

## 14th Kopan Course: 1981

Lecture 1: November 13<sup>th</sup> pm

[Prayers]

Can you hear, the people who are sitting around the edge? Then you meditate! Maybe next year.

First I would like to express thanks. I feel great rejoicefulness that many people came from various countries, from very far countries to seek peace of mind. I'm not sure what kind of peace of mind you want or need, I am not quite sure. This has to be examined; however, peace of mind, happiness. But my rejoicefulness is not just for your seeking peace, seeking happiness. Everybody, any living being, any being who has an unsubdued mind, all the living beings, even the tiniest creatures, even the tiny creatures that we cannot see without machines—even they have the thought to seek happiness. Because of desiring happiness and not desiring suffering, even those tiniest creatures move around, doing whatever they can. Even though they have such a tiny body, they attempt as much as possible, whatever they can.

So I am not thinking of just that. The great rejoicefulness that I have for you is for your not being satisfied with what you have done so far, what you have been doing, what you have been managing in this life in regards to obtaining mind-peace. Not being satisfied, understanding this, discovering this. "What I have been doing is not enough, there is something wrong in that. There is something wrong with what I have been doing, it is not enough." So there must be something else, something more correct, which definitely brings happiness. Something that does not mislead. Something that you do and you get what you want. Not something that you dislike, not something that you did not wish. Not something that makes you shocked.

You open your own mind to seek a new method. Not having a closed mind, not closing your mind by yourself. You are giving yourself the opportunity to seek the method, to understand, to practice, to accomplish the ultimate—not only temporal happiness and perfection, but also ultimate happiness, everlasting release. So this is a great surprise, a great surprise you happened to find in your life.

You might have heard my name, in the papers, Lama Zopa, something like that. You might have heard this in the papers, pictures, or you were told by somebody else, in the restaurant, or at the beach or at the movies. Anyway, I'm joking. However, you might have come here to hear something, to learn some meditation or to hear something from me, somebody who is called Lama Zopa. However, just from myself, just from my side, I don't have hope that you will receive benefits, because I am not a meditator, not a holy Dharma practitioner. My practice, what I really practice is the worldly dharma, not the holy Dharma. But here nowadays we have many learned monks and geshe—learned monks who spent their whole lives from childhood, from ten, fifteen, thirteen, nine, from childhood up till now, thirty, forty, fifty years, their whole lives they lived in the monastery and studied. I did not do that. I didn't study. Of course I did touch the scriptures a little bit, you know, like a baby touching books, like that, putting up and down the pages. That kind of thing I did, the body touching the text. That's all.

I think there are perfectly qualified teachers, highly learned. And they themselves are not just speaking the words, but living in the practice. This is the most important thing. In the world, on this

earth, there are many professors, many people who have studied the words and who speak. But those who are living in the experience, who are living in the practice, a teacher who himself has either lived or is living in the practice of which he speaks, living in the discipline of which he speaks, becoming an example—that is rare to find, very rare to find. That kind of teacher, guru, or virtuous friend is worthwhile to follow, there is no misleading.

I think you people are highly fortunate to receive profound, extensive teachings, profound without the slightest mistake—especially if you can understand Tibetan language. I'm joking. However sometimes there can be difficulties in the translation. But even if some mistake happens it can be explained again, it can be corrected by other people who understand. Also from the side of the geshe and from the side of the translator, it can be corrected. Also if you have doubts, not clear, they can be discussed. They can be made clear, made that much clearer. But if you live in the practice, if you really try, if you put things into practice, when you start to really experience it—that is the time that it really becomes clear. It starts to become clear when you start to experience it, when you yourself live in the practice. So anyway, things can be made that much clearer in regards understanding the words, the definition of the words, the meaning of the Dharma, like this.

Buddhadharma is something that the more you study it, the more you check, it becomes more and more clear. It becomes more and more deep, more clear. That is the particular nature of the Buddhadharma. The more you understand, the more you study, the more you check, it doesn't become weaker and weaker and more and more faulty, you don't see more and more faults. So definitely even though there are other problems, although it is hard, it is hard when you listen to the teachings, when you do the meditation, definitely there are great benefits. We think one month is incredibly long, however, it is like last night's dream, so short. It might seem to be very hard and very difficult, but in fact it is like last night's dream, it is like one second of the meditation course, it is like that, this one time that we do. If, with patience, you continue to study, to listen to the teachings, to meditate, to practice as much as you can—definitely there is unimaginable benefit that you receive. Especially those geshe, you know, highly learned. So there is no question about the benefits for your temporal and ultimate mental peace. Especially after the course, after you understand more and more teachings, after you understand the fundamental teachings, then you would find how it has been greatly worthwhile, how each meditation session, how each session of listening to the teachings during the course has been so precious. How every meditation, listening to the teachings, each of these hours and minutes has been so precious and so worthwhile. The more you understand the teachings in the future, especially the fundamental teachings, the more you see this. You feel great rejoicefulness that you have done this.

Can you hear? Can you hear those who are around? Those who are sitting on the edge? How difficult? I think what can be done, maybe we can have a short peepee break, then sit close, sit tight. I think this next hour, I don't think I will talk. [thunder] Also it might rain. Anyway we cannot hear.

[Everybody moves closer]

I have a request to you, to you people, asking a favor. That is to recite mantra, a long-life mantra, one particular aspect, (you see, it started to rain) one particular aspect of Buddha, the female aspect of Buddha called Tara. Is there an example? Can you pass it around?

The right hand is in the mudra of granting sublime realizations and the left hand is in the mudra of granting guidance, guiding sentient beings from fear and suffering. And these mudras have

significance. The two fingers joined like this signify enlightenment, the unified state of the holy body and the holy mind, the achievement. And usually these three fingers standing signify Buddha, Dharma and Sangha—the Triple Gem. It can also signify the three principles of the path: the mind renouncing samsara, bodhicitta—renouncing self, cherishing other sentient beings—that ultimate good heart, bodhicitta, then also the wisdom realizing voidness; the three principal paths to enlightenment. By taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha one achieves enlightenment, the unified state of the holy body and holy mind. One can understand it that way. One can understand that by actualizing the three principal paths one can achieve the unified state, enlightenment. However, then there can be other explanations. Then, holding the *utpala* flower, the left hand is in the mudra of granting guidance, guiding from fears and from the sufferings of samsara.

White Tara has seven eyes—one eye on each foot, then one eye on each palm, and then there is the third eye—as you have seen in the picture. That is just to have an idea of that manifestation, to have just a rough idea. What is drawn in the *thangka* or what you can see on the picture is just a rough idea of how it looks, the manifestation. In the meditation you should visualize better than that if you can.

The *dharmakaya*, the holy mind, is the most important thing to think about first or to feel. The most important thing is the dharmakaya, the holy mind, which is complete in all realizations and purified of all obscurations, devoid of all mistakes. This holy mind, this completely pure holy mind, dharmakaya, which is called the absolute guru, the real guru, the absolute guru, in order to guide yourself and other sentient beings, manifest in this particular aspect, the female aspect, having one face, two arms, with the legs in the vajra posture. The essence is the dharmakaya, the pure holy mind.

The holy body is very clear, calm, in the nature of light, extremely beautiful. You visualize this seated on a lotus and a moon disc.

This mantra, the purpose of reciting the mantra of this particular aspect of Buddha, Tara, White Tara's mantra, is mainly because some students here asked what can be done for the long life of Lama Yeshe. You might be able to see Lama Yeshe after about two weeks; you might be able to hear teachings. So some students asked what can be done for the long life of Lama Yeshe. So this particular Buddha's mantra comes out highly beneficial to recite, about one hundred thousand times. Also I think it comes out beneficial that if here in the course everybody recites it. Also the number finishes soon. If many people recite, then the number finishes soon, less expensive. I am joking, anyway.

So the visualization for those who have received initiation, Tara, the great kriya tantra initiation, the great mahaanuttara tantra initiations—there is a particular visualization to do if anybody, one's parents, or any other sick person has the danger of shortage of life; in order to have a long life there is a particular meditation to do, generating yourself as that deity, and then at the heart, there is a particular meditation to do.

Anyway, what we can do is this. Visualize Tara, then underneath, down below, Lama Yeshe. If you have seen a picture of Lama Yeshe, anyway, Lama Yeshe, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, any of the holy beings, think all the holy beings there, the holy beings who work for sentient beings to eliminate their sufferings, to obtain happiness. All the holy beings are down below Tara. Then nectar rays, like milk, that color, flow from the Tara's heart and fill the holy beings. The holy bodies are like a glass filled with milk, the long life nectar.

Then visualize the enemy that you dislike or who hates you, then all the rest of the sentient beings. Think of the enemy in front of you, the dearest enemy in front of you. Then father, mother, then the same Dharma friends who are sitting around you here now and all the rest of sentient beings you think of. Nectar flows from Tara's holy mind and purifies yourself and your parents, the enemy, friends, and all the rest of the sentient beings, purified.

You see, without the holy beings, those who work for the sentient beings, those who have accomplished the path, without those holy beings who reveal the teaching, without them, if they don't live then there is no teaching. Like without a doctor there is no medicine, however much you are sick there is no medicine, there is no way to receive treatment. So without these holy beings there is no teaching, no pure teaching. So you see, for we sentient beings, there is no way to be free from suffering, from confusion, there is no method—we cannot find the method. Even if we seek we cannot find it, we do not meet it. So you see, sentient being's happiness, temporal happiness and ultimate happiness, is dependent on the merit, dependent on good actions, on the teachings, the holy Dharma. The holy Dharma is dependent on the holy beings, so therefore how important the long life of the holy beings is, how important that they live longer in the aspect that we can see, which we can communicate with. That is the purpose of reciting the mantra.

One thing, in relation to the long life of the great holy beings who have accomplished the path, they themselves don't have such things as death and rebirth caused by unsubdued mind and karma like we experience. They don't even have the name of that. Even the name death and rebirth do not exist for them. The actions that harm others and yourself, which come from the confused mind of anger, ignorance, and attachment, these things cause the holy beings to not exist a long time in that aspect. So our confused mind, our unsubdued, uncontrolled mind and the actions that come from that, they are the obstacle to meet the holy beings, the obstacle to hear the infallible teachings, to be able to see those holy beings and to hear the infallible teachings. This, itself is the obstacle. So for them to have long lives we should purify the obstacles that we have in our mind. So therefore first we purify.

As we recite the mantra, nectar beams emitted from Tara's heart purify us, the sentient beings. Then at the end, long life nectar beams flow into all the holy beings and their bodies get filled with long life nectar. I think that is all.

To do the oral transmission of this mantra, first we recite together, so please generate the motivation to take the oral transmission of this mantra. At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all the sentient beings, therefore I am going to take the oral transmission of the White Tara long-life mantra.

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE MAMA ARYU PUNE GYANA PUTIM GURUYE SOHA

[Recited many times]

From Tara's heart, from the holy mind, unbearable compassion flows from the heart for us, the sentient beings. From that holy mind white nectar rays flow and purify the obstacles, the unsubdued mind and the karma that causes holy beings to have short lives. Those obstacles within one's own mind are purified, then all the obscurations and negative karma that comes from that, all that negative karma, then disease, spirit harms—also you can think that those are purified; also other sentient beings' obscurations, unsubdued mind and the actions which come from that, and their

negative karma. Then all their suffering, all their problems, disease, and all the rest of their problems, all their sufferings of body and mind—your father, mother, friend, enemy, and all the rest of the sentient beings—all the true suffering and the cause of the suffering are completely purified by the white nectar rays flowing from Tara’s holy mind.

You can visualize the unsubdued mind, negative karma, those diseases, all the confusions of the life—all the sufferings of body and mind are completely purified in the form of dirty liquid, filthy dirty liquid coming from the lower doors of the body and also from all the pores, like when your body is very dirty and when you are having a shower how the dirt comes out, like that.

One can make requests to Tara and the holy beings to exist until samsara ends, to exist and to continuously do the works and turn the Dharma wheel for oneself and all sentient beings. And also yourself—as the white nectar rays fill your body and the bodies of other sentient beings, if you wish to have a long life also you can make that request. Then when you stop the mantra you can think, “I have received the realization, the undying realization.”

One can request the long life of one’s parents. If there are sick people that you know, then also one can pray, one can visualize the nectar flowing, purifying, visualize their body filled up with undying white nectar and think that the person achieves the undying realization.

However, whether you pray for yourself to have long life or not, it is very important to pray for others, for those who protect karma, avoiding the harmful actions, the non-virtuous harmful actions, who practice the virtuous actions, who have refuge in the mind, for those who recite even one mantra of OM MANI PADME HUM, even those sentient beings who recite this mantra, to have a long life. For even those who recite the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM, the six syllable mantra, even those sentient beings to have a long life.

You see, those sentient beings who accumulate merit, especially the sentient beings who know how to accumulate merit, if they have a long life, the longer they live they are able to make their life more meaningful. They are able to create more causes of happiness, so there is sense in living long. There is a meaning to live, to have a long life being a human being, not an animal, not another, lower type of sentient being with greater suffering, with another type of body. Among human beings, for those who do not practice Dharma, those who do not understand Dharma, those who do not attempt to accumulate merit, there is a little bit more opportunity for them to experience temporal pleasures, by having the human body.

Lecture 2: November 14<sup>th</sup> pm

[Prayers]

During this teaching on the *Bodhicharyavatara*—the teaching that was composed by the great bodhisattva, the great pandit, the bodhisattva called Shantideva—Manjushri is the particular aspect of Buddha to whom we are going to make requests and take refuge, in order to quickly realize or see the object, the ignorance of true existence, the object, the ignorance of the truly existent “I,” which is empty—to truly realize that which is empty as empty. Then, in that way, be able to quickly eliminate even the seed of that ignorance, the root of samsara. Realizing that which is empty to be empty, and quickly eliminating even the seed of that ignorance—one essential purpose is that. Then

also, to be able to quickly generate bodhicitta, renouncing self and cherishing others, this precious thought of enlightenment—to be able to quickly generate these things.

So for these two main purposes we visualize the particular aspect of Buddha called Manjushri, who is of the Buddha's transcendental wisdom manifested in one aspect. He has one face, two arms, with his legs in the vajra posture, his right hand holding the wisdom sword and the left hand holding the stem of a lotus. In the lotus is the *Prajnaparamita* scripture. The holy body is orange colored. This aspect is called Manjushri and exists particularly to grant us, sentient beings, the development of Dharma wisdom.

As you see Manjushri in the examples, in the tangkas or pictures, better than that, visualize in front of you, at the height the same level as your forehead above the ground, facing you, with a smiling, youthful face. Then, as the admiring prayer, the requesting prayer to Manjushri is still on the way to be printed, and is not finished, I will just read it here. So you just meditate on the meaning of this.

“Obeisance to my guru and protector Manjushri, who holds to his heart a scriptural text, symbolic of his seeing all things as they are; whose intelligence shines forth as the sun, unclouded by delusions or traces of ignorance; who teaches in sixty ways, with the loving compassion of a father for his only son, all creatures caught in the prison of samsara, confused in the darkness of their ignorance, overwhelmed by their suffering.

“You, whose dragon thunder-like proclamation of Dharma arouses us from the stupor of our delusion and frees us from the iron chains of our karma, who wields the sword of wisdom hewing down suffering wherever its sprouts appear, clearing away the darkness of ignorance.

“You, whose princely body is adorned with the one hundred and twelve marks of Buddha, who has completed the stages achieving the highest perfections of a bodhisattva, who has been pure from the beginning, I bow down to you, O Manjushri.

“With the brilliance of your wisdom, O Compassionate One, illuminate (this is the request)... With the brilliance of your wisdom O Compassionate One, illuminate the darkness enclosing my mind; enlighten my intelligence and wisdom so that I may gain insight into Buddha's words and the texts that explain them.”

Visualizing, you might wonder why there is not only one buddha, why there are different aspects of buddhas, “Having many different aspects of buddha that you have to visualize confuses my mind.” However, even generally to do the works in a country, generally speaking, you have to have that particular power, you have to have that particular position so that you can do the work, so that those people will listen, and people will follow, so that you can achieve what you want to help them. You see, with that power, in that position, if you are in that particular position, with that particular power, then you can accomplish your wishes, whatever you want to help them. Or maybe sometimes you have your own particular work, anyway it doesn't matter. That is not important, that we don't talk about now. Anyway you understand.

If you are concerned for others, if you want to relieve people from certain difficulties and problems, then if you are in the position of that king, like in Nepal, if you have that power, if you are in that position, then you have the power to make laws, or to change, to stop the actions or things that

cause problems. You can stop them, and you can suggest good things, prosperity, whatever good things you think and whatever you can develop, then you can help. Also they will listen if you are in that position, if you have particular power for example, like the king. Then, there are other examples, such as a doctor. There are various examples, many different examples, just talking in general way. So these different aspects of buddha are like that. Another way, if you don't have a certificate saying that you are a psychologist, for example, if you don't have a recognized certificate saying that you are a very learned psychologist, then probably other people may not come to you. There might not be crowds of people coming to see you. Or you might not make enough money. Anyway you see you have to have those things, certificates.

So like that there are many different aspects. One aspect is not enough. One aspect is not enough to fulfill the wishes of sentient beings. There are numberless sentient beings, but to fulfill the wish of one sentient being, one particular aspect, is not enough. So there is the need for different aspects to fulfill the different wishes, an aspect that suits the different levels of mind of sentient beings.

Therefore, White Tara is particularly for granting long life. All these particular aspects of buddhas, the compassionate buddha or Tara—there are about one hundred different aspects of Tara—however, the main aim, the main purpose is to bring the sentient beings to the highest state, enlightenment, the sublime happiness. That is the main purpose. But in order to make that successful, there is need of wisdom. In order to make it successful one must generate the path to omniscient mind. In order to generate the path, one must not just meditate on space, blank, that alone, without studying, without doing extensive listening, reflecting, or meditation practice, just sitting in the meditation position, and just keeping the mind on space, keeping the mind blank. Ignorant mind won't make it to enlightenment. With ignorant mind you cannot approach the omniscient mind. Like without fuel in the car you cannot reach your destination. Even if you have the car, if you don't have the fuel then you cannot reach to the desirable place. So, you see, this is similar.

However, in order to make generating the complete path to omniscient mind successful, one should have the wisdom of listening, reflecting, and meditation—one should have all these wisdoms. So therefore there is a need, since you cannot do it alone by yourself—for example, you alone cannot learn ABCD alone, without depending on somebody, you don't know how to fix the car, how to fix the watch, how to make the watch, or how to drive the car without depending on somebody. Somebody gives you a car, or you buy a car, but without anybody teaching you, you cannot learn the whole thing—if something is wrong how to fix it, and how to drive. If somebody gives you a car, you learn—somebody puts you in the huge ground, if somebody leaves you there with the car but without anybody to teach you, then you alone cannot learn, even if you have a car.

However, without talking much, here, what we are doing here this one month, what we are trying here is not just to learn how to fix a car, to fix a watch, to make Coca-Cola, or make chocolate—anyway, I'm joking. It is not like that, what we are doing here is not like that. Here what we're doing is not trying to recover from some disease, not only that, not even that. Like you take medicine to rid of a stomachache, or a toothache, or a discomfort of the body to relax for some time, like you take medicine and then get better for some time, again it comes back. Not like that. Not even like that.

Here, what we are doing, whether we know it or not, the method that we are doing, the different meditations that we are doing now, the benefits, from the individual's side, whether we know the

benefits or not, the benefits are to free ourselves forever from true sufferings, such as the suffering of rebirth, sickness, old age and death—all the problems of samsara. To be forever free from true suffering, all those various problems of samsara, even from the true cause of suffering, the unsubdued mind and its action, karma. Without being free from that there is no way that you can be forever free from those true sufferings, those everyday life problems. There is no way to be free forever from those. So, otherwise, as long as we are not free from them forever, free from the unsubdued mind and karma, the true cause of suffering, it would be like taking medicine—all the other methods are like taking medicine. Perhaps, if it works it works for some time, that's all. It doesn't mean that you are free forever from that.

So not only that, not only the self alone, the blissful state of peace, the achievement of everlasting release from samsara, or from true suffering and the true cause of suffering for oneself. Not only that. That is not the main goal; that is not the main thing. That should not be the main reason we are here, why we study, why we listen to the teaching and do the meditation, particularly this teaching, the Mahayana.

The teachings that were revealed by Buddha are divided into two: the lesser vehicle teaching and the greater vehicle teaching. This is the greater vehicle teaching, the Mahayana teaching. So the teaching that we are hearing and meditating on, what we are trying to actualize, the path that we are trying to actualize, the basic idea, the main motive, the principal motive, the only motive, if possible the only motive that should be in our heart, is to benefit others. The motive for doing this course, the greater vehicle, the Mahayana teaching, if possible it should be only that. It should be purely that, only the thought to benefit others—on the basis of avoiding harm, not having the thought to harm others, having only the thought to benefit others, to fulfill the wishes of all sentient beings, for all sentient beings to be in all happiness, to be in sublime happiness, the state of omniscient mind.

So, “To make this extensive work for others successful, I am going to achieve the state of omniscient mind, which is complete in all realizations and which is purified of all mistakes, all obscurations. For that reason I am going to listen and study, reflect and do the meditation practice on the graduated path to that omniscient mind.” Like this.

Also for that reason, to fulfill this work, the Dharma practice, one also needs a long life and many things: wisdom, long life, many necessary conditions. So therefore there are different particular aspects of buddhas who—the main thing is to bring the sentient beings to enlightenment—but to grant help, to grant the different guidance, there are particular different aspects. So therefore, by taking refuge, or by ourselves, from the individual's side making contact with the particular aspects of the buddha, one's wishes of Dharma practice become successful, the hindrances get stopped.

It just happened, otherwise you might wonder, why each session you have to visualize different things. It's very confusing, it drives crazy, you might wonder.

If you want to go pee-pee...

[Break]

Any type of human being from different countries, with different cultures, even the creatures, however different they look, whatever different body they have, all these living beings who live on this earth, all they wish is one thing, all they do not wish is one thing. It's just one. All they wish is



happiness. All the human beings, with different colors, speaking different languages, even the creatures who are flying, those who are crawling on the ground—what they do not wish is just one: suffering. So to prevent, to pacify either one's own suffering, to accomplish one's own happiness, either for self or for others, to accomplish that wish for either oneself or for others, there happened various religions on this earth.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's way of freeing the sentient beings from suffering is not by washing off the cause of suffering, the unsubdued mind and its action, karma—not by washing with water. And not like taking thorns from the body. You just sit and somebody comes along, you just scream, you don't do anything, you sit on the bed then somebody comes along and takes out the thorn. You just sit comfortably, you just relax on a chair, then somebody comes along, takes out the thorn that bothers you. Not like this. Not in this way. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha does not just come along; sentient beings just sit there, then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha comes along and takes it out; not like this, like taking the thorn out, not like that. Not eliminating by hand, by the physical hand. And also not by transplanting, like in the West transplanting the heart. If somebody's heart is transplanted to another's heart, then the other person is empty, the body is empty of heart, there's something missing in the other person's body, even though now the other person has a good heart, a healthy heart. Not like that. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha does not transplant his enlightenment, his realization of bodhicitta, his wisdom of shunyata, his realization of enlightenment in our minds, then it frees us, we become free from sufferings, and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha becomes a sentient being, his mind becomes empty of realization. The way Guru Shakyamuni Buddha frees sentient beings is not by transplanting realizations in the mind of others.

So, what is the way of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, what is his way of freeing sentient beings from suffering? It is by revealing the absolute truth, by revealing the nature of existence, the nature of the "I". By revealing the absolute truth of the "I", the self, the "I," the absolute truth, the absolute nature of the "I," the absolute nature of existence, of which we, the sentient beings, are ignorant, hallucinating. Because of not seeing this, because of hallucinating, we are ignorant of this, so continuously we suffer. So the way Guru Shakyamuni Buddha frees sentient beings from sufferings of samsara is by revealing the absolute nature. Then, by listening, reflecting, and meditating on this, by actualizing it, the sentient beings are able to eliminate even the seed of ignorance, the hallucinating mind, the ignorance, which is the originator of all sufferings, of all other unsubdued minds and sufferings. This is the way that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha leads sentient beings into the blissful state of peace, and this is the way that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha leads us to the state of omniscient mind, the supreme bliss, the sublime bliss. By developing the path of method and wisdom that is revealed by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the sentient beings practice, actualize, and develop that, and they approach sublime bliss, the state of omniscient mind.

Also one thing: if suffering did not come from the self, if it was not created by one's mind, if it came from others, from a separate being, if the creator of one's own suffering is a separate being who is separate from oneself, then in that way perhaps it might be possible that by just having faith alone, without the need to practice from the side of sentient beings, without the need to do anything from our side, just by having faith. Or another way, what happens is that it doesn't make any difference whatever you do, because the creator of your suffering is somebody else, not you, it is somebody else, so it doesn't matter whatever you do from your side, anyway it's up to him, it's up to the other being. So it's completely dependent on him, no matter whether you do good actions, no matter whether you do bad actions, whether you live a good life or even a very evil life, having only ill will in the mind, not having any love and compassion for others, only doing harm to others, even if one

lives a very evil life, even without having faith, nothing, it would be possible to experience happiness.

Then also no matter how much you lived the good life, no matter how much anger, how much self-cherishing thought, self-centered mind, strong selfish thought, anger, ignorance, or attachment, those unsubdued minds, no matter how thin they become, it wouldn't make any difference for that person's happiness or suffering. The mental peace would not become greater as those unsubdued minds became thinner, there would not be any effect or result of greater and greater happiness in the mind. This doesn't make any sense. The creator of suffering and happiness being somebody else does not make any sense, because it is completely dependent on that other being. If the creator of suffering, of the self, the creator of your own happiness, of the world is somebody else, a separate being, whether that being is called a god or a deva or whatever, then first of all, what would happen if he did not create the world, if he did not create the self, if he did not create the beings? If he did not create them in the first place, what would happen? Would there be any problems if he did not create them? Wouldn't it be better if he didn't create anything from the beginning? Then there wouldn't be any suffering, wars, there would be no need to fear the third war, no need to fight for oil. Also it is just extra work. If you create suffering then you have to keep busy stopping starvation, the danger of sickness, even the effort of buying and taking medicine would be unnecessary extra work. Wouldn't it be better at the very beginning if nothing was created? However, I think there're ways one can check, like this, one can examine.

