelievable, most unbelievable, unbelievable merits to achieve that sign of the holy body. So the thirty-two holy signs and eighty holy exemplifications. That may be part of that thirty-two holy signs.

“From this, beams, hundreds and thousands of white beams are emitted, covering *all* the buddhas’ pure lands. Then any sentient being that the beams touch, including the hell beings, it makes them *definitely* achieve enlightenment. All the buddhas’ worlds, it shatters (?) six times. Then sandalwood powder rainfalls our down in the presence of the buddhas, the presence of the Buddha’s holy feet.”

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

What it’s saying then is, “At that time Buddha taught the wisdom gone beyond, saying that bodhisattvas’ minds should remain in equilibrium, with loving kindness, wishing to repay the kindness, that the mind should be free from defilements, the mind should be free from negative karmas.” The Buddha said that. And also recite this *Heart of the Wisdom Gone Beyond, Prajnaparamita*, and the Buddha’s name, TADYA THA OM MUNÉ MUNÉ MAHAMUNA-YE.

KHUNU LAMA RINPOCHE’S STORY

Many texts have OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNI but that is totally wrong, according to Kyabje Khunu Lama Rinpoche, the great bodhisattva, great pandit, the great scholar, the unbelievable scholar. He’s a great bodhisattva. He was Indian from Kundun, Ladakh, which means Kundun. At a very young time he went to Tibet to learn Dharma and to receive the lineage of the teachings and commentaries

and oral transmissions, and also to learn poetry, grammar and a way of putting the Sanskrit letters together .

I'm not sure how to translate it but there is a particular way of putting Sanskrit letters together that can just be learned from *very* learned teachers. At one time there was a teacher training school started in Mussoorie in India, not so far from Dharamsala. All the abbots of the six monasteries were there: from Sera, Ganden and Drepung, the great monastery universities of Tibet that were later established in India by His Holiness with the monks who fled from Tibet. All the abbots and many other learned teachers, they were there. Kyabje Khunu Lama Rinpoche went there and His Holiness organized then for him to explain teachings to them. There was also His Holiness Song Rinpoche who was ex-abbot of Ganden Monastery, the great monastery university in Tibet, Ganden Shartse, and many learned ones there. So Kyabje Khunu Lama Rinpoche gave explanations from the Buddha's teaching, the *Kangyur*.

He lived in India with the sadhus, in Varanasi, on the river Ganga. This is where he lived and the sadhus helped him, offering him food and taking care of him, so he dressed like a sadhu. Then he came to the one Tibetan monastery in Bodhgaya at that time. There were maybe Buddhist monasteries from Japan other countries but not Tibetan, just one, a Gelug, in Lama Tsongkhapa's tradition. Now there are many, but at that time there was only that one Tibetan monastery. When His Holiness went to Bodhgaya, Kyabje Khunu Lama came, looking just like a sadhu. So the monks of the monastery didn't recognize he was a great bodhisattva, a great scholar, an unbelievable scholar of the Buddha's teachings. They didn't recognize him; they thought he was just a sadhu or something. He asked for a room but monks didn't give him one, and he slept outside on the cement floor of the monastery.

His Holiness was inside the monastery. Then, the next day His Holiness the Dalai Lama took the extensive commentary of the *Bodhicaryavatara*, *The Guide to a Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, composed by *great* bodhisattva, Shantideva, the great Indian holy being, the pandit from great monastic university, Nalanda. After His Holiness took teachings from Kyabje Khunu Lama, he very soon became known. Before, nobody knew him. [Rinpoche laughs] Then he very quickly became very famous.

Outside the monastery there was a two-storied building, a guest house where all monks of the monastery were living. Because His Holiness Dalai Lama was coming, they lived there. There was a temple and outside the garden gate, there was the two-story guest house. Khunu Lama Rinpoche stayed upstairs in the middle room, I think. Anyway, sooner or later all the people, everybody, lined to Rinpoche's room, the steps down from his room lined with people waiting to see Rinpoche to get a blessing or to get advice.

I had a little fortune to meet Rinpoche several times there and to receive teachings on the *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, Lama Atisha's teaching. He also gave commentary on *Bodhicaryavatara* to many other geshe and lamas in the room which is very high in the building, the *takepa*.³

When he presented the Dharma, he taught all four Tibetan Buddhist traditions: Nyingma, Kagyü, Sakya and Gelug. For example, because in the audience were many geshe from the Lama Tsongkhapa tradition and also from Nyingma and the other traditions, when he talked about

³ I think this refers to the room at the top of the Mahabodhi stupa in Bodhgaya. Rinpoche has alluded to this in other teachings where he has given Khunu Lama Rinpoche's story.

emptiness, he taught using Lama Tsongkhapa's teaching, but also the Nyingma, Kagyü and Sakya traditions' teachings. He presented them individually like that.

I requested a commentary on *Bodhicaryavatara*, but Rinpoche did not accept, but he gave the oral transmission of the *Bodhicaryavatara* instead. I was requesting it just to do it myself. So Rinpoche gave the oral transmission in his room for maybe two days, I'm not sure, in the afternoon. I stayed awake through the transmission until he reached the ninth chapter on wisdom and then I immediately fell asleep. This chapter is supposed to be the most difficult one to understand, and the minute Rinpoche started to explain the commentary on the wisdom chapter about emptiness, I fell asleep! [Rinpoche laughs]

I think I had created very heavy negative karma to understand emptiness and for that reason during the teaching I fell asleep. I created heavy negative karma blocking the realization of emptiness, so I have a lot to purify.

Now there are many translations of *Bodhicaryavatara* but at that time there was only one, by somebody from Sikkim, Gadze Dawa or somebody, somebody from Sikkim who studied English in school or university, I'm not sure. So Rinpoche told me, even though there's already a translation, I should learn English well and learn the text, and translate *Bodhicaryavatara* into English. Even though there was already a translation, Rinpoche thought I should do this although so far it hasn't really happened. Hopefully in the future sooner or later. So Rinpoche was very, very kind to me.

When Rinpoche came to Nepal I received teachings on *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment* in a monastery down there, then here with our Western students and Sangha. That time we had many Sanghas, first explosion of Sangha, the first time explosion of Western Sangha. We went to Boudhanath. I brought them to see Rinpoche and [we took teachings on] *The Foundation of All Good Qualities* and *A Hundred Advices to Tigri*, a text by Padampa Sangye, an Indian great yogi who lived during Milarepa's time, who went to Tibet and visited Tingri, giving a hundred pieces of advice to the people of Tingri. It's a very good text. We took the oral transmission of that from Rinpoche.

I think that might have been the last visit. Then Rinpoche gave some fruit. On the table there was fruit, *la-dak*, *kung-pu*. What's it called?

Student: Apricot.

Rinpoche: Apricot, yeah. He filled the bottles[?] under the table and gave some to me. Rinpoche gave advice to the monks here at Kopan. We didn't get to eat but anyway Rinpoche gave the advice that the monks should subdue their mind. Anyway, I cannot subdue my own mind so how can I subdue theirs? I think that might have been the last visit.

ORAL TRANSMISSION: THE PRONUNCIATION OF THE BUDDHA MANTRA

So anyway, the mantra's *not* MUNI MUNI [with a long e /i:/sound at the end], not that one, as many texts are written. But MUNÉ MUNÉ, [like /eI/nay sound] MUNÉ MUNÉ MUNA-YE [aI/] SVAHA. I think Rinpoche corrected this during the teachings in Bodhgaya.

I'm not very sure because I don't know Sanskrit, so I asked a monk who's supposed to be very expert in Sanskrit at Sarnath, but he seems to recite MUNI MUNI [/i:/] so I explained Kyabje Khunu Lama Rinpoche's and he explained this was wrong. But he didn't have much rejection of that.

There are other mantras, like Namgyalma or other mantras, that have MUNI MUNI [/i:/] so I don't know if there is a difference in the meaning between MUNI and MUNÉ. I haven't got an idea.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

“I have found the wisdom gone beyond and achieved the peerless, completely purified enlightenment, full enlightenment.”

ORAL TRANSMISSION: THE PRAJNAPARAMITA SUTRAS

So this is mantra is part of the teaching of the *Prajnaparamita*, the wisdom gone beyond.

This is the heart of the Buddhadharma. For example, the Buddha gave 84,000 basic teachings. He gave every single teaching to the numberless sentient beings but the heart of all those teachings are the *Prajnaparamita* teachings, the teachings on emptiness. The very heart of the 84,000 teachings are the *Prajnaparamita* teachings. The *Prajnaparamita* teachings, or *büim* in Tibetan, come in the twelve volumes. I think maybe there is one text of a hundred thousand stanzas, in Tibetan *tön trak gya pa* (Skt: *Satasahasrika*). Then the next one of three volumes is more abbreviated, twenty-five thousand stanzas, in Tibetan *nyi tri len tön pa* (Skt: *pancavimsatisahasrika*). And then there is an even more abbreviated one of eighteen thousand stanzas, *tri gyä tön pa* (Skt: *Astadasahasrika*). Then there is the much more abbreviated one, the *Heart of Wisdom Sutra*, in Tibetan, *Sherab Nyingpo*, (Skt: *Prajnaparamita Hridaya*).

Then after that, there are a few syllables of the *Prajnaparamita*, so that's this one. Even though it's much more abbreviated, the teaching *Prajnaparamita*, wisdom gone beyond, the Buddha said this is the way he liberates us sentient beings. Not by washing our negative karma away in the water. Not like the Hindus believe when they baths in the river Ganga. When the people die or during their life, they go there and wash, believing the river washes and purifies karma, or when people die, their bodies are brought there, the feet are washed or something to purify negative karma. So, it's not like that. Also the Buddha does not liberate us by pulling the negative karma from us with his hands, like taking out a thorn from the body, not that way. And also not by transplantation. The Buddha does not transplant his own realizations into the heart of the sentient beings like transplanting some organ like a heart, a brain or a kidney. It's also not that way.

How the Buddha, the Mighty One, liberates us sentient beings is by revealing the truth, by explaining the truth. That's the way. That is the teaching on emptiness, the truth, the very nature of the I, the aggregates, all phenomena, the very nature of phenomena which is emptiness.

In Tibetan, emptiness is called *tong pa nyi*; *tong pa* is “emptiness” and *nyi* is “only.” So far in English the term “emptiness” has been used. People who have studied can understand it has a very profound meaning, but the people who haven't studied might think just ordinary empty, so like your stomach's empty of food. [Rinpoche laughs], Or you have purse with no money in it. Just ordinary empty. In Tibetan, *tong pa nyi* is not just *tong pa*. This syllable *nyi* is added and *that* makes it very

special, not just ordinary empty but very special. By adding the syllable *nyi* it cuts, it *cuts* the ordinary emptiness, like I mentioned, instead of just like the stomach empty of food, *tong pa*, not filled. The *nyi* cuts the ordinary emptiness, making it very clear.

From beginning, I don't know who translated the term. It very much depends who translates, from very beginning who put it into English, so much depends on that. Things has been developed, they've become better in the English translation. But of course, it very much depends on who translates.

So *tong pa nyi*, *tong pa*, “emptiness,” then *nyi*, emptiness “only.” Tibetan makes it very clear, there's nothing to get mixed. The *nyi* is left out in the English translation. In Sanskrit, it's *shunyata*, but I haven't studied Sanskrit, so I don't know whether the *nyi* is there or not, I'm not sure in the Sanskrit. So maybe it's there? *Shun-ya-ta*, I'm not sure.

Therefore, it's very useful to understand even the Tibetan word, then we can understand exactly what it means. The *nyi* cuts the ordinary emptiness. It is not an absence of conventional truth, not an absence of the truth for the all-obscuring mind but absence of the object to be refuted.

The I is empty of being truly existent. That real I doesn't exist at all. It's the emptiness of that. *Tong pa nyi* cuts the false I; *nyi*, *tong pa nyi*. So “emptiness only,” *tong pa nyi*. It's only empty of the *false* I, empty of the object to be refuted.

The very shortest *Prajnaparamita* is one syllable, AH, in Tibetan *yi ge chik ma* (Skt: *ekaksari*). Everything in the *prajnaparamita* texts, the hundred thousand stanzas, the eighteen thousand stanzas and so forth is contained in that one syllable, AH. The Buddha said he liberates us sentient beings by revealing the truth, what is contained in the *Prajnaparamita* texts. By that we are able to cut the root of samsara, ignorance, which is the only way we can become liberated from the oceans of samsaric suffering and it causes, karma and delusions, and achieve liberation and ultimate happiness.

AH has meaning; AH means *no* phenomenon—I, action, object—no phenomenon has true existence. It negates the true existence that is projected by the ignorance *all over* the I, the action, the object, the merely-labeled I, the merely-labeled action, the merely-labeled object, the merely-labeled *all* phenomena. This hallucination of true existent is projected all over, making everything appear real. This AH negates all this, making it totally non-existent.

I just read the finish.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan]

Chenrezig received this from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said, “You will become the supreme bodhisattva and then you will become the buddha predicted. Anybody who listens your name, to Chenrezig's name, anybody who listens to the Compassionate Buddha's name, who memorizes your name, who reads your name, who reveals it to other, extensively to other sentient beings, who writes into texts and making offering to the text, all those people then in the future will become enlightened.”

So I'll stop here.

Lecture Five: 9 December

LIBERATING ANIMALS

[Refuge and bodhicitta]

Maybe one question?

Student: Rinpoche, I just want to ask about Milarepa's mantra. Can you recite it to animals who are dying?

Rinpoche: Very good. There's a book we put together many, many, so many years ago, particularly when I was in Taiwan because a lot of people were saving the lives of animals. I made a book about how to save the lives of animals, how to liberate them. Of course, first you have to buy them from the place where they're going to be killed.

Of course, there are two meanings for "liberate." The first is to save from death, the other is to liberate from samsara. That's why when a group brings animals to the center in Taiwan, if there's any way, they circumambulate outside the center because the center has many holy objects, statues, stupas, scriptures, many holy objects.

If you can take the animals around outside around [a center], you can do like that. Otherwise, like in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan, you set up an altar at the place where there's a reservoir or water or when you can liberate them. In Hong Kong the people usually take the whole thing to a place near water where they can put the animals back in the water. It's mostly sea animals. So there's a big table and then another smaller one on that on another level, then another level and another level like that. They bring many tsa-tsas, statues, stupas, as many as possible, and set them up very nicely, then the actual statues, then Dharma texts—the lam-rim and *Prajnaparamita* texts, like the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*—on top. So, the Buddha, lam-rim or *Prajnaparamita* scripture, a stupa, whatever you have, even a whole bundle of photos of buddhas, like card of the merit field, which means thousands of buddhas, or the thirty-five Buddhas or even many photos of Buddha, bundles of them, all put around.

If you have one more buddha statue or stupa or picture there, that means one more cause for enlightenment for the people who go around and animals that you carry around, if you have one more statue of buddha or stupa or Dharma text or picture of the Buddha. If you have a hundred set up there, when you take this most precious sentient being, this insect or whatever, around one time, then this sentient being creates a hundred causes of enlightenment, of peerless happiness, of full enlightenment, and by the way a hundred causes to achieve liberation from the oceans of samsaric suffering and its causes. This precious sentient being, this insect or whatever, creates that, those hundred causes of happiness for all the future lives.

If you have a thousand holy objects, then by going around once carrying this precious sentient being, this insect or whatever, this dog, cat, goat or fish, whatever, taking one time around creates a thousand causes of enlightenment, and by the way liberation from samsara and happiness future lives. Then if there are a hundred thousand holy objects, for example, the pictures there, one photo with many buddhas on it, when you carry one insect or ant or something around, it creates for that sentient being, that most precious sentient being, that ant or worm or whatever, a hundred thousand

causes of enlightenment, and by the way, a hundred thousand cause to achieve liberation from samsara, to be totally free forever, not just free for some time and then come back then and suffer, not like that. Free forever. Because you have ceased the cause to completely cease karma and delusion, including the seed of delusion from where the delusion rises, it's completely totally ceased. And if there's no cause, how can there be suffering?

They create a hundred thousand causes of happiness of all the future lives no matter how small they are, like the ant or even much smaller, and no matter how big. The merit they create all depends on how many holy objects there are. So it's best to create as many as possible; that's very, very important.

Since I'm telling this, I can also mention this. A pig was chased by a dog around the stupa, and the pig tried to run around the stupa, tried to run away, but it become a circumambulation because the dog chased it. It went around and it became a circumambulation. When the pig died it was born in the higher realm. The cause was being forced to circumambulate the stupa by being chased by the dog. That caused after death the pig to be born in the deva realm, the higher realm, the thirty-three deva realm. There are many stories like that.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD HEART

There is one thing very important to understand. Whether we have gone through that or not, a very important lesson, to become cause of the happiness our actions—eating, sitting, drinking, sleeping, working, walking, listening, reflecting, meditating, whatever action we do—to become cause of the happiness, whatever you do, doing our job, playing golf or soccer, anyway—for all these actions to become cause of happiness, to not become cause of suffering, [they need to be done with the right motivation.] That means the happiness not only this life, but the happiness of future lives, *long* run happiness. That means until we remove the cause of suffering, karma and delusions, until we remove it completely, there's continual reincarnating in samsara, and suffering in the oceans of hell suffering, the oceans of hungry ghosts' suffering, the oceans of animal suffering, the oceans of human beings' suffering, the oceans of sura beings' suffering, the oceans of asura beings' suffering and intermediate state sufferings. We'll continue to be born then suffer all this, and then we'll die. Then we'll be born again, suffer and die.

We have been doing that since beginningless time; we have been doing this from *beginningless* rebirths up to now. We need to cease the cause of reincarnating, circling in samsara, the cause that makes us circle in samsara, to be born and suffer and die, this is by karma and delusions, the action and delusions, we need to do this by actualizing antidote, the remedy, by actualizing the path then totally remove it. That's what directly ceases the defilements, the disturbing obscuring delusions, the defilements. What directly ceases them is by the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness.

All the other things, such as renunciation, support that. Realizing the renunciation of samsara is the door. When we have that, we have entered the path to liberation. But of course, if we have bodhicitta, on the basis of that bodhicitta, then we enter in the Mahayana path to enlightenment.

I was talking about the action becoming the cause. Whatever action we're doing, all those actions I mentioned before, become the cause of happiness. Happiness is not just this life's happiness; it's the happiness of all the coming future lives, then ultimate happiness, liberation from the oceans of

samsaric suffering and its causes. That's *much* more important, *much* more important than achieving the happiness of all the future lives—that's temporary happiness. More important than that happiness to achieve is ultimate happiness, liberation from oceans of samsaric suffering and its causes. Now even *more* important than that, the *most* important, is peerless happiness, full enlightenment, completing the qualities of the cessation of mistakes, the gross and subtle defilements, and completing the qualities of all the realizations. Then, our actions no longer become the cause of suffering but cause of happiness. So, there are different levels of happiness.

The basic thing for our daily life's activities to become the cause of happiness, all these happinesses, the action itself has to become virtue, it has to become Dharma, it has to become Sharma. For our actions to become Dharma, the motivation for the action has to become Dharma, has to become virtue.

The meaning of Dharma is protecting ourselves from suffering. To put it simply, the meaning of Dharma is to protect ourselves from suffering and the cause of suffering, holding up, as Geshe Sopa Rinpoche said one day, holding up. Holding up means protecting ourselves from or holding up from falling down into the lower realms, so that means Dharma. Then also protecting ourselves from samsara, instead of repeatedly reincarnating in samsara, protecting ourselves from that, holding up from that; that means the Dharma.

Then holding up from lower nirvana, protecting ourselves from the lower nirvana, then we direct our life towards enlightenment, so that's what's Dharma. So, the meaning of Dharma is like that, holding up from falling down in the lower realm, all this protecting from suffering, suffering and its cause.

Our daily life activities, whatever we are doing—listening to the teachings, reflecting, doing meditation, all the normal activity such as eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing our job and so forth—all this becomes the cause of happiness; it doesn't become the cause of suffering. For them to become the cause of happiness, they have to become virtue, Dharma, and for these actions to become Dharma, virtue, then the motivation for the action has to become Dharma, virtue, pure, unstained by ignorance, anger, attachment.

Nagarjuna, the second Buddha, who propagated the Buddha's teaching unbelievably, wrote six or seven texts, very deep, profound, on wisdom, on emptiness. There are tantra teachings by Nagarjuna. So anyway, Nagarjuna said,

Desire, hatred, ignorance, and
The actions they generate are non-virtues.
Non-attachment, non-hatred, non-ignorance,
And the actions they generate are virtues.

From non-virtues come all sufferings
And likewise all bad transmigrations,
From virtues, all happy transmigrations
And the pleasures of all lives.⁴

⁴ *Precious Garland*, vv. 20–21.

Then, whatever activity we are doing, it becomes virtue, and it becomes the cause of happiness, the cause of the happiness of future lives, a good rebirth. Then if that daily life's activity is done with the renunciation, with the detachment to the future lives' samsara, like the samsaric happiness or perfections, that action becomes the cause to achieve liberation, ultimate happiness, everlasting happiness, the cessation of the oceans of samsaric suffering and its cause, karma and delusions.

Then if our actions are done with bodhicitta, much higher, if our daily life's activities are done with the motivation of bodhicitta, the thought to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, cherishing sentient beings, then all your actions—eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing our job, and no question, listening to Dharma, reflecting and then meditating—all become virtue, the cause of happiness, the cause of full enlightenment, the state of omniscience, peerless happiness. That's the most important one. Among the success, that is the greatest success in the life.

On the other hand, if listening Dharma, reflecting, meditating, and the normal activities such as eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing our job and so forth, all these things—if they are done with attachment to this life, then all those actions become *worldly* dharma, not *holy* Dharma, not *holy* Dharma, *worldly* dharma, they becomes nonvirtue. Even listening to the teaching, reflecting, meditating become worldly, so of course eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing our job, everything becomes nonvirtue.

Why? Because the motivation is nonvirtue, attachment clinging to this life, that motivation is nonvirtue. Because that motivation is attachment to this life, it doesn't bring peace in our heart. It only causes disturbances to our heart, to ourselves and to our mind, making the mind unsubdued. It's the opposite; it doesn't bring peace to our mind, inner peace, because the motivation is nonvirtue. That means if we're not practicing Dharma, if you're not practicing lam-rim, then waking up in the morning, dressing, washing, eating—everything is just done with attachment. Maybe sometimes there's anger, but there's always ignorance and there's attachment, attachment clinging to this life. So everything from early morning, from the beginning of the day, already all those actions become negative karma, nonvirtue which only result in suffering.

Rushing, going for our job, even if the motivation is not bodhicitta, to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings—even if we don't think about enlightenment particularly but if we think about benefitting all sentient beings in order to free them from suffering and have happiness, or at least the company we're working for, or the family member we're working for—if the motivation for whatever we do such as working for a company, helping an old person who is sick, cleaning for them and so forth, if the motivation, if the main goal is our own happiness, is to achieve our own happiness, attachment to this life, then no matter how many hours we work—washing, cleaning, even washing the old person—if it's all done for ourselves, the everything becomes negative karma, nonvirtue.

But then in our heart, if our motivation is the happiness of that person, not our happiness but the happiness of that person, it becomes virtue. Here it becomes virtue; that's the difference. Is the main goal of our life our own happiness or the happiness of that person? If it's the happiness of that person, then our action becomes pure, it becomes virtue. The action becomes virtue and therefore it is Dharma. It becomes very pure Dharma because our main goal is the happiness of that person, happiness of that sentient being. That's very important. The motivation is, so then [it] becomes pure dharma, and cause of enlightenment, so that [pause]. Then it becomes Dharma, pure Dharma, the

very powerful means to purify all our past heavy negative karma. The harder we work, the more hardships we endure taking care of that sentient being, then even *much more* heavier negative karma collected in the past—many eons of negative karma—gets purified.

Every day our life is like that. If we have good heart, if our motivation like this, every day our job becomes Dharma, becomes meditation. Therefore, you can see now here how it's so *urgent* to have a good heart, good heart in the life, *so* unbelievably important.

Even if we might not believe in reincarnation, in karma, or we don't understand those subjects, even if we are only thinking this one life, it still becomes the most unbelievably important issue to have a good heart. If we have good heart, thinking of the happiness of the person, then all our actions become Dharma, so this becomes the purest action.

Otherwise, however many hours we do our job, everything becomes negative karma, the cause of suffering, because the motivation is attachment to this life. When the motivation is like that, that is dissatisfied mind, we never get satisfaction. With that motivation, we never get satisfaction in life; we never get inner happiness, peace *at all*. There's no inner happiness, peace, satisfaction in our heart. That attachment only brings disturbance to our heart, not peace.

Because of that attachment, anger can arise *very easy*, or any of those other minds like jealousy, in fact *all* those afflicting negative emotional thoughts; attachment makes it easy to arise. So it constantly makes us suffer while we're doing our job in everyday life, as well as harming other sentient beings. There are *so* many ways we harm other sentient beings with these wrong concepts. We are under the control of the dictatorship, of the dictator, the selfish mind, the self-cherishing thought. This is the mind that is dictating to us how to lead our life.

Instead of giving peace to others at home or in the office, we give no peace to others but instead give so many types of harm to others, disturbing others because of all of these negative thoughts, these delusions that arise. Thinking only of ourselves, only of our own happiness, only of our own profit, we disturb others based on the self-cherishing thought. Then we don't care for others. Then other receives so much harm, disturbance, so it harms others, creating negative karma, and that causes us to be reborn in the lower realms and then experience those unbelievable, most unbelievable, unbelievable sufferings—of the hell beings, the hungry ghosts, animals—and then later, after some time, due to another good karma ripening, if we get reborn as a human being, then in that life, we still experience *many* problems, many problems.

THE FOUR SUFFERING RESULTS OF KARMA

There are four suffering results from a negative action. The first, the *ripening result*, is to be reborn in the lower realms. The other three are if we are reborn as a human. The *possessed result* is to do with the place, we are born in a place where there's a lot of negative attitude or suffering, a lot of problems. There are a lot of sicknesses, contagious diseases, or a lot of fighting or many famines. It can be a place where there's no water or no food. Anyway, there are a lot of problems.

Then, with *experiencing the result similar to the cause* of that negative karma, we receive harm from others. We receive harm from others because we created negative karma in the past, we harmed

them in the past. So then, in another life after some time, when we're born as a human being we receive harm from others, we experience a result similar to the cause.

Then the third result, because of the habit or negative imprint left on the mind by the past negative karma of harming others, like the ten nonvirtues, we do that negative action *again*. We create that negative karma *again* because of the habituation or negative imprint left on the mind by the past negative karma. That is *creating the result similar to the cause*.

Since I mentioned this now I would like to add this. As a result of the past negative karma, one of the ten nonvirtues, whatever is done, we then do that action *again* in another human life. We're born as a human being due to some different good karma, but then we do this again, we harm others, we commit the ten nonvirtuous actions. As a result, we do it again, we create it again.

A completed negative karma has four parts: *shi*, *tsam-pa*, *jor-wa* and *tar-tuk*. *Shi* is the object. For example, killing or telling lies, the object is a sentient being. Then there is the thought or intention, in Tibetan, *tsam-pa*, and the action, *jor-wa*. Finally, there is the conclusion or goal, *tar-tuk*. For instance, if our intention is to kill a person and we complete the action of killing that specific person and he dies before we do, then all four factors are there and the karma of killing is a complete action.

With lying, when the other sentient being has heard and understood what we have said, the meaning, then the goal of telling lies is completed. If that didn't happen, the action is not completed. We want to tell a lie but we did not complete the action or the person didn't understand the meaning. It's the same with the experience of sexual misconduct, when then goal is completed the action is complete and so we experience the complete results of the action.

When the four parts of the action has been completed, that produces the four suffering results again: the ripening aspect of being born in the lower realms and the three sufferings in the human realm. I haven't seen a text talking about experiencing those three other suffering results in the deva realm. I haven't seen it in the texts, but you can ask that question. In the texts three suffering result are always related to the human realm. So that's something that can be checked.

So, the fourth result is doing it again, engaging in the same negative karma, then the four factors are gathered, the object, *shi*, the action, the intention, *tsam-pa*, and the conclusion, *tar-tuk*.. Then again, that produces the four suffering results, and then that fourth one *again* is engaging in the negative karma.

Since I'm talking here, I want to take opportunity to emphasize this. We create one negative karma, one negative karma, killing, sexual misconduct or telling lies, whatever. For example, today, let's say only one time we kill or commit sexual misconduct or telling a lie. Let's say we've only done this one time in this life. That leads to the four suffering results, and then creating the result similar to the cause produces another four suffering results, then *that* fourth result, creating the result similar to the cause produces another four suffering results. It goes on, goes *on* and *on* and *on* and *on*. On and on and on, endlessly! This is the endless suffering of samsara.

If we examine it, this is how one negative karma done one time, just once this life, produces endless suffering. If we don't purify the negative karma, if we don't purify the negative karma, if we don't practice purification, if nothing is done to that. By actualizing the remedy, the path to be liberated,

having ceased the delusion and karma. We did not purify negative karma, so nothing's done. Then in that case, this one negative karma causes endless suffering, endless—there is no end, there is no end.

Can you imagine how many times in this life we have committed the ten nonvirtues—killing or telling lies—how many times we have done it in this life, as well as gossiping, sexual misconduct, all these things. It's a basic example of the ten nonvirtues. How many times we've done it in this life. Getting older and older, how many years old we are, and all the time creating all those negative karmas. Can you imagine it? We've collected an unbelievable number those negative karmas.

Can you imagine? Even in one day, in one day doing our job, eating, walking, and talking, including night time and the last activity sleeping, the *whole* activity of the body, speech and mind is done with attachment to this life, for this life's happiness. Can you imagine? Everything during that twenty-four hours, *everything*, including the last one, sleeping, everything becomes negative karma, everything becomes negative karma. Then no question of any action done with the anger, no question of that. In one day of our life, it's like that. And then of course, can you imagine? Unimaginable, unimaginable, unimaginable negative karma in one day. Can you imagine?

From birth, the motivation has been the same, attachment clinging to this life, to the happiness of our own life, so it has been nonvirtue up to now.

THE NEED FOR PURIFICATION

Even without meeting Buddhism, it's a question of how much good heart a person has, it's question of that. Even without bringing up the subject of meeting Buddhism, without understanding Buddhadharma, without having met Buddhism.

Sometimes we help an animal or insect that is starting to be eaten by other insects or other animals or going to be killed by human beings. Saving that animal has nothing to do with our profit to ourselves; it's just purely the happiness of that sentient being, that worm or that insect in danger. We simply want to save that sentient being for its own happiness.

If we sometimes have a good heart like that, then of course that becomes pure Dharma. As I mentioned before, thinking of that person's happiness, of the being's happiness, not *our* happiness but the person's happiness, then taking care or whatever, that becomes pure Dharma.

Otherwise, every day like this, *all* the activities become negative karma. For the whole lifetime, the whole lifetime. If we don't know Buddhadharma, if we don't come to learn Buddhadharma. Of course we can *learn*, we can *learn* but then we need to *practice*, we need to put the practice into our daily life. Otherwise our action does not become Dharma and cannot cause happiness up to enlightenment. Just learning, just intellectually understanding is not enough. We need to put it into practice in daily life.

We need to change our attitude, to transform our mind into Dharma, into the cause of happiness, making it pure and healthy. Here I want to use the term "healthy mind." When the mind becomes Dharma, it become a healthy mind, otherwise it is not healthy mind, it's a sick mind. If it's an attached, angry, jealous mind, then all that is a sick mind, not a healthy mind. But when the mind

becomes Dharma, it becomes a healthy mind, a virtuous mind, a pure mind and then the next action will be pure Dharma, positive, virtuous, and will result only in happiness.

Without meeting the Dharma, without practicing, then for our whole life, this most precious human body is used to collect only the cause of suffering, the cause of suffering of the lower realms. I'm talking just about this life, but now we have to think about past lives, past lives when the mind did not become Dharma, and the motivation for all our actions was ignorance, anger or attachment. Then, everything became negative karma. Then in the life before that it was the same. So can you imagine from beginningless rebirths? Can you imagine?

Now you can understand, now you can get some idea of negative karma from beginningless rebirths, negative karma which we haven't finished experiencing, and which we haven't purified. The negative karmic imprints are uncountable, they are uncountable, like the dust of this earth. Therefore you can see now how important it is to practice purification in daily life. You can see now how the practice of purification in everyday life is *so* important.

A retreat like a Vajrasattva retreat is very powerful, where you do a lot of practices in the short time. You can organize have the some weeks and month and you can do the 100,000 recitations of the Vajrasattva mantra. Then there is the most unbelievably powerful purification practice, the recitation of the Thirty-five Buddhas, that is most powerful. By reciting each of the buddha's holy names just once, it has the power to purify many eons of the different negative karma, two eons' negative karma, two thousand eons' negative karma, then five thousand eons' negative karma, six thousand eons' negative karma, then there's the one I mentioned already this morning, the reciting the first buddha's name, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's name, which purifies a hundred million eons' of negative karma. Not just that but on top of that, hundreds of thousands of times of eons, that amount of eons of negative karma gets purified just by reciting once time, it has the power.

Then... what was your question? I forgot.

[Student asks about Milarepa's mantra.]

Rinpoche: Yes, yes. I see, I see. [Rinpoche laughs] So there's one, *De zhin sheg pa me tog päl la chbag tshäl lo*. "To the Tathagatha Glorious Flower I prostrate." If you recite that name even once, *De zhin sheg pa me tog päl la chbag tshäl lo*, it purifies a hundred thousand eons' of negative karma.

So reciting the names of the Thirty-five Buddhas is *most amazing*. That's why Lama Tsongkhapa did many hundreds of thousands of prostrations at Olka Chölung in Tibet, in a hermitage, a cave. People can go to see where he did many hundreds of thousands of mandala offerings on the rock. Not on silver, not on the very comfortable place, but he offered mandala on the rock. And then he did many hundreds of thousands of prostrations reciting the Thirty-five Buddhas' names, with the confessing downfalls.

At the beginning he didn't recite, "*De zhin sheg pa*" this title, "tathagata" but just the bare name were mentioned. Then he saw the Thirty-five Buddhas in the cave, but without heads—not without a "hat" but without the head, and so he added the *De zhin sheg pa*, literally "Gone As it Is." I already this explained yesterday. So then he saw the Thirty-five Buddhas with the heads. Although in other traditions, the texts don't have *De zhin Shekpa*, in the Lama Tsongkhapa tradition, we recite *De zhin sheg pa* because of that story of what happened to Lama Tsongkhapa.

So reciting the names is a most *amazing*, powerful purification practice. Then, with prostration, *won!* One prostration, *won!* The merit, good luck, the merit we collect is most amazing.

So, we'll quickly finish this subject.

So anyway, as I just mentioned, lay down with the full-length prostration, called a five-limb prostration. The full length prostration is according to the Mahayana oral tradition, and it is mentioned in some texts, according the Indian great yogi, Naropa's, tradition. The full length prostration is mentioned there.

The Buddha has explained, with every atom of our body covering the ground when we're doing a prostration, we collect inconceivable merits to be born as wheel-turning king for one thousand lifetimes. If there's one atom of our body covering the ground while we're doing a prostration. To create the cause to be born as wheel-turning king one time, in one life, we need to collect inconceivable, inconceivable, inconceivable merits. Two wheel-turning kings at the same time doesn't happen in this world. Like the Buddha revealing the Dharma. The Buddha who descended in this world to reveal Dharma, showing the twelve holy deeds like Guru Shakyamuni did, inspiring sentient beings, teaching the sentient beings how to practice Dharma and *why* we should practice Dharma, the need to achieve liberation from samsara, the need to achieve full enlightenment, the importance of that—two buddhas do not happen, showing the twelve deeds in this world at the same time. So, it's like that. Only one wheel-turning king happens in this world at one time.

When a wheel-turning king happens in this world, *everybody*, *everybody* is able practice virtue, *everybody* is able to live their life in practicing the ten virtues. So when that happens in this world, it has the same power, that kind of benefit, unbelievable to sentient beings. Besides the wealth and richness that happens, to be born as wheel-turning king once, we need to collect most unbelievable, unbelievable, unbelievable merits.

But here, when we do a prostration, if our body covers one atom, that means we collect inconceivable merits to be born as a wheel-turning king for thousands of lifetimes. So now from here, how many atoms of the ground our body covers when we're doing prostrations, from here down to the bottom of the earth, it's numberless, unimaginable, unimaginable. Even just how many atoms our one finger covers, from here down to the bottom of the earth, it's most unimaginable. And one of our toes, while we're doing prostrations, how many atoms one of our toes covers from here down to the bottom of the earth is most unimaginable. Can you imagine?

Even a piece of hair—of course if somebody has long hair, there's no question—but if we have a piece of hair, when we do prostrations, the hair covers unimaginable number of atoms from here down to the bottom of the earth. We get merit, an unimaginable number. Can you imagine? We get inconceivable merits to be born as wheel-turning king for thousands of lifetimes equaling the number of atoms that our hair covers from here down to the bottom of the earth. Can you imagine the merit, the good karma, the good luck when we do prostrations to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha?

Without thinking “Buddha, Dharma and Sangha,” when we just do the action, it only becomes physical exercise; it does not become a prostration, purifying negative karma. But once we have a holy object— even there are no actual statues, stupas, scriptures, nothing, but we visualize them—

but once we have the holy object to prostrate to, then it becomes prostration, then it purifies our mind, then we collect extensive merits. Can you imagine? By doing one prostration, the merit we collect is most unimaginable, unimaginable.

There are so many other practices to help us purify, but even if we only know these two, just Vajrasattva and especially the Thirty-five Buddhas, that's so unimaginable.

I mention this so that you'll come to know the importance of the practice of purification and the Vajrasattva practice, in everyday life Vajrasattva meditation or as a Vajrasattva retreat for three months. It is *so* fortunate we have had this here in the FPMT Organization for *so* many years due to Lama Yeshe's kindness.

The first initiation Lama gave after we moved here to Kopan was the Vajrasattva initiation. At that time there was no monastery built, not even the first monastery, so we were in the house that belonged to the Nepalese king's astrologer, which was built in the British style.

Lama and I shared a room. When you enter inside, the very first room, one tiny room, maybe this big. [Rinpoche shows] There was Lama's bed. There can only be one bed, [Rinpoche shows], then there's a door. So it was a small room and we were there for many years.

There were three American students, one is a professor now the, I don't know which university, Jan Willis, she an African American. And there were two other American students, a couple. They lived in the Nepalese house. I don't know if the same house exists now or not, but it was outside the gate. It's not the house outside the gate now, that's the new house but back from that, what was called Ran's house, the Nepalese man who worked for many years at Kopan in the kitchen.

They were upstairs. They received initiation from Lama Yeshe and they did retreat upstairs. The Nepalese family who lived downstairs made a fire and upstairs where they were doing the retreat got totally filled with smoke, totally filled with smoke. I don't think they were familiar with wood fires, they'd never lived that kind of life, so I think they had great difficulties with all the smoke every day in their room coming from downstairs.

So anyway, they did a three month retreat. They were the very first. Then it spread, and many students received the Vajrasattva initiation, and then Lama did it and I did it, then *so* many people, so many students here at Kopan, in Dharamsala and other places in the West did three-month Vajrasattva retreats. It's *so* fortunate, *unbelievably* fortunate. Then, practicing Vajrasattva every day is so fortunate. Then of course many people did many hundreds of thousands of practices in their preliminary practices.

So, I'm just saying here how our actions become the negative karma usually, and so we need to understand how important, how *urgent*, how *most urgent* it is to practice Vajrasattva and do prostrations by reciting the 'Thirty-five Buddhas' names. Anyway, since I'm talking, I'm going to mention also this.

So, I'll finish today. The Vajrasattva initiation is tomorrow in the evening.

Anyway, since I'm talking about karma, the other thing is this.

If we recite in the case of Vajrasattva, a hundred thousand hundred-syllable Vajrasattva mantras, then even you break all our vows they get purified. For example, say somebody takes ordination, then breaks the four root vows, killing a human being and received the defeat, stealing things, things that have not been offering, committing sexual intercourse and telling lies. Or while he doesn't have realizations he tells the lie, saying "I have such-and-such realization." Like this, very heavy karma is collected, but if you do the Vajrasattva mantra a hundred thousand times, all that gets completely purified, and you don't have to be reborn in lower realms where you suffer.

The next thing to understand so we can see, we can understand how important it is to practice Vajrasattva even in daily life is this. Today's negative karma expands. For example, killing a very, very tiny insect that's crawling on the damp wood, damp wood, that get multiplied, it become double tomorrow, triple the next day and so on. Every day it multiplies.

So after fifteen days, the karma is as heavy as having killed a human being. We kill that tiny insect killed and then we don't purify, and day by day it increases—doubled tomorrow and so on—so that after fifteen days, it's the same heavy karma as killing one human being. After eighteen days, after fifteen days, the negative karmas increases a hundred thousand times, then 31,072 or something like that; it increases.

So by the time we die, this one tiny negative karma, by multiplying day by day, becomes like the size of this earth, from one atom multiplied it become size of this earth containing so many atoms.

This is similar with any negative karma. If we don't purify it, by multiplying it becomes like the size of this earth—such an unbelievable increase—by the time we die. Then, can you imagine the next life? The most unbearable, most unbearable suffering, so many eons, eons, eons, eons have to be born in the lower realms and experience suffering. And this is only talking about one negative karma.

As I mentioned before, in twenty-four hours we do so many other negative karmas with the body, speech and mind, all those done today, yesterday, the day before yesterday, *so many*, all this gets multiplied, everyday it gets multiplied, it increases, unbelievable, most unbelievable. So, can imagine, like that, wow!

If we don't practice purification in this life, if nothing is done, then you can imagine, then future lives become so, for eons, most unimaginable, most unimaginable numberless eons become so difficult, most unbelievable sufferings, with no chance of a human rebirth. Can you imagine? You can't imagine, after this human body, in next life to be born as a tiny insect. I just mentioned this, unimaginable, most unimaginable after this human body, this human life, then we die and we're born as a red worm, a worm on the road—can you imagine?—or a scorpion or spider—can you imagine?—or a frog.

Then, it's impossible to practice. There is no way to practice Dharma. I just mention this. No way to practice dharma. For example, with a turtle or your cat or dog or snake, you can explain to them for billions of eons, day and night without any break at all what the cause of happiness is, that the cause of happiness is virtue, without break for billions of eons you can explain, but there is *no way* they can understand, *no way* they can understand.

But we who have this human body, when somebody explains to us, it doesn't even take minute, within a few seconds we can understand that the cause of happiness is virtue, and the definition of virtue—an action which result in happiness, motivated by non-anger, non-ignorance, non-attachment. That's it; it doesn't even take a minute. Within a few seconds we understood. That *proves* how our human body is so precious, unbelievably precious, most unbelievably precious.

So that means it's *unbelievably easy* to learn Dharma, how *unbelievably easy* it is to practice, how *unbelievably easy* it is to have realizations, how *unbelievably easy* it is to be liberated from oceans of samsaric suffering, how *unbelievably easy* it is to achieve the state of omniscience, full enlightenment. It's unbelievably easy with the human body, but it's *impossible* for them. That's a way of developing most compassion for them.

So you see, here it becomes *most* important, it becomes *the most* important thing to take care of this precious human body, and to make this life meaningful, to make it meaningful. Taking care means making the life meaningful, practicing Dharma. Can you imagine how most important it is to practice Dharma.

So please have tea.

[Tea offering: *Lama sangye lama, Chö de zhing lama, ge dun te Kun gyi je po lama, te lama namla, chö pa bu!*]

I didn't know if I finished. There was some left. Whatever negative karma that we do today, just one negative karma, it becomes double tomorrow. At end of the day today, if it's not purified, reciting the Vajrasattva mantra, without purifying that with Vajrasattva practice, it becomes double tomorrow, then the next day it becomes four times. And the third day it becomes eight times. So it increases like that, goes on. So this one negative karma today, if we don't purify it at the end of the day, this is how it increases as the days go. So it becomes most unbearable.

So then like that, how many negative karmas collected with the body, speech and mind today, all those increase, it becoming double tomorrow, triple the next day and so on.