What Guru Buddha Shakyamuni said is that all the sufferings came from the self. All the happiness and perfections came from others. How all the sufferings came from the self: while the self, the "I," looks as if it exists from its own side on these aggregates, it is empty from its own side. It is empty. While the "I," the self, looks as if it exists from its own side from above the aggregates, it is empty—in fact it's empty of existing from its own side. It looks as if it exists from its own side but it doesn't exist from its own side. Empty. While the "I" is empty of existing from its own side, the "I" appears from above, from above these aggregates, as if it exists from its own side.

Another way of saying it: this "I," the self, which appears as if it is inside the chest, above the heart, above the heart in the chest, somewhere here, looks real, looks as if it is there. It appears in the chest, it doesn't appear in the toes or in the legs or in the nose, or in the ears, in the fingers. One doesn't feel or it doesn't appear like that in the other parts of the body. Here is something that you feel, particularly here something that you feel; real "I." While you are not examining it, when you let it go, when you let it happen in normal life, it looks kind of solid, real solid, living in a dark room, living in a kind of black, dark room, something like that, as if you are living in a dark room without light. Something like that, the "I" is here inside, kind of living in a dark room, like that.

While you are not examining it looks like it is there, but if you search, if you really examine whether it really exists, where it is, whether it really exists, in fact, when you examine that, right on that, by watching it, while you are looking at it, if you examine whether it really exists, where it is actually, it cannot be found anywhere, from the very tip of the hair down to the feet, the toes. It cannot be found anywhere, completely empty. What you used to cling to before, so far what you have been clinging to in your life since you were born, since beginningless past lives until now, what you have been clinging to, what you have been believing in, is completely empty in fact. On these aggregates it is completely empty in fact.

Without mentioning much, like this: when one is not examining it looks like it is there, real, solid, solidity. It looks like it can be found if one searched but it becomes weaker—the more one searches it becomes weaker, unclear, and cannot be found. Like when you look from far away it looks like there is a cow that you want to find, which you are supposed to find, a cow on that mountain. From far away it looks like it is there, eating grass, but when you are on that mountain, when you searched you couldn't find the cow, on the top, on the bottom, anywhere—nowhere can you find the cow. That mountain it is empty of cow. Similarly, that mountain is empty of cow and like that, on these aggregates the “I” existing from its own side is completely empty, in fact it is completely empty from its own side, just there, completely empty from its own side.

However, on these aggregates there is an appearance of the “I” existing, there is an appearance of an “I” that exists from its own side. Another way of saying this: the appearance of the real “I,” the solid “I” that we point out, today, now, that we put our finger on, that we point out when somebody calls you, when you get shocked, or when you are in a certain circumstance, happy or suffering circumstances, then you point out here. This is it, what is appearing now to us, to you now, right now, the self, the “I” that is appearing to you now as real, as solid, somewhere above the heart, not in the stomach but above the heart, somewhere in the chest. This is it. However by making it short, by making it simple, the “I” that doesn't exist, this is it.

So normally what we point to in certain circumstances, during shock or happiness, when there is happiness or when there is suffering, normally we point there. The reason we point there is because that relates to the mind belief, it relates to the conception, it is not just pointing there unnecessarily. When somebody calls you or when you get angry, you can point at the nose, you can point anywhere. When somebody calls you, if somebody accuses you, “You have stolen my car,” or ice-cream from the refrigerator... anyway, I am joking but you see, if somebody accuses you, you don't point...

“When did you see me stealing?” At that time you don't point your fingers to the toes. “When did I come to your house, when did I steal your ice-cream?” usually we point at the chest. Especially when you are angry you hit the palm on the chest, like this. This is to do with the conception; the outside physical action is related to the internal mind, the conception.

This “I” appears as if it is real or solid, as if it exists from its own side, and we completely cling to that, believing that this is completely true. This ignorance, even now we cling to that, this appearance of this “I,” this truly existent “I,” we cling to that. This is completely true. The ignorance that clings to that is the simultaneously-born ignorance. It is not the intellectual belief caused by a wrong philosophy or doctrine that says “I” and existence are truly existent, existing from their own side. Without the mind being caused to believe this by wrong philosophy, which causes you to have acceptance, belief, verbally you accept that this “I” exists from its own side. Even now we are clinging to this “I,” this present appearance of “I”, as completely true. That is the simultaneously-born ignorance.

When one was born in the mother's womb, when consciousness took place on the fertilized egg, even from that very first second, even at that time, the previous continuation of this simultaneously-born ignorance this life began from that. Even in the mother's womb one was born with it. Another way of saying this, making it simple, is to say that one was born with this simultaneously-born ignorance, clinging to the “I” that appears as truly existent, clinging to it as true. One was born with

it even in the mother's womb. The reason we have this now, the reason we have this ignorance clinging to the "I" as truly existent, is because we are born with it.

Similarly, the reason we have anger. The answer to why we have anger and attachment now, why we have these unsubdued minds, is similar. This is because when we were born, in the mother's womb, even at that time, we were born with the impression, the seed of that. We were born with it. The reason we were born with this ignorance, this simultaneously-born ignorance clinging to the "I" as truly existent, even as a child, even in the mother's womb, even at birth-time, is because in the past life we were not free, we were not liberated from these unsubdued minds, the true cause of suffering, we were not liberated from them by generating the remedy in our mind. The reason we were born with this unsubdued mind, this ignorance clinging to the truly existent "I," cherishing the "I" so much, is because there was the continuation of that just before the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg. There was the continuation of this unsubdued mind from the past life.

So that past life's unsubdued mind, the root of suffering, the ignorance of the truly existent "I," continued from other past lives. The unsubdued mind continued from other past lives. So like this, as the continuity of the consciousness has no beginning, so the ignorance, the root, the very root of all the sufferings, the ignorance clinging to the truly existent "I," the continuation of that didn't have beginning. Because that didn't have beginning, so the continuation of our suffering didn't have beginning. So the confusion of our life that we experience with a human body, it is not the first time. A lot of up and down, depression, aggression, all these things, this is not the first time. Even if we live in the West, wherever we live, whatever problem we experience, relationship problems, all these things, it is not the first time. We experienced this numberless times in the past.

However, even though our suffering, the cause of suffering, the resultant suffering, true suffering, even though the continuation of that didn't have a beginning, at this time, this period, this short time while we have this precious human body and not only that, we have met the perfect virtuous teacher who can reveal the complete path to enlightenment with nothing missing, the complete path, who has complete understanding without missing anything, the perfect complete path to enlightenment; and we also have the opportunity to hear, to receive the teachings and the opportunity to practice such a profound, infallible path, the method that ends suffering. So we should not waste the opportunity while we have all these three, having met such a qualified virtuous teacher and from one's own side having a precious human body, which can practice and has met the teaching, and having the opportunity to practice the methods that end the suffering, the infallible method that definitely ends suffering if one can practice it.

From one's own side if one practices, from the side of the method, from the side of the teaching there is no misleading at all, except if from the side of the practitioner one doesn't practice this infallible method that definitely ends the suffering. So anyway if one practices such an infallible perfect method, the teaching of Buddha, even though the continuation of suffering has no beginning, but you, yourself can make it end.

I think I stop here.

[Dedications]

Lecture 3, November 15<sup>th</sup> pm

[Prayers, including praise to Manjushri]

Just briefly mentioning at this point, for clear understanding—more details on this point about the object of ignorance, true existence, might come gradually in the future, more details on this subject, but at the moment it is just to start, to have a brief idea.

This way it is clear, why we believe, “I am here in this tent at Kopan, I am here at Kopan, I am in Nepal.” Each person, each of us believes, “I am in Nepal now.” Where is it? At Kopan, at Kopan on this hill, in the meditation hut or whatever it is called. Then, “I am sitting on this meditation cushion,” or “I am sitting on this mattress or this cold ground.” However, the reason we say “I am here, I am in Nepal,” or “I am at Kopan,” there is no other reason to say that I am here, no other reason, nothing else except for the reason of the labeling base, the aggregates, the group of body and mind—what is called the five aggregates—the group of the five aggregates, the group of body and mind, just to make it simple. No reason except this labeling base being here.

This physical body, the labeling base, the physical body, is sometimes there, sometimes not there. It changes. At the moment we have this shape called a human being, two legs and two hands, standing up, without tails—then somebody might have tails. I think it should be checked up; maybe short tails. I am joking, anyway. Not crawling. It doesn't matter. However, sentient beings who are called human beings, the consciousness abiding at the moment, like renting a house, living in the rented house. Soon we have to leave that house to go to another house, we get kicked out. It changes. At the moment we have this shape, you know, called a human being. So consciousness abides in this body, at the moment inside this body, inside this form. Then, after some time, this consciousness migrates, the continuity of this consciousness migrates to another body, according to how we lived life every day, according to those actions of body, speech, and mind, done with good motive, bad motive.

Like this, the physical body sometimes is there, sometimes is not there. Sometimes there is a physical body, sometimes there is no physical body. Sometimes there is only consciousness, then there are other aggregates that are not the physical body, there are the five aggregates, so even though there is no physical body there are the other aggregates. However, there is always continuity of consciousness, the aggregates: the labeling base.

So, the continuity of consciousness, this present life's consciousness continued from the past life. Like the continuity of today's consciousness continued from yesterday, like that the continuity of consciousness has no beginning. As the labeling base, the consciousness, the continuity of that has no beginning, so the “I,” the self, which is labeled on that, the continuity of that also has no beginning. So like this, the continuity of the consciousness has no end. As it has no beginning it doesn't have end, the continuity of consciousness.

If we do not change our mind, if we don't practice Dharma, if we don't change our mind, if we don't do something with this mind, if we don't eliminate the ignorance of true existence, the root of suffering, the creator of all the suffering that each of us experiences, if we don't do something with it, we don't eliminate this, if we always keep this, if we always keep this in our heart, if we do not change this, then endlessly, endlessly, consciousness always continues. If we do not do something, if we don't change the mind, if we don't make ourselves able to eliminate completely the ignorance of true existence—the root of suffering—then continuously, endlessly we experience suffering in

samsara. As the continuity of consciousness has no end, there is no time that it ceases; it always continues, so there is always self, there is always continuity of the self that is labeled on that, that exists by labeling on that, there is always continuity of the “I.”

So you see if we don't practice Dharma, if we don't do something with this mind, if we keep always same mind, controlled, hallucinated, always under the control of delusion and karma, always hallucinating with this ignorance of true existence, if we live always in this world, then endlessly we experience suffering in samsara. But if you practice Dharma, if you change this, if you eliminate the ignorance of true existence then this consciousness, instead of continuously suffering, transmigrating in the different bodies, in different samsaric bodies, instead of that, this continuity of consciousness goes to the state of omniscient mind. The continuity of this present consciousness goes to omniscient mind, is able to approach, able to reach the omniscient mind, able to become omniscient mind. The continuity of this present consciousness is able to become omniscient mind, the holy mind of Buddha, which is devoid of all mistakes and obscurations and perfected in all realizations, in all understandings. Once the continuity of this consciousness becomes that, then the self, which is labeled on that, the self that exists on that, becomes Buddha. The mind becomes omniscient mind, the self which exists on that, on those aggregates, which is labeled on that—that “I,” as it is living in the meaning of the Buddha, also it receives the name “Buddha.”

Now our mind is under the control of the unsubdued mind, of ignorance and karma. It is not free from that. So the self, the “I” that exists by labeling on that is a samsaric being, a suffering being. And also a sentient being having obscurations.

When this mind becomes omniscient mind, when the continuity of this consciousness becomes that, when it approaches the state of omniscient mind, then the base is that—the omniscient mind, the transcendental wisdom of dharmakaya, and the absolute nature of that omniscient mind is called *svabhavakaya*. It is completely pure, omniscient mind, which is the continuity of this present consciousness. We could say it is just a way of talking about the future, about the future omniscient mind, what you are going to achieve, just talking about that. The omniscient mind is the continuity of this present consciousness that is completely pure of all the obscurations and perfected in all the understanding. Also the absolute nature of that omniscient mind is also completely pure, and at the same time completely pure. So the omniscient mind itself is the transcendental wisdom of dharmakaya; the absolute nature of that is *svabhavakaya*, *ngo wo nyi keu*, or the *svabhavakaya*, the state of self-nature. They translate into the holy body of the self-nature, but it is not a body like this, it is a state, the state of self-nature, *svabhavakaya*.

Now, our mind or consciousness is not oneness with the obscurations. It is not oneness with this ignorance, it is not oneness with the anger and it is not oneness with the attachment. It is not oneness with the unsubdued mind, it is not oneness. Like the mirror is not oneness with the dirt, it is temporarily obscured by the dirt. Like that, the mind is obscured, it is not oneness with the obscurations but it is temporarily obscured by these veils. It is temporarily obscured by these veils such as the unsubdued mind and the obscurations; obscurations such as the obscuration to the omniscient mind, which is the more subtle one. The unsubdued mind obscuration is the grosser; the obscuration to omniscient mind is the obscuration that mainly disturbs to achieve the omniscient mind, not so much liberation from samsara.

So our present mind is temporarily obscured by these two veils. So it is not pure. Like the mirror that is covered by dust is not clean, like the white cloth that is covered by the dirt of the body is not clean; like that the mind is not clean, the mind is not pure. It is similar.

The absolute nature of the mind, the absolute nature of our present mind is pure. One can say that the absolute nature of the mind is pure because it is not oneness with the obscurations, in that sense. However it is not pure, it is not stainless, it is stained by obscurations; the absolute nature of the present mind is stained by obscurations.

By practicing the remedy, by generating the remedy-path in the mind, then, you see, one removes the two obscurations, and then the mind becomes omniscient mind, the transcendental wisdom of dharmakaya, and the absolute nature of that becomes the svabhavakaya, the state of the self-nature, which is called enlightenment.

I think you heard a lot about these two terms. My talk somehow went this way. I think you have heard many times these two types—the *rang shin ney rig* and the *gye gyur gyi rig*. I think you might have heard this many times. One is buddha-nature or the clear light nature of mind; the absolute nature of the mind, called buddha-nature, *rang shin ney rig*, the type of absolute nature. Then *gye gyur gyi rig*, the type that causes enlightenment, is the present mind, the continuity of this present mind that goes to enlightenment by practicing Dharma, by following the path; that is what it is, this is it, mind, this mind, whose nature is clear and knowing.

The causative phenomena, which brings the result, which benefits, which is useful to bring the result, has three divisions: the matter, then the knowing, then the phenomena that are neither matter or knowing, so three things. The knowing, that which is knowing—matter, relating to the aggregates, the body is matter, substantial, which can be seen by the eye but there are aggregates that cannot be seen by the eye, which are not tangible, which cannot be seen by the eye, but can be an object of clairvoyance, like if somebody who has clairvoyance can read or see the level of mind or what the person is thinking. It cannot be touched with the hands; it is not an object of the five senses. It is the mind becoming the object of mind, of consciousness.

So, the knowing. In regards to the aggregates on which the self is labeled, on which the self exists, there is the body and there is knowing, the knowing phenomena. The body is something that has shape and color, which can be seen by the sense of eye. The knowing is formless and colorless, which contains and includes all the positives, loving compassion, wisdom, all these positive parts and all the negatives like ignorance, anger and attachment.

Knowing phenomena contain all these, the fifty-one secondary minds, the different types of thought. There can be many branches of thoughts like this, the negative side and the positive side. All this goes in the part of the knowing phenomena. The meaning and definition of knowing phenomena is clarity and perceiving.

The delusions, the anger, attachment, and ignorance, don't go to omniscient mind, but this consciousness, even though it is obscured by these veils, by depending on and generating the remedy of the path then this consciousness, this continuity of this mind goes to omniscient mind. So this consciousness, this mind, which is clear and perceiving, is the *gye gyur gyi rig*, the type that becomes the cause of enlightenment. Literally, the type that becomes development but by saying

“enlightenment” it makes it much easier. However, the causative phenomena that can become enlightenment, *gye gyur gyi rig*, the second one.

What I am saying is... that’s right. I am lost in my point like the Indian train station. So, you see, the point of what I am saying so far is that the continuity of consciousness has no beginning, the continuity of consciousness has no end. So the continuity of the “I,” the “I” that exists on the aggregates—the point is this, what I am trying to clarify is that the body, even this present body, after it becomes ashes, it is strewn on the flowers, in the parks, in the gardens, in the rivers, then after some time we can’t see, can’t find anything, not even the ashes. However, there is the continuity of consciousness and the aggregates, whether it has entered another body or not. Since there are aggregates and consciousness existing, so there is self, there is the continuity of the “I” existing on that. How? By merely labeling on that—and that is difficult to understand at the moment, but it is like this.

You see, when somebody dies, when somebody is dead, the body is in the grave, in the tomb or in the grave, and the nice flowers around the tomb, or what do you call it? Tomb, tomb, heh? Tomb? Tombstone. Nice flowers are planted around, especially on Sundays. However, you don’t point out “my mother is still here,” people don’t say “my mother is here.” Even at the house, if your mother died, if somebody, your mother, your father or whoever, died last night, even if the body is on the bed this morning, on that comfortable bed, then if somebody comes along and bangs on the door, “Is your father at home?” then you slowly say, whispering, “My father died last night.” This happens when he does not breathe, when the people in the family discover that his senses don’t do any function any more.

You see, normally in the world, even though there is the body, in general people, even though they don’t know exactly what it means, they don’t know the process of the death exactly, the evolution of the death, even if they don’t know exactly that the gross consciousness absorbs, then the subtle mind becomes visible, and then it leaves from the heart, from the indestructible seed, and then comes out either from the lower doors or from the upper doors of the body, even though the person doesn’t know those processes exactly, doesn’t know them clearly, but generally in the world even though there is the body but when there is no mind, when the mind is separated from the body, when the body doesn’t do any functions, they believe or they call it dead. “Such and such is dead.”

Then by clairvoyance, maybe you see that the consciousness migrated into the calf, the cow-baby, the calf. The father’s consciousness migrated, has taken the body of a calf, a cow-body. Then somebody who has clairvoyance, either born with that knowledge, or the clairvoyance that is generated through meditation, however, somebody who is able to see, to recognize these things would say, “This family’s father, this calf...” No, I choose the American, not the English. The one who has clairvoyance, who can see the past and future life, would say, “This calf is this family’s father.” “This family’s father was born as a calf” or a fish in their swimming-pool. Anyway, the body is changed, there is a different body, but the continuity of that consciousness entered this body, the continuity of consciousness joined this, migrated into this body. So because of that, the father was born as a calf, because of the continuity of the consciousness, which migrated into that particular body.

The point of what I’m saying is this: wherever the consciousness is, there is the self, there is the “I.” Wherever the consciousness exists, wherever the consciousness goes, the self, the “I” that is labeled



on that, which exists on that, also goes. So it is interesting to find out, to check on the body that is left in the grave—on that there is no self, but on the consciousness, wherever the consciousness is, on that there is the self. This you can check why, why it is. Why the self doesn't exist on the body. When the mind and body are separated, the "I," the self doesn't exist on the body but it exists on the consciousness, on the aggregates of consciousness—why this is.

I would say it is similar with this flower. At present, now, my "I," self, doesn't exist on this flower, because my consciousness has not entered this flower, has not migrated in this flower. Let's say a hair, let's put it also this way, the hair in the water, somebody's hair thrown in the water. When my consciousness has not migrated into that hair, on that I wouldn't think "I." I don't label "I" on that as long as my consciousness is not there, migrated into that. That doesn't happen, to label "I" on that while my consciousness is not in that, not with that. But whenever my consciousness entered in that hair, due to my karma, the condition is there, due my karma to have such a body in the shape of a hair, then just like this, on these aggregates of body and mind "I" is labeled. On the action of these aggregates "I" is labeled, each time, "I want to talk, drive people crazy, make them more confused," "Now I want to eat," "Now I want to sleep,"—labeling "I" on this, on these aggregates, on the actions of the aggregates. Now as we label on these aggregates, the body and mind, on these aggregates we label "I". "I, I, I, I," we label on the aggregates, "I am going to do this and that," or "I did this and that," "I,"—past, present and future. Like this we cling that there is an "I" existing now on these aggregates. While the consciousness has not migrated in that hair, like this the body has not migrated. In the same way that we don't label "I" on this hair, I don't think there is "I" on that, "There is me on that, I don't think so." But whenever our consciousness migrated into that hair, then, in the same way as we feel now, as we think on these aggregates now, same thing. In the same way we cling to the thought that there is an "I" on that, that there is an "I" on these aggregates: the hair, the body, hair, and the consciousness. Like that.

So it is not so much what other people label, it is actually your own experience, it is to do with your own mind. What I am saying is that it is similar—when the consciousness has left the hair, then one doesn't think that on this hair there is an "I," there is "me" existing. I don't label "I" on that and I don't cling to the thought that there is an "I" that exists from its own side on that hair. It is similar with the dead body, after the consciousness has left, after the consciousness has separated from the body.

It is also similar with the flower. Anyway there is no need to repeat, you might have gotten a clear idea, but this is just to make it clear, some new people might have doubt, so just to make it clear. If my consciousness has entered this flower like my consciousness entered this body, migrated into this body, like this—I die, my body is here, but my consciousness enters this flower. This example is just to benefit some other doubts. At that time I am not a plant. What am I saying, yes, that's right, at that time I am not a plant. Now it is a plant. Now this is a plant, but when by my karma my consciousness enters this flower, migrates into this flower like it did into this body, then I have a body shaped as a flower. But I am not a plant; I am a living being, not a plant. Like this. But when my consciousness has left that body then at that time it can be a plant. However, it is like this. As the consciousness migrates into the flower, the hair or the flower or whatever the material is, like this body, at that time even though before there was no clinging to that material, to this flower, to that hair, to that piece of leather, that piece of leather in the water, before there was no thought clinging to the "I," labeling "I" on that, but whenever the labeling base, the consciousness is with that, then automatically there is this thought labeling that "I," and also there is the "I" that appears as if it is

not merely labeled, as if it exists from its own side. Then the mind, the ignorance clings to this as completely true.

So you see, wherever the consciousness goes, on that consciousness there is the thought that the “I” exists, the self exists. How? By merely labeling, it exists. It exists by merely labeling on that. And the “I” that is merely labeled on that consciousness appears as if it exists from its own side without being merely labeled, and the ignorance clings to this as true.

As I mentioned yesterday, as consciousness has been continuing so far without beginning, it is the same thing with this ignorance that clings to the “I,” which is merely labeled on the consciousness but appears as if it is not merely labeled, as if it exists from its own side. Then we cling, completely cling to this as true. So this ignorance also has continued, the continuity of that has existed without beginning. But the interesting thing in what I am saying is this, the very interesting thing is this: it doesn’t matter whatever aggregates, the aggregates, group of body and mind, or just even the consciousness, either way, with the body or without the body, the interesting thing is this. The “I” that exists on this consciousness is unchangeable. “Unchangeable” is not clear, but what I am saying is that it is something that cannot be stopped—the “I” existing on the consciousness, on the aggregate, the consciousness. The reason it exists on the consciousness, the “I”, the self, the reason it exists on the consciousness, on these aggregates, the reason it exists, the reason it is there, that is the most interesting part, that subject—especially if you realize it. When we realize this it is the most interesting part, the most interesting subject, when you see it really clearly, how it exists, how the “I” exists on the consciousness.

At the moment, the way that we believe now, the way that we cling to the “I,” how it exists when we talk about it, the way that our mind clings, “I do this and I do that,” “I am doing this and that,” “I am going to do this and that,” the way that we believe now, the way that we cling now is something that doesn’t exist at all, something that is not there at all—at all. Actually, when we are talking about “I do this and that,” actually according to the way we perceive, the way we view, according to that we are always talking about the “I” that doesn’t exist, we are always talking about the life story, the suffering or the happiness of “I” that doesn’t exist, Lama Zopa, George or Peter, who does not exist at all.

It is inexpressible, it is inexpressible the way the “I” exists on these aggregates. I mean you can simply say that it exists by labeling with thought, motive, and with words, name, you can simply talk about it in that way, you can simply say as it is explained in the scriptures, you can say that that is how it exists on the aggregates. But when you really discover, when you really see the way it exists, the way the “I” exists on these aggregates, when you really see it, clearly, by realizing the non-existent “I,” by realizing the “I” that we cling to now on these aggregates is in fact empty. The “I” that appears as if it exists, the “I” that is merely labeled on these aggregates appearing as if it is not merely labeled, as if it exists from its own side, by realizing this “I” that looks as if it exists from its own side as empty, empty on these aggregates, completely empty, it doesn’t exist at all, when you see this as completely empty, the “I” that we are clinging to now on these aggregates, completely empty.....

<end of tape>

...then you don’t need to worry that I am falling in an extreme, I am falling in nihilism. You don’t need to get hung up in the words; you don’t need to hang up in the words, “Oh, I exist by labeling.”

Without need to worry, without even trying to think of that, “I exist,” without need to think about the existence of “I” at all, without attempting to think about the way of the existence of the “I” at all, just by realizing, right in that minute, in that second, just by realizing that this “I,” which looks as if it exists from its own side is empty, completely empty of existing from its own side; whenever you realize this, at the moment of seeing it as completely empty on these aggregates, automatically by the force of that, by the cause of realizing the “I” that exists from its own side as being empty of existing from its own side, uncontrollably, without thinking, without need to think about “I” at all—“I definitely exist” or “merely labeled” or all these things, all these words—uncontrollably, without freedom, uncontrollably the existence of the “I” comes so powerfully, so strongly on these aggregates. Uncontrollably, so powerfully, so strongly, by the force, by the cause of realizing that this “I” that exists from its own side is empty, that the “I” exists under the control of name, powerfully comes, without any attempt. You meditated to realize it is empty, you put your effort into realizing that the “I” looks as if it exists from its own side, to try to see that as empty. In other words, you don’t particularly attempt to see, to discover, to realize that the “I” exists under the control of name. You don’t particularly attempt that. What you attempt is to see the “I,” which looks as if it exists from its own side, to see that as empty. Then just as a result, when you discover it is empty, as a result, that the “I” exists under the control of name, that the “I” definitely exists under the control of name, comes so powerfully, uncontrollably. On these aggregates, merely labeled, under the control of name; it comes so powerfully that it exists under the control of name.