Then not only that, there is yesterday's negative karma, the day before yesterday's negative karma and so on. If the purification by reciting Vajrasattva's mantra, the remedy with the four powers, the perfect confession or purification, if we apply the four powers then it becomes a very powerful, perfect confession, purification.

Can you imagine from birth time, wow! We can go back all the way through—can you imagine?—if no purification is done with the remedy of four powers, we have to experience all the suffering results. Then there's all that from past lives. Can you imagine?

The remedy, the four powers, we purify the negative karmas collected in connection with the Buddha and Sangha, by taking refuge, we purify. Then the negative karmas collected in connection with the sentient beings, by generating bodhicitta, we purify.

Then we think what the shortcomings of this negative karma are, what harm the negative karma gives to us, reflecting like that. All those different negative karmas with the body, speech and mind, what harm they give us, like that we think about their shortcomings.

When we see them as harmful, negative, we get inspired to generate the thought to purify. Then, the power of the remedy, the “power of always engaging,” it might be that. But that translation can be checked; it could be that. That is the recitation of Vajrasattva mantra itself and so forth.

Then the power to not commit the negative karma again. After we finish the mantra we recite this twenty-one times, for example, to stop increasing today’s negative karma, to not let it multiply tomorrow, then we recite the Vajrasattva mantra.

We need to recite the hundred-syllable mantra twenty-one times to stop today’s negative karma increasing tomorrow, you need to recite 21 times. If we are reciting the short one OM VAJRASATTVA HUM we need to recite it twenty-eight times. There’s also OM VAJRASATTVA HA, but I asked my root guru, His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, the Dalai Lama’s younger tutor. From here I wrote a letter and asked which one we should recite for the short one. His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche answered it’s more comfortable to recite OM VAJRASATTVA HUM, not HA; OM VAJRASATTVA HUM. So if we’re reciting the very short one, then we need to recite twenty-eight times to have power to stop today’s negative karma increasing tomorrow, becoming double tomorrow.

So now here, even reciting the hundred-syllable mantra twenty-one times in the power of the remedy within the four powers, it purifies, it stops today’s negative karma increasing tomorrow. And not only does it purify today’s negative karma, it purifies *yesterday’s* negative karma, it purifies past lives’ negative karma.

How much it purifies depends on how we recite. How we recite is not so much the sound, it’s more the motivation, whether the motivation is strong, whether there is stronger compassion for sentient beings. Recited with that, it becomes unbelievable, the most unbelievably powerful; even if we recite only a few mantras, it becomes the most unbelievably powerful purification.

If we recite with the right view, then it’s so unbelievably powerful. If we have the realization of bodhicitta, of right view, if we recite only once, it’s *the* most unbelievably powerful purification, collecting extensive merits, most unbelievable.

Even if he breaks all the four root vows, receiving the four defeats, a fully-ordained monk can purify all that even by reciting just once, if recited with the bodhicitta realization or right view, the realization of emptiness. So how much negative karma gets purified depends on how it is recited.

And how much faith. Another one is how much faith we have in the benefits of reciting the Vajrasattva mantra. The stronger the faith, the more power to purify negative karma.

By practicing the remedy, the four power, it has the benefit that we don’t experience the four suffering result: the ripening aspect, where we experience the result of rebirth in the lower realms—we don’t experience that—or the three suffering results in the human realm, the possessed result, the suffering to do with the place—we don’t experience that—then experiencing the result similar to the cause, where other sentient beings harm us as we harmed them in the past—we don’t experience that—and we don’t experience creating the result similar to the cause, where we do the negative karma again. That doesn’t happen; we don’t do that. That’s the importance of the Vajrasattva practice. If we do it twenty-one times, it stop today’s negative karma multiplying tomorrow, if it’s done with the remedy of the four powers.

LIBERATING ANIMALS

Then just to finish. The way we in the FPMT liberate animals is this. Set up an altar, if not in a building, outside in the garden or at the reservoir where there's water we can liberate the animals into and we can perform the prayers. And then people come.

In Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, also I think Malaysia, children come, their parents come, the grandfathers and grandmothers come, everybody comes. Then, even the children take the fish and carry them in their hands and go to the water to release them. So it's *very* good, it's a *very* good education for children, *very* good thing because I guess, I don't know, I guess there's no pride, there's not expectation to receive something for doing it. They just simply help them, put them back in the water. After finishing the circumambulation, they taking them round and place them in the water.

Setting up the altar, if you can, place relics of Buddha there. Of course, I don't know if the animals can see the statues, stupas, scriptures and other holy objects. It is said in the teachings that animals cannot see, even though we can see. I don't know. Of course, if you're able to see a Buddha relic, it purifies a thousand eons' negative karma. It might be same also if you circumambulate that. Anyway, it's a very powerful purification.

Right at the beginning, when the animals are brought there, immediately take as many as possible around as much as possible. Say you have a thousand crickets in a plastic bag. (Make sure the bag is not full, just half.) Crickets are so not expensive and easy to buy; they're sold to feed other animals. When you take them around once, those thousand crickets create the cause of enlightenment. Even if you only take them around once, every one of them creates the cause of enlightenment. However many times you go around, that creates that many causes for enlightenment and causes of happiness for them.

This is similar with the worms from the supermarket that are sold for fishermen. In the United States in the Washington and at the Aptos house, we buy worms there from the supermarket, then take them around the stupas as many as possible, as many times as possible. After that we recite the prayers.

At the altar, on the last platform, there are also offerings set up to offer them, so it's sort of like a puja for the animals, done for them. Then everybody chants mantras and there's a bucket of water. Everybody chant those powerful mantras to purify negative karma. Then after one mala or seven malas or half a mala or whatever, it depends, someone recites OM MANI PADME HUM, and recites more than other mantras. Then everybody blows over the bucket and that water is sprinkled over the birds for sea animals you can pour it over them. In Hong Kong or Singapore, they have a big sack of shell animals, and they pour the water over the water on top so the blessed water purifies them. It has unbelievable benefits, as explained in the texts by Buddha. Their negative karma of the big sack of shell animals gets purified, it's so good. Then you can also sprinkle on the birds and other animals, or pour on like the frogs and fish.

What they've been doing in Singapore for many years is have a truck for the big fish, with tanks which they oxygenate, maybe it's oxygen or not. Anyway, there are big fish in the truck's tanks and there are also many small ones, turtles or frogs. They drive the truck around the relics; they take them around in the containers. But with the big fish in the truck they also purify them with the blessed water.

At ABC, Amitabha Buddhist Centre, in Singapore, the truck goes around the center, it circumambulates the whole center. Downstairs there are animals, there with the set up altar. The big fish and those in the truck, in the water, go around as many times as possible. Then the people take all the animals to the reservoir to liberate them.

In Hong Kong, it's not at the center, they take the animals to the reservoir. There's a place where you can set up an altar and everybody comes and circumambulates the altar, carrying the animals, go around and then blessing the bucket of water. Then the third thing is they chant the mantras loudly, so some of the animals can hear. That purifies their negative karma and it plants the seed of enlightenment in their hearts.

In recent times, I suggested that one boat has all the turtles and big fish and one boat had the altar with the relics that I carry. There are relics of the Buddha and many other enlightened beings' relics, with many precious relic mantras, which I carry with me. Normally on the altar the center has there are pictures of the deities, tsas and so forth. I thought they could put the altar on one boat that just sat there and the boat containing the fish and different animals could go around it.

That makes it very easy for them to purify negative karma and create cause of enlightenment and happiness of all. Then you do the dedication at the end, dedicating the merits firstly for the one savior of us sentient beings, the originator all the peace and happiness including enlightenment, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to have stable life and all the holy wishes succeed. Then all the other holy beings and all the gurus to have long life. Then dedicate the merits for the long life of the Sangha, the other holy beings who have different teachings, who are in this world only to benefit other sentient beings, for their long life. And then the Sangha who preserve the Dharma, who spread the Dharma for the sentient beings, for their long life and their wishes to succeed.

Then the benefactors who offer service to the Sangha, so the Sangha get the opportunity to practice Dharma and to spread Dharma in the world, so the benefactors' long life. And then after that, dedicate these merits to the long life of all the people who are reciting OM MANI PADME HUM, making their life meaningful by reciting OM MANI PADME HUM, collect skies of merit every time and unbelievable purification. So dedicate for the long life of all those sentient beings.

And then the next one is dedicate the merits for the long life of all those people who are living in morality, the lay people who are living in the lay vows, five precepts, or the eight Mahayana precepts, all those who are living in morality, even one vow, one holy being living even in one precept, so they're doing something meaningful with their life, so dedicate for their long life.

Then the other one is dedicate the merits for the people, the sentient beings, who are doing good things for others, people who are working for good things for others, to benefit others, so therefore dedicate for their long life.

And then if you have names of the people who have cancer, dedicate for them. Sometimes because they need this, one of the methods to recover from cancer and have long life is to liberate animals, to save the lives of animals, to cause long life to others, to cause happiness to others. Then as a result, effect then you have long life, you're able to recover the cancer, so the cancer becomes weaker. It doesn't multiply, it doesn't increase or it gets better.

Liberating animals, saving the lives of animals or even human beings who have a suicidal mind, you do a consultation and then save the lives from being killed. Anyway there are different things. So you can dedicate these merits for a particular person, your friend or somebody who asked you to pray, who has cancer. Sometimes, I send the names of people who have cancer to Amitabha Buddhist Centre. I think a few years ago they have finished liberating a hundred million animals, a hundred million animals. They did that a few years ago.

Probably, I'm not sure, maybe they've already finished liberating a hundred animals for the second time, I. [Rinpoche asks someone in Tibetan.] So the first hundred million was done several years ago, and now probably the second hundred million is maybe finishing, maybe it's already finished. That's most amazing.

So I send the names of people who have cancer there to dedicate for that person, to liberate animals. They're liberating animals, saving them, and dedicating that for that person. I don't know but I think some have recovered from cancer.

Cancer is shortening life, any life-threatening disease is, and so saving lives, causing long life in others, saving the lives of others, that is very, very important to do. It's not the only thing, but it's very important.

According to my own experience, there have been quite a few people who have recovered. Some I don't remember, but some recovered from cancer and got better. The first person I especially remember is Ann Kung, a business lady from Canada who makes predictions about fashion, saying what people would like in fashion next year. She speaks for an hour and makes a thousand dollars for that. She got cancer. I was in Australia but I got message through Karuna, a student. So I told her to visualize Vajrapani on the crown, and then chanting the mantra then can purify it. Then saving the lives of animals, that she should do a lot of that. And also taking the eight Mahayana precepts. Those were the three main ones.

It didn't take much time. Then she went to hospital and the doctors could not find cancer *at all*. They were so shocked, surprised. Through practicing meditation, her cancer was completely recovered. They wanted to write a book because it had never happened in their life before, but then she said *she* wanted to write a book, they don't need to write book.

She just took an interest in Buddhism by hanging around the centers, so she didn't really get to learn. When the TV people wanted to interview her, she didn't know how to explain about how the practice allowed her to recover from cancer. I was unable to go there so it didn't happen.

After some number of years, The virus came back, something like that, because I think she told me at that time her conduct became not neat, it became a little bit of a mess. She didn't do the practice, so the virus came back. Then she started to do it again, taking the eight Mahayana precepts and saving the lives of animals, and then it went. I haven't met her in a long time. That was my first experience but there have been several other patients.

If you dedicate your animals liberation to those particular persons it can help, they can definitely recover, although of course this depends on the karma of the person also.

THE POWER OF THE *GOLDEN LIGHT SUTRA*

So there are two subjects, three subjects actually. Maybe I'm going to do them quickly. Maybe I'll do refuge tomorrow. In the evening before Vajrasattva.

I talked about karma last time and there's some more I want to say about karma, but there's a most urgent need to practice purification, then you can get some idea from this. Today maybe, I want to read something from this letter, I'm going to read you a note from Rwanda.

"The reason why I want to talk to," talk to Mickey Mouse "Yesterday you accepted to become my perfect teacher. [Rinpoche laughs] And I also come from a country where there is no holy Dharma." So this is the one. "I need to know what steps to take since I want to spend my life working for the welfare of all sentient beings." I was inspired by that. "I need to know what steps to take since I want to spend my life working for the welfare of all sentient beings." That's most wonderful. Then "Thank you sincerely. Fedel Dassal." Right?

Anyway, I was very inspired by that. So I thought to mention a few things on this, sort of going over the lam-rim. This is also lam-rim anyway. So what I said, how I advised him to help his country—his idea is how to help his country, but it's the same for your own country or the world—I advised him that as much as possible he had to read the *Golden Light Sutra*. The *Golden Light Sutra* is unbelievable, most unbelievable, powerful, this amazing, most amazing text, the *Golden Light Sutra*, to read that. Then you become most fortunate. I you read this, it directs your life towards enlightenment; it directs your life towards enlightenment.

As long as this text is in the world, the Buddhadharmā exists. The minute the *Golden Light Sutra* becomes non-existent, then Buddhadharmā, the Buddha's teaching, becomes non-existent at that time. When the *Golden Light Sutra* becomes non-existent in this world, then at that time Buddhadharmā becomes non-existent. It is mentioned there.

If you read this sutra, for example, in Kathmandu then it becomes healing for all the sick people in Kathmandu. So like that in the West. If you're reading this if you are in the city, then it becomes healing for all the sick people in the city, the millions of people who have sicknesses. For the many millions of people who are sick, it becomes healing for them.

If you read this text, it gives so much power to the president or the king who runs the country, and the other countries who want to take over your country, they lose, they cannot take over. By reading this text, they cannot interfere, they cannot take your country, they cannot invade. So they lose. So this is great protection, this is great protection for the country, for the safety for your country and it helps the world.

If you have listened to the *Golden Light Sutra*, when other sentient beings take care of you or do service to you, who make offering to you, they collect unimaginable, most unimaginable, most unimaginable, most unimaginable merits, good karma. There are so many things, I don't remember all of them. I've only mentioned a few points it makes. It helps the world, not only your country, so it's very, very, very, very important. Then, all your wishes get fulfilled, all your wishes get fulfilled and then you're always protected by so many devas and nagas. It has incredible benefit to bring peace, to bring peace.

THE FOUR HARMONIOUS BROTHERS

The other way to help the country, to help the world, is from your own side to take the eight Mahayana precepts as you've been taking here, to take the eight Mahayana precepts. Even if you can't do it every day but as many times as possible. That helps the economy to develop, so there's no scarcity in the economy in your country, in your area, in the world, so it has great benefit.

Probably you may have heard this already, I'm not sure, but in a country in India once unbelievable prosperity happened, rains came at right time and crops grew well so much prosperity happened. So the king thought, "I did it." Each of the ministers said, "I did it," somebody else said, "I did it." So then, one minister suggested to the king, "There's a sage we should see the sage who can tell us who's effort has made this unbelievable prosperity happen to the country?"

They went to see the sage and the sage said, "It's none of you. It's the animals; it's the four harmonious brother animals living in the jungle, in the forest, living in morality. The elephant practices the five vows and then spreads it to other elephants. The monkey practices the five vows and then spreads it to other monkeys. The rabbit took the five vows and spread it to the other rabbits. And the bird took the five vows and spreads it to the other birds. Due to that it affected the whole country, giving it this unbelievable prosperity."

Shakyamuni was the bird, Ananda the rabbit, Maudgalyana the elephant and Shariputra the monkey. They manifested like that to help the other animals. So there's a whole story how it benefitted the rest of the country.

The merit you collect taking the eight Mahayana precepts is unbelievable. Taking the eight precepts with bodhicitta, can you imagine? With each precept, taking each precept with bodhicitta, you collect eight times limitless skies of merits, limitless skies of merits. This is most amazing, most amazing. This practice is the greatest, unbelievable, unbelievable, most purification; you purify negative karmas collected from beginningless times and collect such unbelievable extensive merits, unbelievable benefit to the world and to all sentient beings, and of course you achieve enlightenment, to liberate and to enlighten all sentient beings. So that's another incredible benefit. So if you cannot take every day but doing it as much as possible is a great benefit.

Of course for you, whenever death happens you have *very* good future. Your future is like the sun shining, your future is like sun shining, going to a pure land and so forth from life to life. Can you imagine? Like a sun shining opening your good future life to achieve liberation, to achieve full enlightenment, so it's most amazing.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD HEART

The other way to benefit the country, to benefit the world, of course, what we have been talking anyway, is to practice the good heart, to practice good heart. That is the other one, it's most important if you want to help the world, if you want to help your country, and the same thing, if you want to help your family, your friends, your area, your country, the world. Practicing the good heart as much as possible is the most the important thing. That should be kept as your heart, as your main practice, the good heart, bodhicitta. This should be your main goal.

You yourself must recognize, “This is my most important practice.” There are so many practices but think, “This is my most important practice, the good heart, the thought of not giving harm to others, the thought of benefitting other sentient beings.” Try to abandon harming others as much as possible, and then the thought of benefitting them increases.

Then every day, always try to talk with people about compassion, somehow try to bring the talk to compassion, and always attempt that, emphasize the importance of compassion, to practice compassion, how to practice compassion.

So in the daily life conversations, even gossiping, so you bring compassion, then like that, so message. You’re giving education to other sentient beings, to other human beings, so as much as possible that; *very, very* important, the most important thing, yourself practice and talking about it to other sentient beings, means educating others.

So then if you do the practice, then your friends will do that, follow, they will practice compassion, they will do this similar what you’re doing, benefiting others as much as possible and to stop and to decrease the their harm others. So that’s so essential, *so* essential. So then of course, then when you do that, then of course, it makes everybody happy in the family, in the office, wherever, even the animals, dogs, dogs and cats and snakes, the tigers, [Rinpoche laughs], so anyway.

There was a bodhisattva, a Chinese monk who came from China to Taiwan, in Kaohsiung, so when he, that time Kaohsiung. There was no rain, it was very dry and nothing grew. When this bodhisattva, this Chinese monk came from China, wherever he walked rain came. He was in a cave for many years, thirty years or something. And there was a tiger lying down, sleeping around outside but not harming him.

Animals don’t harm bodhisattvas because of the blessing, due to the power of the good heart of the bodhisattvas. They get subdued. They say that monk, the great master only lived on fruit. He is very famous in Taiwan.

Later he got [founded?] a nunnery and a monastery, then he passed away. He didn’t teach, but just because his great bodhisattva, just his presence was so great for so many people, and they got devotion and were impressed just with his warm presence and his kindness. He didn’t give teachings but there were four pieces of advice he gave.

Anyway, I got a little relic from his body. It was given by his chief disciple and the nun who became the abbess of the nunnery. She served the Chinese monk came from China as his main attendant. Then after he passed away, she became the abbess of the nunnery and the monastery. She’s quite short; she has a short body but she’s filled with compassion.

I went there to ask help for the Sera Je Monastery food fund, to offer food to all the monks. She helped, giving quite a bit of money at different times for the food fund. When I was explaining the escape from Tibet and how hard life was, studying Dharma in the monastery, she was crying, she was crying. So she gave one small relic of her teacher. Actually it looks like this attendant, this nun, was that monk’s mother. The mother passed away, reincarnated as a human being and became his student. Anyway, this monk passed away and his holy body was brought out in the... what do you call that thing people carry the body in? [*Student*: Casket.] Casket. So his holy body was put in the casket, although the decorations not quite as a Western coffin with the cloth or the robe and all the big decorations, but the same in Tibet when the high lama pass away.

Then one abbot came, then another abbot came who was very pure, very strict in morality. He doesn't like to build temples or have elaborations; he was against that. But I think when I came to see this abbot, maybe because people pushed him, he was building something. But for many years, he stayed very simple. This abbot, whose name is Tsi Tsi or something like that, I think was a friend of this monk who passed away, this bodhisattva who passed away, he was the close friend. This abbot came, and the monk's holy body was already taken outside in this casket, very beautifully arranged. Then he talked to the abbot. The bodhisattva, the Chinese master who has already died, spoke, responded to this abbot.

So anyway... [Rinpoche laughs] So, the third reason for having a good heart is so you yourself can be an inspiring example for the world. If you want to help the world, you want to bring peace to the world, this is the most important thing. To not harm others, to benefit human beings and animals, that's the most important thing.

So always meditate, always remember the kindness of mother sentient beings, all the four types of kindness, then also the extensive kindness. That might come later in the teachings. Those who attended the course last year or the year before, you may have heard.

So anyway the next one, this one's very good. We have Essential Wisdom. At the beginning it was called Universal Education, but then somebody else started Universal Education so we have Essential Wisdom. Here, there are the *Sixteen Human Dharmas* [the *Sixteen Guidelines*] and not only that, the *Ten Divine Dharmas*, but I changed the title to the *Ten Skillful Means*. What? [Rinpoche asks someone] So I changed the title, the *Ten Skillful Means*. I worked with Steve and two other students recently, I don't know whether it's recent time, in the United States, the *Ten Divine Dharmas*, the title became a little bit difficult so I just translated it into the *Ten Skillful Means of Making Sure of Your Future Happiness*. Making sure, making secure, do you remember? [Rinpoche asks someone.] *Making Sure of Your Future Happiness*. That means future lives' happiness, the happiness of future lives and of course that could be up to enlightenment.

So the third one, try to practice that. It's very good if even in your family you can possibly practice that. Then this is how you can teach others. First in your family, your children, the family, they can practice that. Then also you can help others while you're practicing. So that's to have the means of bringing peace, making life happy, to not create problems and to do only good things which results only in peace, peace for yourself, in your life, in your heart, peace in the family, peace in the neighborhood, peace in the country, peace in the world. So it's very good. That is another way you can help the country.

Try to live the life as much as possible with compassion for others, with the thought of benefit others. As I think I already mentioned before try to always express the kindness of others, think of their kindness, then you can express others' kindness to the people, so then if you talk about compassion, about the kindness of others, that person will talk to others, his friends, her friends about compassion, about how to develop compassion, about kindness to others. Then from those friends it will spread to their friends.

So first you start with one person—just an idea—then that person will tell others, educating his or her friends. Then each of those people will explain it to their own friends. Like that it spreads and spreads and spreads and spreads, inspiring and spreading in the country.

Quite a number of years ago I was in Adelaide doing retreat, but I did retreat watching TV. Listening to TV or watching TV? Huh? Watching TV or radio. I think listening to the radio. I did a retreat on watching TV and listening to the radio. [Rinpoche laughs]

At that time, many people died in Africa, maybe millions. Africa's children and *so* many people died. Because there was no food with the drought, I was thinking to go there to help; it was just a thought. You go there and spend a few months, only two to three months, you meet friends and as well you talk about compassion, educating through you talk. Of course, not like talking this, you talk about compassion, and then they understand some. Then they are happy and they tell their friends and then their friends tell others, so gradually like this that's how you can help the country. So I thought like that, but of course it didn't happen that I went there.

But I thought also to invite some lamas, to spend some money to send them there to make rain. I thought about that. Then I thought, first they have to have karma to have rain, they have to have karma from their side. If things don't depend on karma, the buddhas would never let us to suffer even for one second; the buddhas, the bodhisattva would never let us to suffer even for one second. They would never let us to be in samsara even for one second if it didn't depend on our karma from our side effort. From our side we have to put effort into doing good.

What buddhas and bodhisattva cherish—even very new bodhisattvas, who generated bodhicitta only today—is all other sentient beings. Bodhisattva have totally renounced the thought of seeking happiness for themselves, cherishing the I, totally. Their attitude has *completely* switched from that into cherishing others who are numberless: numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, numberless human beings, suras, asuras, intermediate state being. So instead of cherishing the I, that has *completely* changed into cherishing others who are numberless.

They seek happiness only for others, seek happiness for numberless sentient beings instead of seeking happiness for themselves. So the mind has *completely* changed. Even the new bodhisattva, who has only achieved bodhicitta today, holds us as the most precious one in his life, in his heart, like the *most* precious one, regarding us as a mother regards her beloved child, how she sees this being, her beloved child, as more precious than herself, Like that, the buddhas and bodhisattva regard *every* sentient being, like how the mother love her most precious, her beloved child, but for the bodhisattva this means the numberless hell beings, the numberless hungry ghosts, the numberless animals, the numberless suras—*every* sentient being is *most* precious, the most precious being.

Of course, the best is kindness. Only the thought seeking happiness *only* for others, like how a mother doesn't want her beloved child to suffer even for one minute, one second. She feels so sad when somebody criticizes her child.

This is how the bodhisattva, even today's new bodhisattva, thinks of us, as most precious. There is *no way* to give us up, *no way* to be careless, no way. Like a jewel, today's bodhisattva thinks of us, as a jewel, like a wish-fulfilling jewel, wish-granting jewel. By praying to that jewel, you can get everything, all the material possessions, all the comfort, more than that. A bodhisattva thinks of us, each sentient being, as more precious than a whole sky filled with wish-granting jewels, filled with diamonds and gold. A bodhisattva regards us as even *much more* precious than skies filled with

diamonds, gold and wish-granting jewels. Therefore he does not want us at all to suffer even for one second; the bodhisattva doesn't *want* us to be in samsara even for one second.

This is a new bodhisattva I'm talking about, then there are the arya bodhisattvas, then there are the five Mahayana paths to enlightenment, the ten bhumis, then after that, the buddhas who have completed the whole path to enlightenment. Can you imagine? Can you imagine? It is said in the teachings, however much we love ourselves a buddha loves us many hundreds of times much more than how much we love ourselves. A buddha's love is many hundreds of times greater. So it's unbearable to think of our suffering, they don't want us to suffer in samsara even for one second.

A buddha has omniscience, knowing everything, and perfect compassion for us, for every sentient being. A buddha has perfect power to reveal all the methods to guide us. A buddha has all these qualities, so a buddha can guide us *but* we have to put effort into it. We have to put effort from our side.

It's like we are the patient. There's a perfectly qualified doctor who knows the illness very well, who can diagnosis it and has all the medicine, and there's a nurse but that's not enough. If the patient doesn't listen to the doctor's advice, if from the patient's side he doesn't take the medicine, he cannot recover. Even though there's a doctor, the medicine, a nurse, but if the patient doesn't listen to the doctor, doesn't follow the advice correctly and doesn't take the medicine correctly, the patient won't recover. So the patient has to put effort in from his side. Now it's exactly the same from our own side, we have to put effort into it. Even though the buddhas have completed all the qualities, still from our side, we have to put effort in. It is said that sentient beings' karma and buddhas' power are equal.

Anyway, I don't know how to say this, otherwise, put it this way, unimaginable eons ago, unimaginable eons, eons, eons, eons ago, we would have all become enlightened already, everybody. There wouldn't be any sentient beings. If it was only up to the buddhas, there wouldn't be sentient beings. But it's not only up to the buddhas. We sentient beings, from our side, we have to put effort into it.

That understanding's very important. Like the qualified doctor, the correct medicine, the nurse, that alone is not enough. From the patient's side, he has to put effort in and take the medicine and to follow the doctor's advice. From our side, if we don't do that, then it doesn't happen that we can be free from samsara, to achieve enlightenment.

Then, of course, whatever education you have, whatever wealth you have, use to benefit others as much as possible. I think I've mentioned similar things before but however, if you do that, then your friends and many people will follow your lead and they will do the same. Like that, it very much helps your country and the world.

Then do those extensive practices, practicing the six paramitas: morality, charity, patience, perseverance, concentration and wisdom. This becomes a very important means to help others.

The six paramitas is to ripen our own mind, and the four means is to ripen the mind of others. There is the practice of the four means. It's translated as to "the four means to attract the disciple," but it's not only disciples. This is the four means to draw sentient beings, not only attracting disciples.

Those are very good. In addition in the world there are so many things you can do. Normally what the people do to help is to help with finance or medicine or help by giving shelter. That's what people normally do in the world, but then there are also these things.

The most important thing is you yourself studying Buddhism, the most important, making your understanding deeper and deeper. You get deeper and deeper understanding and you learn about the mind, deeper and deeper. Then you know how to help others deeper and deeper. You can offer deeper and deeper benefit by learning Buddhism and through that gaining realizations.

Through learning Buddhism, you can develop bodhicitta and wisdom, the wisdom of what is to be abandoned and what is to be practiced, what is right and what is wrong, and to develop this Dharma wisdom, and wisdom, ultimate wisdom, the wisdom realizing emptiness.

Of course, if you have a good heart, especially if you have the realization bodhicitta, it's like your life becomes transformed like from kaka, from poo poo, transformed into gold. [Rinpoche laughs] If you have the bodhicitta realization, then whether somebody benefits you or harms you, from your side there is no harm. Somebody harms you but from your side there is only benefit back.

I don't remember the last verse of the chapter in the *Bodhicaryavatara* on the benefits of bodhicitta, but it pays homage to bodhisattva, saying you, the bodhisattva, receive harm but in return you benefits. I don't remember the four lines.⁵

So, if you have the realization of bodhicitta, even if somebody criticizes you, harms you, beats you, whatever, from your side you *only* benefit back, you only benefit back.

For example, when the harm-givers, the spirits tried to harm the Buddha, in return he made charity of his blood. They sucked the Buddha's blood and they became the Buddha's disciples in their next life. And I think also there was a tiger family that Buddha gave charity of his body to, and they became the Buddha's disciples in the future life. I think that maybe in the Sarnath, they became monks and took teachings from the Buddha in Sarnath.

Serving other sentient beings, *wow!* When you have bodhicitta and *they* serve *you*, when they make offering, they collect, *wow*, the most unbelievable merits and it becomes most unbelievable, unbelievable purification for them, so you become wish-fulfilling for them. When you have bodhicitta realization, even for those who harm you you become wish-fulfilling to them, fulfill all their wishes and their happiness.

So I'll stop here.

THE SIXTEEN HUMAN DHARMAS

One important is, of course, school for young people. For the future world to become better, then depends on the present the young people, the children. So it's important to give them a good

⁵ The verse is: I bow down to the body of him /In whom the sacred precious mind is born. /I seek refuge in the source of joy /Who brings to happiness even those who harm him.(Ch. 1, v. 36.)

education like the Essential Education, the good heart, as I said before, the Sixteen Human Dharmas. I put this together.

The first one is *kindness*, practicing kindness day and night, all the time practicing kindness towards animals, towards human beings, towards others.

The next one is *rejoicing*. In daily life, whatever good things you see other people do, whenever you see good things happen to other people, always rejoice. “How wonderful that they have this.” Somebody has a beautiful house or swimming, pool, all those things, think, “How wonderful they have these things.” Someone has a beautiful house or someone has a beautiful car, think how beautiful it is, how wonderful it is they have that. Not praying, “May I get a car like that.” But for that sentient being, how wonderful it is that the person has it.

Or if somebody finds a friend that person likes, Think, “How wonderful it is that person has found a friend.” So you rejoice, thinking of that person’s happiness they’ve got. So that is the everyday practice of rejoicing. It’s the opposite of jealousy. Then you don’t help, you harm those people, you become jealous, you don’t like it and that brings no peace, only suffering in the world, in the family, in your life.

So rejoicing brings peace and happiness in your life, in your family, in the world. What happens in reality is you always create good karma. Even if you don’t know you’re creating good karma you are all the time when you practice kindness to others and rejoicing, you *always* create so much unbelievable good karma. Then as a result, you achieve happiness, your wishes get fulfilled all the time, now, in the future, in all the lives. Your wishes get fulfilled, the happiness you’re wishing for, as a result.

The next one is *patience*. Practicing patience is so important. It brings so much peace and happiness in your life, in your partner’s life, in your family, in the country, in the neighbor’s country, in the world. In the world it brings so much happiness.

Then next one is *forgiveness*. When others harm to you, when others say bad words or when others get angry, when they harm you, you immediately give forgiveness to them, then immediately that bring peace to you and to that other person, peace. And then you bring peace in the family, you bring peace to the neighbor, country, in the world.

Each of these practices brings world peace. If you did something wrong to others, say some bad words or got angry, immediately apologize, immediately apologize, so that second it bring peace to you, to others, to the world.

The next one is *contentment*. Contentment is very, very important. Contentment for the children, for the young people, the practice of contentment and of course we have to have contentment. Otherwise, your whole life gets destroyed by drugs or you become alcoholic, and so many bad habits destroy your life. And you can’t help the world, you can’t help yourself, so your life is totally ruined. You can’t even help yourself, you can’t even do your job. So contentment is an education practice we all should learn.

Even for the old people, contentment’s very difficult. Many wealthy people, famous people, people who have enough wealth to live for many lifetimes, but because of not practicing contentment, they

try to make more money and more, then they cheat others, tell lies to others, then they go to prison, then they destroy even their reputation. Somebody sues them and they go to prison, they end up in prison. Even those who are famous people, wealthy, they need contentment practice, that education.

The next one is *courage*, the opposite of depression. You courage yourself.

That's what I put together. There might be something extra from Essential Education, the organizers. I heard they added one or two other things. However, the very essence, the very essence is to help the country. With a good heart, your main practice is how to benefit others. Your life becomes meaningful now, you open your heart towards everybody. It's a meaningful life, with happiness now. Your future is like a sun shining life-to-life, bringing unbelievable to benefit sentient beings. You are happy; everybody's happy.

So that's it. I'll stop here.

[Rinpoche does the dedication prayers]

Lecture Six: 9 December

THE SEVEN-LIMB PRACTICE

Basically, I'm just going to mention the essence. In everyday practice, we have the seven-limb practice, the seven-limb practice. These are seven very important parts, like the parts of a car that makes it functional to bring people to the place where they need to be, or seven very important parts of the airplane to bring people to the place where they wish to be.

There are seven very important practices which create enlightenment, the fully awakened state. [Rinpoche laughs] So that you achieve enlightenment and then you can be spaced out, you can be relaxed. Not like that.

Of course, that's the best realization, that's the highest. However, the reason is to benefit sentient beings, to liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to full enlightenment: numberless hell beings to bring them in full enlightenment, numberless hungry ghosts to bring them to full enlightenment, numberless suras and asuras to bring them to full enlightenment as well as numberless hungry ghosts, animals to bring them in full enlightenment. That's the main goal, that's the main objective, the goal of life, of every single practice or every single meditation, of life, that's the main goal of the life. To benefit others is the ultimate goal.

SEVEN-LIMB: PROSTRATION

The first limb is *prostration*. Prostrations are the antidote to pride, delusional pride, destroying that. It is said that in a text where there's more than hundreds initiations, that we should show respect and put our palms together in prostration to anybody. It could be Sangha or somebody who is not pure or even evil, but we should be humble, prostrating with our palms together, like His Holiness the Dalai Lama does, respecting everybody, rich and poor, educated and uneducated. Even if we see somebody doing an evil activity we must respect that person. That's what this initiation text says.

A good example is Alak Rinpoche, the attendant of Kyabje Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, from whom I've received so many initiations and teachings. Alak Rinpoche was his attendant for so many years. He came from his home in Amdo to Lhasa not by walking but by doing prostrations on the road. It took two years from his home to Lhasa to see the Shakyamuni Buddha statue blessed by Buddha himself in Jokhang at Lhasa. To see that, he came *all* the way from his home by doing prostrations on the road. He had another person with him and a donkey.

Because I was talking to Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche [who said] even somebody you have heard a story about how bad he is, when you see that person you should respect him. Then I remembered also Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche's attendant, Alak Rinpoche, since he came from in Tibet, for so many years he was the main attendant to serve Rinpoche so well until Rinpoche passed away.

So he came from home to Lhasa to see the Shakyamuni Buddha statue blessed by Buddha himself. Because the Buddha's mother misses the Buddha very much each year when the Buddha went to the Realm of the Three-three, the deva realm, to do Vinaya practice, the abiding summer retreat, Yarne, for three months. At that time his mother missed him so much. So the Buddha asked an artist who was not ordinary being but a transformation, to make a statue of Buddha. He made a statue of the Buddha for the Buddha's mother so she didn't have to worry, she didn't miss him so much.

After the statue was complete the Buddha put his hand on the statue's head and said that this statue will particularly benefit so many sentient beings in India for this many number of years, then it will go to Mongolia and it will benefit so many sentient beings for this many number of years, then it will go to China and it will benefit so many sentient beings for this many number of years. Then it will go to Tibet, the Snow Land, and it will benefit so many sentient beings for this many number of years. Even the number of years was mentioned. Then after the Snow Land, it will go to under the ocean for the nagas. So probably again something happens in this world, finally something happens, also in Tibet at the end then I think that statue probably goes under the ocean.

Many Tibetan people go from their homes, they go from Kham doing prostrations, taking many months and years. Like this, Alak Rinpoche went to Lhasa doing prostrations all the way from his home in Amdo. It took two years, going by doing prostrations every day, no matter how bad the road was. It was unbelievably cold, unbelievable, unbelievable cold. There was one place he had to climb up, after you stand up, if you don't lay down immediately, if you don't become active, then I think the unbelievable cold, the snow and ice or whatever, will stop you functioning, so you have to go quickly. You have to stand up and lay down, like this, you have to do that.

It was so unbelievably cold, but they don't carry blankets or things; the donkey carries their blankets or things that they need. They slept outside, and one time Alak said it was so cold they had to sleep against the donkey's belly to keep warm. The donkey, [Rinpoche laughs] the donkey, probably on the snow or ice, I'm not sure, the donkey had his head do like this. [Rinpoche demonstrates.] Then the ear came off! [Rinpoche laughs] Anyway, at certain times the Chinese military trucks passed by and they sort of felt compassion for Alak and his friend and asked him to come into the truck, so they were dropped at certain places.

After they arrived at Lhasa, his friend took the donkey around. There are many, many historical statues and temples. Not just the Jokhang has so many statues. The donkey was taken around one time to purify negative karma and to achieve enlightenment. Then they sent it back home. Anyway,

that's just a story that came. The most unbelievable purification is done by coming to Lhasa by doing prostrating, enduring all through the hardships.

Just before passing away Rinpoche advised Alak to do the preliminary practices, and then practice this one particular Secret Chenrezig practice. A great Indian yogi, from where the lineage of this initiation of this Secret Chenrezig passed through, achieved full enlightenment, so he said it will happen to you exactly if you do these all the practices.

After Rinpoche passed away, he has been doing this in Varanasi, getting up at three o'clock in the morning, every day and doing many, many prostrations, and other preliminary practices. Now he's going to Tibet to Amdo, to where the monastery is, to complete the preliminary practices and the three-year retreat, the long retreat of the Secret Chenrezig.

These are already predicted by Rinpoche that it will happen on an exact day what this great yogi who achieved Secret Chenrezig saw. So it's very fortunate, he's a very *very* fortunate person.

Anyway, prostrations are the antidote to pride, and they purify the negative karma collected with the body, with the speech, with the mind from beginningless rebirth, that gets purified. Then to achieve the buddha's vajra holy body, vajra holy speech, vajra holy mind to be able to do perfect work towards sentient beings.

SEVEN-LIMB: OFFERING

Then the next limb is *offering*. Offering practice is the antidote to miserliness and attachment. By doing that, the result is when we become enlightened, enjoyments, offerings like limitless sky just spontaneously happen. That result is from that.

Not only that, from every single practice of offering, what we achieve is the best business. Other business in the world, gold goes up and down, the dollar goes up and down, all those things, property goes up and down—nothing is stable, all these things.

As regards karma, as regards to making offering to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the merit is always same. We collect most inconceivable, most inconceivable merit. I might be taking time but I just want to let you know that because I didn't get to mention that during the teachings.

If we offer one grain of rice or one tiny flower, not even to an actual living buddha we meet, but even to a statue or a picture of a buddha, no matter how small it is, no matter how big it is, if we offer one grain of rice or one tiny flower, the benefit we get, the profit we get is this. This is mentioned in the *Pile of Flowers Sutra*, (Tib: *Me-tog Tsek-pai Do*) the benefit we get when we offer one single grain of rice or one tiny flower to a statue of a buddha or picture of a buddha, we achieve happiness from beginningless rebirths, the happiness we have already experienced from beginningless rebirths up to now, that much happiness, or that much happiness we will achieve from now on. That much happiness, we will achieve from this tiny offering, offering this one tiny flower or one grain of rice to a statue of a buddha or a picture of a buddha or a stupa or a scripture, it's the same.

That is, of course, temporary happiness, that is temporal happiness. Besides that, then we achieve ultimate happiness, liberation from the oceans of samsaric suffering and its causes. We achieve that, ultimate happiness, everlasting happiness. The total cessation of the oceans of samsaric suffering and its causes, we achieve that from this offering one grain of rice, one tiny offering to a statue or a stupa or a scripture of a buddha. Then, not only that, the benefits don't stop there. After that, we achieve full enlightenment, peerless happiness, the state of omniscience.

The benefit doesn't stop there. Of course, after that, then the main object is to benefit sentient beings, so we're able to liberate numberless sentient beings from each realm from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to full enlightenment. We're able to bring the numberless sentient beings from each realm to full enlightenment.

At *that* time, when *every* sentient being is brought to enlightenment, when we have brought every sentient being to enlightenment, at *that* time, then the benefit of offering that one grain of rice or one tiny flower to a statue of a buddha, a stupa or a scripture, only at that time will it be completed.

This is very, very important, very, very important. This is the subject of karma, the benefits of offering even one tiny grain of rice or one tiny flower to a statue, stupa or scripture.

The benefit we get from that is unimaginable, all the temporary happiness while we're in samsara, then ultimate happiness, then liberation and full enlightenment, then we're able to bring numberless sentient beings to full enlightenment; we're able to cause to other sentient beings happiness this life, happiness in future lives and then liberation from samsara and full enlightenment. That's the benefit of offering one grain of rice or one tiny flower to a statue, stupa or scripture.

It's the same benefit we get of having actually made offering to the Buddha we met and made offering to. We get exactly the same benefit making offerings to statues, stupas and scriptures.

And it's always same. There's no decreasing, there's no up and going, like in business. There's no such thing like that. Always, every day, every season, it's the same. It's like that day and night, there's no difference. The inconceivable benefits we get are always the same, every second the same.

So making the practice of offering is the most unimaginable cause of happiness. Anyway, that's the second practice, so I'll just stop there.

SEVEN-LIMB: CONFESSION

The second practice is offering. Then the next one is *confession*, the practice of confession. That is antidote to the delusions, negative karma. That purifies the negative karmas collected with the body, speech and mind, and the result is we achieve dharmakaya, the cessation of the defilements collected with the body, speech and mind.

SEVEN-LIMB: REJOICING

Then the next practice is *rejoicing*. The practice of rejoicing is the antidote to the jealousy. If we don't practice rejoicing, if we live our life with delusions such as jealousy, it brings obstacles. Jealousy is the obstacle, and when we have jealousy, it interferes with the success of others' happiness and then

that becomes the cause of the obstacle for our own success and for achieving our own happiness. Whether temporary happiness or ultimate happiness, enlightenment, it becomes an obstacle interfering with others' success or happiness, their wishes to be fulfilled and that becomes the cause of the obstacle for our success, for our happiness, temporary or ultimate enlightenment, so like that.

Therefore, so it's very, very important, if we want to have always success in our life, we need to practice rejoicing. We must abandon the jealousy; that's to be abandoned. Then we'll have great success in our life. Not only success in this life but success in the future lives, success in *all* the future lives. All our wishes for happiness will be actualized.

So, rejoicing is the antidote to jealousy and the ultimate result we achieve is a buddha's holy body. How much we look at [a buddha's holy body] we never get bored, we always want to look, we never get bored.

SEVEN-LIMB: ENTREATING

Then next practice is entreating, requesting the buddhas and the gurus to have a stable life, requesting them to have a stable life. If we do that practice, then to the buddhas who are nirmanakaya aspect, to the gurus, the ultimate guru, and the guru who appears to the all-obscuring mind, in the ordinary aspect who appears to the ordinary mind, we request to have a stable life.

By doing that, we create long life for ourselves, that's result of that. Even if we don't look for our own long life, by doing that it causes long life. It is just a karmic result. That's what happens to us, the benefit of that.

What this practice purifies is the negative karma of disturbing the guru's holy mind, causing unhappiness or disturbing the guru's holy mind. Even those negative karmas collected in this life, collected in past lives, they get purified by doing this limb of the seven-limb practice, requesting the buddhas and gurus to have a long and stable life. It is the antidote, the practice to purify those negative karmas collected in connection with the guru. It's because that negative karma is the heaviest negative karma among all other negative karmas. After we have made the Dharma connection, if we give it up, when it doesn't fit our own self-cherishing thought, one's own negative thoughts, delusion, attachment or self-cherishing thought, then we give it up. When we find it interesting we follow the self-cherishing thought, when we find something difficult for the self-cherishing thought, then we give it up.