How you see, now how it appears is as an “I” that exists not being merely labeled, not under the control of name, as if it exists from its own side—that is how it appears from above these aggregates and that is how we cling. But that time, when you realize that the “I” is empty of existing from its own side, at that time then you see the “I” so powerfully existing under the control of name. So that time as you have discovered, as you have realized how the “I” exists on these aggregates, under the control of name, so powerfully, so then, similar way, instead of falling into nihilism that “I” doesn’t exist, that there is no such thing as “I” existing, instead of rising such heresy, instead of that, much more faith in the existence of the “I.”

Similarly, as the “I” exists, in a similar way it benefits so much to have more faith in karma—from the virtuous actions that one accumulates one receives the result of happiness, from the non-virtuous actions that one accumulates, one receives the result of suffering. It causes one to have more faith, unchangeable faith in ordinary karma, instead of falling into nihilism, and the heresy that they don’t exist.

Like the experience of the “I,” how the “I” exists on these aggregates, like that, in the same way you can realize about karma, how the virtuous actions and non-virtuous actions exist, how happiness and suffering exist. In the same way you can realize how they exist by being merely labeled and by being merely labeled how they do all the functions, doing the function of cause, bringing the result, all these things.

So my conclusion is this, according to the way I started the talk in the beginning. The reason we say, “I am here” is because the aggregates are here at Kopan. So there is no other reason, only because the aggregates are here, the aggregates of the body and mind are here, so because of that “I,” “I am here.” It is in Nepal so that is why we call it, “I am in Nepal.” So, the same thing, in the morning, when the body, the aggregate of body stands up, on that we label, “I am getting up.” As the aggregate of body is doing the function of wearing clothes, dressing up, then, “I am wearing

clothes.” Then, similarly according to the activity of the aggregates we label, “I am washing.” Then like this, according to the action of the aggregate of eating food, eating breakfast, “I am having breakfast.” On that it is labeled, “I am taking breakfast.” Then, as the aggregates are doing sitting meditation, as the body is sitting in meditation posture and the mind is thinking, then on that it is labeled “I am meditating.” When the aggregates go to bed, the body is laid down in the sleeping bag, the mind trying to not have any object, to not be aware, to stop the views, the visions, “I am sleeping.” Like this from morning until night according to the body and mind, aggregates, whatever action it does, then, “I am doing this and that.” By that reason it is labeled, “I am doing this and that.”

Like this, the same thing, this month, one day’s biography of self is merely labeled on the aggregates, on the activities of the aggregates. The same thing, the biography of oneself this week is merely labeled on the aggregates. Same thing this month’s, this year’s biography of oneself, whatever one did is labeled according to the activities of the aggregates. The same thing from birth until death, all the biography, “I did this and that,” “I suffered,” “I was very happy,” such and such, “I enjoyed so much,” all these things “I am happy,” “I am suffering,” all these things, upset and depressed, all these things, excited, all these things, whatever action of “I,” the work of “I,” all this is merely labeled according to the activities of the aggregates done from birth-time until death-time.

Same thing like this from beginningless past lives until now, “I did this and that,” “I suffered,” “I was born in such and such a realm, experienced such and such sufferings.” “I was born in the human realms, experienced such and such,” had such perfections, pleasures in deva’s realms, all this, whatever experience I had, whatever action I did from the beginningless past lives until now, all this is merely labeled according to the activities of the aggregates, according to that; so like this up to enlightenment, merely labeled according to the activities of the aggregates.

So this is it, how the “I” is like a dream, how the “I” is like illusory. This is the main thing to understand, this is what I am emphasizing, how the “I” is merely labeled on these aggregates, how the “I” is dependent on these aggregates, merely labeled on these aggregates—that is the main emphasis of how I started the talk.

You should question yourself. This morning these aggregates were doing the function of eating breakfast and last night of sleeping. But you could call it, “I am sleeping,” “I am sleeping,” all the time. As you call last night, “I am sleeping,” this morning you call, “I am eating breakfast,” you could you call all the time, “I am eating breakfast.” Why don’t you call? As you are calling that time, “I am eating breakfast,” why do you change the letters when you meditate? Why don’t you still call it, “I am eating breakfast?” When you go to bed, why do you call it, “I am sleeping?” Why don’t you call it, “I am eating breakfast?” Why don’t you call it that? From this you can understand. You can say, “I am still in the mother’s womb.” Even when you are dying you can say, “I am still in the mother’s womb.” Why don’t you call? Why do you change, why do you change all the time? “I am doing this and that different actions,” why do you change all the time? From this you can understand, when you question like this. From this you can understand the whole biography, “I do this, I do that,” “I have this suffering,” all these things are merely labeled on these aggregates.

Yes, I think I stop here.

[Dedications]

Lecture 4: November 17<sup>th</sup> am

[Prayers]

As I mentioned before, it is usual to think in this way. It is clear, if we relate it to ourselves, to our own daily life activities, your own aggregates and the activities of that, so if you meditate like that, on the “I,” the existing “I,” how the “I,” the self, is dependent on that and the activities of that, it makes very clear and it is more effective.

Now we are sitting, one is sitting. If somebody asks a question: “Oh, I am sitting.” No other reason except that the aggregate, the body, is sitting. “I am meditating”—no other reason, not any secret, hidden or other reason besides that the mind is meditating on the path, trying to make the mind familiar or trying to transform it into the path. By the reason of the mind meditating, on that it is called “I.” “I” is labeled on the aggregates, the body and mind, so the mind is doing the activity, so, “I am meditating.” The action of the “I” exists in that way, as the labeling base, the mind is meditating, so like this.

As there is a labeling base, the aggregates, existing, so therefore, because of that reason the self, the “I” exists. How? By being merely labeled on that.

I am not going to mention the details about why it is called “merely.” There is a very clear definition of that. In order to understand that, one should explain the four schools, the different wrong views and the refuted objects of the four schools. First of all very gross, then a little more subtle than that, then more subtle and the last school is very subtle wrong view. The refuted object of the fourth school, the Middle Way School, has two; one is Prasangika. The actual refuted object, as the Prasangika School explains, this is it; in order to realize shunyata, the infallible right view, this is it what we should recognize. As long as we don’t recognize this according to Prasangika school, this refuted object, the truly existent “I,” as long as we do not recognize this, then realizing shunyata is blocked, there is no way to realize the meaning of selflessness.

By going through these explanations then you will understand clearly the reason, the meaning of saying merely labeled. However, the explanation of that might come after some time, those different levels of refuted objects, and the different schools.

The Middle Way doctrine school has two—I don’t know how to say it in Sanskrit—what are they called in Sanskrit? *Svatantrika* and *Prasangika*.

The philosophers of the Svatantrika school say that the “I” and existence should have inherent existence; they should exist from their own side. If there is not something existing from its own side, there is no way that it can exist and then it becomes non-existent. It becomes non-existent. “I” and all the rest of existence, if there is not something, if there is not some existence from its own side, inherent existence, then there is no way that anything can exist—then it becomes non-existent.

So the understanding and theory of the philosophers of this school is this: “I” and all existence are labeled, there is no such thing as “merely” labeled by thought and name. They exist by labeling but also exist from their own side, together.

For instance, sometimes, for somebody who is studying Madhyamaka, if we check we cannot contradict it, it is obvious, it is so clear, it is true. We cannot contradict that the “I” is labeled by thought and name. We cannot contradict it, it is so clear that it is labeled by thought and name. It is so clear, I mean we cannot contradict, except such an incredibly foolish person, otherwise we cannot say no. The child, the baby who is called Reagan, the one day, two day old baby called Reagan, I mean it is so obvious, it is so clear that it is labeled by mind, by thought and name, it is so clear. Except if the person is crazy. If the person is crazy then he may insist, he may push, he may say anything—even that he doesn’t exist, whatever—even while he is seeing Reagan he might say Reagan doesn’t exist.

However, that is true, and you see very clearly, Reagan, “I,” hand, or leg is labeled by thought and name—that is so clear.

But while you accept that, while you know that, while you know that the existence of these do depend on thought and name labeling, they are labeled, you know that, while you accept that, while you know that, intellectually understanding—I would not say realized, it is not that the person has realized that they are conventional truth, the all-obscuring truth; without having realized the absolute truth there is no way to realize conventional truth, the all-obscuring truth. Just that alone doesn’t mean the person accepts, that he has agreed or understands that it cannot exist without thought labeling, thought and name labeling; he has some understanding of that, but just that alone doesn’t mean he realizes that it exists under the control of name.

While we accept this, while we understand a little bit that it cannot exist without thought and name labeling, this Reagan and this “I” and all these things, if you check, at the same time in our view we see something that exists from its own side. While we are talking about it, that they are labeled by thought and name, while we are talking about that, thinking about that, at the same time something exists from its own side, there is inherent existence from its own side, from the side of the “I,” from the side of the Reagan.

So the philosophers of *rang gyu pa*, the Svatantrika, their theory is that “I” and things exist by labeling, and also they have existence from their own side.

In fact, according to the Prasangika school, if there is existence from its own side, from the side of the “I,” from the side of the Reagan, if there is inherent existence, then the “I” and other existents should exist only from their own side, without being labeled by thought and name, without depending on conditions, without depending on the labeling base. So in fact, in the evolution, if there is existence from its own side it would be like this.

So according to the Prasangika school if there is existence from the side of the “I,” from the side of any existence, then it would be like this: completely independent, existing by itself alone, existing by itself without depending on anything, without depending on any other, without depending on the labeling base, on the thought and name that labels. So “merely,” “merely labeled.” “I” is merely labeled on the aggregates; “Reagan” is merely labeled on the aggregates of the Reagan. “Merely” purely, completely cuts off any existence from its own side, any existence from the side of Reagan, any existence from the side of the “I.” It completely cuts it off, saying “merely labeled by thought and name”.

I just mention this now: on the basis of this, as you meditate and as you study more then eventually, gradually it will become more and more clear. More and more you see how “I” and things are merely labeled. Not only they are labeled, but merely labeled. Especially when you find the understanding of “emptiness-only,” especially when you realize, either on the aggregates or on any of the aggregates, when you realize existence and emptiness together, unified—the appearance and the emptiness together, unified and inseparable. Whenever you realize this, whenever you realize the refuted object “I” on these aggregates, the “I” that appears as if it exists from its own side, when you realize this is empty on these aggregates, then as a result you see how the “I” is merely labeled by thought and name on these aggregates—clearly.

I guess some people didn’t get, before when I was talking about this point “powerfully,” how you see the “I” powerfully existing, I think, I guess, for some people it might have sounded like when you realize this “I” is empty of existing from its own side on these aggregates, that the ignorance of clinging to the “I” as truly existent is powerfully coming or something, I don’t know, whatever. It might have sounded some other way, it might have sounded opposite.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama used to say in the teachings when he talked about shunyata, “I” and things, whatever, on the existence of such as “I,” there is no existence from its own side, there is no inherent existence on this; there are infinite logical reasons to identify that “I” and things have no existence from their own side, that there is no inherent existence. But in regards the side to prove that “I” and things exist, there is no reason. No reason. In regards the side that there is no existence from its own side on the “I” and all existence, there are infinite logical reasons to identify.

The reason the “I” exists on these labeling aggregates, the labeling base, the aggregates—there is no other reason, as I mentioned before. The reason I am now at Kopan—today I am at Kopan, in this meditation hut. There is no other reason except that the aggregates are here at Kopan in this meditation hut.

Just because the only reason is that the aggregates are here and on them the “I” is merely labeled by thought and name, one should be satisfied just by that that “I” exists. By mixing the flour with water and making it round, you label it bread. By putting it into the machine, making it long, by making very long ones, then on that particular shape made of flour, on that you label noodles. Then, when that is mixed with tomatoes and either mushrooms or meat, inside containing that, then covered, either covered or underneath, different styles depending on the cook I think, depending on the cook’s interest, then it is called *pizza*. Then when it is wrapped, you make the dough flat and then you put meat or potatoes, or vegetables, whatever it is, inside, then you close it up, and then it is called *momo*, the Tibetan food *momo*.

So you label on that according to the different shape that is made of flour or the different stuff, by what is labeled on it you have to just be satisfied that it is a *momo*. That is *momo*, that is *pizza*, that is the noodle, that is bread, that is French bread... whatever it is. You have to just be satisfied with that. If you search well, “Where is the noodle, I want to find out, where is the noodle, where is the *momo*, where is the *pizza*?” If you want to search, “Where is the *pizza*?” then you won’t get the *pizza*, you won’t find *pizza* and you won’t get *pizza*. On that particular shape that material is made in that way, so on that labeling base, when the labeling base is formed, “*pizza*” is merely labeled on that by thought and name. So on that it is merely believed that this is *pizza* or this and that.

By being merely labeled one should be satisfied that this is pizza, that this is bread, like this. If one searches for where it is, without being satisfied by that, if you start to search, then that becomes checking the absolute truth.

And also it is not that things can exist just only by labeling. The way that things exist is also not like that, just only by labeling. Then you could collect all the Katmandu garbage and pile it up at your house, and then believe it is gold. You can call it gold, you can label it gold or whatever you want to call it, whatever you want to label, hashish or whatever it is. You see, if anything can exist by simply labeling, only by the reason of being labeled, then it is very easy. Then when you have problems, if you do not want to see somebody, if the police are coming, then you call it, “I don’t exist!” It is very easy, you don’t need to run away, you don’t need to close the door, you don’t need to scream or you don’t need to escape to the mountains or whatever it is, just simply you call it, you label, “I don’t exist.” That’s enough. Whatever name is in your passport you call your body that—on your aggregates you call that name, but they don’t exist. Then the police won’t see it, and they have nothing to capture, nothing to put in prison—however, not like this.

There are three things that need to be gathered. In the scriptures it is explained that the base on which you label, the labeling base, should be a true base. And what you are labeling on that should be familiar, valid, valid knowledge of a valid mind—it should be familiar to other worldly beings’ valid minds.

It means like when the abbot gave the name, Thubten Zopa. On these aggregates he labeled Thubten Zopa, so that I am Thubten Zopa. This is common, it is known by my abbot’s valid mind—just an example to explain, so that from this seed you can expand, just an example—then the other valid mind cannot harm this, cannot find that this is not Thubten Zopa. It cannot harm, it cannot negate, saying that this is not Thubten Zopa. And the absolute wisdom analyzing the absolute truth doesn’t find a mistake with the fact that I am Thubten Zopa. The absolute wisdom analyzing, realizing shunyata doesn’t find a mistake in that I am Thubten Zopa.

You see if the absolute wisdom realizing the absolute truth, shunyata, analyzing that, finds a mistake in the fact that I am Thubten Zopa, it means Thubten Zopa would be a truly existent Thubten Zopa. The absolute wisdom is the wisdom that sees that the truly existent Thubten Zopa, which is in fact empty, as empty; seeing that which is empty in fact, as empty. So if the absolute wisdom sees Thubten Zopa as a mistake, if it negates, can give harm, in that case Thubten Zopa would be truly existent. But the absolute wisdom doesn’t find a mistake, it cannot negate, so Thubten Zopa is not truly existent. It exists by being merely labeled by thought and name.

And, for example, if somebody sees Thubten Zopa sitting on this throne having a one-mile tail, even if one person sees that but many other valid minds, true minds, don’t—they see Thubten Zopa who is sitting on this throne without a one mile tail. So you see in regards to having the one-mile tail many other valid minds can refute it. Many other valid minds see that Thubten Zopa sitting on this throne does not have a tail, so they discover it’s a mistake. They don’t see it, so the other person’s view, that person who sees Thubten Zopa having a one-mile tail has a wrong view, it is a mistake. It is not agreeable with most others’ valid knowledge, valid mind.

An example relating to yourself: From a distance you see a mannequin. From far away you see that there is somebody standing there talking, there is somebody making a phone call. You see one young girl making a phone call there. You see it from far away, but when you come near you don’t



find the human being that you believed in before, that young girl making a phone call—that becomes empty. It disappears, it becomes empty. When you come close it is plastic, it is a figure made of plastic and holding a telephone, holding the machine, the phone.

So now the one that he used to see from a distance as a person, that young girl, even though this person himself labeled, “Oh, that is a young girl making a phone call there outside the shop,” even though he labeled it like that, that young girl doesn’t exist. She doesn’t exist as this person comes nearby—the previous one becomes empty, that previous young girl becomes empty, the person sees that she doesn’t exist, that the young girl doesn’t exist on this figure. He and other people agree, it is agreeable—other valid minds see that this is not a living being, that this figure is a mannequin made of plastic. So that mannequin exists, but that young girl doesn’t exist. Even though it is labeled on that, it doesn’t exist. The mannequin that is agreed on by others, which other valid minds see as a mannequin, that exists. It is common, it is known to other valid minds, it doesn’t receive any harm from other valid minds. Even when this person himself sees his mistake, when he reaches near, when he sees it is a mannequin, his valid mind finds a mistake in his previous view of the young girl. His valid mind finds the mistake there, is able to harm the previous view of the woman, the young girl. So also others’ valid mind can harm to that view seeing the mannequin as a young girl, and also other valid minds can find mistakes in that view, because other valid minds see that the mannequin is not an actual human being.

Similarly, the “I”: on the perfect labeling base, the labeling base that is the valid perfect base, the “I” that is merely labeled on that is known to other valid minds and other valid minds cannot negate it, cannot find mistakes, cannot find that it is not “I.” And the absolute wisdom cannot negate it, cannot find mistakes or cannot negate it.

Simply just by labeling things cannot exist. For things to exist they should be have these three qualities—then it exists.

I think pee-pee break.

[Break]

You collect, you buy many pieces of brass and go to sell them as gold. You go to sell them, labeling them gold—you call it gold, you tell everybody this is gold. “This is gold,” then you sell it. Then you realize whether it needs these three qualities or not—these three qualities that I have just mentioned: being known to other valid minds; other valid minds not finding mistakes; and absolute wisdom not finding mistakes. If that brass has all these three qualities then you won’t have the problem of becoming a criminal; you won’t have the problem of selling brass, because actually what you are selling is gold. So you won’t get the blame, or become a criminal, or get into trouble and get punished for selling things that are not gold as gold, for cheating others by calling it gold, for calling this brass “gold.” If the material that you are selling has these three qualities you won’t have these problems.

If you think this way, if you use this example, than you can understand the need for these three qualities, how things need these three to exist, how they should be perfected in regards to these three qualities. If you think of such an example, if you relate to an example such as this, than you can understand, it is easy to understand.

However, without mentioning much, how powerfully the “I” exists on these aggregates; what I am saying is this. When you buy something in the West in the supermarket, you buy things in packets. Very easy, things in packets already cleaned. Here you buy things in kilos—if you buy food in the shops they weigh it. The main thing I want to express is that when they weigh it, whenever one side is heavier, the other side goes up. Automatically, when this side is heavier, the other one, the other side, the other point of the stick goes up. Why does the other side of the stick go up when the person is holding it like this, why does the other side of the stick go up? One would simply say, anybody would simply say, because the other side is heavier, so it goes down and the other one goes up. When this is lighter, when that is heavier, automatically, when this goes down the other one goes up. This is because they are dependent on each other. Dependent. The other one is lighter than this, this one is heavier, so then this one goes down and the other one goes up. Dependent, it works by dependence—it is not because there is no connection between these two, it is because there is a connection, a link, they are dependent on each other so this one, the heavier one, goes down, and the other one, the lighter one, that top of the stick goes up. So, like that, it works by dependence, being under the control of dependence. One side goes down, the other side goes up when it is unbalanced; it happens by being under the control of dependence. Because it is dependent, it works in that way.

Similarly, just exactly like that, the “I” that appears to us now on these aggregates, whenever we realize this “I” that appears to us now as empty, on these aggregates there is an “I” that appears as if it exists from its own side, the “I” that is merely labeled on these aggregates appearing as not merely labeled but as if it exists from its own side, whenever you realize this “I” completely, from all sides completely empty, not half and half, not like that. The “I” that appears as truly existent, complete, not as part...

This might be easier. When you realize that this piece of rope—either in the early morning or in the evening time, in the shimmering time, in such a condition and also the position of the rope—what you used to believe before was a snake, when you see that there is no snake, with the light, when you come near with a torch, when you search—where is that snake on that piece of rope? When you find there is no snake, when you realize this, then it is not like half of the body of the snake doesn’t exist but half does exist on that rope. It is not like that, that a piece of that snake exists on that rope but most of the part of the body doesn’t exist on that rope—it is not like that. When you see the emptiness of the snake on that rope, when you see that the snake is empty on that rope, you see that the whole part of the snake’s body is empty. It is empty on that rope, nothing left, nothing left there. Similar, like that, on these aggregates, the “I” that appears as truly existent is completely empty from its own side.

Whenever you see this, right that minute whenever you see this, as a result, that becomes the cause. Realizing the truly existent “I” on these aggregates, realizing that the truly existent “I” is completely empty is the cause, and then by that power—like the way the stick works, the unbalanced stick—you experience that the “I” exists on these aggregates under the control of name, so powerfully. That “I” exists under the control of name—so powerfully it comes on these aggregates, without choice, without freedom. Like when the heavier part of the stick comes up without freedom and the lighter side goes down. Like that, when you realize it is empty, without choice, even if you don’t accept it with words, even if you say the “I” doesn’t exist, even if your philosophy is this, when you realize that the “I” on the aggregates is empty—that “I” that exists from its own side is empty of existing from its own side—without freedom, without choice the experience comes. Even though verbally, intellectually you say that, however the experience comes. When you realize the “I” that is really

empty, which doesn't exist, when you realize that, there is no choice, no freedom—you realize that the “I” exists, you seize it. And then the way it exists is under the control of name, and it so powerfully, so strongly comes on these aggregates. At that time you don't see “I” from the side of the aggregates, you don't see it, but definitely you see “I” on these aggregates. “I” exists on these aggregates—definitely you see that—under the control of name. This “under the control of name” is exact, the experience, like taking a picture of a person, like that, under the control of name.

At that time you don't see the “I” from the side of the aggregates, the way you used to believe in it before, but you see the “I” there on the aggregates. Normally, when you realize shunyata, when you finish analyzing shunyata, when you realize shunyata, you don't find there what you used to believe before. Somewhere where you do not expect that it exists, that you did not expect before, that you did not think about, that you didn't have an idea about before—the place where it is, it doesn't exist, but it does exist the place where it is not. It is like that; you see like this in time.

However, when we see like this, when we actually realize shunyata, the infallible right view, the absolute nature, when we realize this we will discover that the “I” that we used to believe in is now completely non-existent. At that time we will discover this. What we used to believe in, what we used to cling to—we discover that this is completely empty, non-existent. At that time you recognize the “I;” that how it appears now and what we used to cling to, the me or the “I,” is a complete hallucination.

However when you see this, that the “I” exists under the control of name, while the “I” is appearing on these aggregates, while the “I” is appearing to you, at the same time you see the “I” is empty of existing from its own side. You see it is empty.

While you see the “I” is dependent, while you see the “I” exists under the control of name, while you see the “I” is dependent on these aggregates, at the same time you see that the “I” is empty of existing from its own side. While you see on these aggregates, while you see the “I” is empty, empty of existing from its own side, you see clearly that it exists. While you see the “I” is empty, the “I” appears. You see the “I” existing in dependence on the aggregates. Even though the “I” appears as truly existent, you see it as empty of true existence. While you see the “I” as empty of true existence, the “I” appears as truly existent—like while you see the mirage in the distance, on the condition of the hot sun touching the sandy ground, while you are seeing the mirage at the same time, while there is appearance of water there, at the same time you see it's empty of water, at the same time you know there's not the slightest drop of water. While there's the appearance of water in the mirage, at the same time you see that is empty, like this. While you are seeing there's no water, there's not even a drop of water, while you are seeing it is not water, there's the appearance of water, being a mirage.

Like that, the way how this comes, how it appears to the mind or how it comes, it might come like this in the experience—I think it is like that.

So when you have such an experience like that, then you have incredible faith, you get incredible faith from the depths of your heart for the teachings, which talk about this subject, such as Lama Tsong Khapa's teachings—the way he emphasized so much the unification of emptiness and appearance, of dependent arising and emptiness, such as the teachings of the three principles of the path—many people here might have received teachings on that, have seen or read the words that say...

<end of tape>

[Tape missing; rest of Lecture 4 from notes]

...the words that say that whenever the object of the ignorance of self-existence dissolves, becomes empty, at that time the practitioner has entered the path pleasing the buddhas. It is experienced exactly the way it is explained in the teachings. So you develop incredible faith for Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and the great pandits. Now you identified; first you only copied, “things are dependent, blah, blah, blah,” like this but now you know.

Where Lama Tsong Khapa says—we just make it loose, without making the translation tight—as long as the person finds the separation between the appearance, the unbetrayable dependent arising and the emptiness that is accepted as true, as long as the person finds the separation, and cannot unify it with emptiness, when he accepts that the “I” is empty of self existence, but cannot unify it with dependent arising, and he thinks he realized shunyata, no matter how much pride he has, still he has not unified the view of Shakyamuni Buddha. Whenever the person can put together an object, “I,” can put together these two without separation—just by seeing that this “I” is a dependent arising—the object of ignorance, the truly existent “I” completely dissolves, is empty. That time examining shunyata is finished. Especially these words are like taking a picture, like when you have a picture of a house and then you see the house. It is so clear, the teachings explain it so exactly, so unbelievable devotion arises, more inspiration to practice Dharma, more than before.

I think now I stop here.

Just to conclude the subject. Because of the reason that the aggregates are sitting here, so I am sitting; now after one or two minutes I am standing, I am eating food. There is no other reason than the reason that the aggregates are standing and doing the action of eating food. To make it more clear: without depending on the aggregates sitting, the body sitting, the “I” sitting cannot exist, there is no way the “I” is sitting, no way it can happen. And also without depending on the labeling thought and name on these aggregates sitting, there is no way that “I am sitting” can exist and no way “I” can exist. They have to meet—the aggregates sitting and thought and name. So by these meeting, then “I am sitting” comes out, “I am sitting” comes into existence. That is how it is dependent. Otherwise, if “I am sitting,” “I am making peepee,” if that is truly existent, if it is independent, without depending on the thought and name labeling, without depending on the aggregates doing the functions, then if it exists by itself, independently existing, “I am making peepee.” Then in that case all the time it would be, “I am making peepee.” So the action of “I” would all the time be making peepee.

Otherwise, if it is independent, merely peepee, without depending on thought and name, then all the time then I would be making peepee. Even though you are having a party in the hotel, eating food, if somebody asks what are you doing, “I am making peepee.” Then you should be in the toilet. Otherwise people think you are crazy; shouldn’t be at the table but in the toilet.

I think that’s all.

Lecture 5: November 17<sup>th</sup> pm

[Prayers]

Some more details on this subject, on shunyata, the emptiness only, and also about the refuted object, that which is empty and which we should realize as empty—perhaps more explanations on this might happen, might come after some time. For the moment it is just that I did not plan or I did not mean to go over these things, just to give a brief explanation on the motive, on bodhicitta, that was the plan. Then somehow it slipped away into this, somehow it slipped out this way.

Thinking this way is also useful—how the whole thing, the “I,” the aggregates, how the whole entire thing exists by being labeled. How everything, how all existence exists by being merely labeled. Thinking this way is also useful. I exist by thought and name merely labeled on these aggregates; then also the aggregates, the labeling base, the aggregates themselves also exist by merely labeling. What is called aggregates, the labeling base aggregates exist by merely labeling on the group, the gathering, the collection of the five aggregates. The aggregates exist by merely labeling on this group of the five aggregates.

Then again, think in the same way about the aggregates of the physical body—that what is called body, what we get attached to, the body on which we think “I,” again this exists on the group of the parts of the body by thought and name, merely labeled. Then the parts, the labeling base, the parts of the body—the leg, arm, head, stomach—those parts exist on the labeling base, the group of their parts, by being merely labeled.

When we see a hand, there is a hand that exists from its own side, without depending on its parts. On this there is hand that is not labeled, which is not merely labeled on this. There is such a hand that does not depend on the parts, which is not merely labeled—even though in fact it is merely labeled on this. On the parts, on the group of parts, the pieces of this, fingers and all these things, inside the bones and the skin, all these together, even though they are merely labeled on this particular shape, “hand,” merely labeled on this, nothing exists from its own side, it is merely labeled on this by thought and name. But suddenly when you look at your hand, when you look at another’s hand, suddenly, if you check your view—how the hand appears, then on this there is a hand that does not depend on any parts, on anything, something that is not labeled, a hand that exists—I cannot put the exact expression from Tibetan term into English exactly, but something that exists independently, which exists from its own side.

It is the same thing when you look at other’s feet, when you see other’s feet. On that there is a foot, on that group, on that group of pieces, toes and heels and all these pieces—on that there is a foot without depending on those parts. On the group there is a foot that exists from its own side, without depending on any parts, without depending on the group of its parts and the thought and name that labels. However such as this hand or foot, which appears as if it exists from its own side, that is the non-existent hand, the non-existent foot.

Example: let’s say you are shaking hands in the night time, in the complete dark, without any light, in the complete dark room. If you would be shaking hands, in fact the hand exists by labeling on the group of parts, by labeling on that it exists. But when you shake hands in the dark room you don’t feel that you are shaking your hand to another hand which is merely labeled, you don’t feel, when you shake hands that you are shaking your hand to another hand that is merely labeled. When you are shaking hands you feel you are shaking hands with a hand that exists from its own side, which is not merely labeled. Not merely labeled, this is what you feel. When you shake hands in a dark room,

when you touch it, you don't feel that you are shaking a hand or touching a hand that is merely labeled, you don't feel that. You feel you are shaking a hand that is not merely labeled, which exists from its own side. So that hand, such as that hand is the refuted object. Such as that hand is the non-existent hand.

There is not much point to talk on this subject in more detail. However, what I was going to say is even the parts of this body exist by merely labeling on the groups of their parts.

Checking further, it comes to atoms. Atoms depend on particles. Then depending on the continuation, then comes depending on the fertilized egg, just checking back the evolution of the physical body. So that came by depending on the parents' bodies; the parent's body came from another parents' body—dependent, merely labeled and dependent, like this. Then it goes back to the very original human being's body. Parents' parents' parents' parents—like this it goes back, if we think about dependent, to the very original human beings who lived on this earth, then the original human being's body, then the very first condition, the light, the very first condition caused the mind, the consciousness to migrate on this earth; the very first, the original human beings on this earth, the element light. From the world of forms, the deva realms, consciousness came and migrated onto this earth. By the condition, light, that formed, that became the body, the body in the nature of light. That light is dependent on the elements.

So it is kind of beginningless, the origination, if you think how things are dependent. This earth is formed of elements. From the elements, the four elements, the very origin wind. Again that is dependent; it came from another universe, that very original wind. However, physically one can think, it is helpful to think, to search, to meditate like this, starting from the "I." That labeling base is also merely labeled on a base, and that base is also merely labeled on a base; like this one can think about how things are dependent, how things are merely labeled.

Same thing with the consciousness: when we say mind, when we say consciousness, when we talk about it, while we are talking about mind or consciousness there appears to our mind a consciousness that does not depend on the nature of clarity, an independent consciousness that exists from its own side, or an independent mind that exists from its own side. Not a merely labeled mind but a mind that exists from its own side. That is what appears to our mind when we talk about consciousness, about mind. However, this consciousness mind, which appears to our mind when we talk about it, when we think about it—that is the refuted object, that is the non-existent consciousness, non-existent mind. That is what we should realize as empty.

What is called consciousness, mind, the six different consciousnesses—eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness etc.—all those things are called by each of the different functions. Each different function is labeled—eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness—is labeled on that. Today's mind is labeled on the twenty-four hour stream of the mind, and is dependent on that. One hour consciousness or mind is dependent on those minutes mind, and then those minutes, each minute of mind is dependent on each second. Each split second of mind or consciousness is dependent on each other. The previous second of consciousness is dependent on the later. Because of the previous second of consciousness, this present second of consciousness is able to exist. Because of this present second consciousness, the later, the next second of consciousness can exist, will be able to exist. They are dependent on each other, and then on this particular phenomenon, which is formless and colorless, and whose nature is clarity and perceiving, we label mind, *shepa*, knowing phenomena.

It is similar with virtue and non-virtue, virtuous thought and non-virtuous thought. Those are labeled on the different qualities of mind. The non-virtuous thought, the mind that is called non-virtuous and whose nature is unsubdued, uncontrolled and confused, is labeled on that mind that has such characteristics. That is called non-virtuous mind. That mind does the function of making the mind unpeaceful and unsubdued. That characteristic of mind is called unsubdued mind. Like this are the different unsubdued minds such as anger, attachment, and ignorance. For our mind, when we talk about it, it looks as if there is attachment that truly exists from its own side. Independent attachment, independent anger, independent ignorance, independent pride, independent doubt—for our mind it appears like this, it looks as if there is independent true existence like this. But in fact all these—ignorance, anger, attachment, doubt, pride—these are merely labeled on the different characteristics of the unsubdued mind. Different characteristics and different functions, such as the mind that finds it so difficult to separate from the object, the mind that is very sticky to the object, difficult to separate, and because of that function, that characteristic, we call it attachment. Attachment is labeled on that particular characteristic of mind.

Then the mind that dislikes that object, the undesirable mind, the mind which is ill-will, wishing to harm to the undesirable object, on such a characteristic, on such unsubdued mind it is labeled anger. However, like this—without mentioning the others, this is how the different unsubdued minds exist by labeling. And then also the virtuous thoughts, such as bodhicitta, those virtuous thoughts. When we talk about it, for our mind it appears as independent bodhicitta, independent wisdom and independent virtuous thought. When we talk about virtuous thought what appears to our mind is different independent virtuous thoughts, however, all these things are empty of independence, they are dependent, merely labeled on the different characteristics of virtuous thought.

Examining like this how the body and mind's existence are dependent, merely labeled, existing by merely labeling is very important, thinking in many different ways, examining like this, trying to understand how not only these aggregates but even the outside existence, the objects of the five senses, all this, how everything exists by labeling mind. To get used to it, to see clearer and clearer, that is very important.

Even the “I,” this self, is merely labeled on these aggregates. But not merely labeled on these aggregates, with these aggregates existing from their own side, and then clinging on this as completely true is completely hallucinated. Completely hallucinated, like clinging to the non-existent. The way it appears to our mind is the non-existent “I,” so completely clinging to this non-existent “I,” completely clinging to this as true. Like this we are completely hallucinating, completely hallucinating the “I.” The non-existent “I” appears and we cling to the non-existent “I.” We do not see the “I” that exists.

It is similar with the aggregates. Even though they are merely labeled on their own labeling base, they appear as if they exist from their own side without being merely labeled on the aggregates, on the labeling base aggregates. Then we completely cling to that, that it is true. So we are completely hallucinating on the aggregates.

Now same thing with the object of the five senses: the object of form, the object of the sense of the eye, form; even when we see other's body, even when we see a house, even when we see a meditation cushion, even when we see a plant, even when we see an apple, fruit—whatever object of the senses, whatever form we see exists by merely labeling the base by thought and name. Whatever we look at, even when we look at the light, the candle flame, which functions to make the darkness

disappear, according to that function, on this we label “light.” On this base “light” is merely labeled by thought and name. But even when one sees the base on which one labels “light”—the base that performs that function, which has that nature—the light that one has labeled on this particular base does not appear to the mind. Right after we see the base that has that function, we call it “light.” “There is a light,” but the base that is labeled does not appear. The light is mixed with the labeling base—the labeling base that has the function of dispelling darkness is not clear. They look mixed, not clear.

Like this, any form that we see, we see it as if it exists from its own side. We do not see the merely labeled eye-sense, form—we cling to it as not merely labeled and existing from its own side, independent.

It is the same thing with the rest of the objects of the senses. Even when you hear music, even sound, if someone is playing guitar, or someone is snoring—even if someone is coughing, somehow on that person’s body there is a cough. On that that person’s mouth and tongue, this group together, there is a cough that exists from its own side, an independent cough. When you hear somebody coughing you do not feel it is a merely labeled cough—when you hear a cough, even while you are watching the person, if you examine how the sound of the cough appears to your mind, the independent cough that does not depend on the lips, which does not depend on the tongue, on the breath coming out, the breathing out, on that body there is a cough that exists from its own side. When we listen to music, when we listen to the sound on the guitar, on the group of strings, the instrument, there are various sounds, high and low, and the various sounds exist from their own side, as real sounds, independent. When we concentrate on the sound, the way it appears to our mind while we are listening to music, on that instrument there is a sound that exists without depending on the instrument, without depending on the person. It is the same thing when you listen to a record, and also similar with the songs or whatever you hear—independent, without being labeled, independent sound. The way we hear music is as if the sound exists from its own side. When you hear the song it looks as if you are hearing a song that exists from its own side.

However, all this is the refuted object. In fact all these are empty, they don’t exist, and this emptiness is what we should realize. Like this all the objects of the senses, all existence, even though in fact they exist by being merely labeled, they appear to exist from their own side, as if they are not merely labeled.

So like we completely hallucinate the “I,” the aggregates, it is the same with all the objects of the senses. We completely hallucinate with all the objects of the five senses. Like the dream at night time. Even though what you see in the dream is a mere projection of the hallucinated mind, dependent on the mind, in the dream you completely cling—whatever appears we believe in. In the dream things appear as independent. We completely cling to that even in the dream, and then on the basis of that, attachment arises, and anger—the dislikable thought arises, the thought to give harm arises—even in the dream.

Similar with all the hallucinations, even in the day time; using that dream as an example, in the daytime, on the basis of this hallucination, this clinging, things appear as truly existent, then we completely cling to that. Then as we meet various objects, the various unsubdued minds arise, which produce the various actions, virtue and non-virtue, and that plants seeds on the consciousness—karma, the virtuous and non-virtuous actions. Like a plant seed, this leaves ability, a potential on the field of consciousness. Relating to this present life’s body, in the past life the various actions that



were accumulated left seeds, left potentials on the consciousness. Then just before this life, just before the birth of this life was taken, at the very end of the past life, at the time of death, when the gross mind, the gross consciousness was about to stop, to absorb, at that time the craving and grasping—I think grasping is stronger, which means stronger attachment, wanting to have a human body, the very strong thought of attachment wanting to find, wanting to receive a human body—the craving and grasping generated that potential, which was planted on the field of consciousness. This makes it stronger, and makes it ready to receive this present human body. So that seed, that potential, which was left on the consciousness becomes ready to bring this present body, and this is called “becoming.” As an example, this is like the pregnant woman when the baby is ready to come out.

So like this. By the force or by being under the control of the unsubdued mind, there is ignorance, craving and grasping, and then the action that comes from the ignorance, the action that comes from the attachment that seeks the human body in the next life. There is that kind of action, and then one action of becoming, which comes through the power of craving and grasping, which is generated by craving and grasping. So by being under the control of the unsubdued mind and karma, action, consciousness, the aggregates and samsara arise, particularly samsara. By the previous aggregates, particularly consciousness, being under the control of the force of the unsubdued mind and karma, that particular aggregate, consciousness, joined to this present samsara, the aggregates. Another way of saying this is that it got stuck to this fertilized egg, that consciousness got stuck to the fertilized egg in the mother’s womb. So you see, that is how it is samsara, a cycle.

The reason it has received the name “cycle” is because the gross body was left, but the previous samsaric aggregates, particularly the consciousness joined to this life. That is how we circle in samsara, how the previous aggregates circle in this life, and now, as we have not ceased the unsubdued mind in this life, again these present aggregates will join the next life. The continuity of the aggregates join from the past to this life, and then the continuity of these samsaric aggregates join the next life.

When I say “aggregates” we should not think only of this gross body. If we think only of that, it causes confusion because this body does not join the next life, it does not go back in the mother’s womb. Maybe you can shrink, you know, shrink? No, I am joking, that is not necessary. So we should mainly concentrate on consciousness.

The definition of samsara, the definition of the circle is the continuity of the aggregates that join again and again. This continuity of the present aggregate, the consciousness, will join again the next life. So this aggregate is labeled a cycle, like bicycle. It circles again and joins the next life. It circles. As these present aggregates circle without freedom, by the force of unsubdued mind and karma, these aggregates are called “cycle,” “samsara” or “cycle.” They always cycle like this. The continuity of aggregates joins from one life to another life—whichever rebirth place, wherever it joins, it experiences suffering in that realm. It experiences suffering there, and then the aggregate of consciousness joins another life, another rebirth, another birthplace, and again experiences the suffering of rebirth and death, and the various sufferings between rebirth and death. So like this, on and on, the continuity of aggregates joins again and again and experiences suffering; the “I” that is labeled on that, which exists on that, circles in samsara, in the six realms and suffers. Like this.

Because we have taken rebirth and this body, we experience the suffering of old age, sickness and death. Besides those four major sufferings, we experience the suffering of meeting the undesirable

object, then not finding the desirable objects and, even if one finds them, the suffering of dissatisfaction. The suffering of these aggregates is explained by the lineage lamas of the lamrim teachings, in order to easily understand and see clearly and easily the shortcomings of samsara, how samsara is in the nature of suffering. By generating the thought of renouncing samsara, one is able to generate bodhicitta that much quicker and one is able to achieve the state of omniscient mind quicker. The lineage lamas of the lamrim teachings made it clear by setting up the meditations on the suffering of rebirth, each of these sufferings in five numbers—the suffering of old age, suffering of sicknesses, suffering of aggregates—all those in five numbers are set up, so in that way it is very clear and easy to meditate, easy to see.

All these problems, every day what we experience, up and down, nervous breaking down when you lose your job, when the money is cut down, all these worries, fears, everything, all these mistakes, are because we have taken this body, because we have taken this rebirth. If we didn't take rebirth in the first place—the first mistake is that—if we didn't take rebirth then there is no reason at all, no reason to protest, no reason to strike. If we had not taken rebirth then there is no reason to do strike. Even the garbage collectors strike, they don't collect the garbage. Where was it? I think in Venice, I think in Italy, I think in Venice the garbage was piled up outside the people's houses.

Anyway, the whole problem is having taken rebirth. The reason we have to experience the suffering of death, the reason we have all the worry, the reason we have to worry about death is also because we have taken rebirth. The reason we have to take medicines in order not to experience death, so much worry and fear about death, even making pujas trying to prevent death—all this is by the mistake of rebirth, the first mistake is having taken rebirth. Therefore, if you do not want suffering, all these problems, old age and all these things, white hair and teeth falling out and all these things, if you don't want abortions, operations, spending much money, stretching out skin, paying a lot of money for the doctors—all these things, if one doesn't wish to experience them, then we have to stop taking rebirth. If we stop taking rebirth again all these problems will not happen, we will not experience them.

The conclusion is this. The whole suffering started from the very beginning mistake: even though the "I" is merely labeled on these aggregates, it appears as if it is not merely labeled, as if it exists from its own side, then we cling to that as completely true. You see, the whole suffering, the whole thing started from that very beginning. From the ignorance that clings to this "I" as completely true. So it is your own mistake, the whole problem. From this you can understand everyday life, complaining that we receive criticism, complaining about what we receive, being badly treated by others, all these things, aside from rebirth and death all these things in everyday life, all this discomfort, bad reputations, all these things that we receive, the whole thing, is your own mistake completely because of clinging, following ignorance, completely clinging to this "I" that appears as truly existent as completely true.

The point is to realize, to understand, to study shunyata, to study under the guidance of a well-experienced teacher who has found the infallible right view. With such a teacher you study shunyata to realize the right view, the infallible right view, which eliminates this ignorance. So that is extremely important. As I started the talk, so like this: you created the suffering, your own suffering is created by yourself and so you should also eliminate it. By practicing the right path that was revealed by Shakyamuni Buddha, the absolute truth, and following that, you will be able to eliminate the very root of suffering, ignorance.

I think I stop here.

[Dedications]

Lecture 6, November 18<sup>th</sup> am

[Prayers]

As I explained in the last two or three days, the creator of all one's own suffering is oneself, all the suffering comes from self. That is one way to think, one way to understand. It is not just a case of believing—in fact not like that, in fact, in the reality not like that, but one should believe that way—it is not like that. Even though you cannot understand, in the long run, from one life to another life by making the connection, if you are intelligent, if you are smart, you can understand if you think a little bit, if you check a little bit, you can understand how even the daily life's problems are based on this ignorance and come from this ignorance. While the "I" is empty of existing from its own side, we believe and cling to it as if it existed from its own side—how even each day's life problem, the unhappiness, the sufferings of the body and mind, how they build up on the basis of that or how they arise from that, how that causes it. It is very scientific.

Then also to think in this way is very effective, very effective for the mind. Can you hear? You who sit by the door? By following the self-cherishing thought, so many sufferings and problems arise. That is also very effective for the mind to control, to subdue the selfish attitude, the uncomfortable mind, the very painful uncomfortable mind, the selfish attitude. Think in this way, of the shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought, how the self-cherishing thought obliges you to experience many problems, so much suffering in samsara. How the self-cherishing thought is the thief, stealing away all happiness, all one's own happiness, temporal and ultimate happiness and perfection. How the self-cherishing thought is like a butcher, a butcher cutting off life, the root of temporal and ultimate happiness and perfection. You see, by following the self-cherishing thought, anger arises very easily. How strongly, how much the person follows the selfish attitude, careless of the happiness and suffering of others, caring and concerned only about one's own happiness and suffering, one's own comfort, strongly seeking one's own comfort for self, how much and how strongly one follows the self-cherishing thought, depending on that, that much easily anger arises, that much easily the person becomes impatient.

The root of temporal and ultimate happiness and perfections is virtue, merit; anger completely eliminates and destroys merit. Like burnt rice, completely burnt rice—even if you plant it, it cannot grow, anger completely makes the virtue no longer have any potential to bring its result of happiness, perfection. It makes it impossible to experience and enjoy the result, temporal or ultimate happiness, whatever it is, impossible to enjoy the result of undedicated merit, the merit that has not been accumulated with the motivation of bodhicitta, and even the merit accumulated with the motive of bodhicitta, those merits that are dedicated to achieve enlightenment for the sake of others. Anger even postpones the result of those. Whatever result of happiness that one is about to experience, whatever realization, it is postponed by anger—it causes it to take a long time to experience the result. Arising heresy is also like this. So the self-cherishing thought is like a butcher. It is like a thief, it is like a butcher who confiscates, who disturbs one's own temporal and ultimate happiness and perfection.

Then the self-cherishing thought obliges us to experience so many problems, even in daily life. Meeting a desirable object causes attachment to rise—when you meet the desirable object in daily life it causes problems, makes the mind unhappy. When you meet the desirable object attachment arises, and again the mind becomes confused and unhappy and uptight and painful. Then when you meet an ugly object, an undesirable object, a person or food, or a place, when you meet an ugly object, it causes anger. Again the mind is unhappy, painful. Then also ignorance arises with the indifferent object.

This happens particularly with living beings, when you meet other sentient beings, when you meet somebody who is wealthier than yourself, even somebody who has a better looking body or somebody who has a better education. You are a psychologist and the other one is also a psychologist but he has a better understanding, more understanding, and when you find he has a deeper understanding of psychology, or what he does, that his method is more useful, more beneficial for others, when you hear this, it is painful in the mind. The self-cherishing thought that is concerned so much for one's own happiness causes pain in the heart, when you hear that somebody with the same title of psychologist has a better understanding than you. If you hear that the other friend, that other person is more effective to others, the self-cherishing thought gives you pain in the heart. You become jealous. Somebody who has good meditation or somebody who has a better understanding of Dharma, or you are a professor and he is also a professor, working in the University, doing the same job, when you hear his work is better, his way of teaching is better, when more people are interested in him, when one sees or when you hear that more people come to his class, and less people come to your class, again the self-cherishing thought, which is so much concerned with one's own happiness, gives much pain, gives so much pain in the heart.

And then the self-cherishing thought obliges a person to generate ill will. Instead of rejoicefulness, it obliges ill will. He thinks, "What can I do? What can I do? How can I kick him out of this University? How can I manage this?" Then he does a very long meditation on that. For months he keeps the pain. "How that person is harmful for me, harmful for my reputation, for my happiness." Actually he is not harming but the self-cherishing thought makes him think how that person is "harmful for me, for my happiness, so harmful." Then he keeps that in the heart for months and months, years and years; it causes him to have pain for months and months, years and years, as long as the other person is working in the University.

Then, "What can I do? What can I do in order for him to lose his job? What I can do? Maybe create some criticism. Even though it is not the case, but create something." Then the person tries to find some blame, tries to find some mistakes so that he can announce it. However, he is unable to find mistake. Then he tries by criticizing the other person so he will become successful, even trying to kick him out of the University, to lose his job so that that he himself will have a greater reputation and more people coming. Things like that, trying to create disharmony between the person and those people who do the same job in the office, in the school, or in the University.

Like this, in daily life when one meets other sentient beings who have a better education, who have better perfections, who have a greater reputation, instead of feeling rejoicefulness, instead of feeling "how good it is," "how wonderful it is," instead of thinking like this, the self-cherishing thought causes the jealous mind to arise, and then there is much pain in the heart. The object that you see becomes an unbearable object. The self-cherishing thought makes you see it in that way.

However, without talking much, then even if you meet equal people, who have the same class or same level of education, the same job, then again the self-cherishing thought doesn't make the mind happy, it causes suffering. Again there is the thought, "I want to be better than him." The thought of competition arises, wishing oneself to have a greater reputation than the other one. This thought is concerned so much with "my happiness," thinking this so much more important than others' happiness and because of this the thought of competition arises. And again like this the mind becomes unhappy. Even though one has the same education, the same job, still the mind is not happy, not satisfied, not happy.

The self-cherishing thought that seeks more happiness for oneself than others causes all the pains. It keeps the life busy and causes all the worries and fears—the fear to lose the job, fear to lose the reputation, fear to degenerate the perfections and wealth, even the fear and worry of becoming older, even though there is no choice, even though you cannot stop becoming older, changing the color of the hair, changing the color of the skin, even though there is no freedom in that, stopping the process of changing, of becoming older, by being under the control of unsubdued mind and its action, karma. Then useless fear, useless worry arises. Even if the person knows that worry and fear, it cannot stop the changes of becoming older. Even if the body doesn't experience that much hardship or difficulties, even though there is not much physical difficulty, the mind experiences so much difficulty, so much hardship. It has so many worries, even these worries and fears of getting older, feeling upset and getting shocked when you see your face in the mirror, the changes in the mirror, getting great shock in the mind. All those are caused by the self-cherishing thought, which constantly seeks happiness for oneself, which constantly thinks, "If I can be happy."

Then, when we meet other sentient beings in daily life, human beings, even animals, we feel pride—when we meet other sentient beings who have less capabilities than ourselves, who have less education than ourselves, who are bad looking, who have bodies uglier than ourselves, and who are poorer in wealth than ourselves. Then when one meets somebody who has less Dharma understanding, who has a small view of Dharma, the teaching of Buddha, who has a very limited view, then again, when you meet somebody who is lower than you, again the self-cherishing thought causes pride to arise. Again it makes the mind unhappy. When we meet others who are lower than oneself, again the self-cherishing mind makes the mind unhappy, very painful, like having put a stick or a rock inside, like having built a stupa here inside. Like somebody built a stupa here inside, sort of, like having a stick inside the heart, here, so painful. Like this. Also animals, even with animals, feeling pride, "I am a human being, this is an animal," even for that feeling so much pride. However like this.

Then, even you see your girlfriend or wife smiling at somebody or smiling at another man. Even just smiling, even without talking, even without running after him, just even by smiling at that person it becomes incredibly painful. The whole sky fell down. All the sun and moon, and all the stars, everything fell down—in your mind it is like that. The mind becomes completely berserk. The mind that was like daytime before, relaxed, happy, suddenly becomes night. No light. No sun, no stars, no moon—I mean at nighttime there is no sun, so no moon, no stars, like that, completely black. Not only black, but so painful; or very angry. Either very painful, jealous of the other person, jealous of the other man, or the great flame of anger burns in the heart, and the body, all the limbs are shaking and nervous. Then, of course, there is no question if she runs away. Of course, if she stayed with that man even for one hour, if she stayed with that man for one day without seeing you, it is painful.