Creating negativity in connection with the guru, with that very heavy negative karma, it's extremely difficult to achieve enlightenment in this life. Even if we killed our father and mother, caused harm to the Buddha and killed an arhat and caused disunity among the Sangha, the uninterrupted heavy negative karmas that make us be reborn immediately in the lowest hot hell without a break, in the inexhaustible hell realm and experience heaviest suffering of samsara for the longest times, even if we collected those five heavy negative karmas, we can still achieve enlightenment in this life. But with those other negative karmas collected with the guru, such as those I mentioned, it's extremely difficult to achieve enlightenment as mentioned in the Kalachakra or those root tantras.

Therefore, that's why we normally do this seven-limb practice with the practice of requesting long life in the daily life at the beginning before we do actual the practice, before meditating on lam-rim or something like the Tara tantra practice.

You can see how that is most important practice concerning purification. So from that, the ultimate result we achieve is the realization of immortality, undying, the vajra holy body. We achieve that as the ultimate result from requesting to have a stable life.

We have this practice every day. Now this is expanded. This long life puja is an expansion of that, and this guru yoga, the *Lama Chöpa* guru yoga puja, this prayer composed by a great lama, Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen, a great lama from Tibet, the first of the Panchen Lama's incarnations.

He checked many great Indian yogis who achieved enlightenment, who completed the path using the guru yoga practice, such as Marpa, Milarepa, Tilopa and Naropa, to see what made them to achieve enlightenment. He checked so many great Indian yogis, then from Tibet, from the four different traditions, the great lamas who achieved enlightenment, Sakya, Kagyü, Nyingma and Gelug. Based on all the guru yogis, he put together this *Guru Puja, Lama Chöpa*, including lam-rim and the thought transformation as well. It is a most powerful, well-packed, all these practices put together.

This is what makes us achieve enlightenment in a brief lifetime, even a brief lifetime of these degenerate times. So many meditators, those who practice tantra, achieved enlightenment in one brief lifetime of degenerate times by practicing like this. What made them achieve enlightenment, this is the prayer what we're doing, *Lama Chöpa*.

The benefits of the practice are most precious, secret, most inconceivable. Doing just this particular *Lama Chöpa*, we also do lam-rim and the thought transformation, all the things. This is an unbelievably deep practice, helping us achieve enlightenment quickest.

And then the next one is what we'll do today, this activity that is called the "long life puja."

SEVEN-LIMB: REQUESTING

Then next of the seven-limb practices is *requesting* to turn the wheel of Dharma, requesting the teachings. This is the antidote to ignorance, our ignorance and the very heavy negative karma of abandoning the holy Dharma. That is something unbelievably heavy, heavier than having destroyed all the statues, temples, stupas, scriptures, everything in the world, having destroyed them completely. The negative karma of abandoning the holy Dharma is heavier than that.

This is something that happens very easily. Sometimes when we study Dharma, philosophy or something, we don't understand and we think, "Oh, this is useless. This is not for me." We give up, we kind of you renounce it. From our heart, we give up the object of devotion. "What's the use of this for me?" While it is Buddha's teaching, then you think like that. This can arise very easily. This is a very heavy negative karma. While it is the teaching of Buddha, we give it up; we give up the object of devotion, renouncing it from the heart. When we do that with any Buddhist meditation practice, when we renounce studying philosophical teachings, that's avoiding the holy Dharma.

Sometimes we burn texts because there are letters or many pages missing, or there are Dharma texts difficult to keep, so we put them in the fire because there's no place we can keep them, such as some place higher, in a cave or on a rock or stupa or something like that. What I'm saying, especially in the West this happens. I think here at Kopan we have a stupa where we can put Dharma, but in the West that doesn't happen. So we just burn Dharma because it's difficult to keep, or throw it in the garbage. That creates negative karma; we obscure our mind, making it more difficult to have realizations, to understand Dharma. It's disrespect to them; it's disrespect to the holy objects, the statues, stupas, scriptures, all these, then it obscures our mind. It more it difficult to understand Dharma, to have realizations.

However, with faith so as to not create negative karma, we and others can burn Dharma texts and that does not become avoiding Dharma. It doesn't become avoiding Dharma because we do it with faith.

So the antidote to avoiding the holy Dharma is this practice of requesting the teachings. And then the ultimate result is we're able to turn the wheel of Dharma, the 84,000 teachings, or we achieve the perfect holy speech of a buddha. This is the ultimate result of requesting the holy beings to turn Dharma wheel. Then in this life or future lives, we're able to teach Dharma to sentient beings.

SEVEN-LIMB: DEDICATION

And then the last practice is *dedication*. Dedication is the antidote to heresy. Heresy is another very heavy negative karma, heresy to the guru, heresy to the Buddha's teachings, heresy to the Triple Gem, like that. This is the antidote to the heresy. The ultimate result of dedication is that we achieve all the qualities of the Buddha.

This is just for new people, not those who know, to get some idea what is involved in practice or what is important about it, to get some idea. It's not just a custom, a Tibetan custom or a Nepalese custom. It's not just about that, but it's something very connected with reality. What we're doing is something very, very important.

It's not because I'm a buddha or something, a buddha or bodhisattva, it's not that; it's because of the Dharma connection. Because there's a Dharma connection that has been received, and from that, because it's a dependent arising. We get all these unbelievable merits and purification, and then the heaviest negative karma collected in connection to the guru get purified. Without those, then realizations cannot happen and it's impossible for life to become better.

Sorry. Sorry I mumbled again. [Rinpoche laughs] Thank you so much.

[Dedications]

Lecture Seven: 11 December

[Rinpoche does extensive teaching in Tibetan, untranslated.]

Lecture Eight: 11 December

THE SIX TYPES OF SUFFERING: NOTHING IS DEFINITE IN SAMBARA

Until we are liberated from samsara we have to continuously experience the six types of sufferings. [The first is that *nothing is definite in samsara*.] Nothing is definite the relationships; it changes from life to life. Friend, enemy, stranger—there's nothing definite even within one life, not only changing from life to life but even within one life, even within one year, even within one month it changes. And so in the morning we have a friend but by evening the person becomes an enemy. In the morning he or she was a friend, by the afternoon he or she becomes an enemy or by nighttime he or she becomes enemy, so like that. Or even few hours before friend and then next some hour become enemy, an enemy. The person tells us something that hurts our attachment, that hurts our selfish mind, so he becomes an enemy. He behaves physically or says something or thinks something we don't like and that person becomes an enemy. We think that person is harming us so he is bad, he is an enemy.

It's very interesting with family members. Maybe I'll tell you this first. You might have already heard this but anyway, just to remind you. I think it was Shariputra. He went for alms and he saw a family. The father used to catch fish from the pond behind the house; he caught fish from there and ate them. When the father died he was born as a fish in the pond. Usually with fishermen, people who live off fishing, *so many* times they will be born as fish and then somebody catches them with the same technique. Then you can't get out. Even before you die, I mean even before the consciousness leaves the body, you experience the body being cut in half, you experience the same as you did to others. I think that happens *many times*. All those fishermen experience much of that. I mean, we have all gone through that, being fishermen and catching fish and then being born as fish and then being caught by somebody else. We experience our karmic result of what you did to others in the past. We experience it, those fish that are caught, hooked and with no way to escape. It's the same.

Anyway, the father was born as a fish in the pond after he died. Then the mother was attached to house and so was born as a dog, the dog of the house. The family's son had an enemy but the enemy had a physical relationship with the son's wife. I'm not sure but he was attached to the wife and he died with attachment to the wife. The enemy was killed but he died with attachment to the wife, and so he was born to that family son's wife. It was enemy actually, but after he was killed, he was born to them, born to the son's wife; he became their child.

And so the son was carrying his enemy, who had become their child. The mother was eating the father, fish, and the dog, his mother, was chewing the bone of the fish, which was her husband. Then the dog is sitting in the front of the son, waiting for the meat of the fish, her husband, and the son is carrying a stick to hit the dog, to hit his mother, the dog.

Shariputra saw this and said, "Eating the father's flesh, beating the mother..." I've got some words but sometimes maybe different from the text. "Eating the father's flesh, beating the mother, carrying the enemy that was killed on the leg! I laugh at the samsaric existence." So, you see, it has totally changed, totally changed. That story is not only about them, not just *this* family, but about everybody. We all have dogs and cats; we've all been farmers who have cared for cows.

I think one time at Solu Khumbu, when I was coming down to Lukla, there was a benefactor we stopped at. The old mother was walking outside as we were leaving. There was a young calf next to

her who suddenly got up on its hind legs and put its fore legs on her shoulders from behind as if it was trying to have sex with her. [Rinpoche laughs] That sort of shows it could have been her husband in its previous life still with an imprint of the past relationship. That's why the calf stood up like that. Like that story, it's the same for us. We change from one life to another completely like that. That's the evolution of samsara. The evolution of samsara is very frightening.

Once it changes we don't see what was before, like the son was unable to recognize his enemy, the incarnation is the enemy who was born to them and so cherished him. And the mother was born as a dog but he couldn't recognize her and so he beat her with a stick. Then the fish that she was eating, chewing the bones of, was her husband, but she couldn't recognize this.

When we have a child, we cherish that being, but before, in the previous life as a dog or cat or whatever, we didn't cherish it; we didn't think this is ours and if it got sick we weren't unbelievably worried thinking, "My child is sick." We weren't worried and crying and all that.

Before they were born to us, we didn't do that, we didn't feel that. Only after they died and then were born to you, then we think, "My child, my this," with all the constant worry. There's so much attachment, unbelievable attachment and always worry about, always worry. A mother worries all the time, always talking about it and worrying, about health and education, everything, health, education, then marriage, about her child getting married. [Rinpoche laughs] Or not getting married, not finding a relationship, not getting married, *oh* such worry! Then after the child gets married there are many more problems, and then there are children, and *then* there are many problems; life is full of worries even after being married.

Once I met a rich Indian family with some of their friends in Singapore when I was there. The mother asked me, "Please pray for my daughter to get married." She wanted her daughter to get married very quickly. They couldn't wait; the mother couldn't wait, she was so worried. So I said, "It's better to wait." So I said, "It's better to wait and be more careful. Otherwise you'll end up... Otherwise" I don't remember the other parts I mentioned her or not. Maybe I didn't want to frighten her. They never think, they *never* think there will be problems; they only think of the marriage, waiting for the marriage, and of course the wedding. There are two things here in Nepal, the people blowing those things which are part of the wedding, the wife and husband being carried or sometimes going in a car. So then some people play music, with drums and things. Anyway, that's for simple people; the rich ones do much more. That's one time, the wedding. Then what's the next one?

[Rinpoche speaks to someone in Tibetan]

What I think is that with weddings like this, maybe playing music, that's one thing. When I hear that, it reminds me the next time [they hire a band] is when they die, when the body carried to the cemetery, and again people play music or something. Not all Nepalese, but some type of Nepalese do that.

In Taiwan, in the early times I went there, when a family member died, they carried the body in a decorated car. I wanted to go the cemetery, but it didn't happen. At one time, in a building near the road where the car passes on the way to the cemetery, sometimes in the day you hear a person crying. There is a person there crying, but they are hired. You hire the person to cry. So you can hear [Rinpoche makes crying sounds] crying in the car. I wanted to go to the cemetery but it didn't

happen. At the cemetery, the body is buried or burned, then people party; they drink and talk, but there is one person who is hired. She crawls on the ground, like a dog, she goes like this, and she cries. [Rinpoche makes crying sounds] She makes noises like crying. But she is paid, paid to cry. That's funny! [Rinpoche laughs] I heard about that. The people drink and talk, but they hire one lady to cry; she cries so much, making that noise.

We have a center in Delhi, Delhi Tushita Mahayana Meditation Center. There was one student in Delhi, for many, many years, one family that went to Tushita at that time, Sikhs, Punjabis. The wife died. This is not the same as Taiwan. She died and all the family members, all the relatives came dressed in white. They all kind of sit around, the men on one side of the room and the women on the other side. A relative of Mrs. Singh operated the hotel, I think a part owner of the hotel, so she took us there; we went there together. She sat down with her head bowed. You have to show you are sad because it's your some sort of relative. Then the husband, I've forgotten his name, was sitting next to her near the head; and he keep his head down, not tears coming, I didn't see tears coming, because when tears come then it's obviously he's crying but he kept like this. He made a little bit of noise like, "Hooo hooo hooo" but I didn't see any tears. Because this is the act of society. It is not that you are sad, but you have to *act* that, "Oooh." Then the body was put in the car and taken to the cemetery. The daughter was crying, "Oooh." The daughter wanted to go in the car but somebody tried to protect her. I was inside the house and the father came through to the kitchen; his face was up. "Oh," I said, "Don't worry." He said, "Oh, Lama, now it's finished." [Rinpoche laughs] He wasn't sad actually. [Rinpoche laughs]

That's a different style. This is a different story but I just remembered it. I was talking about Taiwan but I remembered Delhi. In Delhi I went two or three times to a cemetery to watch. I don't remember if I prayed or not, I don't remember. It was very, very interesting. For the rich people, the wood was sliced, like a salad, like you slice vegetable or carrots. It was very nice wood, and it burned the body very easily. I think a rich lady died so a rich family came with maybe thirty of forty people. There were many cars and motorbikes. The body was laying down there and they were all standing round. Then they put their knees down and prostrated to the person who died. Maybe they were close family members. The husband of that lady who died was walking round, and I thought *that* was the most perfect time to talk Dharma because his mind was *completely* confused with what was happening in his life. Usually a person like that would be completely absorbed in business and about the happiness this life—party, party, party, then business. Life's *totally* about that, they never think of death. They're *totally* absorbed in business and parties. That's life. Even while they're studying university, it's still the same.

At the cemetery, however, they see a family member dead, and they have no idea of life, they are *completely* confused. They *totally* don't know what to do, they have no idea of death, no idea, no understanding, no education of death, of reincarnation, no idea *at all*. Normally they never think of death, their minds are totally distracted, *completely*. Now at the cemetery, they are forced to see the reality of life, what happens but they have no idea what happens *after this*, after this what happens to the mind, no idea, *completely* no idea, no idea of life before this, no idea of life after this.

I was just walking around. Because I was standing there, the father asked me, "Are you doing research?" "Are you doing research?" I said I wasn't but I don't remember what else I said. "Are you doing research?" Maybe I should have told him I came to do research from Harvard University or something. [Rinpoche laughs] Anyway, he had totally no idea, so it was perfect, the best time to talk

about Dharma because at such a time you can see the reality of life. At other times, the mind completely makes its own reasons. This is how it is. So the people were there, like that.

Then there were some very poor people who died. For them, a few people carried the body, bringing it there; those very poor people had to carry the body. The wood was not sliced but big, old wood, that takes a long time to burn. There was a mother from the poor family who was sitting there, she was talking *so* much about the person who had died, whose body was on the fire, talking so much, talking about how good that person was, something like that. I don't know whether it was her son or her husband. She must have wanted to go into the fire with the dead person, so people were holding her back.

Anyway, I'm just giving an example, but when you met them, there's no feeling, nothing, that after the death they're born *to you*. It looks almost like they never had a past life and this is just kind of a new thing, a new birth, the first, the very first birth. There is no *rebirth*, no *rebirth*, kind of like that, according to hallucinated mind. Anyway, then you cherish, you have the most unbelievable attachment, the grasping mind, unbelievable attachment. As I mentioned before, "my this, my that," there is unbelievable attachment. Then that person dies and is born as an animal or born as human being, and we meet them but have no feeling. It's our family before, our son, our husband, our wife, whatever but after they died and become a animal or human being there is no feeling, nothing. Even if they come to the house as a beggar, we can't recognize them, we can't recognize them. We might meet them [Rinpoche laughs] but there is no feeling there. It's very funny, very funny. That's how samsara arises. It's completely like that. After that person dies, for months, for months and years we cry, we cry for that person, our child, our son or daughter or husband, our brother or sister but then even though we actually meet that reincarnate, we have no feeling at all. [Rinpoche laughs] Before we cried and cried and cried as if we're going to die, for months and years. Now even if we meet that loved on, as an animal or human, whatever, we can't recognize him or her. It's like this family story totally changes.

Every sentient being has been our own mother, father, brother, sister, husband, wife, friend, enemy, stranger, every sentient being has been like that. We have been like this to others and others have been like this to us. For example, I have been like this to you; I have been every relationship to you and in exactly the same way you have been to me. Everybody's been everything to each other numberless times—not just one time but numberless times, from beginningless rebirths, numberless times: numberless times our father, numberless times our mother, numberless times our brother, numberless times our husband, numberless times our wife, numberless times our enemy, numberless times our friend, a stranger *numberless* times. So it is kind of very, very, very, very old relationship from beginningless rebirths, a very, very, very, very old family, from beginningless rebirths. That is the first of the six types of suffering, that nothing definite in samsara.

THE SIX TYPES OF SUFFERING: NOTHING GIVES SATISFACTION IN SAMBARA

Then second [of the six types of suffering] is that *nothing gives satisfaction in samsara*. There is no satisfaction, as the Rolling Stone gave the teaching with his big guitar, "I don't get no satisfaction." He gave a very important teaching to the world, to the *whole* world, through his big guitar.

All the alcoholics, all the people in the world who become alcoholics, do so due to shortcomings of dissatisfaction. They cannot get satisfaction so they drink over and over and over to get satisfaction,

over and over then become alcoholic, then they can't control it. Then destroy the family, they give trouble to all the family members, their life gets into trouble; they cannot do their job.

In places like New York and those cities, there are many people who are beggars. I didn't ask everybody but many times it looks like those beggars on the street are alcoholics. I think family members maybe do not like them so they are out on the street. They have family but the family members don't take care for them, so they stay on the street. I've asked one or two people. They seem alcoholic. People give them money but they don't buy food but alcohol. There are maybe many like this. It's sad. They are sad and the family's not happy with them. It seems there are many like that.

That is the shortcomings of dissatisfaction. As long as we're in samsara, there are problems like this. Another great dissatisfaction is we are never satisfied no matter how much we have. If we are making money, we make a hundred dollars' profit and then we try to make a thousand. When we're able to get a thousand, we're not happy until we make ten thousand. If we are able to make ten thousand then we *must* make one hundred thousand. If we are able to make a hundred thousand then what more are we able to do? Maybe a million. Then if we become a millionaire we want to become a billionaire. And so it goes on like that. As a billionaire, we're still not happy, not satisfied, we want to become a trillionaire. If we become a trillionaire, we are still not happy and we want to become a zillionaire. Trillion, zillion? Anyway, this goes on like our whole life, with no satisfaction. No satisfaction. Did I mention that one? I am not sure.

Quite a number of years ago there was an article in *Time* magazine about the most successful person in the world. The cover showed the person's face. The most successful person, that means the person who made the most money in that year through business. That's the definition of the most successful person. That person's life story was inside. Because he had become so rich, he had so much money, he was so scared to leave his house, to go out. He was too scared to go out, scared that people would kill him or kidnap him. And then all his worries, his fears about losing that wealth. He had so much more wealth and so he had so more worry, fear. Then his anxiety because he wanted to become even richer than other rich people. He was very rich but there were other people richer still and he wanted to be the richest person in the world. So there's always competition, so life goes on like that. The article talked about his own life inside the house which was totally a mess, totally a mess, very uncontrolled, full of worries, of fear about going out.

In London, there was one person who did car business. He became wealthy by doing car business, and then he bought a *huge* property, a *huge* building, property. I heard he sleeps in each room on different nights. He doesn't eat food but he drinks sixty bottle of alcohol, sixty bottles or something a day, *a day*, something like that anyway. He doesn't eat food but he drinks. This is the shortcomings of samsara, the dissatisfaction. He couldn't get any satisfaction, so he became like that. He was *so* unhappy, *so* depressed. When he checked back where his suffering came from, he remembered he became rich by doing car business.

Then he asked his bodyguard to buy toy cars. He thought that was the root of his suffering, what made him so unhappy, the car business. So he asked his bodyguard to buy lots of toy cars, and he went outside to the cement circle where birds drink water. He put all the toy cars there and poured kerosene on them and burnt them. He thought that was the solution to remove his suffering, all this unhappiness, worry, fear, depression, all this. He thought all these things came from that, so by burning the toy cars he would be free. [Rinpoche laughs] That's totally, completely, because he

thought cause of happiness is only outside, due to the car business. He never thought his mind, his delusions, caused it. He never realized, never discovered, that. If he had discovered that, if he had though the cause of suffering came from the mind, if he had has to study about the mind, he would have seen [why he was unhappy.]

The Buddha taught true suffering and the true cause of suffering, the Buddha explained it first, instead of the true cessation of suffering and the true path. Then the Buddha explained true cessation first and true path, how to achieve cessation. As far as suffering, he didn't explain the true cause of suffering first; first he explained suffering itself. After we have studied suffering, then we think about where suffering comes from. Then we question that. Then the Buddha explained the cause of the suffering. After knowing there's a cause of suffering, then the question comes whether we can *cease* the suffering, whether we can *eliminate* the cause. Then that was what Buddha showed with the cessation of the suffering, that we can achieve that. Then we wonder whether it is possible and the Buddha said, yes, there's a path, a method, a true path. If we discover in our mind, *our mind*, then we look for the method, like the true path, how we can *cease* that mind which brings suffering, and then we make our mind only to produce happiness. Not just only this life, the happiness of all the future lives, and liberation from samsara and enlightenment. It's our mind that liberates us by completing all the realizations of the path, then liberating numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bringing them to full enlightenment. It's our mind that does that for sentient beings.

Even with the wealth of so many billionaires, so many rich people, famous people, there is dissatisfaction. We never get satisfaction, we always want more and more and more, even though we have enough for many lives, four, five, many lifetimes. We have enough wealth, but we always want more and more, and then we cheat other sentient beings. We kill them and cheat other sentient beings in order to earn more wealth. We cheat other sentient beings by harming others. Like that, we achieve all this wealth and fame, we become famous in the world, then one day somebody gets upset and sues us and throws us in prison. The world is always happening like this. We see this on TV. That is the shortcomings of dissatisfaction. No matter how much samsaric enjoyment we have, we never get satisfaction.