I think three years ago, during the first course that was done in Australia, in Diamond Valley, in Queensland, there was one girl. I think it had only been one or two weeks, and then I think she wrote to her husband—I don't know where they were living. I guess she wrote to him after one week of the course, I do not remember exactly, but around that time, she wrote that she wanted to become a nun or something like that, that she didn't want to come back. So her husband came one night, and he came in my room. His whole body was completely shaking. He was talking about something but I couldn't understand. I couldn't get the conclusion of what he was talking about, I couldn't get the essence. He was talking about something, a very long one. I think he was just going around, something like that, not talking straight about what he wanted to say, going around and around and around, completely crazy, sort of like that.

All these things, such as relationship problems, things like that, and becoming crazy—losing jobs, nervous breakdowns, relationship problem, becoming crazy because of lost possessions, money, those things. When such conditions happen, how unhappy the person is depends on how much the person clings, and how strong the self-cherishing thought seeking one's own comfort is. It depends so much on that. When such a problem happens, such as in business when things are not working even though you try so hard, when nothing is successful, you become completely depressed, and even the color of the body changes, becoming black or kind of white. Due to relationship problem, the mind becomes completely depressed, in great shock, in so much pain, and there is incredible great suffering when you find out that the boyfriend or the husband has another friend, another wife, or another girlfriend. It becomes like narak suffering, incredible suffering in the mind. You are unable to sleep at nighttime, unable to eat food, and may commit suicide. Overwhelmed by problems, you think, "Better to kill myself." That is the very last answer; there is no other solution in the mind.

This is the lack of understanding Dharma, the lack of understanding the Mahayana thought training teachings. It is the lack of practice and lack of understanding the teachings. So you try many ways, but nothing works. You try many ways to harm the other person that you feel jealous of, you try to follow and catch the husband or the wife who runs away, and bring them back; however you can't manage. You try everything, but nothing works. So then you shoot yourself with a gun, if you can find a gun in the house. If not, you go in the bathtub and put the electricity in or go to a very high tower and jump over the edge, or go to a very big bridge and jump into the river—somewhere you can die immediately. That is the very last answer, and the person sees that this is the best. He sees nothing else, nothing else; this is the best, so that the suffering is ceased. The suffering is ceased, nirvana is achieved. I am joking. I am joking, but the person believes this. For his mind this is the only solution. The person is not committing suicide with happiness, but without choice. Somehow he can't manage to stop those problems, so committing suicide happens without choice, the person does it without choice.

The one who has given us all these problems is the self-cherishing thought, the devil, the self-cherishing thought, which is dwelling in our heart, which obliges us to experience all these problems. Even if you see a mosquito in the room, flying around making the sound, "u-u-u," even though he did not start to bite, even though he did not jump on your body, he is flying around making noise, and when you hear the noise and see him flying around you say, "Oh, there is a mosquito." This kind of becomes a great shock to the mind. "When is he going to bite me? Now something is going to happen to me, some discomfort is going to happen to me." Then again worry and fear. What this tiny mosquito can do is nothing—what it can take is not even a mouthful of your blood, just a tiny drop. A tiny, tiny drop, not even one spoon of blood, but it becomes a great shock to your heart.

This hungry pitiful mosquito cannot take even one spoon of blood. However, you have an incredible huge big body, which eats two, three plates of food and twenty cups of coffee a day.

However, what I am saying is this—even such a small thing like this becomes a great shock. Even seeing such a small thing as this, one small tiny mosquito flying around making a noise, even if he did not bite, it becomes a great shock for the mind. Worry and fear start. Even those arise by the self-cherishing thought, are caused by self-cherishing thought. You see, as much as you are concerned with yourself, with your own comfort, that much the fear and great worry arise, even if the condition is so tiny that it is nothing. Suddenly if you see a flea on your bed, jumping in your sleeping-bag, you say, “Oh, there is a flea!” It is like somebody came to kill you, like a tiger came to eat you—the shock is like that, what the mind experiences, the mind-shock is like that. Like the flea is going to eat you up, finish you up, and not even the hairs or the bones are going to be left in the sleeping-bag to show the parents, “This is your daughter’s hair.”

Or if you see a little bit of dirt on the plate, on the glass, or if the person who brings food has some dirt on the face or on the hands, if he didn’t wash, or if he is wearing rag clothes or something, even if the food is delicious, you do not want to eat it. Such small things as this become a big complaint, a huge problem for the mind. Those are because of the strong self-cherishing thought.

You give a cup of tea to another person, you compliment the other person or you give them a cup of tea, or you helped another person, and then if the other person didn’t say “thank you,” if he kept quiet, if he stayed in silence, if he kept quiet, you think, “Oh, how shameless, how bad he is.” Even if you liked the person before, suddenly when the other person didn’t respond, did not say even the words “thank you,” these two words, great suffering comes into the mind.

You respected the other person and the other person didn’t respond. You respected the other person and then if the other person didn’t respect you, if he went on keeping the nose in the sky—how do you say? Keeping the nose in the sky? Snob, yes. If the other person did not respond, did not respect you, if you say hello to the other person and he passed by, not looking at you, even if you were close, again great suffering comes into the mind, “How ridiculous, how shameful, how bad he is.” Then you recite many mantras of, “Oh, how bad he is.”

Even such small things as that become great disturbances for the mind. How much all these small conditions disturb your mind is so much dependent on how much you cling to comfort, to reputation. It is so clear that the one who is giving this suffering is the self-cherishing thought.

Even worry about the money of the grandfather or grandmother or whoever it is, “If he or she dies I’ll get the money.” The worry that he or she will not die soon, “If he or she doesn’t die soon I won’t get the enjoyment of using the money, traveling wherever I want, having a nice apartment, a car, several cars, another house in the city, another house outside of the city.” Even these worries are caused by the self-cherishing thought. Having worry like this, even if in fact it is not certain whether or not one will die before the grandmother does, there is still worry. There is so much expectation in the mind, so much doubt and expectation about reputation, food and clothing, the perfections of this life, for now and for the future. And then there is so much doubt that it is not going to happen, and so much worry and fear. All this, you see, is so obvious, so clear. If you check your own experience and that of others—the mind of one who is so much concerned with his or her own happiness, who cherishes him or herself so much, has so much doubt and expectation, and because

of that, more confusion, and it is very difficult for the mind to relax and be peaceful, and difficult to enjoy life.

Before Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, so many buddhas descended on this earth, and those buddhas enlightened so many sentient beings, subdued so many sentient beings, and enlightened so many sentient beings by revealing the path. We did not become an object to be subdued by them—even in Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's time numberless sentient beings were led to nirvana and enlightenment, by having the teachings revealed to them. We were unable to be in that group who was subdued by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's directly giving teachings. And even after that, there were many yogis and mahasiddhas—the eighty mahasiddhas, those famous well-known pandits such as Nagarjuna, Asanga and Shantideva, such as Tilopa and Naropa. There were innumerable numbers of great yogis in India. Also, in Tibet there were Marpa, Mila, Sakya Pandit—many highly realized yogis in each sect. Each of them revealed the teachings and led so many sentient beings, subdued so many sentient beings, and led them to enlightenment—but we were not in that group. Still we are suffering in samsara; still we are left in samsara. Still we do not have any realizations in the mind, from beginningless samsaric lifetimes, from beginningless rebirths until now. Our births have had no beginning, so by now we should have had at least some realization. We do not even have the wisdom of shunyata, or the attainment of the bhumis, or tantric realization, or the thought renouncing samsara, or bodhicitta. Still our minds are completely empty of realizations.

All this is the mistake of following the self-cherishing thought. This is the mistake of following “what I want, what I like,” not what Buddha has revealed. The advice that Buddha has revealed: You have the true cause of suffering, like this, like this, like this, so therefore you experience true suffering, problems like this, like this, like this. You can be liberated from the true cause of suffering; there is liberation from it and you can achieve it. And in order to achieve it, you should follow the true path. Even Buddha himself, even Shakyamuni Buddha, left so many various extensive, profound teachings for us to be liberated from suffering and to achieve omniscient mind. But we do not practice the path or follow the advice given by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

Buddha Shakyamuni himself showed how to practice Dharma, the reason there is need to practice Dharma, by showing the twelve events, the twelve actions—descending from the Tushita pure realm onto the earth, and being conceived in his mother's womb. First he lived the princely life, with a wife, and then he completed the action of discovering the suffering of samsara, old age, sickness, death and rebirth. Then he lived the ascetic life for six years, doing retreat, and then he completed the action of becoming enlightened, subduing the *maras* and turning the Dharma wheel for sentient beings, according to their level of mind. Then he completed the action of passing away. So Guru Shakyamuni Buddha even left the example, besides the teachings.

Why is there the need to practice Dharma? Because there is suffering. If you do not wish for suffering, if you do not want to live in suffering, in samsara, then you should follow this path and practice the holy Dharma. If you practice the holy Dharma, this will be the result.

He showed the action of passing away in order to destroy the conception of permanence in the minds of sentient beings, in order to change the wrong views that confuse them. In order to do that, he left those examples of how the holy Dharma should be practiced right away. How we should practice with this body while we have it, and that we should start right now—because death definitely happens and it is uncertain when the actual time of death will occur. However many years, months, days, hours and minutes we have this precious human body, we should not waste it, we



should make it highly meaningful while it is ours. Not following this advice, following “what I want, what I like,” are the mistakes of self-cherishing thought.

However many teachings we have received from the holy mouth of the perfectly qualified guru, however many initiations, however many profound, secret teachings we have received—they are difficult to practice. We are unable to do even one practice, and still we have no realizations, no experience of the path in the mind.

The conclusion is: even if we understand Dharma, no matter how much we understand the teachings of sutra and tantra, no matter how much elaborate understanding of sutra and tantra we have, for the everyday actions of body, speech and mind to become Dharma, to become virtue, is very difficult. This the mistake of following self-cherishing thought, thinking day and night, all the time, “what I want, what I like,” not what sentient beings or Guru Buddha wishes or needs, not “what Guru Buddha wishes me to do.”

We are a slave for the self-cherishing thought, as if we took precepts, committed ourselves, “I am going to work for the self-cherishing thought day and night, all the time.” It is like taking the bodhisattva ordination, making the commitment to dedicate the actions of body, speech and mind always for other sentient beings, to do the work for the sentient beings.

As long as we follow the self-cherishing thought, it obliges us constantly to experience suffering. If anger doesn't arise, attachment arises, and if attachment doesn't arise, pride arises. If pride doesn't arise, jealous mind arises. So you see, the self-cherishing thought obliges the unsubdued minds to arise, one after another. It does not give you any rest from suffering, not even a minute. The self-cherishing thought never gives any relaxation, or a minute's rest from suffering. All these mistakes, all these sufferings that arise from the self-cherishing thought, all this that one experiences comes from oneself, and is the mistake of following the self-cherishing thought.

So all the sufferings come from the self, and all the happiness and perfections come from where? They come from others. (That part I will explain later.) Therefore Geshe Langri Tangpa, one Kadampa geshe, one great hidden yogi, wrote the very effective short condensed teaching called the *Eight Stanzas of Thought Training*, which involves eliminating the ignorance of true existence and eliminating the self-cherishing thought. Geshe Langri Tangpa gave this advice: in the situation where there is victory and defeat, what one should do is offer the victory to others and take the loss, the defeat, upon oneself. Why? Why we should offer the victory to others? All the happiness and perfections that one experiences, that one enjoys, which means all the support, all the means that benefit our survival—for example, someone who survives by selling fish lives his life by that means—so all the means that support our life is received by the kindness of others, of sentient beings, according to Geshe Langri Tangpa's verse. Therefore, when there is victory and defeat, we should offer the victory to others and take the defeat upon ourselves. Why should we take the defeat upon ourselves? Because all the sufferings come from self-cherishing.

Normally in the world people wish the friend or the relative, or the person who likes and helps them, to have the victory, and they wish the enemy to have the loss. If there is a choice, they wish the enemy to receive the loss. Why should the enemy have the loss? Because I don't like him, he doesn't like me; he hates me or harms me. Normally when there is a choice about whom to give the victory to, people in the world do this. That is a mistake. Giving the loss to other sentient beings is a mistake. But this is worthwhile: giving the loss to the inner enemy, the self-cherishing thought—the

real enemy who gives all the problems of past, present and future lives, all the suffering, everyday life's problems, who doesn't allow us to have mental peace. That can only benefit.

We receive happiness and perfection even in our daily life by depending on the kindness of sentient beings. It is very good and effective for the mind if we meditate, if we think of the kindness of mother sentient beings, even those kindnesses that we can see in daily life by the eye. Just think about that part, leaving out the part for which we depend on the understanding of reincarnation. Even somebody who doesn't have an understanding of karma, even somebody who does not have faith in karma can understand, can see and cannot reject how the sentient beings are kind. In our daily life, we receive our comfort and enjoyment by depending on the kindness of the Lord, the sentient beings.

Any perfection, any enjoyment that we enjoy in our each day life—there is nothing that we receive from them without their experiencing suffering. There is nothing. You can understand by thinking like this, simply: just think about this simple comfortable place where we accumulate merit, which protects us from rain, from the burning sun, this place where we accumulate many causes of temporal happiness in samsara and even ultimate happiness and perfection—in each session, in each hour.

When the foundation was laid, so many creatures were killed and hurt. So many creatures suffered so much to actualize this place. Without them suffering, without those mother sentient beings being hurt by the human beings who built this place, there would be no way for this place—where we are meditating on and listening to the teachings, where we are planting seeds of enlightenment and omniscience in our minds every day for the sake of sentient beings—to exist. There would be no way for us to have the opportunity to enjoy being in this simple house without their suffering and experiencing pain, as well as the human beings who hurt them. Some sentient beings created negative karma by hurting others, and some sentient beings suffered and had to experience pain. From those pitiful sentient beings, who suffered so much and created much negative karma, the opportunity to enjoy this arose for us.

Just like those beautiful apartments we live in, in the West, the luxury houses—the same. When you see and enjoy the house, it looks like everything exists by itself. When we are inside, when we are not aware and examining, it looks like it truly exists from its own side, without depending on anybody's effort or experience of hardship.

Even the clothes that protect our bodies from heat or cold, from harms of creatures—particularly those that are made of animal hair or animal skins, fur coats, woolen clothes—those warm clothes we wear in the winter time. The animal from whom the wool or skin came experienced much pain when it was killed by a human being. That animal was shot or it was killed by a knife—however, it has gone through incredible pain. The human beings fastened the limbs of the animal with ropes, and pressed it down, and pulled out the wool from the body with much force. Also, clothes that are made from silkworms—any clothing that we wear, which keep the body comfortable, which we enjoy now, came from the kindness of many sentient beings working hard. The animals transported it. And the human beings worked hard to actualize the cloth—in the factory, then in a shop to make it available. Then you buy it. Even just one piece of cloth depended on and came from so many sentient beings working so hard and experiencing great hardship. Without depending on so many sentient beings experiencing hardship, without their working, without their suffering for that, there is no way that we can now enjoy this clothing.

Even the food, the living condition that keeps us alive each day is received by depending on so many sentient beings' suffering, working so hard for that. Meat is easy to understand—how non-vegetarian food comes from sentient beings suffering so much, and some sentient beings creating much negative karma. That is easy to understand. But even vegetarian food, even one grain of rice—even for this one grain of rice that we eat, the field is plowed and fertilized, either with machines or with animals, and you can see if you check one handful of dust that there are so many tiny creatures, red ones, white ones, moving around. There are very tiny ones, and there are also creatures that you cannot see. If you check the flower place, for example, if you check one handful of mud, there are so many creatures.

For this one grain of rice, first that land was fertilized and then plowed with machines or with animals, and during that time so many creatures were killed. Then the human beings had to work in the rain and under the hot sun with much hardship and creating much negative karma while hurting and killing the creatures, and causing them to experience much pain. At the beginning it was like this. Even in the middle the human beings worked very hard pouring water. And then at the end, the sprout grew and they had to split the rice and plant it separately.

Here we have one Nepalese man who used to be the caretaker of this place. I asked him how they work for the rice. I asked him how the Nepalese work for the rice, how they plant rice. So he explained the graduated path, the Nepalese way of planting rice, to me. When the sprout comes, after the sprout comes, they take it out, they split it, and then they plant it in a triangular shape—one here, one there and one there like this. That is how they plant the rice. So in the middle human beings work hard and also many creatures get harmed. Then also, at the end, when they collect the grains...

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...this is one set of work for this one rice. This rice came from other rice—it's a result of other rice, so again human beings and many creatures suffered in order to actualize it. And that rice came from other rice. So again, so many human beings and creatures suffered for that. When you think back, for the continuation of the rice, it is unimaginable how many sentient beings died, suffered and experienced pain, and how many created negative karma for that.

Even when you hear that one sentient being suffered and died to actualize this one grain of rice, it makes you unable to simply eat it without doing something, without some thought to benefit to this sentient being. You dare not eat, you dare not swallow this one single grain of rice very simply, unconsciously, for your own comfort, for your own happiness—you dare not eat for the reason of your own happiness. When you think about all the continuation of the rice, of each grain of rice that is on your plate, it is unbearable—thinking about how other sentient beings suffered and were killed for this.

So now what happens if you eat this one plate of rice unconsciously, without any thought to benefit all these pitiful suffering sentient beings—creatures who created so much negative karma and experienced so much pain for this? When you think about how so many sentient beings suffered for each of these rice grains, or worked so hard for each of these rice grains, if you eat this one plate of rice only for your own comfort, happiness and pleasure, how is it? If you eat with such a motive, after all sentient beings suffered for each grain of rice, if you eat only seeking your own comfort—

isn't that a very upsetting, selfish attitude, a very poor mind? There is no thought to benefit even one sentient being who made this rice available, no concern for even one sentient being, who made the rice on your own plate available. There is nothing except the attitude, "If I can be happy; when can I be happy?" When you think about how others suffered so much and created so much negative karma for this, it is unbearable to eat without having some plan, some thought to benefit in the mind.

Even a piece of vegetable, it's the same thing, again so many creatures were killed. Without spraying they cannot grow well, they get a lot of holes, and by spraying so many creatures get killed. It looks very nice when you buy it in the supermarket, it looks like a self-existent nice fruit, nice vegetable, like nobody worked hard, it simply appeared—it simply exists like that in the supermarket, in the packet. But those creatures who live on that food also need that food. Like it is our food, it also is their food—same thing. So by killing them, we get the food, by force. Those creatures don't have big bodies like we have. Those who live on vegetables have fragile bodies, so tiny—there is nothing they can do, nothing. It is their food; they are born there by their karma. But the human beings have more powerful, bigger bodies, and they also want the fruit and vegetables, so they take it by force.

Both of them want happiness; both of them do not want suffering. Both do not want starvation, but those creatures are so powerless, so small, so tiny, they can't do anything, they don't have machines. Human beings made factories and machines to destroy. Some pitiful human creates this negative karma, harming them for their own means of living, for the happiness of their own life, by force, killing them to gain happiness of this life, in order to make business. If it is bad looking people won't buy it. If it has a lot of holes, with insects, people won't buy it. So some pitiful sentient beings have to create negative karma—many guideless, pitiful creatures, and so many have to suffer. Like this. Then some sentient beings put it in the shops, put in the supermarket, making it easy for us, making it available for us, everything together in one shop so you don't have to go around and around and around. The sentient beings make your life so easy. To save energy, to save time, to save money—everything is together in one supermarket, nice and clean.

If we look at it this way, all comfort and enjoyment are completely dependent on the kindness of sentient beings. Even the water that we drink, that we use for one cup of tea. Even in one mouthful of water there are many tiny creatures that cannot be seen by the eyes. They get disturbed—when the water is boiled all these creatures die, and experience much suffering. Without depending on the kindness of sentient beings, without sentient beings' suffering, there is no way to enjoy even a cup of tea. There is no way to receive this comfort. Not even a mouthful of water to quench the thirst.

We might think, "I have money, I have a job, I have education, I have a nice house, a car, a job, a degree and money, so I am self-supporting." But even the education that you have now, with which you can make money, could not exist without depending on the kindness, effort and hard work of the teachers, on their patience and on the parents or whomever—friends, benefactors—spending money for the education. Those who give you financial help are sentient beings. Even the money that is spent for the teachings comes from sentient beings. Education is received by the kindness of sentient beings.

Whether you are educated or not, if nobody offers you a job or wants to hire you, how is it? You have no money to live. Whether you have an education or not, if nobody gives you a job, how is it? Each month you enjoy, living in that nice apartment that you have rented, with water, with a car, with a boat—with all these comforts, just from having money. That money came from the person

who gave you the job. Thinking of just that part, just that evolution—each month's enjoyment comes by the kindness of the person who employs you. If nobody gives you a job there is no comfort. It is so clear how your comfort depends on others.

So now you can see how each day of being alive depends on sentient beings, and particularly how food is received from sentient beings. When you think this way, you can see that each day that we are able to be alive—without depending on others, on sentient beings, each time we breathe, without depending on sentient beings there is no way that we can be alive, no way that we have opportunity to practice Dharma, the complete infallible method to free ourselves from all sufferings, and to free others. Through this we can free all others from all suffering. Without depending on the kindness of the sentient beings we would not be able to follow such an infallible method, the method to achieve enlightenment, today.

So now you can see each day of being alive completely depends on the kindness of mother sentient beings. Now we should think this way. So far, sentient beings, creatures, have been for our use, suffering so much, and have benefited us so much, worked so hard since one was born until now. They have been so kind—all happiness is received by their kindness, they have been extremely kind. Now from our own side, what have we done to benefit others, what worthwhile action have we done for others? Since we were born until now, what did we do to benefit them? Nothing. If we search, we can't find anything—it is very hard to find.

Actually I just talk the words, like a tape recorder I just talk the words about bodhicitta. I don't practice, I just talk the words of the teachings—the mind is empty of compassion and love, and there is no practice. The mind is completely empty, like an empty pot, very dry, no water, like ice. Like the very hot sand ground, like that, very dry.

My mother doesn't talk much about bodhicitta, and she doesn't understand much of the teachings, but she has much feeling for it and her mind is rich in compassion. She doesn't read from the scriptures; she doesn't understand that. But actually, she practices. I do not practice, but she practices. She doesn't speak as it is explained in the scriptures, but somehow she feels it all the time—anybody who helps her, anybody whom she sees working hard, all the time she says that. Even if they work so little, from her side there is so much concern, she always feels so much kindness in her heart. She always sees the difficulty of others and is always speaking about how they work so hard for her, how they are kind, saying that she is unworthy to receive help from others.

She says, "My stomach is empty," which does not mean empty of food—she means my mind is empty of realizations so she is not worthy to be served. She is not worthy of receiving help from those monks bringing tea, and not only those monks but anyone. She doesn't speak about all mother sentient beings' kindness but practically, in everyday life, with those who are around her she always expresses how all sentient beings are so kind. Now she goes to circumambulate the stupa every day. She says, "I must do something, my mind is empty of realizations, I received so much help, I cannot sit like this, I should do something." So she wants to do prayers, to circumambulate the stupa, to do the practice of purification and accumulation of merit.

This thought just came about my mother. There are some good things that I found out, which I don't have, so the thought just came to mention this.

However the point of what I am saying is this. Even if we don't know how all sentient beings are kind and have been our mother, even if we don't know this, I think it is very important at least to think about the kindness of the surrounding people. The kindness that you can see by the eye, as I explained before, which doesn't need a particular belief or understanding of karma—it is just a matter of being aware of it. For the person who offers you the job, always think about their kindness. Always think about the kindness of the parents who have been so kind to give you this body. If they didn't create the karma to give you this body, there would be no way to be given this body, to be born from the womb. They are kind even in creating the karma to give you this body. They protected the body, each day, from many hindrances and protected the life. They brought you up in the path of the world, taught you the language, educated you and experienced much hardship for this. Like that. Remember the kindness of the surrounding people; remember the kindness of the husband and of the wife. Without depending on other sentient beings, there is no way that you can have a good reputation, there is no one to give compliments to you—the rocks, the plants, the water won't make compliments to you. Even this is received by the kindness of sentient beings.

Even traveling; somebody created the idea of an airplane. If sentient beings did not make it available we would not have the opportunity in this life to travel. Saving time and energy; you can accomplish your wishes. All this—whatever material you wish to buy you can easily get, you can easily find, you can easily travel. All these come from the kindness of sentient beings, from their experience of hardship. In everyday life, it is extremely important to remember the kindness again and again, in particular the kindness of the enemy—among the surrounding people, particularly the enemy. You should remember that one from the heart, the kindness of the enemy who has hateful thoughts towards you.

Even the job that you do, going to the office—whether you go to the office or something else—the more you feel, the more you remember the kindness of other sentient beings, such as the one who gave you the job, that much easier and more sincere it becomes. Instead of, “I am doing this job for my happiness, I want the money, I want to enjoy my life so I need money,” body, speech and mind completely into one's own happiness, one's body, speech, and mind become dedicated to fulfilling the wishes of others. The more you feel the kindness of others, such as the person who gave you the job, every day the more you think of the kindness of others, the more the wish for others to be happy and not to suffer increases, gets stronger and stronger, even if you do not get money. You see, the previous work was completely for yourself and now the work is for others. Even the same work that you did before just for yourself, for your own comfort, becomes a bodhisattva action. Also there are no more problems—it becomes the work for others, so there is less confusion. Also the mind is that much happier, much more happy than previously doing the work only for oneself.

The conclusion is that if other sentient beings benefit you so much, why don't you benefit others? There is no reason why you would not benefit others. Your life is completely dependent on others, so others are also dependent on you. Then why shouldn't you benefit others?

The practice of the good heart, patience in particular, even if we don't know how all the happiness comes from all sentient beings, even if we don't know that, in each day's life, in the office where one works, the surrounding people with whom one lives at home, with whom one lives at one place, in one house, in the same room, whose face we see in everyday life, with whom we talk in everyday life—generally the human beings, in particular the surrounding people with whom one eats together, with whom one works together, particularly the one who hates you. They are the people who

criticize you, who badly treat you, who complain about you, particularly those virtuous friends, those gurus who help you develop patience, and a better and better heart.

So however, without talking much, even if we cannot give benefit to all the sentient beings, even if we cannot generate love and compassion for all, at least with human beings we should have thoughts of loving kindness. Particularly for the human beings with whom we live together in one house, we should attempt to avoid harming and instead give to them. Because if one doesn't practice the good heart, if one doesn't practice patience, not giving benefit but giving harm, always living this life with the selfish attitude, with anger, it is difficult to have harmony in the family, with people in the same office, with friends, husband or parents. Difficult. The relationship doesn't last. If one lives with strong anger, there are that many more problems. It is not easy to have harmony.

You see, happiness, each day's comfort, comes from others. Depending on these human beings, from them you receive your happiness and comfort. Happiness, peace of mind is so important—the most important among the means of living. Among the means of living this is of the utmost need, the most important thing, happiness. Without others you can't receive it. Therefore you need to practice. If you want mind-peace, happiness in life, you should practice patience, love and compassion. Train the mind in loving kindness. As much as possible, avoid giving harm, and train the mind in giving benefit to others.

Lecture 7 November 19<sup>th</sup> am

[prayers]

“Obeisance to my guru and to the protector Manjushri, holding to his heart a scriptural text, symbolic of his seeing all things as they are; whose intelligence shines forth as the sun, unclouded by delusion or traces of ignorance. Who teaches in sixty ways, with the loving compassion of a father for his only son, all creatures caught in the prison of samsara, confused in the darkness of their ignorance, overwhelmed by their suffering. You, whose dragon-thunder-like proclamation of Dharma arouses us from the stupor of our delusion and frees us from the iron chains of our karma, who wields the sword of wisdom hewing down suffering wherever its sprouts appear, clearing away the darkness of ignorance. You, whose princely body is adorned with the one hundred and twelve marks of a Buddha, who has completed the stages, achieving the highest perfection of a bodhisattva, who has been pure from the beginning, I bow down to you, oh Manjushri.

“With the brilliance of your wisdom, oh Compassionate One, illuminate the darkness enclosing my mind, enlighten my intelligence and wisdom so that I may gain insight into Buddha's words and the texts that explain them.” (3x)

While the requesting prayer is chanted in Tibetan, you can read the meaning of the prayer in English. And those who are familiar with it and want to do in that way can follow it. You see the last prayer, the requesting prayer to Buddha, Maitreya and Asanga will be repeated twice, the *sang.gye j'ang.sem sum.la sol.wa.deb*, making request to the three of them. The visualization is the same as it is normally done in the *Jorcho* practice, the preliminary practice of the lamrim meditation.

When you do the first request, beams are emitted, purifying all the general hindrances and obscurations to generating the whole graduated path to enlightenment, from guru devotion up to enlightenment, the unified state of Vajradhara, particularly the hindrances of generating the extensive path. There are two paths to achieve omniscient mind—the profound path and the extensive path—so particularly the hindrances to achieve the extensive path. The hindrances of generating the general path from guru devotion up to enlightenment, the particular hindrances of generating the extensive path of sutra and tantra, those hindrances which are within your mind and in the minds of all the sentient beings, who are around you, are all purified by the nectar rays flowing from this merit field.

Then the second time, *sang.gye j'ang.sem sum.la sol.wa.deb*, “From you three buddhas and bodhisattvas, I request inspiration.” Then a replica of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, a replica of Maitreya Buddha and a replica of Asanga absorb into you and into all sentient beings. Then think that the general path from guru devotion up to enlightenment, particularly the essence of the extensive path of sutra and the essence of the extensive path of tantra, is generated within my mind and in the minds of all sentient beings. That is the meditation to do during the second request.

The essence of the extensive sutra path is bodhicitta and the essence of the extensive path of tantra is the illusory body. Then the very essence of that is rupakaya.

Then the last one, “From you three crowning jewels of clear exposition I request inspiration.” At that time the particular hindrances that are purified are the hindrances to generating the extensive path of sutra and tantra. Those hindrances that are in my mind and in the minds of all sentient beings are purified by these strong nectar rays flowing particularly from Buddha, Manjushri, and Nagarjuna. Purified. Then second time when you repeat, “...*sol wa deb*,” they are so pleased—it is good to think that they are so pleased. So far our mind did not face towards the graduated path to enlightenment, the graduated path to omniscient mind. So far we have been backwards, doing the opposite. So now we are facing the graduated path to omniscient mind, following their wishes. Whatever they prayed for us, whatever their holy mind wishes we follow, and also by doing the request, we intend to follow the graduated path towards enlightenment, generate bodhicitta, benefit others and obtain the omniscient mind for the sake of others. So the holy beings are so pleased, particularly by this request.

By that a replica of Buddha, a replica of Manjushri and a replica of Nagarjuna manifest and they emit a replica which absorbs into you your heart. And like that a replica absorbs into each sentient being. Then think that the general path from guru devotion up to enlightenment, particularly the profound path, the essence of the profound path, the essence of the profound graduated path of sutra, the wisdom of shunyata is generated, and then the essence of the profound graduated path of tantra, the clear light, and then the very essence of that, the dharmakaya, is generated in my mind and in the minds of all sentient beings. Do the same thing when you make requests to Shantideva.

That’s the way of doing the meditation while one is saying this requesting prayer. I won’t explain the purpose of this requesting prayer now. Sometime when there is need of an explanation of the other prayers, the purpose of the other preliminary practices, at that time it will be explained.

[Requesting prayer]

[From notes]



How sentient beings are so precious, so kind. How one receives all happiness and perfection from them, by their kindness. Think in this way: one has to accomplish the three great purposes by depending on the kindness of other sentient beings. Meditating on the kindness of others in this way is very deep and very effective for the mind, as the mind becomes more familiar with this subject. Even with this precious human body that we have now, we can achieve any great meaning even within one hour, even within a minute. With this precious human body we can create so many causes of omniscient mind. We can follow the path to omniscient mind, we can create so many causes for liberation—even in one hour, one minute we can create so many causes for a perfect human body qualified by the eight freedoms and the ten richnesses. We can create the cause of a perfect human body with perfect enjoyments and richness in future lives—whatever one wishes to achieve one can accomplish, one can work for that. Even this body is received by the kindness of each sentient being in the suffering six realm beings. It is particularly good to think that I received this precious human body with which I can accomplish the three great meanings and so forth by the kindness of the enemy who hates or dislikes me.

How is this precious human body received by depending on their kindness? The principal cause of the perfect human body is moral conduct. In relation to stones, wood or water, an action cannot receive the name, the label, “killing” or “not killing.” There is no base to label “receiving harm,” “taking life,” “separating the consciousness from the body.” In relation to these material objects we cannot label the vow of abstaining from these actions. If the object doesn’t have a mind then it is not a sentient being. It should be living and having a mind. If the object doesn’t have a mind, there is no way to practice moral conduct in relation to it, no way of abstaining from these negative actions.

So we make a vow, a commitment in relation to any object that has mind. One can make the vow in front of the form of Buddha, or in front of the guru, the abbot, or the assembly of Sangha, “I won’t do the action of killing in relation to this object, sentient beings. I won’t harm these sentient beings.” This covers all objects that have mind, it doesn’t matter what shape it is—mushroom, eggs, flowers, pillars, broom—sentient beings. It covers the whole thing. That is included when we make the vow, “I won’t do harm by taking others’ lives, stealing or lying to the object, other sentient beings.” We make this vow and practice this moral conduct on the object, sentient beings, except if the person doesn’t recognize it is a sentient being due to ignorance. Like a woman who looks like a piece of stick, who doesn’t move much.

There are some amazing creatures—because of karma. There is no particular fixed number of shapes of bodies. Because of the various causes we create, so there are various shapes of bodies that sentient beings take. There are those who look like mountains, but are sentient being. Their bodies are of fire, but they are sentient beings. There are various things like that. Some beings bodies look likes plants, so looking at the shape alone you cannot discriminate them as sentient beings.

So there are various karmas. There is nothing like, “Karma should be like this,” “Non-virtuous karma should be like this.” The bodies that sentient beings take have various forms. If a hair is thrown in water and there is a consciousness that has the karma to have a body like a hair, then it can go in the hair. That happened in Tibet. A monk in Tibet had a leather strap to carry his luggage, and it become dry, so solid. So he put it in the water and after some days it became flexible, like that. So after a few days he came to pick up and it had become a sentient being. One end became the head and the other end became the tail. So he couldn’t use it to carry his load anymore. Even though

it was leather, after a consciousness has migrated into it you cannot say that it is leather anymore, or that it is hair. Similarly, even though it has the shape of a plant, you can't say for sure. That which has consciousness is not a plant, and saying that a flower closes up and eats creatures does not alone prove that it is a sentient being. There can be sentient beings who have the shape of plants, due to their karma and the karma of the surrounding beings, but just the flower closing up, just the reason of harming others cannot alone prove that it has mind.

If people are traveling in the mountains and a stone falls down and hurts a particular person, crushes his head, does that stone have mind? Would scientists say that that stone has mind just because it hit one person and not others? Or a butcher in Italy—all the pigs are lined up and a big wheel cuts the whole body immediately into pieces. The mother of the family cleans the blood for many years. They become so wealthy. One day she slips on that machine and it immediately cuts her body into pieces. That is an example of karma that is created and experienced in this lifetime.

The results of powerful actions done with holy objects can also start to be experienced in this life. If one understands the teaching on karma and checks one's own life, then one can recognize this. Particularly with treating the parents badly, harming the parents, holy objects, bodhisattvas, sangha or the gurus with whom one has made Dharma contact. Negative and positive actions done with these holy objects are very powerful. By repeatedly doing the same actions one experiences the result in this life, without need to tell about future lives. Doing the harmful action with ordinary beings again and again, the negative karma becomes very powerful, like this old lady who killed pigs. The machine was not supposed to cut her, it was only supposed to cut the pigs. But it happened that way. The machine doesn't have a mind to cut her in pieces and from her own side she doesn't want to be cut up, but it happened that way.

Whether we talk of time or not, the condition of time, if there is no further answer than, "The stone fell down on his head because of time," "The baby was born handicapped because of time," it looks as if these things happened without a cause or creator. They look close to self-existent. But the stone fell down on that particular person. This particular baby was born with an imperfect body.

Even if there is a physical cause, something wrong with the fertilized egg, some atoms missing or whatever, without reason it would not happen. The reason is the karma, the actions that the person has accumulated in the past. If there were no karma, then there would be less opportunity to be liberated from suffering and causes of suffering such as the three poisonous minds.

There would be nothing that you could do to purify the cause of suffering if there was only limited understanding. It doesn't give the opportunity for you to achieve complete release from suffering. Just that limited idea does not allow you to follow the path that ceases the unsubdued mind and its action karma. There is something else that causes the child to be conceived on that imperfect fertilized egg, or for that person to be there when the stone falls down—something that makes the elements, that makes the stone fall down, that makes the branches of the tree fall down on your head and the tree fall down on your car.

By understanding karma you have the opportunity—not just the reason of time, but your own mind, your own thought, your own karma. To put it this way: there is more freedom. It is up to you. Except if your own choice is not happiness but suffering, which is a different thing. The more one understands, the more one gets freedom to liberate oneself from undesirable suffering. If it is up to time, it doesn't depend on karma, the action created by the person himself.

After this life, at the time of death, if the continuity of consciousness would cease, then the purpose of meditation practice, everything besides ordinary life—work, farm-work or doing business, besides the worldly methods to gain happiness for life, to obtain materials, besides that something else, something different from that would not be necessary. Spiritual development or the development of the mind would not be necessary and meditation practice would be unreasonable.

Past and future lives are not objects of our knowledge because we forget. This is the same reason we do not remember things that we did in this life—but we can't say therefore they don't exist. Nowadays even in the West, there are so many stories of people telling about their past lives—where they lived, how they died, where they were shot. There are many old people who have clairvoyance and they can tell their own and others' past and future lives. Many people in the West wrote books saying that there is a life after this, they explained their experience.

For some people, when they get material objects, these last a long time and for some people they easily get broken, lost or stolen. Some people plant flowers and they grow so well, but for some people flowers don't grow, or they grow so poor, not nice looking.

On the basis of the creatures that you can see as sentient beings, you should practice moral conduct, abstaining from killing, avoiding giving harm, and benefiting. If one cannot see them, then that method is finished. If you want to work for sentient beings, even to be able to discriminate what is a sentient being and what is not a sentient being, you need clairvoyance. To be able to do the works for others according to the level of their minds, to be able to do it perfectly without any mistake, one must have clairvoyance, one must have omniscient mind or samatha and higher seeing, those realizations, in order to have good realizations, in order to have good clairvoyance, as Lama Atisha said in *The Lamp for the Path*.

Lecture 8: November 19<sup>th</sup> pm

Once more, if there is no past life and no future life, if there is no continuation of consciousness before this life and after this life, then there would be no point in achieving omniscient mind for the sake of others, because when the human beings and creatures who live on this earth died, there would be nothing after that, no life. In this case, whatever life there is now—that is it. There would be no life after this one, so what would be the point of bearing so much hardship, putting great effort into achieving omniscient mind for the sake of others? There would be no point. And anyway, the omniscient mind wouldn't be achieved within an hour, all sentient beings wouldn't be enlightened within this hour, so whether you worked for omniscient mind or not, after this life there would be no other life so there would be no point in being concerned so much about others' mental peace. There would be no point. Mental peace, relaxation, release from samsara, release from the bondage of samsara, delusion and karma—these wouldn't be that important. There wouldn't be so much point, because anyway, whenever death happens, suffering is ceased. So then in this way, dying soon would be the best method. Dying as quickly as possible would be the solution. After death there is nothing, no continuation of consciousness, so dying would be like achieving release from samsara. You don't need to meditate or do any other extra thing, you don't need to do a particular practice. The easiest one is to die now. To die now is the solution.

In that case, since there is no continuity of consciousness after this life, if death happens immediately there wouldn't be any problem. There wouldn't be any problems after that—such as not having enough money, empty pockets, then running to your parents or friends, or applying for a job, or going to see a psychologist or doing some tricks. Anyway, I am joking. Then in order to make money, or in order to have happiness and comfort, you have got to be educated, go to school, and then again in the daytime study, at nighttime work, in the daytime study—all this rushing doesn't have to be done.

But in that case, if there's no continuity of consciousness, why should there be birth? If there is no continuity after this life, if this is it, if this is the only life, why should there be birth? So many people die on this earth, why do so many get born? Why is it—many worms, many creatures, many insects, many ants, many chickens? How many eggs does a frog lay? There are many eggs from one frog. We see so many other creatures with so many eggs, so many babies coming. Recently there was a story, I am not sure whether it was in the West or in the East—maybe in an Asian country—one mother got nine children at the same time, so many born at the same time and they all stayed alive. There were many stories many different times, I get mixed up. Why is it? If there is no continuity of consciousness after this life, then why should there be birth? There shouldn't be birth also. If there's no continuation of consciousness after this, there shouldn't even be birth to start with. So why is it?

The same reason why, on this earth, there should be fewer human beings and more animals. If there's no continuation of consciousness after this life, what makes there be fewer human beings on this earth and more creatures? Even if you just think about ants, the human population and the population of ants, (Rinpoche laughs) the number of butterflies—so many in summertime, unbelievable. Why are there less human beings? Who does that? Who keeps that number? Is there somebody here on this earth who keeps the number of human beings down, allowing the number of creatures to be more and keeping humans down? Is there somebody here? I am not saying here, I mean on this earth, I am not saying in this tent!

If there were no continuity of consciousness after this life, many mistakes arise. There wouldn't be any logical answer to these questions. Even if there is an answer, temporarily, immediately, it might look kind of nice for the first question, but the second question might be difficult, or when it comes to the second or third point, it becomes more and more difficult. Then the first answer becomes completely false, ridiculous. To think in this way is helpful.

So the main subject is the kindness—what I was saying just slipped out—the main subject was kindness, how precious the other sentient beings are. In relation to the object of wood there is no way to practice moral conduct—no way to abstain, to turn away from killing, stealing and telling lies—as there is no mind. So the object in relation to which we practice moral conduct, abstaining from killing, telling lies and those things, is the object of sentient beings. As I mentioned before, sentient beings: “I won't harm them, I won't kill them.” When you take that vow, it also includes enemies, not only the friend, the stranger. It is on the basis of all the sentient beings and includes also that particular sentient being who hates you. That is the object in relation to which one makes the vow to abstain from killing.

This present precious human body, with which one can achieve any great meaning, whatever one wishes, has been received by depending on the kindness of each sentient being. Now you can see how this is received from sentient beings, including this present enemy, the one who dislikes you. This present precious human body was received by depending on his kindness. Depending on the

kindness of sentient beings, one creates the cause, including the kindness of the enemy, the one who dislikes you now. So the cause and the result of this highly meaningful precious human body are both completely brought about by the kindness of other sentient beings, including the enemy who hates you now. So actually the cause and result both are given in your hands by sentient beings, by this enemy. Having the opportunity to follow the path to liberation, to omniscient mind, comes about by the kindness of the enemy, by the kindness of other sentient beings. One can see how it is by the kindness of others.

Also the enjoyments in everyday life, our means of living, the perfections of life—this is also received by the kindness of other sentient beings, because the cause of the enjoyments is charity. The karma of the enjoyments, the perfections, is charity. And again same thing—there is no such thing as making charity to the rock, to the earth, to the sky, nothing to label, “I am making charity to the rocks, to the earth, to the sky,” no such thing to label. The object, the base in relation to we make charity is a sentient being—it has to be a sentient being. There is no such thing as making charity to yourself. So the base in relation to which you practice charity has to be another separate being, separate from yourself, another sentient being. So now again the cause of charity and the resultant enjoyment, wealth, food, clothing and material perfections, the cause and the result are completely received by the kindness of other sentient beings. It comes from them, it completely depends on others.

Having many helpers around, having surrounding people to support you, to help you—friends, family—those pleasures are received by the kindness of other sentient beings. The cause of having perfect surroundings, helpers, is patience. So, again the same thing—the object in relation to whom we practice patience are other sentient beings, the one who disturbs or the one who dislikes oneself. In this life even having helpers around, even the result and cause of this pleasure, is completely received by the kindness of others, sentient beings, completely depends upon others.

Without depending on the kindness of sentient beings, you can't do anything. You alone can't do anything, nothing, you can't even do a little movement without depending on the kindness of other sentient beings. Leave aside ultimate happiness, even a small comfort in a dream, even a small comfort, cool air passing through, touching the body when one feels hot, even such a small pleasure—there is nothing that is received without depending on the kindness of other sentient beings, there is nothing that is received without others suffering.

So besides the present human body, enjoyments, surroundings, even the causes of these are completely received by the kindness of other sentient beings. And even in the future life, if one wishes for the body of a happy transmigratory being, a human body or a deva body, perfect enjoyments, perfect surroundings, even if one wishes this in the future, the cause and the result both are received by depending on the kindness of other sentient beings. From the three great purposes this is one.

The second great purpose—even if one wishes to achieve ever-release from samsara, ever-release from the contaminated aggregates of attachment, even if one wishes to the achieve ever-release from this samsara, one has to receive it by depending on the kindness of others, sentient beings. How? The fundamental path to nirvana is the three higher trainings. The higher training of moral conduct, as I explained before, is dependent on the kindness of other sentient beings. From that cause one is able to generate the higher training of concentration, or samatha, tranquil abiding. From that one is able to generate higher seeing, insight. So through the development of this one is able to generate

everlasting release, nirvana, on this mind. So you see, by depending on the kindness of others, sentient beings, one can generate the path and the result, nirvana, in one's own mind.

Then the third great purpose; put it this way. The enemy whom you dislike, the person who hates you, the present enemy—the past ones we don't remember, the past lives' enemies we don't remember and the future enemies we don't see, so the present ones, this month, this week, this life, somebody whom you dislike, somebody who hates you, whether he is in the East or in the West, wherever he is—if he's here it is very good, sitting next to you is excellent, very good for the mind.

So first of all we think how kind that person is. Then in relation to the one whom one points out as enemy, the object about which one says, "I don't like," "I don't want to see her or him," in relation to this enemy whom one hates, whom one doesn't want to see, in relation to this enemy and all the rest of the sentient beings—you should think of that particular person in front of you, and then in relation to this enemy and all the rest of the sentient beings, you generate great compassion wishing this enemy and all the rest of sentient beings to be free from all the suffering and to cause that by yourself. The great compassion is generated in relation to this enemy and all the rest of the sentient beings, as well as great love, wishing this particular enemy and all the rest of the sentient beings to have happiness and to cause that by oneself, to do that by oneself. So great love is generated on this, and now from this great love and great compassion, which is generated on the enemy and all the rest of the sentient beings, bodhicitta comes. From that cause—the root, great compassion and great love, which is generated by depending on them—from that cause bodhicitta is generated. From bodhicitta, bodhisattvas come. From a bodhisattva Buddha came; from Buddha, the Dharma came; and from Dharma, Sangha.

Even if we have accumulated so much heavy various negative karma, such as the five uninterrupted karmas, very heavy, whatever heavy negative karma, the cause of suffering that we have accumulated, there is the opportunity to purify and make it non-existent. By taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha we have the opportunity to purify the cause, to not experience the result, the suffering, which one has to experience for many eons, for many lifetimes, many hundreds and hundreds of lifetimes—those one can purify.

Even if one has degenerated precepts, pratimoksha vows, tantric vows or bodhisattva vows, even if one has degenerated these, one can purify them with the holy object of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Having this incredible opportunity, such that even when one made a mistake it can be purified, having an opportunity like this is due to the kindness of the enemy. If you think of the evolution, if you think back to the root from where great compassion and great love came, this great opportunity, this great freedom is dependent on the kindness of the enemy. Definitely it depends on the kindness of the enemy—so kind, so precious. However many mistakes we do, non-virtuous actions, everything we can purify, having great freedom—so precious, so kind the enemy. The one who is complaining now, who is criticizing you.

And not only that: from Buddha, Dharma came, and whatever, either we accumulate merit by understanding the Dharma revealed by Buddha or we accumulate merit without knowing karma, without knowing what is virtue, what is non-virtue, without having heard the teaching of Buddha. Whenever we accumulate merit in our mind, that itself is the work of Buddha; that is the true action of Buddha. The true action of Buddha is working in the mind of sentient beings; it is collected by the sentient beings' minds—only by the Buddha's holy mind, the Buddha's holy actions doing the works for sentient beings. Even if we haven't heard the teaching of Buddha in this life, whenever we

accumulate merit, by opportunity not by knowing, not by having intellectual understanding, but by opportunity (there is no need to mention examples) then whatever merit we accumulate in our mind is the action of Buddha.

From this merit, from these virtuous actions, from this merit, we can enjoy happiness, perfections—temporary happiness and ultimate happiness, perfections that we experience, we can enjoy. The cause of happiness is purely virtue, only virtue. The cause of suffering is only non-virtue.

It's like this, yeah. The cause of this potato is only potato, not corn. The seed, the cause of this potato is only potato, it's not corn and it's not avocado. The cause of the seed of the corn is not potato, it is only corn. So like that. By planting potato, as much as you pray, "Please I want avocados from that, I don't want potatoes growing," as much as you make prostration, as much as you pray, you will only get potatoes. Because what you have planted were only potatoes. If you have planted the seed of avocados than it's okay, you don't even have to make prostrations. It's like this. You can say, "Why not?" or "Why can't we grow potatoes if we planted avocado?" However in reality it doesn't happen. If you were wishing and praying, this year planting potatoes and then next year getting avocados, and other people knew that, they would think you were crazy—that what you're hoping and what you are doing is crazy.

So like that, if you are expecting happiness from non-virtue, it's crazy. It doesn't happen in reality. In reality, this evolution doesn't happen. The cause of happiness is only virtue, merit—that is the action of Buddha. All the three times' happiness, perfections that one has experienced from beginningless samsaric lifetimes and that one is experiencing now, what one will experience in the future, temporal happiness, ultimate happiness, all the three times happiness and perfections are completely, completely dependent—you can see, for example, that today each comfort, each pleasure that we have, each spoonful of food, each cup of coffee, each biscuit, each comfort that we experience today—when you look at the evolution and how things are dependent on each other, completely, even today, each comfort is dependent on the kindness of this enemy, is dependent upon this person.

Now we think this way: without depending on this enemy who dislikes oneself, without depending on this enemy, ignoring this, forgetting it, without depending on this, there is no way that great compassion can be generated. There is no way that great love for all sentient beings, great compassion for all, focusing on all sentient beings, can be generated. There is no way to generate bodhicitta, no way for any bodhisattvas to happen. Without depending on this, among all sentient beings, ignoring this, there is no way to generate great love and compassion, to generate bodhicitta, to become bodhisattvas. There is no way for Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and the attainer of the holy Dharma and Sangha to exist.

Then, without them there wouldn't be the opportunity to purify the negative karma that we accumulated. Liberating oneself from true suffering and the true cause of suffering wouldn't happen, there wouldn't be this opportunity. Also without Buddha, there wouldn't be Dharma, there wouldn't be the Buddha's holy actions accumulating merit in our mind. So without this, there is no way that we can experience any—leave aside ultimate happiness, even every day life's comfort, sitting here comfortably on this cushion, warm—there is no way for even this small comfort to happen, there is no way to experience this. By ignoring and forgetting the enemy who hates us, among all sentient beings, ignoring and forgetting him, there is nothing among the three times' happinesses—past,

present and future happiness—that you can experience or enjoy. This is completely dependent on the sentient being who dislikes you. So that person is incredibly kind and so precious.

Immediately, especially, at the moment, even though we hear the words, even though we understand the words, we might not feel the kindness from the heart. Through this meditation, through this evolution, we may not feel it now, but gradually, if we meditate more and more, as more faith in karma comes, you see the advantage of achieving enlightenment. The more you understand the teaching, the more you meditate, the more you purify and accumulate merit, the more you will feel the kindness of others stronger and stronger from the heart.