The problem is not practicing contentment. The practice of contentment is Dharma, renunciation, renouncing attachment, renouncing always wanting more and more. Here contentment means renouncing the desire that always wants more and more and there is no end. We renounce all that, so that is Dharma, that's meditation. We can see this. After becoming so famous and wealthy somebody sues us for our mistakes and we end up in prison. Then life becomes difficult. I saw people cheating like that at different times in the world. It happens.

Due to dissatisfaction, relationships have problems. We spent thousands, tens of thousands, hundred thousands, millions of dollars to find the object of our desire. To be able to live together we spent so much money, and then you think, "If I am able to live with this person, *wooooom*, if I am able to live with this person." Like that Indian family I told it was better to wait, but they never, never think of the problem that comes after marriage, after the wedding, after all that the problem that comes. People *never* think of that, *never*. It's like there can only be great bliss, only bliss, *only* bliss, in their whole life *only* bliss. It's kind of like that. It's very funny. People *never* think of the problems that will come up.

So like that, we spend all that money and we think, “If I can live with this person, *wow*, my life will become *completely perfect*.” We *never* think of the problems that comes after that, *never*, we never think of problems. It is amazing. Before living together, it was very nice, very nice, so wonderful, we think that our life looks so perfect, we never think of the problems. Then once it happens, we succeed in living together, as the weeks goes by, the months goes by. In the world, in the West especially, relationships seem to change after one week, after one week it seems to change and lovers become enemies. This happens so many times. [Rinpoche laughs] Slowly, slowly, after living together, then we see the problems. Life becomes more and more boring. As the days go, they become longer and longer, and more and more boring, boring, boring. Or we find that the other person’s mind is so much more selfish, or angry. There are so many negative emotional thoughts and he or she only cares for him- or herself. Then we lose interest, and it’s boring, boring. We become bored with the body as well, not only the mind. Like seeing our partner doing kaka and all the things. [Rinpoche laughs] Why I’m telling you this is because I heard that. Because I heard that through the students. Anyway, we lost interest, we become more and more bored, then after some time, after some time the other person becomes boring.

In the beginning we pray, “In the world, this is the person, *wow*, who makes my life perfect.” Thinking this will make us most happy, we spend all the money we have, but after some time of being together, sooner or later, we realize this is the person we *don’t* want to see forever. [Rinpoche laughs] Many times it’s like that. This is the person we *don’t* want to see forever. Even though we’re not divorced, we’re not separated, we’re still living together but the mind has no interest. We wish the other people to be away, that person to be away from us any minute, wishing, “I want to leave you. When I can be free, when you can leave, this will bring me the unbelievable peace and happiness.” So now it’s totally the opposite. Then after a while that happens.

Sometimes we find somebody else, we find somebody else. [Rinpoche laughs] We find somebody who we think, “Oh, this person, I like this person the *most*,” or “This person loves me more,” something like that. But then *that one* living together with us totally become the enemy to our heart, so we pray. Before we prayed to be one with that person, but now we pray to be separate, to never see that person any more in this life. Then we meet *another* person, and think, “Ah, this will make my life so perfect, only bliss,” something like that, and we spend all our money on this. Again we live together, and again the same problem, and finally we find more and more problems. Sometimes the other person finds *our* problems, *our* emotions, *our* selfish mind boring. We become uninteresting to the other person.

Then we experience another big package of relationship problems. Then that finishes. Then that becomes suffering and we look for somebody else. Our whole life goes on like that, suffering, suffering, suffering, another suffering, another suffering, the same package. All these are the problems of dissatisfaction, the problems of samsara, of being in samsara. Therefore, if we don’t become free from samsara, we have to have all these problems. Also we don’t practice meditation, we don’t know Dharma, we don’t practice compassion, we don’t practice patience, we don’t practice contentment. We can’t free ourselves from the dissatisfied mind, from desire, from the pain-sticking mind. We don’t practice renunciation, contentment or practice compassion; we don’t practice patience, so life becomes suffering, constant suffering.

THE BODHISATTVA’S MOTIVATION

As I mentioned the other day, even we don't believe in reincarnation, in karma, but if we want happiness, it becomes so unbelievably important to practice Dharma, meditation, compassion, loving kindness, patience, good heart, all these things. If we want happiness. But if we want suffering, if we don't want happiness, that's different. We don't have to practice Dharma then.

A good example is Geshe Lama Konchog. His reincarnation was sitting through there, the small lama. Geshe Lama Konchog's relics are down there. There were many relics, all different colors. He was here for many years, after Lama Yeshe passed away, teaching the nuns and monks and the Western students meditation, preliminary practice and so forth. He also went to Australia, to Tara Institute [in Melbourne], Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong, where he taught lam-rim.

Anyway, one time it was raining hard and he fell down outside the old gumpa, I think, the old gumpa. Outside there were cement steps and he slipped on the cement and fell very heavily. But the minute he fell down, his mind was *so* happy, his mind was *so* happy because he thought he had received my life obstacle. He thought he had received that so he was *so* happy, unbelievably happy.

Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche told a story. Today I mention the story of Alak Rinpoche, the lama who was sitting there, who came to Lhasa to see the blessed statue of the Buddha, Buddha, prostrating all the way from Amdo to Lhasa, taking two years, every day doing prostration on the road. I mentioned that. He and another friend, another monk, had a donkey to carry the food, not much food, only a little food, and the things they had, the donkey carried. At one part of Tibet, I don't know where, it was so cold with snow and ice that they slept outside near the donkeys' stomach to keep them warm. Then next morning, it was so cold when the donkey shook his head like its ear came off; it became ice. [Rinpoche laughs]

Every day he prostrated from his home in Amdo to Lhasa. By thinking of this statue in Lhasa at the Jokhang temple, with that in his mind he prostrated on the road. Not just doing like this without any thoughts in his mind, but thinking of that Buddha, he prostrated.

Anyway, Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, the great master from whom I received many teachings and initiations, whom Alak Rinpoche served, when Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche was in Dharamsala, the doctor—I think it might have been an Indian doctor—came to check to Rinpoche's health, and he said that might have cancer. He said he wasn't a hundred percent sure, maybe just eight percent, but it might be cancer. When he asked Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche what he thought, Rinpoche said, "I am *very* happy to have cancer." He told the doctor, "I am very happy to have cancer because this gives me the opportunity to practice bodhicitta, taking *all* sentient beings' suffering and its causes."

I think he did the *tong-len* meditation, taking and giving—*taking* all the sentient beings' suffering and *giving* [all your realizations, happiness and good qualities.] You take all sentient beings' suffering on your self-cherishing thought, destroying the self-cherishing thought which interferes with you achieving enlightenment for sentient beings, which interferes with you liberating numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsara, which interferes with you bringing sentient beings to enlightenment, destroying your enemy who make you to suffer in samsara from beginningless rebirths. You take all the sentient beings' suffering, including cancer and all the cause, karma and delusion, with compassion. Then with loving kindness you take it on your self-cherishing in your heart, and destroy the self-cherishing thought; you burn all the self-cherishing thought. Then you generate loving kindness and give your happiness, merits, everything, three times' merits and *all* the happiness up to enlightenment, *everything* you give to numberless hell beings, numberless hungry

ghost, numberless animals, human beings, suras, asuras, intermediate stage beings, like that. To everyone, to every sentient being, nobody is left out, no one insect, no one ant, no one ant left out, no matter how small it is.

So anyway, Rinpoche said, “I am very happy to have cancer.” That is what he told doctor. Later there was some other conversation I don’t remember when Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche said to others, “I have been doing this from when I was a small child, this meditation of taking all sentient beings’ suffering, every sentient being’s sufferings and its causes, and giving with great compassion, then giving your all the past, present, future merits and all the result happiness to the numberless sentient beings by generating loving kindness.” He said, “I have been doing this from when I was a small child.” I remembered because I asked before if there was any person who liked suffering and didn’t want happiness. That is one way of saying it.

Of course, generally speaking, with us ordinary beings, there’s nobody who don’t like happiness and there’s nobody who wants suffering. Everyone dislikes suffering; nobody wants suffering. Everybody wants happiness, generally speaking. But here now, that’s why I say unless you like suffering and don’t want happiness, [you can never destroy self-cherishing completely.] That’s one way of saying it. The other way is this. Dharma practitioners whose minds are well-trained in Dharma, with bodhicitta, when they experience suffering, when they experience problems, when somebody complain to them, their minds are so happy, unbelievably happy. For a being whose mind is well trained in bodhicitta, who cherishes sentient beings, who has realized the kindness of sentient beings, how sentient beings are so precious, *so precious*, he can get unbelievable joy and happiness when he gets cancer or sicknesses or whatever problem.

For example, achieving liberation for yourself, the blissful state of peace, total cessation of the oceans of suffering of hell, hungry ghost, animal, human being, sura, asura and the causes, karma and delusions, the total cessation of all the sufferings and causes, the arhat is so happy to achieve that because the motivation seeking happiness for oneself. For the bodhisattva, even ultimate happiness, everlasting happiness, liberation from samsara, from the oceans of samsaric suffering and cause, for a bodhisattva this is like used toilet paper, used toilet paper. You throw your spit on the road, on the stones, you don’t touch it because it’s bad, so I say it’s like used toilet paper. For the bodhisattva to achieve this liberation for oneself is like used toilet paper. On the other hand, for oneself to be born in hell in order to save sentient beings from suffering is like *unbelievable*, most *unbelievable* joy, happiness, *unbelievable* happiness, joy. It is compared to the swan when it feels hot going into the cool lake and feeling unbelievable joy and happiness.

For example, the bodhisattva captain who was one of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s past lives, the captain sailing a boat or ship, I am not sure, ship, where there were five hundred business people onboard. There was a short black man carrying the spear who wanted to kill all these business people. The bodhisattva captain realized this and felt so sad, because this man was going to kill all these five hundred people on the boat and create unbelievably negative karma—can you imagine?—to be born in the lower realm for eons and eons and eons and suffer. The bodhisattva captain realized this and, to stop this man killing all these people, he totally, completely decided to be born in hell himself in place of this person, by killing him, so that this person doesn’t have to kill all these people and also those people’s lives are saved. By killing this person who was going to create so much unbelievable negative karma, he accepted he himself would go to hell, but would save this person from creating that negative karma. Then this person didn’t have to suffering unimaginable, unimaginable, unimaginable eons in the lower realm, but the bodhisattva captain would suffer in the

hell for this person. Then he killed this person, and sacrificed himself *completely*, he was *unbelievably* happy to be born in hell for this person. What happened here, though, listen to this, what happened, because that was done with a bodhicitta motivation, the purest motivation, that actually caused him to shorten his time in samsara by one hundred thousand eons. So that meant it was quicker to achieve liberation, it became that much quicker to achieve liberation from samsara from that act. Even though it was killing it was done with bodhicitta, done with total bodhicitta, the pure mind, to suffer in the hell for him. I'm sure there are numberless stories like this, about those bodhisattvas who trained the mind in bodhicitta, who trained mind in *lo-jong*, thought transformation.

Those who have trained their mind in *lo-jong*, whatever catastrophe, whatever problem happens, they're *wishing* for that and they pray for that, they pray to the protectors, they offer tormas to the protectors and they pray to the protectors, "Please give me problems." They pray like this, to be given problems. Those who have a mind well trained in thought transformation do this to destroy the self-cherishing thought, by experiencing problems for sentient beings. What happens is, your *heart* sincerely wishes that for the happiness of other sentient beings, but the reality is, what really happens is that makes you collect limitless skies of merits, most unbelievable, unbelievable merits and that makes you to achieve enlightenment in the quickest time. That's what it does. Of course, your motivation is the happiness of sentient beings, to free sentient beings from suffering.

THE SIX TYPES OF SUFFERING: WE HAVE TO LEAVE THIS BODY AGAIN AND AGAIN

There are so many problems, so much dissatisfaction. If we don't become free from samsara, we have to experience all this, continuously suffering. The next of the six types of suffering is *the shortcomings of having to leave the body again and again*, leaving the body again and again. We have taken the body of a butterfly countless times, with those many, many colors. We have done that numberless times. If all the butterfly bodies we have had were collected, there would be no empty space left. Space would be filled completely. Similarly if the numberless female human bodies we have had were collected there would no space left or the numberless male human bodies, whatever color: white, brown, black, whatever—all those we have had numberless times would completely fill empty space.

All these different bodies we have taken numberless times. We have taken a cat's body numberless times. Those of us who have a pet cat, think how we have taken a cat's body numberless times; think of all the cats' bodies we have taken, the different cats' bodies, cats from Sri Lanka, cats from whichever country, dogs from Lhasa or dogs from Tibet, all the different dogs, dogs with flat noses and long nose, whatever, short tails, long tails, all the different dogs' bodies we have taken, those dogs which have so many wrinkles on the face, that big dog *full* of wrinkles, including that, we have taken that numberless times from beginningless rebirths. There wouldn't be any empty space left if all the bodies were collected. And the same with the human bodies we have taken numberless times, if they were collected there would be no empty space.

We have taken all these different samsaric bodies. There is not one type of samsaric body we haven't taken, we haven't experienced, there's nothing left. Whatever we've been so attracted to, we have taken such bodies numberless times: horses, spiders, rats, rats or spider, rats *and* spider anyway, those animals, those insects that we are so scared of, that we think are so dirty or we're so scared of, if we see them in the house we get out, or we move to another hotel! If we see lice in the bed, we move to another hotel. [Rinpoche laughs] Anyway, we have been all these awful aspects, those

terrifying insects, we have taken those bodies numberless times, and tigers, poisonous snakes, we have taken those bodies numberless times, numberless times and if they had been kept, there wouldn't be any empty space left.

THE SIX TYPES OF SUFFERING: WE HAVE TO TAKE REBIRTH AGAIN AND AGAIN

That was the shortcomings of having to leave a body again and again. Then the next one is *the shortcoming of having to take rebirth again and again*, of joining a body again and again. That has two meanings. Lama Tsongkhapa explained in *Lam-rim Chen-mo* that even if the whole earth was made into pills the size of a juniper berry and each pill represented one mother, then it would still be impossible to count or mother and our mother's mother, mother's mother, mother's mother, mother's mother, mother's mother, mother's mother, mother's mother, father's father, father's father, father's father, father's not mentioned there, mother mentioned there, but it's same, mother's mother, mother's mother, mother's mother. Mother's mother you count even, that mother's mother you count then put another pill, then that mother's mother you put another pill. The whole earth's worth of pills would be finished but still there would be more mother's mothers, or the same if we were counting father's fathers.

I thought maybe the idea is this, how it helps for renunciation, to be detached to samsara. This body of ours is sperm from the father, and the egg or blood from the mother, so mother's mother, mother's mother, mother's mother, so mother's mother, mother's mother, the egg, blood, there's a continuation from mother's mother, to mother's mother, to that mother's mother, to that mother's mother, an unbelievable continuation from all the mother's mothers. Similarly this sperm comes from the father and his comes from our father's father's sperm, and then that father's father, that father's father, *ooooohhh*... This actually becomes like a septic tank, like the poo-poops and everything, poo-poops and pipis and everything in the septic tank, all the smells, *all* collected together. This is like that. In this way, we can see something like very old junk; like this we can become detached, the mind can be free from the attachment which causes us to be reborn continuously in samsara, and from beginningless rebirths to suffer in samsara.

In another text it's mentioned about the continuity of this aggregate, this continuity of taking birth, is like the continuity of the sound of the trumpet, blowing trumpet, the trumpet during the puja. Have you seen this? A person blows the trumpet. [Rinpoche laughs] Anyway, the shortcomings of joining again and again, the continuity of these aggregates taking birth, reincarnating, due to the contaminated seed of delusion, caused by karma and delusion, this circles from here to the next life and then next life to another, then the next life, then the next life, then the next life, so the future is like the past. This has been continuation of past lives, then there is the continuation from previous lives, from beginningless rebirths, these aggregates taking birth, reincarnating, and so on like that. So another meaning is that. If we are not liberated from samsara, we have to continuously suffer with birth after birth.

THE SIX TYPES OF SUFFERING: WE GO FOREVER FROM HIGHER AND LOWER IN SAMSARA

After that, the next type of suffering is *we go forever from higher to lower*, we cannot stay always higher, we cannot stay always as human being. After death then it changes and we take the rebirth according to karma, even as a hell being, a hungry ghost, an animal, or as a deva in the sura realms. We have to

change. It's not always everyone always stays as a human being, from beginningless rebirths all the time we become human beings, it's not like that.

After achieving the highest deva realm we must fall. There's the desire realm, the form realm and the formless realm. The formless realm is the highest realm in samsara. The formless realm has four stages, four levels, and the fourth one is the *tip of the samsara*, so after we are born there, when our karma to be there finishes, then we reincarnate again in the lower realm, as a desire realm deva, a desire realm human being or a hell being and so on. We've gone through shamatha meditation, calm abiding, and achieved the form realm and formless realm, those deva realms, numberless times, and in the formless realm we've reached the fourth one, the highest one, the *tip of samsara*. We've been born in that realm numberless times through meditation, being detached from desire realm, being detached even from the form realm, being detached even from the three previous formless realms. But because not having realized the *tip of samsara* is the nature of suffering, we haven't renounced that. That's one thing. Then we didn't have the realization, the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, and because of that we have to reincarnate again and again continuously. So then numberless times we have been born in those realms through *shamatha* meditation, calm abiding. So nothing is definite.

So this suffering, going from high to low, shows us how in a previous life maybe we were a king but in this life we become a servant or a beggar. Or even in the same life, you become beggar after being a king, or after being a wealthy person, then becoming a beggar even in the same life. In the world this happens. For example, Tibet totally changed, it went totally upside down after Mainland China took over. So like that example, different conditions cause changes like that.

THE SIX TYPES OF SUFFERING: WE HAVE TO DIE ALONE

Then the last one of the six types of suffering is the *shortcoming of having to be born and die alone*, to be without a helper. We are born alone; just the bare consciousness comes from the past life to this life, just the bare consciousness. Whatever body we had past life didn't continue, it didn't reincarnate, only bare consciousness came into this life. And when we die we die alone and then the body is left in this world and only the bare conscious leaves to go to the next life. It's like when you pull the hair from butter; the butter doesn't come, only hair comes.

Then all the negative karma we have collected for ourselves, for our family, for the children, all the negative karma we've collected for the family, friends, relatives and so on, once we are reborn in the hell realm, only *we* have to experience. Nobody comes to share it. No family member comes there, saying "Oh, I will help, I will share your suffering. You have too much suffering. I will share, I will take some." Nobody comes there, *only we* have to experience it. It's like that.

Until we are free from samsara, whichever place we have been is a place of suffering and whoever we're with, friend or whoever accompanies us, it's a friend of suffering, whatever enjoyment we have, it's the enjoyment of suffering. Until we're free from samsara it's always like this. Besides the suffering of pain we have to experience, even the suffering of change, all the temporary, samsaric pleasures which are the suffering of change, bring us suffering. That's why there is no continuing, samsaric pleasure doesn't increase the like Dharma happiness. Dharma happiness we can continue, we can develop, we can complete, and it's one time, we only need to make effort one time. Samsaric pleasure, we do again and again, again and again. We have been doing that from beginningless

rebirths, any samsaric pleasure, we have been trying that from beginningless rebirths again and again, but the pleasure never continues, it never increases. Those two other sufferings come from the pervasive compounding suffering. For example, these aggregates are pervaded by suffering because they're under the control of karma and delusion, they came from that, and this contaminated seed of delusion compounds the suffering. The seed of delusion compounds the suffering of the mind, the suffering of the body and compounds our future life's rebirth's suffering. So these aggregates are in the nature of pervasive compounding suffering and the two other sufferings come from this. *Without this*, if we could be free from *this*, then we would never experience the other two sufferings. Therefore liberation means freedom from this pervasive compounding suffering, from these contaminated aggregates. We have to understand what liberation from samsara *exactly* means.

Now, how to be free from samsara. I am just going to stop here, I'm not going to talk about the twelve evolution of samsara, the twelve links. I am not going to go through that today. But that's a very, very important meditation. Still there are a few days, so I must meditate on that, the twelve links, the twelve dependent related limbs.

Therefore, so now the conclusion is we must be free from samsara, we must be free from samsara. To "put it off" until our next life, if we put it off, it is extremely difficult to say what our next rebirth will be. There are only two choices, a higher rebirth, the body of the happy transmigratory being, or a lower rebirth, the body of a suffering transmigratory being. From virtue we achieve the body of the happy transmigratory being and from nonvirtue the body of a suffering transmigratory being.

Even in one hour, even if we are trying to practice Dharma, even in one hour we create mostly nonvirtue. If we check one hour, it's mostly nonvirtue and then in one day it's mostly nonvirtue. From the two types of karma it's mostly nonvirtue. Then one week, one month, one year, from birth it's mostly nonvirtue. It's most unbelievable. I think I talked yesterday or the day before yesterday, virtue's is so small and not powerful, so weak. Negative karma's powerful. That means rebirth in the lower realms immediately. Of course, we go through the intermediate stage unless we get reborn in then the formless realm, then there's no intermediate stage. Then there's negative karma collected from past lives, from beginningless rebirths which we haven't purified, which we haven't finished experiencing. There's so many negative karma like that, like the dust of the earth, like the atoms of this earth on this mental continuum.

Therefore, that means it's *extremely* difficult if we put off the practice until future lives, thinking, "I will do this next life." It's extremely difficult. To be free from samsara, that is *this* life. Having received this perfect human body, having met a virtuous friend revealing the unmistakable path to enlightenment and the Buddhadharma, all the conditions have been received, so it's almost, *almost* just this once, *almost* just this once, it's almost only just this one chance. If we don't practice Dharma now and free ourselves from samsara this life, then the future is so extremely difficult to say.

Death is definite to happen, and death can happen any day. Any day it can happen, any moment it can happen, therefore we *must* practice, we must practice *right away* without delay. Now we must free ourselves from samsara, as the Buddha explained, the cessation of suffering. To achieve that, we need to practice the true path, the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness. There are five paths to achieve liberation which begins with the renunciation of samsara, the total detachment from samsara, by discovering how samsara is only in the nature of suffering, like being in the center of a fire or like that, or being drowned in a septic tank with all the dirty things, most unbearable.