There is more to talk about—about the kindness of the enemy, more clarification, and ways to think how the enemy is incredibly kind. There are other ways to prove it. When you think of these reasons then you see and feel that among the sentient beings there is no one who is more kind to you than the enemy. You see this, you feel this from the depth of the heart, and you feel so precious. Hopefully it will be possible to talk more about that, the little advice that I heard from the holy mouth of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, when he was teaching the *Bodhicharyavatara* commentary.

By depending on the kindness and the existence of the enemy one generates bodhicitta, the cause of enlightenment. One is able to generate bodhicitta, one has the opportunity to generate bodhicitta by depending on his existence, by depending on his having dislikeful thoughts towards oneself. In order to achieve omniscient mind one should complete the practice of the six paramitas. From the six paramitas, one is the paramita of patience. So if nobody has disliking thoughts towards you, if nobody has ill will, there is no opportunity to practice the paramita of patience at all, and no opportunity to achieve omniscient mind as there is no opportunity to practice patience. There is no opportunity to do the effortless work for all sentient beings according to the level of their mind. One cannot accomplish the result, achieving omniscient mind and doing continuous effortless, extensive work for others—one cannot do this. One being able to do effortless extensive work for all the sentient beings, freeing all sentient beings from suffering and leading them to the state of omniscient mind comes from the practice of patience.

If everybody loves you, if everybody is a friend to you, if all the sentient beings love you, nobody has anger, nobody has disliking thoughts for you, then there is no opportunity to practice the paramita of patience, and no way to be able to offer extensive benefit to all sentient beings according to the level of their mind. There is no way to achieve the omniscient state of mind. There is no way; the opportunity to offer extensive benefits for others will be blocked. There is no way. So now, with whom one can practice patience, the paramita of patience? With no one else, no one except this one who has dislikeful thoughts towards oneself, with no one else except this one. So you see, by depending on his kindness, we achieve omniscient mind. By achieving omniscient mind, we are able to free all sentient beings from their suffering and lead them to sublime happiness, enlightenment.

Somebody who doesn't have dislikeful thoughts, even if he says something negative with words or does something negative with the body, if you know that he doesn't have dislikeful thoughts towards you, even if he tries to beat you, even though he says something, calls you something, anyway he loves you, his mind loves you—even though his action is something else, not gentle—you wouldn't get angry with this person, because of the fact that he or she likes you.

The most painful for one's mind or what makes one get angry is somebody who dislikes one. Even if he doesn't do any harm with his actions of body or speech, if the mind dislikes or hates you it is



the most bothering, the most painful for the mind; when you don't do the practice of patience that is the most bothering, the most painful.

So you see, by having disliking thoughts, ill will, towards oneself, because of that you label "enemy." Otherwise there is no way to label enemy.

However, for him it is creating negative karma. Having ill will and negative thoughts towards oneself, criticizing, giving bad reputation, giving harm towards one, he is creating negative karma, he is making himself suffer. In another way this is pitiful. For himself it's no good, but for you his having dislikeful thoughts is so extremely kind, so precious. His having dislikeful thoughts, ill will and anger towards you, for you it is so kind, extremely kind. With the person who has that type of mind, dislikeful thoughts, anger, one can train the mind, one can develop the good heart, the thought of loving kindness, great compassion, patience. With that person you can work for enlightenment. There is opportunity to accomplish omniscient mind with that person. Through the development of the good heart, train the mind in the good heart with that person who has ill will.

Particularly when you think of the kindness of the enemy, how he is extremely kind to oneself, how helpful, kind and so beneficial in generating bodhicitta, in generating patience in one's mind, in the path to omniscient mind and to accomplish omniscient mind—in this way you can see how precious he is, the person who has ill will towards oneself. The cause of bodhicitta, the thought of loving kindness, great compassion, the cause—the path, the six paramitas and the result, omniscient mind, doing the continuous effortless extensive works for all sentient beings—this is all received by completely depending on the kindness of this enemy. How kind he is, this enemy. All the three times happiness was received by his kindness, and the three time happiness, perfections and everything was received by the kindness of all sentient beings. Each human being here, those who are together here in this meditation hut, under this shed, all their three time happiness and perfections was received by the kindness of each sentient being, each human being, each deva, sura and asura, by the kindness of each narak, preta being or animal being. It depends on the kindness of each sentient being.

Also, to think the following way is very effective for the mind, especially for those who do not feel so much, do not understand so much this way of explanation about the kindness of others, cannot feel this way of explaining so much. To think this way is very good for the mind.

When we say "I," it's one person. How much you, oneself, how much you are happy, it is one person. How much you are suffering, what incredible suffering you experience, it is just one person. It is just one, one number. So no matter how much you are happy, it is nothing to get excited about, nothing to be surprised, it's just one person. How many incredible problems you have, billions of problems you have, nothing to be so much depressed. Nothing so much to be shocked, it is just one person, just one, "I, I," just one person. But others, what is called "others," the sentient beings, are uncountable number, trillion numbers of sentient beings, that many number of sentient beings—even they are happy, it's so little number. Others, what is called others, even if two sentient beings are suffering it's too much, it's too many, there is a mistake, even if two human beings are suffering it's too many.

So now, think this way—what is more important? Here is one person, here are two people—which is more important—to work for this one person, to eliminate his suffering and to obtain happiness for him, or to eliminate the suffering of two people and obtain happiness for them? What is more

important? Is working for the group, the two people, more important, or is working for the one person more important? Now, of course, this is one, this is two, so of course it is more important to work for the greater number. The one that is greater in number is more important. Working for two sentient beings is more important than working for one sentient being. So they are more precious, these two are more precious than only one.

If there is a choice between one million dollars and a hundred dollars, which is more precious; is a hundred dollars more precious than one million dollars? You see, if there is a choice then without even one minute's delay, of course we take the one million dollars. If somebody puts it on the table, one hundred dollars and one million dollars, "Which one do you want to take?" Then if you are not crazy—anyway, the reason you choose the one million dollars is because it is more in number, so it is more precious, more valuable. So the same thing, the more important is what is more in number. So now, this one sentient being and ten sentient beings—what is more important, to work for one sentient being or to work for ten sentient beings? Which is more important? Of course there is no comparison, it's more important to work for the ten sentient beings.

Now one sentient being and a billion sentient beings—here is one human being and there are one billion human beings, so which is more important for you to work for? Which is more important? Of course it is more important to work for the incredible number. Now here is one sentient being and here are the others, uncountable numbers of sentient beings, so which is more important for you to work for—for this one sentient being or for uncountable numbers of sentient beings? There is no need even to doubt. Of course it is obvious; the others for whom you work are an uncountable number and this is just one.

So now, that one sentient being for whom you are working is not a separate sentient being, it is yourself; so now, between yourself and all the others, an uncountable number of sentient beings, you and others, for whom you are going to work? Are you going to work for yourself or are you going to work for others—which one are you going to choose? Which is more important, your working for yourself, for your own happiness, which is more important, or your working to eliminate others' suffering, to obtain happiness for all others, an uncountable number? Which is more important, which are you going to choose?

Same thing: as you want happiness and you don't want suffering, so the uncountable numbers of others also wish happiness and do not want suffering. So choose for whom you are going to work. You see, when you think of others, the uncountable number, *you* are completely lost, nothing precious. When you think of others, you, the one, the "I" is completely lost, insignificant, completely lost, not important. When you think of how others want happiness and don't want suffering, so many numbers, when you think about that, you, the one person, is completely lost. When you compare like this others become so important, so precious. So it is important to fulfill the wishes of others, to work for others, to eliminate their suffering, to obtain happiness for them. Nothing in life is more important than that work, nothing else is important; nothing among the works that you do in the life is more valuable than doing the work for sentient beings. Nothing else is more important. Nothing else is more valuable, nothing is more beneficial than this work, nothing is more important than this work in our life.

Also you can see from this: "So far how I have been living my life? I have been cherishing only me, completely renouncing the uncountable number of others." All these are left out, day and night, all

the time, cherishing only oneself, doing everything for oneself—wearing clothes, eating food, everything, making money, everything for oneself. You can see the selfish attitude.

So now the conclusion is this: it is much more skillful, much more wise to renounce the small number for the many, that is much wiser, much more skillful. If you renounce the many for the small number, if you renounce the two people for one person, it is not skillful—this is generally speaking. If you renounce the many for the small number, it is not skillful, it is foolish. If you renounce the small number for the many, it is skillful. And the small number is not others; it is just one, that is, oneself. So by this logical reason, just by the number, not by particular belief or faith in religion, just even by this number, like the money, a million dollars and one dollar, you can see so clearly...

<end of tape>

...renouncing others, which are an uncountable number, and cherishing oneself is the cause of many sufferings. That is foolish. Renouncing self for the sake of others is more skillful, and this is the cause of all happiness. So the conclusion is this: one should work for others, renouncing oneself and cherishing others and fulfilling the wishes of sentient beings.

So now, what sentient beings want and what they don't want—what they don't want is suffering and what they want is happiness. But now, for sentient beings to be free from all the sufferings, to be in sublime happiness, the sentient beings themselves should follow the path to omniscient mind. Without following the path it can not happen. So to do that, in order for sentient beings to follow the path, you should reveal the teachings. In order to reveal the teaching for them, first you should understand clearly, without any mistake, all the various personalities, the various levels of mind of sentient beings. You should see them clearly. Then also there are various methods according to that. So you should know the various methods without mistake. The one who can see this perfectly is only omniscient mind, nothing else. Therefore the solution or the method to free all sentient beings from suffering and lead them to omniscient mind, the sublime happiness, is that one should achieve omniscient mind.

So this should be the goal of our practice, of listening to the teachings, of doing the meditations, whatever. If possible from morning until night, every single action that we do should be dedicated for that, to accomplish these goals. And at least that which are Dharma actions, listening to teachings, doing meditations, those things, as much as possible they should be dedicated for that goal.

Like the mother whose only, most beloved, most dear son or child fell down in the fire—when she hears this, when she sees this, simultaneously the thought to relieve the child from the suffering of the fire, from being burned, arises without effort, automatically. While she is eating or running round, it automatically arises. Like that, she wants to pick up the child from the fire. In the same way, whenever we have the attitude to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all others, effortlessly, like the mother has this thought to go in the fireplace herself and take it out—automatically, simultaneously, effortlessly, it arises—like that, when we have this we have generated bodhicitta, the principal cause of enlightenment.

I stop here. It went quite long, I am sorry.

[Dedications]

Lecture 9: November 21<sup>st</sup> am

[Prayers]

Homage to Manjushri, mandala offering.

The visualization as I explained before. What we shouldn't forget is this: the present life's father and mother, friend, enemy. In the text the friend is in front, the enemy is behind, however I think that whatever is most effective for the mind can be done: the friend behind, the enemy in front, to take more care of the enemy, to have more concern. Then, all the rest of the sentient beings are around, and in the teachings it is explained that you should visualize them in the form of human beings. During the practice of refuge we visualize all sentient beings as human beings because when you recite the refuge prayer, as you are the leader of the prayer all the rest of the sentient beings follow your prayer. If you visualize ants, if you think of snakes, frogs, bugs and fleas, it is difficult to think that they are reciting the prayer. So I think this is just to make it easy for the mind.

However, whichever way is most effective, I think that can be visualized. The whole point is to subdue our mind. The whole point of everything, visualization, anything, is to subdue the unsubdued mind that we have now, to make the unpeaceful mind peaceful. That is the whole point of these various methods. So I think the main point is whatever is the most effective; that is the most important.

Then on the basis of this visualization purifying together, and you and all sentient beings together having generated all realizations. In this way it becomes a great puja, a method for all sentient beings to meet Dharma and gradually to be able to follow this incredible path, which leads to the state of omniscient mind.

[Requesting prayer]

If I abbreviate the previous explanation of the motive of bodhicitta or the way of training the mind in bodhicitta: exchanging oneself and others, the way of training the mind in this bodhicitta.

As it is explained in the teaching written by the great bodhisattva Thogme Zangpo, *The Thirty-Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva*, all the sufferings, each and every suffering, comes from desiring happiness for self, wishing only oneself to be happy; and enlightenment, the fully completed state that is fully developed and purified, which means enlightenment—it's just making it exact according to the Tibetan term—the state which is completely purified and fully developed came from the thought to benefit others. Therefore, completely changing one's own happiness into the sufferings of others—maybe my English is not right, might be my own English. Completely exchanging one's own happiness for other's suffering is the practice of a bodhisattva, the son of the victorious ones.

Anyway, in short what this great bodhisattva Thogme Zangpo is saying is that since you do not wish for suffering and you wish for happiness, suffering comes from this selfish attitude, seeking happiness for the self. All the suffering, each and every suffering came from that. And all the happiness—here in the teaching it only mentions enlightenment but what it is saying is all the

happiness, all the perfections and among that the ultimate happiness, perfection, among that the highest, the state of omniscient mind, the state which is completely purified and fully developed, the sublime happiness [enlightenment], even this comes from the thought of benefiting others, sentient beings.

So what it is saying is that if one renounces the selfish attitude seeking happiness only for the self, if you renounce this, if you give this up, if you change the mind, if you transform the mind from that into the thought of benefiting others, then not only do your wishes for all the temporal happiness and perfections become successful but even the ultimate wishes, to attain the state of omniscient mind, will be accomplished immediately, easily, if you have this thought of cherishing and benefiting others.

So therefore, as you have the opportunity now to practice this, you see, you want happiness now; you don't want suffering, now, even today. That is the wish you have. Since your wish is like that, since even now you do not want suffering but only want happiness, what you should practice, what you should do, the method, the practice to fulfill that wish is to renounce one's own happiness for the sake of others, and to take others' suffering and experience that by oneself. Offer your own happiness and perfections to others, and take others' suffering and experience on yourself. So you should practice this, even from right now, at this time.

This practice is the practice of the holy beings, the bodhisattvas, the sons of the victorious ones, the buddhas. "Victorious one" means Buddha, who became victorious over the unsubdued mind, who conquered the two types of obscurations—the unsubdued mind obscuration and the obscuration to fully knowing, to the omniscient mind. Who is completely victorious over the two obscurations, the inner enemy, the two obscurations. These are the practices of those holy beings, the sons of the victorious ones, so it is worthwhile to follow their examples, to take their example. It is worthwhile to be able to do the practices that are explained in the teachings, in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, the great bodhisattva Shantideva's teachings, instead of renouncing others, renounce self. Instead of cherishing oneself, cherish others. It is worthwhile to be able to change the mind like this and to be able to offer one's own happiness and perfections to others and take others' suffering upon oneself and experience it. It is worthwhile to be able to do this practice, to change the mind and even the actions; to be able to exchange with other sentient beings.

If there was a choice, one would take all the suffering, sincerely—all the causes of suffering, the unsubdued mind and all the true suffering, such as the three types of sufferings—the suffering of pervasive formation, the suffering of change, the suffering of suffering. The sufferings of the lower realms, the sufferings of human beings: rebirth, old age, sickness, death, the deva's suffering—the suffering of suffering. If there was a choice, if this was something that you can take by hand, like a thorn, like a fire on the body of other sentient beings, something that you can help by taking it by hand; if the sufferings of others were like that, if there was that possibility, like if a fire spark fell on the baby's body and immediately you could take that fire out with your hand—if you could take all the suffering of other sentient beings by hand, like a thorn or a fire, if there was a choice or possibility like that, then you would want to take the suffering of uncountable numbers, you would want to take all their suffering, cause and result, upon yourself. Instead of them suffering, you would be happy to take all their suffering upon yourself and experience their suffering instead. You would be extremely happy if you could really do that, like taking a thorn or the fire that fell on the body if, when someone was suffering, you could take it away and offer the comfort or peace to that sentient

being and suffer for them. Like that, if there was a choice, immediately you would want to exchange your own happiness for others' suffering. To have such an incredible will like this.

Even if in everyday life we don't have that much great will—if another person makes a mistake, or accuses you—if some other person has stolen a car and that person is in the group with you, and the owner of the car comes along and accuses you, running toward you with a red face, red nose, red ears, with a shaky mind, as if he is almost going to eat you he is so mad at you, and he scolds for stealing the car even though it's not the case—these small things that happen normally in daily life. If you tell this person, “Oh, I didn't do this,” trying to prove that it's not you, then it has to be somebody else, it has to be another sentient being. If you prove that it's not you, it has to be another sentient being, so he has to get mad at another sentient being, so that means another sentient being has to experience the problem, take the accusation, the punishment, the whole thing, whatever has to be done according to the law, getting caught in prison, all these things. So even though you don't suffer punishment and all these things, in fact it's the same or worse, because another sentient being has to suffer. Although you don't suffer, another sentient being has to suffer.

So even in the case of a small suffering like in this example, you have the choice to take it upon yourself and let the other sentient being, the kind, precious one from whom you received all the three great purposes, as well as all the happiness and perfection, temporal and ultimate, of this life and future lives, who is much more precious than the wish-granting jewel, to let him have the comfort of not having this accusation, all these problems, to offer that to him, to this precious sentient being, and take his suffering upon yourself. We should train the mind in that way, we should have such great will like this. If there's the possibility to take the true cause of suffering and the result, the whole thing, like I mentioned before in the case of taking the fire out and putting it on your body, we should train the mind in that way, we should have such great will—that is exchanging oneself with others. We should have the great will like this.

Actually in the practice right now you can't really do that, we can't really take the fire, the whole entire suffering upon ourselves, and then immediately make them free, to have peace, ultimate peace, the ever-release from suffering. Without sentient beings themselves following the path that releases from suffering, without them doing that, actually it is not possible for them to be free from all the sufferings. But we should train the mind in this way, we should have this great will, if there is the possibility that without delay, even a minute, we can take all the causes of true suffering and true sufferings upon oneself, and experience them by oneself. However what can we do now according to our capability? If we have a choice about even the small problems of other sentient beings that we can experience for others, we should practice them. As we pray, as we wish, in daily life practice we should practice taking other's suffering and offering the comfort and victory to others. Even if it's small, we should practice as much as possible.

If we cannot even exchange self with others even in terms of a small comfort, if we can not offer even a small comfort to others, such as one plate of food, or one cup of tea, if we cannot share, then how can we dedicate all the happiness, our body, all our possessions and even the good karmas and merits that you accumulate in three times—past, present and future—to others? How can we offer them to other sentient beings? We can't. If we cannot practice even the small ones, if we cannot exchange even the small comfort or pleasure for others' suffering, how can we exchange the greatest suffering?

If somebody stole a hundred dollars and we cannot do the practice of dedication, taking the loss upon oneself and offering the victory to that sentient being, if you cannot dedicate it, cannot offer that to that sentient being, even such a small comfort, such a small perfection, if one cannot give that up or offer to that sentient being—instead of feeling rejoicefulness, instead of feeling happy, feeling how good it is that one sentient being has received it, has got it, even if one doesn't know how precious he is, how kind, even if one cannot think that he was kind in the past life, kind in the future life, and kind to accomplish the three great purposes—even if one cannot think that, but simply thinks he also wants happiness, he doesn't want suffering, as I wish happiness and do not wish to suffer—we are the same, exactly the same; equal, completely equal, the same person, the same sentient being, having exactly the same wish. “As my happiness is that important, his happiness is the same thing, also important, so why can't he have it, why can't he receive that one hundred dollars?”

When you find a hundred dollars, how happy your mind is. Like that you are so surprised when you find one hundred thousand dollars, even one hundred dollars—you show much excitement, clap your hands, like that, much excitement. So why can't you do the same thing when others receive one million dollars, when others receive one hundred dollars? Why can't you do the same thing, why can't you clap your hands and show much excitement that another sentient being has found it?

If we cannot share or dedicate even a small thing like this for others, how we can do the practice of the great actions of a bodhisattva, such as making charity of the whole body for others? How can we do this practice? The conclusion is, if we cannot even dedicate a small comfort for other sentient beings, then practices such as sacrificing the whole body to other sentient beings will be very difficult.

You cannot even offer your comfortable seat to others. Even such a small comfort we cannot offer to others. You run so fast from the bus to the airplane to get a comfortable seat before other people come. Even for such a tiny thing you rush. It's amazing. And all the people in the bus are the same, they all want comfort, it's the same thing.

Just the thought came—I just remembered in England, in the center, outside of London, in the Lake District, at Manjushri Institute, fifteen minute walk from the Center there is a large cemetery. One day in the afternoon I went there on purpose with another person, to see it. One evening I was painting the eyes of the thousand-armed Chenrezig. The artist who made the painting hung the painting in my room. So one evening I went to see the cemetery. It's a very interesting cemetery. On one side, at one place, in one spot, a person who didn't die yet put a piece of stone on which they had written his name. It said such and such a name, born at such and such a time—that's all. After that there was an empty space, a lot of space. So I asked why they ground was empty, and they said that this person was worried that when he died, they wouldn't find space for his body in the cemetery, so he paid the money in advance. He bought it. I think it is very expensive to die in the West. Even if you have a good death, it's very expensive. Death costs a lot, a lot of expenses.

Of course making preparations for when you die makes it easier for other people. You make your own plans so that when the death happens your body can easily be taken care of because of caring for other people, because of not wanting to cause difficulty for other people. That kind of thought might be good. Like the example: we have one meditator who lives in the mountains, he is Tibetan and has been living, moving around in Solu Khumbu since the Chinese took over Tibet, since he escaped from Tibet. He's been moving around for many years, nothing definite, like the people who

are called hippies, like that, no definite home. He used to move around with his tent like the ones they put in the forest in America, like a teepee, especially at Vajrapani Center—a small tent that fits one person. So he carried the tent, then his religious symbols, the big *damaru* and the thigh-bone that are used for practice, and at night time he moved from one place to another, putting the tent in the forest or in a cave, in different places, sometimes holy places or other meditator's places. Then at nighttime he did the practice called *Slaying the Ego*. He builds a hermitage at one place, stays some time and then he moves, goes to another place and starts another hermitage. So this meditator has one nun, I think this old nun is his aunt or something, I don't remember exactly, but she used to cook for him and she offered service to him.

People call this meditator Gomchen-la, and once he thought he would die any moment—today or any of those days. He usually thinks this—this is one of the main points of awareness in his daily life. At that time, however, he thought that this nun is very old, she can't do much—such as pick up the dried wood, and burn the body with kerosene. So Gomchen-la, this meditator, brought firewood and he piled it up right outside the hermitage. He piled up the wood, and he bought kerosene and made everything ready there so that if he died, the nun would just have to drag out his body from the meditation bed and put it on the firewood. That all she would have to do. She wouldn't have much problem, and it wouldn't cause much tiredness or worry for her. So he did this. But he is still alive.

But that is a good idea. It is very good for the mind, extremely beneficial for the mind and careful for others, to save them difficulty. That is a good idea. However, buying that expensive land, paying a lot of money, so much money—if your consciousness stayed with the body, if you would be in that beautiful park, that cemetery, if you yourself would be on that land, then it would be like living in a beautiful park, for pleasure. But after death the consciousness is somewhere else, completely somewhere else. The body is like stone, like wood—even during the death process, when the breath is about to stop, even during that time if you touch the hand, if you touch the fingers, because the heat element is gradually absorbed in the heart, already about one hour or about three and a half hours after the breath stops, when you lift the body up it is already like lifting up a piece of wood—so heavy, concrete. And when you touch the fingers you feel like you are touching wood, like your fingers are made of wood, like touching the fingers of a mannequin—very cold, so cold, very solid—you don't feel like you are touching a human being, like that. So there is no opportunity for him to come with the body and to live there, to enjoy the flowers around. The reason he paid so much money for which he worked so hard, experiencing much hardship, is because “this is *my* body, and my body wants good land; my body; my body, so for that I want good land.”

Another way, one can think, “Oh, that's very nice land, somebody else's body can be there; so many people are dying in this country, very good, I am sure if somebody's body can be there, somebody will be happy, somebody has the chance to buy that place, so relatives and friends will be happy...” One can think like this, one can dedicate this small land, that piece of land, a little bit longer than this table, for others. One can think in this way, instead of worrying too much about being unable to get it, and making a lot of expenses just for that. Instead of spending all that money, all those thousands of dollars for that, if one gives it, if one makes charity to the poor people, or nowadays there are many people, refugees from other countries who have so much suffering, if one makes charity of all that money it is incredible. If possible without any expectation for reputation, if one makes charity, it is so beneficial, so practical and so beneficial.



What I am saying is this: even in everyday life, in small things, even the small problems of others, if there is a choice, if there is the possibility that you can take them on yourself, the things that we should practice, it is so good to practice as much as possible—even small practices of exchanging oneself with others. In this way, gradually, as we train our minds and actually practice like this, even with small things, even offering our seat to others because others also want happiness and do not want suffering, even offering a small victory or comfort to others, if we practice like this then gradually also huge problems, even the greatest sufferings that we can experience one day will be no problem for our minds—we will be extremely happy to take that upon ourselves and experience it, and offer the greatest comfort to others.

Similarly, if we practice charity with small things now, like giving food to dogs or beggars, even five paisa, ten paisa or one rupee, if we practice giving small amounts then gradually the thought of giving becomes greater and greater, increases. Then afterwards we do not find any difficulties at all—even if somebody needs your body you will give it with great happiness, even if there is much suffering when you cut the body in pieces and make charity of it, and even though there is much pain in the body, the mind is unbelievably happy to have the opportunity. The mind does not have any difficulty to make charity of the whole body for others. So one can get trained from when one is small—even somebody who has incredible miserliness, who can't give even one paisa to others, by practicing with small things gradually the mind can be changed, the thought of giving can be developed from small to great.

In Lama Tsong Khapa's lamrim teaching, somebody who has incredible miserliness, who can't give anything to others, who can't make any charity of food or money, whatever it is, should practice like this: from the right hand you give to the left hand. As if you are giving to somebody else—still it is you but as if you are giving to somebody else. This hand gives to this hand; this hand gives to that hand, like this. So far I didn't get this practice done.