MOTIVATION FOR THE REFUGE CEREMONY

The very beginning, the foundation is refuge, taking refuge. So to be free from samsara we need to take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, but we can be saved from being reborn in lower realm even by remembering a mantra, by remembering even the *Heart Sutra* or something like that, those Dharma text or mantra, even without taking refuge to the Sangha or Buddha, even just a mantra. We don't get reborn in the lower realms, it saves us. We pray, we remember a member of the Sangha, a monk or nun we have devotion for, we remember that at the time of death, and that saves us; we don't get reborn in the lower realms. Or we remember the Buddha at the time of death and that saves us from the lower realms, from reincarnating in the lower realms.

Here, to be free from samsara we must, we have to take refuge in the Buddha who founded, who revealed the actual refuge, and the Dharma and the Sangha. We have to take refuge in the actual Dharma like medicine, taking refuge to Buddha like the doctor. Like the doctor gives medicine, the Buddha revealed the Dharma, so we have to rely on that. The actual refuge is Dharma, the Buddha is the founder. Then the Sangha are the helpers to actualize refuge. So we also need to rely on the Sangha.

Not only that, we need to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, therefore think, "I am going to take refuge," then those who are taking refuge and the lay vows or the five precepts, if you can't take all the five, you can take four; if you can't take four, you can take three; if you can't take three, you can take two. If you can't take two, you can take three [Rinpoche laughs] I said, "If you can't take two, you can take three." So if you can't two, you can take one, okay. Anyway, whichever way, you analyze and then do whichever.

The last lay vow is to abandon drinking alcohol. Usually abandoning smoking is not mentioned, it's just alcohol because alcohol is very dangerous, very, very dangerous. It makes you totally uncontrolled, totally uncontrolled, harmful to yourself, harmful to others, your family and other sentient beings. So it's very, very harmful. That is why alcohol is mentioned, because it makes you uncontrolled. But then of course, along with alcohol, there is also smoking cigarettes. If it's possible for you to stop, that's unbelievably great, so you're no longer polluting yourself, polluting your body. Smoking makes the mind unclear; it affects the mind and it pollutes your body, it makes your body dirty. It affects your mind to have realizations, makes the body dirty, polluted and it's difficult to have a clear mind, difficult to have realizations because that substance is an impure substance. There is a whole story, evolution of that. So together if you can stop all those other things, of course, it's very good. But however, the main precept, the fifth one is not drinking alcohol, which makes you violent, it makes you totally uncontrolled.

There is the story about what happened to a lady. A monk met a lady in the road. She was carrying a goat she'd brought and a clay pot filled with alcohol inside. She told the monk, "You have to do one of three things: either you kill the goat or you drink the alcohol and you have sex with me." That is what she told the monk. The monk thought, "Oh, the others are difficult, so maybe it's easy to take the alcohol." So the monk drank the alcohol, then after drinking the alcohol, he lost control and had sex with her and killed the goat. So it's like that. [Rinpoche laughs] So, the dangers of alcohol.

REFUGE VOWS

Those who are taking refuge, this is the basis for all the vows, the pratimoksha vows, the bodhisattva vows, the tantric vows. To purify negative karma collected from beginningless rebirths, it depends to having refuge in the heart. Then you collect extensive merit, if you have refuge in the heart, relying on the Buddha Dharma and Sangha in daily life, *so* many times you collect extensive merit, so amazing. I mentioned this morning, I mentioned this morning already, even if you offer one small flower or one grain of rice to even a picture of the Buddha or statue of the Buddha, no matter how small it is, then the benefit you receive, what you get is happiness, happiness you experienced from beginningless rebirths up to now, *that much* to be experienced, for you to experience that much happiness in the future, so that is most amazing, most amazing, most amazing, most amazing. It doesn't stop there. On top of that you achieve ultimate happiness, liberation from samsara, everlasting happiness, the total complete cessation of all suffering and the causes.

Not only that, it doesn't stop there. On top of that you achieve *full* enlightenment, peerless happiness, full enlightenment, the cessation of subtle defilements and the completion of all the qualities, you achieve that for sentient beings. Now the benefit doesn't stop *there*, that offering you made of one single grain of rice or one tiny flower to a picture of the Buddha or a statue or a stupa or a scripture of the Buddha, the benefit you get still doesn't stop there. After *that* then you liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and causes; after *that*, then you bring numberless sentient beings to full enlightenment. When *every* sentient being has been brought to enlightenment and there is no sentient being left, when everyone is brought to enlightenment, *only* at that time then the benefit of your offering one single grain of rice or one tiny flower to a stupa, to a statue, to a scripture or a picture of the Buddha, no matter how small it is, only then will the benefit you receive be complete. Only when every single sentient being has been brought to enlightenment. Then there is another quotation, but I think it might be too late now. If you are able to listen, some people, then it's *so* important to understand these things. You can see, when you hear about karma, the benefits of offering, it's most amazing, you can't imagine the benefit you get from a tiny offering.

It's also mentioned in a sutra, *The Sutra of the Mudra of Developing the Power of Devotion*, it's mentioned by the Buddha that somebody can make an offering every day of a hundred divine fruits, meaning nectar, and a hundred divine dresses, meaning something unbelievably precious. Even all the human wealth of this world is nothing compared to even one ornament, a necklace or something of the devas and the suras, asuras, all this human wealth is not enough to pay for one necklace. So the dress means a deva's dress; it means something unbelievably precious. We can understand from that it's unbelievably precious. So anyway, a hundred deva's fruit, deva's nectar, if every day you offer like that for how long? A hundred eons. And you offer to a solitary realizer, an arhat who are free from samsara. And how many? Equaling the number of the sand grains, sand grains or atoms? I don't remember, the atoms of the Pacific Ocean, that many arhats, realized arhats, the atoms of the Pacific Ocean, the atoms of universe, I think, the dust or sand grains equaling the sand grains of the universe that many arhats, *oh* can you imagine? With your hand you take dust, each sand grain like this, just one with one hand, how many dust there is, can you imagine? So arhats equaling the number of these sand grains here, you make offering every day, you make offering of the deva's dress and the fruit, meaning nectar and precious dress. Arhats equaling the number of the atoms, sand grains that you have in the hand, there is *so* many, can you imagine? *Oh* so many, unbelievable. Now can you imagine the sand grains of where your house is, all the sand grains, so that many number of arhats you offer, *phen*, what a merit! Then one country, one whole country, then the entire world, so how many sand grains this entire world has, imagine the merits. Now here it says,

the sand grains of the universe, that many arhats you make offering to of the deva's fruit, the deva's nectar, and deva's dress, a hundred fruit, a hundred dresses every day for hundreds of eons.

Now, somebody merely seeing a statue of the Buddha, a stupa, a scripture, a painting of the Buddha, somebody merely seeing that, not talking about a Buddhist, a believer or non-believer, any sentient being, the minute they see a painting of the Buddha, a drawing of the Buddha, a statue, how much merit that person collects is numberless great merit, numberless great merit is collected the minute somebody sees the Buddha's holy painting or statue.

All those are previous merits, somebody offering one hundred divine deva's fruit and dresses, every day for a hundred eons to arhats, solitary realizers—how many?—equaling the number of the sand grains of the universe. All this—can you imagine?—the amazing merit, but compared to this somebody merely seeing the holy body of the Buddha, a statue or a painting, this numberless great merit, one collects. The other one becomes small, because this is unbelievable so other one become small. Even greater is somebody making light offerings or incense offerings, flower offerings, and so forth to the painting or statue of Buddha, here collects greater numberless merit than seeing Buddha's holy body, painting or statue, so that becomes small. Here making offering creates more numberless great merit than before. I just want to tell you this, then for you to understand how this is the offering, making those offerings to the arhats, unbelievable merit. In the past, somebody who had nothing offered medicinal food to four monks, they are not arhats, just ordinary monks, just one time. The person died and was reborn in India as a king. That poor person died and was born in India as the most powerful, most powerful wealthy king, he was born the next life. The cause is just giving medicinal food to four monks, and not even arhat, not even bodhisattvas. Can you imagine? The cause, the merit is just that. The result is—can you imagine?—becoming the most wealthy, powerful king. This gives you some idea to understand the hundred offerings of food and dress to the arhats, everyday like that for a hundred eons to the solitary realizer, arhats equaling number of sand grains of the universe. That example gives you kind of some idea how this *wooooo*, I so unbelievable. If you have refuge, *immediately* you collect extensive merits, just like that.

After you have taken refuge, whatever you eat, drink, first you offer, first you offer to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, even candy or a piece of chocolate, tea or whatever you eat or drink. Before you eat and drink, first offer to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, then you take that as blessing. We eat every day, we eat and drink *so* many times, so can you imagine? Can you imagine? Here please listen here, the merits *wow*, how much you collect, how much you collect. So the person who eats a *lot* every day, that person eats so many times, eating chocolate, so many times drinking coffee, drinking milkshakes or whatever, so many times eating, when that person does refuge practice, taking refuge, then offer refuge vows, precepts, make offering, then that person, *wow*, just one time offering is like that. Now so many times one day—can you imagine? *Wow, wow*—most unbelievable. If you have refuge in the heart you don't get harmed by spirits or human beings. There are many stories. Because you rely upon the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha who has unconceivable powers, qualities, you rely upon them and also you do unbelievable purification, all the time destroying defilements and collecting unbelievable, extensive merit. All your wishes get fulfilled, all your wishes get fulfilled, and you quickly become enlightened if you have refuge in the heart.

So please, those who are taking refuge, please stand up. Then make three prostrations to the statue of the Buddha, just from where you are, prostrate by thinking of the Buddha, that real living Buddha, by thinking that, make three prostrations, and then after that make three prostrations to me, the Lama who gives refuge. Thank you.

After that, please kneel down like when you take eight Mahayana precepts, those who can kneel down. Those who can't kneel down, then comfortably sit.

[Refuge ceremony]

So please repeat.

The repetition is not for those who have taken this refuge vow, the precept. Those who cannot take any precept, then you still can take refuge, only the refuge vow, which is call only refuge *upasaka* vow. You can take that, those who can't take any precepts. But those who can take even one, then that's unbelievable good, wise, okay, because now with this human body, this perfect human body is the time to do that, while we have this perfect human body, it is time to what's *best* in the life, to do that, while we have this perfect human body. We are not sure how long we will live; death can happen any day, at any moment. So to do the *best* in the life, okay. That is the conclusion, to not cheat ourselves, to not deceive ourselves. So please repeat. Then *da* means "yourself.". You have to mention your name. *Da*. Then you mention your name.

[Refuge ceremony]

I started to say, but I didn't complete. Sorry. Those who have taken a higher vow should not take the *upasaka* vow, only refuge *upasaka* vow, but cannot take than lower vows. If you do that it is said it makes to lose your higher vow. Like the ordained monks, nuns like that.

[Refuge ceremony]

"From now on, until the death, the supreme among those who have two legs," meaning among the human beings, "from the highest, I go for refuge to the Buddha." You rely on Buddha a hundred thousand times more than you rely on doctors, physicians, you even can recover sicknesses but only temporally, so here is to cease completely all the suffering and causes, delusion and karma.

[Refuge ceremony]

Think of the meaning of the *sangye*, which is "eliminated all the defilements, all the mistakes of the mind and completed all the qualities of realization, so there's nothing missing," in other words, the Buddha. So totally rely on that.

Now the next one, what it is saying is the supreme one, devoid of attachment, that's Dharma. So think the ultimate Dharma is the cessation of the defilements, the cessation of the defilements and cessation of the sufferings, that and the true path, wisdom directly perceiving emptiness. Going for refuge to the Dharma, you should remember that. There is the ultimate Dharma, and the Dharma for the all-obscuring mind, which is true to that. So the scriptures, the Tripitaka, taking refuge is the same. The Buddha has also absolute Buddha and the Buddha for the all-obscuring mind. That is the rupakaya, that manifest in holy form. The Sangha has also absolute Sangha and the Sangha which appears to the all-obscuring mind, which true for that. The absolute Sangha is one who has the realization, the cessation of suffering or the true path, the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness. It doesn't have to be an ordained person, it can be a lay person. Anyone who has that is absolute Sangha. It can be a lay person but somebody who has those realizations, they are absolute Dharma.

The Sangha for the all-obscuring mind refers to one who is a fully-ordained monk or nun but who don't have the realization of absolute Dharma. That is the Sangha for the all obscuring mind.

[Refuge ceremony]

“Devotion to the Dharma is a thousand times stronger than the medicine which cures sickness, but only temporally.” The next one is the Sangha

[Refuge ceremony]

“To the Supreme or sublime,” sublime means those who are intending virtue, “I go for refuge. *Gen dun* means “intending virtue,” and that virtue is liberation, seeking liberation, that virtue is related to the seeking liberation, so intending, wishing to achieve the liberation.

[Refuge ceremony]

So please repeat two more times.

Da means please mention your name.

Going for refuge to the Buddha. Now next, the Dharma.

Da. I already have told this before.

Now here you think whichever number of vows you are taking, so *upasaka*, one vow, two vows, three vows, four vows, five vows, you are taking that. Okay?

So, request the *Lopin*, the precept master to guide you. Please repeat the third time. Maybe repeat again two times. Please mention your name.

The Buddha, now the Dharma and Sangha.

So please repeat the third time. Then after the third repetition I become your *lopin*, the master, the leader leading the disciple in the path to liberation. *Lopin* means that.

Please mention your name.

[Refuge ceremony]

Then before I die, I am going to take these vows. “Those who are taking vows.” Those who are taking only refuge, then only refuge *upasaka* vow, okay?

When I say loudly [Tibetan], loudly the third time then you must generate thought that you have received the vow, if you are taking only refuge *upasaka*, only the refuge vow. But if you are taking any number of the precepts, *upasaka*, one vow, two vows, three vows, four vows, like that, make sure of that one, you *must* think that then you have received them. If you don't think that, you don't receive them.

For the last part of the repetition of the precepts, what you do is this. His Holiness Dalai Lama did this in France because there was no time. Instead of repeating, he asked the audience or the students to decide which number of vows they were going to keep so I'm following that example. The arhats kept these as precepts and that helped them to be free from samsara, to achieve liberation, so I am going to take such-and-such a precept, thinking of the arhat. That is sufficient.

After that, then think, I say [Tibetan]. Very good, okay. So, you've learn a Tibetan word. Then do three prostrations to the Lama who gave the refuge upasaka vow, only the refuge *upasaka* vow, or the *upasaka* and whichever number of precepts you have taken.

If you make a prayer then dedicate the merits and make the prayer, it's extremely powerful, just now you have taken upaska. either only refuge vow or upasaka five vows or whatever number of vows you have taken, so your prayer has so much power. So put your palms together like this.

DEDICATION

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by numberless sentient beings and buddhas, may I able to complete the paramita of morality by keeping it without mistake, keeping it pure without pride. Think that.

[Chanting]

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by numberless buddhas, bodhisattvas and sentient beings, may bodhicitta be actualized in my heart, in the hearts of my own family members, in the hearts of all the sentient beings, and in the hearts of all the leaders, especially leaders of the world, especially leaders in mainland China and populations in all those many other countries who have unbelievable suffering, in those people's mind and also the leaders. Then the third, all the people who follow different religions, may bodhicitta to be actualized in all their hearts without delay even a second. Then may this world be filled with the perfect peace and happiness, may everybody live their life only benefiting each other, giving no harm, anything whatever they do may it become only cause of enlightenment, happiness to all sentient beings.

[Chanting]

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by numberless sentient beings and buddhas, okay, that's it, [Rinpoche laughs] the three times' merits collected by numberless sentient beings and buddhas. This prayer is very important, to be able to learn the complete teaching of the Buddha, unmistakable, unified with sutra and tantra, the Lama Tsongkhapa teaching. Think, "May in *all* the lifetimes Lama Tsongkhapa being Mahayana direct guru to myself." You can also think of your family and friends, and everybody in this world. You can think of that, and then never be separated away from the pure path which is admired by all the buddhas, so that means actualized the complete path that Lama Tsongkhapa actualized.

[Chanting]

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by numberless sentient beings and buddhas, that which is merely labeled by the mind, may the I who is

merely labeled by the mind, achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment which is also merely labeled by mind, and lead all the sentient beings who are also merely labeled by mind to that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which is also merely labeled by the mind, by myself who is also merely labeled by mind.

I dedicate all the merits to be able to follow holy extensive deeds as Samantabhadra, Manjugosha, as they realized, I dedicate all the merits in the same way as the three times' buddhas have dedicated their merits. Think that.

Yeah, that's it, okay.

REFUGE IN THE BUDDHA: WHAT TO PRACTICE AND AVOID

So those who are taking Vajrasattva, so the Vajrasattva initiation, maybe it is good to have, maybe want to take a little break outside to get some fresh air.

There needs to be preparation from the lama's side, self-generation and front-generation. From the side of the disciple, there is preparation like cleaning the mouth, water cleaning.

I forgot something. This book has explained details, other information, other advice. This book is very, very useful to read about refuge. With refuge, there are three things to be abandoned and three things to be practiced. Then there are seven or eight advices that it's important to follow in everyday life. As mentioned before, just having taken refuge, taking refuge in mind every day you collect unbelievable, most unbelievable merit and purification. By these practices, you're able to achieve enlightenment quickly.

By taking refuge in the Buddha what you should abandon is following the wrong guide, following the wrong guide. It's like you have been receiving treatment from a very qualified doctor but at the same time you follow a unqualified doctor. The right doctor who is giving correct medicine knows exactly what your sickness is, but the wrong doctor who doesn't know gives you the wrong diagnosis, and that interferes with you receiving the correct treatment from the right doctor. This is a very clear example. When you are following the Buddha, right founder, then following a wrong teacher interferes with that.

For example, devotion to the Buddha protects your karma. Following what the Buddha said, his advice: to abandon the cause of suffering, negative karma and then create the cause of happiness, virtue, practicing good karma. Then a wrong founder teaches you following karma doesn't matter. This is an example, this is not the only thing, this is an idea. Say, he tells you to sacrifice an animal or something, to make an offering of a sacrifice. That is totally the opposite of the Buddha's teaching. That is just one idea but there are others that are against the Buddha's advice to not harm other sentient beings. That is the Dharma practice we should do, to not harm. On top of that we should benefit other sentient beings. That is the Buddha's advice. To not harm others and benefit other sentient beings, these two advices, that includes the whole entire teaching of the Buddha. Kadampa Geshe Chekawa said included in this two teachings, don't give harm to others [and benefit others], there are the Hinayana teaching, the means to stop giving harm others, and the Mahayana paramitayana teaching, the secret mantra Vajrayana teaching, which go into how to benefit others,

the Buddha's second advice. The Mahayana paramitana teaching, the Mahayana sutra teaching, and the Vajrayana teaching, these are included in the second advice, benefiting others.

For example, the lam-rim integrates these two pieces of advice in the three levels. The graduated path of the lower capable being goes into the advice not to harm others. The graduated path of the middle capable being also goes into not harming others. Then the graduated path of the higher capable being is about benefiting others. So the whole entire Buddha's teaching goes into not harming others and benefiting others.

So you see, if you follow a wrong founder, it is not like that. It is the opposite to that. The Buddha cannot guide you. For example, if you take the wrong medicine of others, then the right doctor cannot help you. That is the same. That is why these precepts are for your benefit, for our own benefit. Giving advice for our own benefit, guidance for our own benefit. This is advice what to abandon, by practicing taking refuge in the Buddha.

What you should practice is this. [You should respect any holy object.] Even a statue of the Buddha, where the artwork is very ugly, the art is done very badly, you can't throw it away in the garbage. You have to think this is really the Buddha, you are looking at the Buddha, seeing the Buddha. Even a broken statue, or pieces of a painting of the Buddha, you can't throw them away, you have to think this is the real Buddha. Even a broken statue, you can't throw it away. If you throw away like that, it doesn't harm the Buddha but it is opposite to your mind. Then, it's very difficult to have realizations, to actualize, to develop compassion, loving kindness and bodhicitta, the root of the enlightened being, to realize emptiness, it becomes very difficult. Then, the whole path to enlightenment is blocked. Even if you can't fix the statue, you should put it in a high place, put it in a high place.

REFUGE IN THE DHARMA: WHAT TO PRACTICE AND AVOID

By taking refuge in the Dharma, what you should abandon is not following the wrong path, the wrong teachings. So, it's basically the same, not harming others. To not harm sentient beings by taking refuge in the Dharma, the precept to do that, to not harm.

Then, by taking refuge in the Dharma, what you should practice is respect the Dharma, the written texts, even torn or incomplete pages of Dharma books, even just a few lines. A missed-out text, a misprint or whatever, even a torn page, you can't throw in the garbage, just drop it somewhere. You can't do that; that is disrespectful to the holy object, the Dharma. That is very bad. It obscures your mind, not only the lower realm, it obscures your mind to realizations, to understanding the Dharma.

For example, when a lama gives teaching, it becomes very difficult to understand, very difficult to absorb all the words. Even if you don't fall asleep it becomes very difficult, you cannot catch the words, your mind becomes very fixed, very obscured. It's very difficult to understand Dharma. Even though the lama is speaking slowly, you still can't understand. You find it difficult to understand the meaning, the words. Even if you read the text, it's difficult to understand.

This happens because you have been disrespectful, careless with a Dharma text. And then one thing very important to understand with the Dharma, you can't put it on your cushion. Some people know but many people don't know. This is what happen at centers. On the cushion or chair where you sit,

you put Dharma books, prayer books. Even the text inside the cover you still can't do like that, this is disrespectful. If there is no table to put them on, you should pass them to a person who is passing to put on a table. If you can't do that, then place them off the floor by placing them on something like your folded coat, but not anything dirty. You can't put a Dharma text on the floor, that is very disrespectful. And you can't put your mala or even a statue on the text.

One time after Lama passed away in United States we went to see His Holiness Dalai Lama in Dharamsala to get his advice. There were certain students there including some Italian students who showed him a Dharma brochure and then put a stupa on top of it to hold it down. His Holiness saw it and quickly took it away, he moved the stupa. You can't even put a statue on a Dharma text.

When you have an altar, you put statue there and the scripture first. The Buddha achieved enlightenment from studying the Dharma. You put the text up there, then the statue go like that. The other one is to put the statue in the center and the Dharma text on the sides, you don't put it at the ends. Generally, the scripture should be above the statue. And it's very important you can't put malas or your glasses on a Dharma text. That is very disrespectful. It obscures your mind, you must know that. And you can't carry a Dharma text with your cushion together, or with your shoes. Say, you take your shoes off to go into the gompa and then you hold your shoes and the Dharma text in the same hand. Or the text and a cushion. That is very important.

ST FRANCIS

I am happy because I saw this book, remembering it. I forgot to explain those things. In the book, there are other bits of advices that are very important. On the back of the book there's St Francis, that real bodhisattva. You can have it inside at the altar, the real bodhisattva. Even though the name is a Christian one. How he lived his life, what affects the world, that is a real bodhisattva, even though he chanted the name of Jesus Christ with his disciples, his life was exactly like the Kadampa geshes'. He wore rags from the garbage. There were many meditators like that. He wore very rough dress, very rough material inside next to his skin, as a sort of renunciation of comfort.

Even Italy, or Spain, huh? I forgot the name. You come around the mountain, and you see the monastery; it's very nice. When you come this way and see the monastery, it is like monasteries in Tibet. A very big, huge building. Outside there was one man, a priest with a long white beard, a very long white beard, then we went inside and met the abbot, abbot or? I don't know. I don't know the name of that church, don't know the name of that monastery. On the wall was the dress of St Francis, very simple, hanging on the wall in the room. It was a very rough one that he wore, but they were very happy, the abbot, the head was very happy when he saw us. Lama Yeshe was there.

When they die they bury the body inside the monastery. There were four monks who died, and they buried the bodies inside this garden, then they had the biggest party. When a monk died they had biggest party, the most extensive food, the biggest party, because they were happy that monk had gone to heaven. That's why they had the biggest party when a monk died. The monks can't get out, they just stay in the monastery. I think probably it's not only Benedictine orders that do this, there are some others, not many but I think maybe there are two or three like that where the monks can't go out. For many years they just have to live in their room, just going out for a walk or for pipi.

This was long time ago, but then in recent times, in Lama Yeshe's time, they changed the, they changed the rules and the monks could go out, the monks could go out and walk up to certain time but they couldn't go far. When we were there we did prayers. There were one monk, it seems his mother maybe had some problem. He had a very serious face, walking up and down. There is Jesus photo, not that monastery but near, in Italy, near Lama Tsongkhapa Institute. There is a place, I don't know the name, where St Francis' body is, near Assisi, whereas St Francis body is. But you can't see the body but where they put it, Lama Yeshe sat down and meditated.

On the next level there is a nunnery founded by his disciple, a nun who had three hundred nuns under her. This nun had very tall body. Everybody can see her body, laid down, covered by glass. I am not sure, it was probably around hundred years ago, so they've kept the body quite good. St Francis was either a Kadampa geshe or a bodhisattva, because he liked to be criticized by other people; he didn't like to be praised by others, like the Kadampa geshe. This was what he wanted. He asked his disciple to criticize him, but his disciple couldn't at all, he could only say good things. He couldn't think of any bad things to say to criticize him. At that place there was water coming, so the disciples couldn't meditate. They complained to him about the water, and he went and said to the water, "Sister," he called the water "sister"; "Sister, please stop, the monks can't meditate." Then the water stopped but then they said, if water comes it looks like it's very bad for the country.

Wherever he was, pigeons, birds, came to sit on his body, due to his good heart, due to the warm heart. He was a bodhisattva, so the animals totally trusted him. You see statues showing pigeons sitting around him. There was a wolf in the forest that harmed many people, so they told St Francis not to walk in the forest. When he said he would go and talk to the wolf the people told him not to go but he insisted. He went and met the wolf, and the wolf started to lick his feet, like a dog who sees his master. He was so gentle. Then St Francis told him not to harm others and the wolf stopped harming others. Then St Francis said he would beg for and give it to the wolf so he wouldn't have to harm others.

There are stories about bodhisattvas who, when they cross a river, the water immediately stops, and after finishing crossing the water comes back. That is quite a common story about bodhisattvas. They said the same thing here about St Francis. I have a few statues of him here. A picture of Jesus spoke to St Francis.

On the back of the refuge card there are his ten pieces of advice. I took it from there. I think that because he has such pure mind, a holy mind, with bodhicitta, only cherishing sentient beings, my guess is the Buddha through Jesus spoke to him. In Buddhism there are many stories of great meditators, great yogis, who have statues speak to them. And buddhas appears in rocks. Tara appears in rocks, the Buddha appears, they talk to those great yogis. St Francis, with his pure mind, was a yogi, a bodhisattva. It's quite common, you can see many things like this, in holy places, in monasteries or hermitages, in Tibet, in Nepal. So I think because his pure mind the Buddha spoke to him through the Jesus picture.

Anyway, only the last work has something different. I've had to change it a little, otherwise you'd have a problem. There might be some confusion

REFUGE IN THE DHARMA (BACK TO)

Anyway, by taking refuge in the Dharma, you should stop giving harm to other sentient beings. What you should practice is studying the Dharma texts and respecting them, even ones with pages missing, even one syllable. For example, if a Tibetan meditator sees one syllable in the garbage or on the road, he picks it up and put it here [on the crown] thinking it's the actual Dharma, revealing the path to liberation and enlightenment. Even if you see a single Tibetan letter on the road, pick it up, put it on your crown and think it is actual Dharma, liberating sentient beings from samsara. Then put it in high place. But English words you see everywhere, under the shoes, in the road, everywhere, it's difficult. But during a teaching in Darjeeling His Holiness Ling Rinpoche, the Dalai Lama's guru, said you shouldn't use newspapers for toilet paper. When you go to the toilet and use newspaper, that's not right, because Rinpoche said we should also respect the English language. Don't use a newspaper to cover the table. A newspaper means not only Tibetan script, it also means the English language, but it's a bit difficult, because you see English all over, on the road, everywhere.

With a Tibetan text like this, we should offer expensive cloth, wrap it in it, like a dress, like clothing a statue represents offering robes, divine dress to the Buddha, the deities. Like that, offering to the scripture, offer a nice cloth, good, not dirty. In Nepal, Tibet, normally I try to buy very good cloth for offering. By offering this soft, light cloth, it increases faith and we can achieve vajra holy speech. Each family who does this offering collects unbelievable merit, so it is very good. And with a thangka painting, you should have brocade around. That is like offering robes, offering the divine dress to the Buddha's painting. Normally you see brocade around a thangka, a painting of the Buddha.

REFUGE IN THE SANGHA: WHAT TO PRACTICE AND AVOID

By taking refuge in the Sangha, what you should abandon is following both the wrong guide and following the wrong path. But now here, the wrong guide. By following the wrong guide, it becomes an obstacle to practicing Dharma, to follow the right path, to follow the Sangha. The example is same as before.

The Sangha guide you: a wrong guide is the opposite to that, so you don't follow him. This is very important, very important. Not thinking much about this, just doing the basic practices, you can do something for some time but then you meet somebody and you decide to follow that person, thinking it is better. You don't really analyze, seeing what is really helpful. Remember this, the more Dharma you learn, the more Buddhism you learn, the more wisdom you have to discriminate, to be able to discriminate what is harmful and needs to be abandoned and what is beneficial and should be practiced. You are able to develop more wisdom, to be able to discriminate bad and good, harmful or beneficial. You have the wisdom to judge, to discover. Without learning Buddhism then it is very difficult to discern what is bad, what is good, what is harmful, what is right. It is very important to understand that point. There is so much to learn, such as karma, for example. What is harmful, what is beneficial.

It is most unbelievably important to learn, to know these things, otherwise how can your life become better? How can your life be beneficial for other sentient beings, causing them happiness, especially the happiness all the future lives then liberation from samsara, and then especially enlightenment? How can you do that? There's no way. You have to understand what is harmful and what is beneficial, and abandon what is harmful and practice what is beneficial. The more you learn

Buddhism the more wisdom you develop, then you are able to see this. Without that there is no way, and you can easily follow the wrong guide.

Many people do that, they follow Buddhism and then, after some time they change their mind. Sooner or later they meet somebody else or they feel this method is better. Like eating food, it's like you go different restaurant and, you decide this is better. Where you dedicate your life, if it is wrong, if it is harmful, it's an unbelievable waste of your life, an unbelievable waste of your most precious human body, waste and harmful. Not only wasteful but harmful to you and to other sentient beings from life to life. Whatever you do continues into the next life, it continues into the next life and then you harm to yourself and you harm others, from life to life, like that, karma, karma. Therefore, in this life you really have to be most careful, to do the best. You must collect the best karma otherwise it destroys all your future lives, and the same thing happens over and over. You believe the same thing because of past habit, you believe the wrong way, you believe the wrong path is the best, because of past imprints. So whatever you do in this life, it has to be most helpful. You must check first before you put your life there, before you throw your life there, must check everything to see it's really beneficial, that it helps sentient beings, and then dedicate your life.

This is how to develop this wisdom. The more you learn Buddhism, more you can develop this. This is telling the truth. What you should do is practice cherishing the Sangha. If you see any person in Buddhist robes, yellow robes, white robes, red robes or blue robes, like the Chinese, any Sangha person, any Buddhist monk or nun—it doesn't have to be a Tibetan monk—any member of the Sangha you see on the road, any monk or nun, it's all the same. You should think, "This is a Sangha member who guides me from samsara, and brings me to enlightenment." Then you respect this person because he or she is Sangha, even though other people might criticize this Sangha.

We really can't tell who is a buddha and who is not a buddha. What appears to us as a mistake might not necessarily be a mistake. I've mentioned this in subjects like guru devotion, but anyway, we are ordinary beings, we have ordinary minds, impure minds. There are many buddhas that we don't see as buddhas, we see as ordinary beings. These are projections of our ordinary mind, our delusions, having sicknesses. They are really buddhas but we can't see them as such. There are many like this.

I mentioned the butcher at the Potala, who sold meat but actually was Red Yamantaka, the wrathful deity, the enlightened being, and how he cut the frog and liberated the consciousness into the pure land. Buddhas can manifest as anything to benefit us, and anywhere, at a butcher's shop, at a brothel, on the street as a beggar, wherever, not necessarily only in a monastery or some great temple. We can't really tell who is a buddha and who is not a buddha. Only if our mind is pure, then we can see the aspect a buddha, when we become a bodhisattva and have achieved the Mahayana path of merit, which has three levels—lower, middle and great, and when we achieve great path of merit we see numberless, numberless buddhas in the nirmanakaya aspect. When we achieve the third rising path, we achieve numberless buddhas in the sambhogakaya aspect. Then, when we complete the path, we become one with all the buddhas, you see all the buddhas mentally, like that. So, at present, we can't really tell who is a buddha.

There are many stories. For example, seeing a dog totally filled with the maggots, Asanga was filled with unbelievable, unbelievable compassion. Then he cut the flesh from his leg and spread it out for the maggots to eat. But he thought pulling them from the dog might hurt them, so he went to pick them out with the tip of his tongue. He closed his eyes, but before he touched the maggots he opened his eyes and saw Maitreya Buddha. The wounded dog was actually Maitreya Buddha. For

twelve years in a cave he had been meditating to achieve Maitreya Buddha, to see Maitreya Buddha, but he never saw Maitreya Buddha so he left the cave. Then in the road he saw the wounded dog, full of maggots. Then Maitreya Buddha asked, “What do you want?” Asanga said he had been meditating for twelve years and he complained that he hadn’t seen Maitreya. Maitreya Buddha replied he had been there all the time and to prove it he told Asanga he spat in the cave and showed him his robes where the spit had landed. Asanga wanted teachings, so Maitreya Buddha took him to Tushita pure land for one morning, which was thirty years for a human being. Maitreya gave Asanga teachings on Abhidharma that Asanga wrote down called *Abhisamayalamkara*, one of the main subjects studied in the monasteries. Numberless sentient beings have achieved enlightenment by practicing Maitreya Buddha’s teaching. The lam-rim is based on all that. If the lam-rim is expanded those are the teachings.

This is very important to remember in daily life. You can’t really tell whether a person is really an ordinary being or not; it’s difficult to say. Therefore it’s good to respect everybody. Then, you see, like that, even though people criticize a member of the Sangha, from your side you respect them. This is the practice you should do.

And also you should respect the Sangha’s robes. You cannot step over a Sangha’s robes or even the seat of a Sangha, the cloth cover they use called a *ding-wa*. You cannot walk over the robes or the *ding-wa*; that’s being disrespectful to the Sangha. Again, it harms your mind. When the Kadampa geshees even see a scrap of cloth on the road, they pick it and think about the quality of the Sangha, then put it in some high clean place. Kadampa geshees, like Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, respect the robes like that. When the great master, Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, came to Tushita, Dharamsala, when he was do an initiation, there were many seats for the Sangha, with the *ding-was*. He didn’t walk over them but stepped between the seats. Those great masters, with all that unbelievable experience, that knowledge of tantra—their experience is like the sky—they know how important it is not to step over the robes of the Sangha. This is very, very important but it is not so much known in the West, you see, there is not so much advice about this. During pujas, I see Westerners walk over the Sanghas’ seat covers and their robe, and Dharma text. You can never do that. You must pay attention to this.

GENERAL ADVICE ON WHAT TO DO AND AVOID WITH REFUGE

Then the general advice. Before you eat and drink, you should make offerings to the Buddha Dharma and Sangha. If you haven’t [been doing the refuge prayers] start to pray, generating compassion for sentient beings.

The other one is before you go to bed, do three prostration, and in the morning, when you get up, do three prostration. But of course, if you are doing prostrations by reciting the names of the Thirty-five Buddhas, or Vajrasattva— if you are doing *more* prostrations, that’s better, but if you are not doing more prostrations, at least do three prostrations to the Buddha in the morning and in the evening.

The other one is to try to control your mind, as much as you can, to not let strong anger, dissatisfaction, attachment and so on arise. Try to control your mind. If it is difficult, then try to stay away from objects that trigger these strong afflictions, that cause strong attachment or strong anger, that destroy your positive qualities and cause obstacles to having realizations to practice the lam-rim.

Keep away from those objects as much as you can. Then, you should listen to the Dharma. This doesn't mean anybody who is teaching Dharma in your country, you have to run towards that. It's not saying that. I mean, in Taiwan ...

[Audible singing] To wake us up! [Rinpoche laughs] I think this is the first time I've spent all night for something like this. A long initiation goes all night, it goes late, it goes all night, but I think this is the first time this has gone all night.

There are the general advice for when you have taken refuge. If you follow them—*woom*, can you imagine?—in daily life, the unbelievable, unbelievable, most unbelievable merit you collected, helping sentient beings so much.

To listen to the teachings. Something that I heard, in Taiwan it was believed that this meant whoever was giving teachings, you *had* to run to there, something like that, but it is not like that. When your spiritual master gives teaching, then listen as much as you can.

I'll stop here.

I think it is very important to know these things. Okay, that is it.

VAJRASATTVA INITIATION

From your side, you wash the mouth, then do prostrations and the mandala offering. Visualize the lama as Vajrasattva. You have to visualize the lama as Vajrasattva, the essence and also in that aspect, not as an ordinary being, as an aspect of the Buddha because this is tantra. This Vajrasattva is with the wisdom mother. There is a lower tantra Vajrasattva and a higher tantra Vajrasattva, and the higher tantra Vajrasattva is with the wisdom mother. I have received this initiation from His Holiness Song Rinpoche. This is what Lama Yeshe gave.

You cannot put things on top of a text and you can't step over a text, you have to go around the text, not walk over it. Rinpoche also mentioned that. That's one thing I remembered.

Okay, so the mandala offering. Offer all the merit of your own body, speech and mind, and all the merits created by others, visualizing the manifestation of all kinds of offerings filling the whole mandala, the whole universe, the whole entire space. Offer like that to receive the *je-nang*, the permission to practice Vajrasattva.

[Chanting]

Above the lama as Vajrasattva, visualize the lineage lamas of the initiation, then all the buddhas and bodhisattvas gathered in the sky. Then, in their presence take the bodhisattva vows.

Those who have taken the bodhisattva vows in the past, of course you can take again. Those who have not taken the bodhisattva vows in the past, generally the bodhisattva vows has wishing vows and entering vows. The entering vows protect from the eighteen root falls and forty-six things to abstain from, the forty-six vices. You have to do these things if you take the entering vows. Even if you are not taking the entering vows you can take wishing vows.

If you take the wishing vows there are four black dharmas to renounce and four white dharmas to practice. The four black dharmas are: telling a lie to the guru, deceiving sentient beings, criticizing bodhisattvas and feeling unhappy when you see somebody practicing Dharma. You feel unhappy and don't want that person to practice Dharma.

In Sydney many years ago, when we were staying at a student's house, there was a nun who was doing water bowl practice. She was very busy but every time she had ten or fifteen minutes to spare, any short time at all and any place, such as in the student's room or in front of the TV—wherever there was a small space or a small table—she immediately put the water bowls, and did the water offering practice. Even if there was only ten or fifteen minutes she took the opportunity to finish her preliminary practice of water bowls. The house owner, the student, was not comfortable with that. He didn't do the water bowl practice himself and he didn't like the nun doing it. Because he couldn't do it, he was unable to do it himself, when he saw her doing the water bowl offering he became unhappy. He even told her not to do it. It didn't harm his body, it harmed his mind. He didn't like it; he didn't want her to do it, to collect merit by making water bowl offering. That's an example. Anyway, there are four black dharmas to abandon and four white dharmas to practice: opening your heart to the guru, praise bodhisattvas, looking at bodhisattvas as like buddhas and praising and respecting them, and inspiring the sentient beings who are around you, bringing them into the Mahayana path to enlightenment.

If you cannot take the wishing vow then at least think, "I am going to practice more compassion, I am going to practice more compassion, loving kindness, more than before towards other sentient beings." At least you can do that. That makes it worthwhile to take this blessing.

[Rinpoche continues with the initiation]

Then next one, "I am confessing all the negative karmas" and think it has been purified, gone.

[Rinpoche continues with the initiation]

Then, the negative karmas collected from beginningless rebirth are complete gone.

Now, the next one is rejoicing. Rejoice in all your past, present and future merits as well as the past present and future merits of all the numberless sentient beings, as well as of the buddhas. The second one is for others, the first one is rejoicing, how wonderful it is.

From the virtue collected from that you get happiness, ultimate happiness, liberation from samsara, full enlightenment, peerless happiness. Therefore, virtue is *sooooo* precious. Okay, so rejoice. How wonderful the virtue is collected by you then after that the virtue collected by numberless sentient beings and the buddhas. How precious is this unbelievable, most precious virtue, collected from beginningless rebirths, and what will be collected in the future. When you do this, every second, every minute, you collect limitless skies of merit.

[Rinpoche continues with the initiation]

“I am going to take the bodhisattva vows in order to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings.” Those who are taking either or both the vows or just wishing vow or if you can’t take it, just think, say, “I am going to develop more compassion and loving kindness for sentient beings.”

[Rinpoche continues with the initiation]

Then those who are taking vow, think you have received it. Those who are taking only the wishing vow or entering vow or both.

Whichever, one or both. Generate very strong faith. Since the entering vow is taken then in every second you collect limitless skies of merits, limitless skies of merit in every second. It is amazing, amazing. Whatever merit you collect every day; it increases millions of times every day. Then think, “Taking the bodhisattva vow, think this my best contribution, my best contribution to world peace.” Think like that. You have done something amazing.

[Rinpoche continues with the initiation]

See the leader as leading the disciple to enlightenment, the essence is there. From your side do this meditation. It is not saying that I am this; it is not saying that I am the three times’, past, present and future Buddha, I am not saying that but from your side try to see it like this.

“Please grant me permission to practice your father mother Vajrasattva holy body, holy speech, holy mind.”

[Rinpoche continues with the initiation]

VAJRA ARMOR TRANSMISSION

It has happened in the past, sometimes because if you generate strong faith, your sickness is repelled.

[Audio not clear] ... liberating, saving from the old age, from sickness and death, to recite this to not get cancer. But cancer is not the only thing, there are other heavy diseases, so many you can recite this for. But here is not everything to recite, just the mantra, to generate bodhicitta, take this oral transmission for the benefit of all sentient beings.

When you read this, read it for the benefit for all the sentient beings including your friends or anybody you know, those who are sick, those who are suffering, again all those humans and all the rest of sentient beings

[Oral transmission]

You can recite it. It says, “Buddhas, anyone who has generate compassion for sentient beings and all peerless buddhas who have achieve full enlightenment, please help me.” This is what the Buddha said. So you can recite this mantra to everybody.

[Oral transmission]

The Buddha, the four guardians, this wisdom mantra that all the buddhas recite, if you recite this just one time then all the girls, boys who recite this mantra will never go to lower realms. A person who recites this mantra will benefit the life of all sentient beings. If for the sake of all sentient beings you recite words every day, you won't have fear of untimely death, suddenly being cut off from life. Whoever recites this won't have an untimely death, there is no fear of untimely death. And then that person won't suffer a heavy disease. Millions of people are dying in the world with cancer, such a large number. You can never tell when it can happen to you. Up to now so many people who never thought they'd get it, suddenly they find they cancer. From my knowledge, some survive but the majority die, no matter what they do, have operations, take chemotherapy and so forth.

Chemotherapy is the worst thing, as Lama Konchog said; it's worse than an operation. It takes away all your power, it's worse than an operation. But still, most people die. Therefore my suggestion is to recite this. That is one mantra, the Vajra Armor mantra.

Quite some time ago, we put it on the website for anybody, with a suggestion to recite it. There is something you can try, you can do that, before you get the disease. Once it comes, it is very difficult. Then you don't by water, by fire, by weapon, by poison, by being tortured by a king. When this mantra is recited, that place will gain the attention of all buddhas and bodhisattvas. Any person who write this mantra out is offering service to all the buddhas. Why? Because offering service to sentient beings is offering service to the buddhas. By writing this mantra and carry it around on your body it becomes protection.

This is Vajra Armor.

[Dedication]

RED TARA INITIATION

[Initiation]

[Dedication prayers]