While you're practicing, while you're doing this practice, the mind is extremely happy, so happy, and is in a state of great rejoicefulness. The mind is so peaceful, so happy, and when the mind is so peaceful, happy like that, the outside form and even the action of speech is nice, gentle; even the outside body looks generous. Then all the surrounding people are very happy. They are always very happy to be around you, to see you, to help you. The one who has a good heart, who has such a generous mind, no matter how much he does not want reputation, to be famous, to have a good reputation, automatically, no matter how much he has aversion to reputation, even though he doesn't cling to reputation, doesn't expect it, the reputation comes, other people create the reputation. Even if one seeks reputation, if one wants a good reputation, it is important to practice the good heart.

In everyday life according to your present capability, however you can, in small things, you should help others and share others' suffering. If somebody is carrying a very heavy load, very exhausted, sweat coming, bearing much hardship—we should help to carry it. Things like that, whatever we can do at the moment, small benefits, whatever we can offer, whatever we can take upon ourselves, practice. In that way we should practice the thought to renounce ourselves. In that way, the thought exchanging oneself for others, renouncing oneself and cherishing others will be gradually developed, as well as the actual action helping sentient beings.

The main conclusion is to be able to do this, to renounce self and cherish others, to exchange one's happiness for others' sufferings. This is the most important thing, not only in everyday life, but even

in the small practices of exchanging oneself for others. The most important thing is to think, to be always aware, to think again and again how others, how sentient beings are so precious, how they are so important, how they are so kind. To think of the kindness of others, to think in many different ways—sometimes they were mother, and the four types of kindness—many different ways. That is extremely important. So it so much depends on how much you are doing the practice of exchanging oneself for others and on how much you feel the kindness of others.

In everyday life it is very important to meditate, to think and to read the teachings that explain about kindness, and discuss how others are precious. It is important to meditate, to study and to be aware—especially when you are dealing with other sentient beings, when you are physically with others. At those times be aware of your meditation of kindness and the teachings that you read on kindness. Then the action to benefit others automatically comes, it has to come. It's unbearable to not do the practice of offering the victory to others and taking others' losses upon oneself—you feel not doing this practice is unbearable. Not practicing the thought of loving kindness is unbearable.

Our everyday life enjoyment and comfort, every day that we are able to be alive and able to follow the path to liberation, to the state of omniscient mind, is due to the kindness of sentient beings. So even by this reason we should renounce the self and cherish others. Even by the reason that we can accomplish the three great purposes, depending on the kindness of each sentient being, including the most precious kindness of a sentient being who hates oneself.

By the reason that they are offering the three great purposes one should do the practice of renouncing self and cherishing others—avoiding giving harm and accomplishing benefit for others.

Even by the reason that that which is called “I,” the self, is only one and what is called “others” are an uncountable number. So there is nothing to compare in terms of how others are so precious, so kind, so important, and so precious—what they want, what they like, how much more important this is than what I like. So even by this reason one should renounce the self and cherish others, not only changing the idea, the attitude but also the action, with speech, body and mind. Instead of working always for the self, to obtain benefits for oneself and to prevent one's own suffering, instead of that we should practice with body, speech and mind to only do the works for the happiness of others.

[Break in tape]

[From notes]

The greatest work, the greatest benefit for sentient beings is to free them from the cause of suffering, from the result of suffering, and to lead them to the sublime state of happiness. That is what is needed and this is the beneficial work for sentient beings. So giving food, money, clothing, making schools, hospitals, helping like this—this is of benefit for others, it relieves others from temporal difficulties, so it is an action that benefits others, but this is not the greatest benefit, this is not enough. Because the sentient beings themselves, these thousands of sentient beings who are starving in Cambodia, they have been millionaires countless times in past lives. They had wealthy lives numberless times but they are still in samsara. Just having wealth alone did not free them from suffering; if this were the case then all sentient beings would have been free from suffering a long time, an unimaginable time ago.

What they need is to be liberated from the cause of suffering—not only from sickness, starvation and the hardships of not having a home, not only that. Actions that give temporal benefit, such as giving food and home, are not enough. Any action that one can offer that gives benefit to others, one should do. But this is not the greatest benefit. The greatest benefit for beings is to attain the omniscient mind. Actualizing the omniscient mind in this mind is the best method to accomplish the most beneficial work for others, extensive benefits for others.

You see, even the arhats who have achieved freedom from samsara, who have incredible psychic powers, who see past and future lives—they are not omniscient but they have incredible powers, according to our mind they have omniscient mind, compared to our ignorant mind an arhat has omniscient mind, incredible understanding—but even the arhat cannot do perfect work for others. An arhat—I'm not going over the cause—cannot see the subtle karmas created eons ago, because of the distance of time. He cannot see the possibilities that the person can become a monk, can become ordained. The reason an arhat doesn't have omniscient mind and cannot do the extensive effortless work for others without mistake like a Buddha is because he has not even completed the work for self; he has not completed the two accumulations of merit and wisdom. Buddha has completed the two accumulations, has purified the obscurations, has finished the work and has generated the realizations. Such a Buddha, whose holy mind is living in perfect qualities, such a Buddha, with holy body, speech and mind is able to do effortless continuous work until all sentient beings become enlightened, revealing the different methods according to the level of their minds. And this depends on the principal cause: bodhicitta.

So our being able to reach enlightenment depends on our being able to generate bodhicitta and our being able to generate bodhicitta depends on our being able to practice patience because one of the greatest hindrances to the generation of bodhicitta is anger. With anger it is very difficult to generate bodhicitta because it destroys the merits; and to be able to generate bodhicitta you need so much merit.

Even somebody who has no thought to reach omniscient mind for the sake of others, somebody who is not following the teachings of Buddha has to harmonize with others, has to be kind to others and should have patience with others. If not, instead of others only having the thought of self in the mind, then one easily gets angry, impatient, has no peace, has uncontrolled mind and gets angry, disturbing and not allowing oneself to have happiness. This causes much disharmony, and also much confusion for others.

So practicing patience is much more important than lunch, much more important than dinner. It is much more important than the atomic bomb. If everybody practices patience there is no atomic bomb. No anger. Then there is no opportunity for anger to arise, and no need to make weapons. But as long as human beings on this earth don't practice patience and the material state develops so much, there is much more danger for oneself—not only for others, but also for oneself. So one can see how important it is, more important than a job. If one gets a hundred dollars now, does it make happiness, does it make harmony, does it destroy anger? If you compare it with material things, you can see it more clearly. You can get more harm from material, but practicing patience everybody likes; even spirits. Nagas, those who give harm, those who are vicious, cannot harm you; they like you. There is nobody who dislikes you. If somebody loves you, renouncing self and cherishing you, there is nobody who does not respect that.

So I stop here. Somehow I did not get the *Bodhicharyavatara* started from the beginning. Hopefully I will finish the chapter of patience in this course and then some other chapter, whatever is necessary, whatever is needed or beneficial.

Lecture 10: November 21<sup>st</sup> pm

As I mentioned this morning, the best method among the various methods, the most beneficial method to benefit other sentient beings is the omniscient mind. It is not like you click the camera and the picture comes out, or as you press the button suddenly the light comes, like that—without depending on hardships, following the graduated path, without depending on completing the work of accumulating extensive merits and purification—omniscient mind cannot be achieved easily, immediately, right in that minute, in that hour. Just by thinking, “Oh, I want to become enlightened this minute,” just merely by thinking, “I want to help others, I want to become enlightened,” just by wishing, just by thinking like this, without need to do any practice to bring that about, just by wishing that, it doesn’t happen.

There are some things I would like to mention but I won’t mention them this time, otherwise it doesn’t come to the subject, the *Bodhicharyavatara*.

Therefore the best method to benefit others, at this time, in this life, while we have this precious human body, qualified with eight freedoms and ten richnesses, with which we can achieve any great meaning, with which whatever we wish we can complete—the graduated path to enlightenment, what is called bodhicitta, the three principles of the path to enlightenment; what is written in the teachings about bodhicitta, about shunyata in so many volumes, the *Prajnaparamita* and the thought of renouncing samsara; then the graduated path of tantra, the graduated path of generation, the graduated path of completion, what is written there in the teaching, what is explained by Buddha—you can accomplish that, if you can have that in the mind, you can generate that in this life, in this body, you can make it a living experience in this life, in your own mind.

The meaning of these teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment such as Madhyamaka, such as *Abhisamaya-alamkara* and the Vajrayana teachings—if we generate the meaning that the subjects show in the mind, that is the best method to benefit others.

However, among all this: bodhicitta. If you can generate what is called bodhicitta, there are unbelievable benefits. In the sutra teachings, there is one whole volume that talks so much about the benefits of this. This is the path that all the three time Buddha’s have gone through: the three principal paths, bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is that which has been in the mind of the lineage lamas of the profound and extensive paths, from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, such as the great bodhisattva Shantideva and Lama Tsong Khapa, which has been in the holy minds of the lineage lamas and which is the essence of all the eighty-four thousand teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. The very essence of the practice of the bodhisattvas is bodhicitta, renouncing self and cherishing others. If you can generate this in this life, in this body, in this life’s mind, then the best method to benefit others has started. This is the most important, this is the best method. If you have this you can achieve enlightenment. Without this: no hope to achieve enlightenment, no hope to do the effortless extensive works for other sentient beings. So it is decided by whether you have bodhicitta in your mind or not.

So how to take the essence of this precious human body, how to make it highly meaningful; this precious human body, the perfect human body that we have found one time—what makes it highly meaningful is having bodhicitta, by practicing bodhicitta. Without bodhicitta whatever realization you have—clairvoyance, samatha realization, single-pointed concentration that can last for hundreds of eons, unshakable concentration, or even having opened the chakras, even the arteries and seeds, even though you have the capability, able to do the function of flowing up and down, having control, even any profound realization of secret mantra—whatever you have, since one’s mind is empty of bodhicitta, there is no hope to achieve enlightenment. Without bodhicitta, a person cannot achieve enlightenment, no matter what other realization a person has. There is nothing to be surprised about, nothing to be excited about. Nothing to be surprised about, whatever other realization one has. If one has bodhicitta, the ultimate good heart, bodhicitta, this itself is the method. That itself is the quick method, the best method to accumulate merit, to finish the work of accumulating merit, the cause of omniscient mind; and that itself is the most powerful, best method to purify obscurations, the negative karma that has been collected in the past.

If one’s mind is enriched with bodhicitta then whatever action the body, speech or mind does, it is unstained by the self-cherishing thought. Even breathing in and out, everything, every action, walking, sitting, sleeping, eating, any action, the four main actions—any action that one does in everyday life, all actions are done to benefit others, with only the thought to benefit others. So every single action that one does becomes a method to accumulate extensive merit; so highly beneficial for others, whatever one does, one-pointedly. A bodhisattva, one who has bodhicitta only attempts to benefit others. His only concern, day and night, all the time, is how to accomplish extensive benefits for others, how to accomplish this soon. Every single action a bodhisattva does, tries to do, is done as much as possible to benefit others.

From the chapter on patience: if a non-bodhisattva gets angry at a bodhisattva for one second, it destroys the merits that have been accumulated for one thousand eons. These are destroyed by one second of anger by a non-bodhisattva toward a bodhisattva. You see, if I have been accumulating so much merit, making charity to the object of sentient beings, making offerings to holy objects, the Triple Gem, with these two objects, sentient beings and the holy objects of the Triple Gem, I have been collecting much merit; and after having accumulated so much merit if tomorrow morning I am able to generate bodhicitta, then if tonight I get angry for one second at a higher object, a bodhisattva, the realization of generating bodhicitta is delayed, it is postponed for one thousand eons. Again I have to accumulate so much merit for that length of time; I have to accumulate so much merit again. So, like this, anger is so harmful to generating realizations quickly, so harmful to generating bodhicitta.

Anger and bodhicitta are opposites. Bodhicitta is the thought to benefit others, and the nature of anger is to harm others. It is completely opposite—the characteristics of anger and the characteristics of bodhicitta. So, as much we are able to do the practice of patience, that much easier it is to generate any realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment, and particularly to generate bodhicitta. It is that much easier to generate bodhicitta.

So before going over the *Bodhicharyavatara* I thought if you had a little bit an idea of the author, the great bodhisattva Shantideva, it would cause you to have a little bit of faith in the author. In that way, when we have a little bit of faith, understanding that the author is an extraordinary being, not an ordinary being, a holy being, it benefits us to also understand the teaching clearly, and also for faith to arise, to realize the meaning of the teaching.

Shantideva, the great bodhisattva, was born in the Western side of Bodhgaya, India, in the very center of India, Bodhgaya. He did Manjushri retreat when he was very young, as a child, about six years old and he actually saw Manjushri. Manjushri gave him so much advice, even at that time. Then, after some time, his father, who was I think king of that country—I am not sure if he was the king of all India or not, but in previous times there were many kings in each part of India, like districts. Maybe he was one of the kings like that. However, his father, the king, passed away, and all the people in that country agreed and requested the great holy being Shantideva to take the place of the father, to become king of the country, to take over the throne. Shantideva couldn't reject the request of the population and accepted to go on the throne of his father, the king.

As he was to be inaugurated the next day, sitting on the throne of the king, that night he had a dream. He saw Manjushri seated on the throne where he was going to sit the next morning. Manjushri was advising him, telling him “My son, this is my seat, I am your virtuous friend, and I and you cannot sit on one throne. This you can never do.” So right after he woke up from the dream, he discovered that this was a sign that he could not enjoy the perfections of a king. He found that this was a sign that he shouldn't accept the power; he shouldn't do the king's works. So that night, he escaped from the palace to Nalanda, the great monastic university, where there were many fully realized pandits, thousands of pandits. Then he took ordination from one pandit called Ya.ve Lhar and he was offered the holy name Shantideva.

For a long time Shantideva did much extensive listening and studying under this abbot and particularly under Manjushri. He understood each and every meaning of the teaching of sutra and tantra. Inside he is an arya bodhisattva, whose holy mind approached the high bhumis—there are ten bodhisattva bhumis—he reached a very high bhumi, doing extensive works for others, having infinite qualities in the mind. Inside he was like this, but outside he appeared in the view of others, while he was in the monastic monastery Nalanda, as just eating food, sleeping and making kaka. Nothing else. Besides these three he did nothing else. Not like other pandits, other monks—reading scriptures or sitting up in meditation position, or making offerings, making prostrations, those kinds of things. He showed this aspect of doing nothing, not doing any works benefiting others. So others called him *Busuku*. *Busuku* means the three recognitions. His name was famous, “the three recognitions,” eating, sleeping and disposal, kaka, urination. He became famous with this name. Everybody called him *Busuku* because what they saw was this, only these three.

The other monks who did not have clairvoyance did not recognize what Shantideva was, criticized Shantideva for not doing any listening, or reading scripture, or reflecting or meditation—he did none of these. His living in the monastery seemed to be only a waste of the Sangha's devotional materials. “Devotional materials” means the monastery, the food, robes and things offered by the benefactors with devotion. The material belonging to the Sangha is called devotional material. They said that his living in the monastery only wasted this devotional material; therefore it is worthwhile to kick him out.

They proposed how to do that. They can't just drag his body out without any accusation. They can't just easily kick him out without some accusation, so then they proposed, somebody got an idea, “Since he does only these three, I am sure, if we take turns, let him take turns reciting sutra scriptures by heart, since he never does any study, of course he cannot say it by heart.” I think what it was is that during these times in a monastery if you could not recite the scripture by heart you were kicked out, you were expelled. I think the person didn't need to be scolded or anything, or by

guns, police coming—anyway I am joking. I think you just had to leave the monastery; it was very strict. They thought he would not be able to recite the scriptures by heart and just by that he would be expelled from the monastery, so they all agreed with that. Then they made the request to him to recite the scriptures by heart and Shantideva finally accepted to do that.

Those other monks, in order to embarrass or tease Shantideva, built a very high throne. They completely decided in their minds that he couldn't even climb up this throne, leave aside his giving teachings from this throne. This was what they decided, this was what they believed.

The next morning, as they had arranged, everybody came, all the monks gathered and then the son of the victorious ones, Shantideva came and without any resistance he went on the throne. Then he asked the audience, the monks, “Should I recite the sutra teaching that was taught in the past by Buddha, or a sutra teaching that was not finished by Buddha?” He asked the monks this. Then all the monks around him asked, “Please explain that which wasn't taught by Buddha in the past.” I think what Shantideva meant was if he should say the sutra teaching by heart, say it exactly by heart, or something that was not set up by Buddha. He doesn't mean the meaning—a teaching that was not taught by Buddha. Of course in regards of the meaning there is nothing that was not taught by Buddha. What Shantideva meant was the words. They asked for what was not taught by Buddha.

Then Shantideva started, and the whole *Bodhicaryavatara* came, like Milarepa when he was singing the hymns, with complete control over the speech, without any resistance, without any effort. From the very first line, paying homage to the dharmakaya; to the Triple Gem, the Ones Gone to Bliss, having the dharmakaya, and their sons—”sons” means particularly the bodhisattvas, the Sangha of bodhisattvas. So without any effort, without any resistance, starting from that, he taught by heart the whole teaching of the *Bodhicaryavatara*. The *Bodhicaryavatara* is not a teaching that Shantideva spent a long time writing, first thinking and then writing, like when you make a thesis. He didn't spend time and effort like that, to put the teaching together. He didn't spend much time like this. Drinking lots of coffee, nervous, staying up late at nighttime under the light, reading lots of books, smoking many cigarettes. Sometimes when you don't remember, when things don't work, you become nervous, impatient, depressed.

So when the great bodhisattva Shantideva reached the wisdom chapter, the verse about causative phenomena and uncausative phenomena, he flew away. He flew away from the throne, into the sky. He didn't fly from the airport. Anyway, I am joking. Finally, while he was giving the teaching, his holy body became invisible. Even though the monks who were receiving the teaching could not see his holy body, there was the same continuity of his holy speech. They could hear his holy speech unceasingly, as if he was still sitting on the throne. Even though his holy body went so far, so distant, still they continuously could hear him. Even when his holy body became invisible, they could still hear the teaching.

Afterwards when the pandits wanted to put the scriptures together, there was some disagreement, somebody said nine chapters, some said ten chapters. Then there is one verse, a section where Shantideva emphasizes one scripture called *Labdu*—you should definitely read that one again and again, he emphasized. There's one point where he said this. And also a very condensed sutra teaching called *Dö.ko.ne.du.pa*. Shantideva also advised one should look at this teaching.

These pandits didn't know these two scriptures. So after some time they heard that Shantideva was in the southern side of India in a holy place where there is a stupa, called *Paljan Chen*. They sent two

monks to invite Shantideva to Nalanda. But Shantideva didn't come. Shantideva answered the question about the chapters. He said that what the central country people have said, that there are ten chapters, was right. And that those two scriptures, *Lab.du* and *Dö.du*, are written in such tiny letters, in the form of "pandit" letters, and that he put those two scriptures in the hermitage, between the roof and beams, I think.

Then Shantideva gave the complete teaching and the oral transmission of these scriptures *Lab.du* and *Dö.du* and also the *Bodhicaryavatara* to these two monks.

In Magadha, a place on the western side of India, there were five hundred followers who held wrong views. Shantideva at one time lived as a servant for those five hundred followers. Once for seven days there was rain, maybe a cyclone, with much wind, and all the people in the country did not have food and experienced much suffering of hunger and thirst. So the people asked among themselves, "Whoever can beg will be the leader and we will listen exactly to what the leader says." So then Shantideva went begging for alms, and one begging bowl full of rice he blessed unceasingly, so that it covered so many people's needs. It was blessed by his psychic powers, by his realizations. So he satisfied all these people, and then he gave teachings to these five hundred people and all the wrong views were completely changed, completely dispelled.

Once, Shantideva went to the eastern side of India, to a place called Ari De Chema. He was just sort of wandering around in the street where there are four main streets like this, close to the king's palace. During that time, I think one person—I am not sure whether it's a group or one person—called *Ma tsela nyopa*—I think a group of people with no means of living, who are so happy to confiscate others' possessions. This group of people was so vicious, not having compassion, very tough, very disturbing and so eager to confiscate the king's possessions. So when they were coming to harm the king, the great bodhisattva Shantideva accepted to protect him. He overwhelmed those disturbing people who came to harm the king. Just by his being there, just by his magnificence, his power, they couldn't harm the king. They couldn't confiscate his things, and they left. Shantideva made the king and the whole population very happy.

During that time one of the king's friends who was very jealous of Shantideva told the king, "This is a very cunning person. He has only a wooden sword. The only weapon he has is a wooden sword. How can he protect you, the king? It's worthwhile to examine him." The jealous person told the king this. So the king got angry and he asked Shantideva, "Could you show me your sword?" Shantideva told the king, "If I show you my sword it will harm you." Then the king said to Shantideva, "Even if I receive harm, you must definitely show me your sword." Then Shantideva asked the king, "If so, then please close one eye and look at it with one eye." Shantideva asked the king to look at it with one eye. Then Shantideva took out his wooden sword. Then many unimaginable beams emitted from the sword and the king couldn't look at it, the king became blind. Then the king felt much repentance and apologized to Shantideva, he took refuge in Shantideva, and Shantideva gave him many teachings. So Shantideva led this king in Dharma.

Again there happened, one king of a place called Khati Bihata was the founder of a teaching that was against the Buddhadharma. His name was Shankardeva. He said, "I would like to debate with the Buddhist pandits and I would like to compete with their psychic powers. All the Dharma, scriptures and all the temples of the side that gets defeated will be burned."

He asked Shantideva, "Please give your permission to do this." At that time none of the Buddhist



pandits was able to debate with this king. So at that time the great holy being Shantideva debated with this king and he destroyed all the wrong views. He defeated this king, the founder of this wrong path. Then this king, debating with words, was defeated and then he wanted to compete with Shantideva by his psychic power. So by his psychic power he drew a mandala, the mandala of Mahadeva in the sky. When he finished the eastern door, Shantideva meditated and did one particular concentration, the concentration of the wind, which is a concentration that destroys the mandala. So as Shantideva's holy mind was in this concentration, suddenly an incredibly powerful wind happened and the mandala that was drawn by the other founder in the sky was completely taken away and destroyed by this strong wind. Then after that the main founder who had taken the wrong path and so many of his followers were interested in the Buddhadharm, and Shantideva gave many teachings of Buddha to them.

So this is just very briefly how Shantideva is a great holy being who has infinite qualities; a tiny bit, just an idea of that.

I just read the first stanza. There are ten chapters. They are chapters on the six paramitas, how to practice each of those. The third paramita is the paramita of patience. The first section is how to actualize the remedy, patience; how to have that in the mind in order for the remedy of anger, patience, to last, in order to avoid the hindrances to patience; then how to attempt to meditate on patience. So to do that one should understand the shortcomings of anger and the benefits of patience. In regards the shortcomings of anger, there are shortcomings of anger that are not seen by the eye, and shortcomings of anger that be seen by the physical eye. So one should understand and think of these shortcomings.

This stanza is about the shortcomings of anger that cannot be seen by the eye:

Whatever wholesome deeds,  
Such as venerating the Buddhas, and generosity,  
That have been amassed over a thousand eons  
Will all be destroyed in one moment of anger.

The worst, the greatest hindrance to generating virtue and making it last, is anger. Therefore one should attempt with much hardship to cease anger, by thinking of the shortcomings of anger.

Virtue, merit—the cause of the path—and even the path itself are lost and degenerated by anger; even the path, the realizations that you have generated. Any good action, any merit that is received from meditation, from moral conduct, from making offerings to the Triple Gem, such as making offerings to the Buddha, the one who has gone to bliss, to the Dharma or the Sangha, and also those merits accumulated by making charity, those merits that have been accumulated for one hundred or one thousand eons, are destroyed by having anger toward a bodhisattva for one second.

So I think what this contains is like this: there are five objects, which are explained in the Madhyamaka scriptures. A higher, powerful bodhisattva—this doesn't mean an arya bodhisattva who has accomplished the right-seeing path—even the bodhisattva who is on the Mahayana path of merit, the Mahayana path of conjunction, the powerful bodhisattva who has anger towards the lower bodhisattva; and the lower bodhisattva who has anger for the higher bodhisattva; or the same level of bodhisattva getting angry at another bodhisattva with the same level of realizations, the same level of power; and then the non-bodhisattva getting angry to a bodhisattva, and the non-bodhisattva

getting angry at a non-bodhisattva—in the commentaries it is explained, five objects like this, of generating anger.

In straight words, in the root text it says that the merit accumulated in one thousand eons gets destroyed by having anger for one second—that is a non-bodhisattva getting angry at a bodhisattva, experiencing anger for one second—that much merit gets destroyed. The merit that is accumulated for one thousand eons gets destroyed. In the commentaries it includes also destroying the merit accumulated in one hundred eons—if a powerful bodhisattva gets angry at a lower bodhisattva for one second, then the merit that has been accumulated for one hundred eons gets destroyed.

I think I stop here.

[Dedications]

Lecture 11: November 22<sup>nd</sup> pm

[Short mandala - prayer]

From the holy speech of one of my gurus, a great bodhisattva, His Holiness Khunu Lama Tenzin Gyaltzen, from his holy teaching called *The Precious Lamp Admiring Bodhicitta*—I am not going to mention his understanding, his holy actions, the way he lived his life, his holy actions, his practice, the holy works that he did for others—another time I will mention these.

However, from his holy speech, “Whoever has bodhicitta in the mind, even if he gets sick he is happy; even if he dies, the person is happy; even if he listens, the person is happy; even if he does meditation, the person is happy. Whatever the person does, he is happy.”

If we have what is called bodhicitta, the ultimate good heart, renouncing self and cherishing others, if we have this in our mind, then even if we get a heavy disease, a very heavy, contagious disease, which lasts for many years, a disease which doesn't have medicine, which is difficult to recover from with medicine or which doesn't have medicine, a contagious disease or a disease such as cancer, a dangerous heavy disease that makes other people scared even just by seeing, even if the body is full of leprosy disease. Also such as what people in the West are very scared of, what the doctors treat very much, such as heart attacks, that you will die very soon. Besides small problems such as toothache, even for such heavy diseases, even if one gets sick with those heavy contagious, epidemic diseases that one has to experience for the whole life, if one has what is called bodhicitta, the ultimate good heart, there is no confusion in the mind. Although the body has the disease, the mind has no problem; the mind is so happy, very happy.

Because by bodhicitta, the good heart, bodhicitta, he experiences the disease for the sake of others, for other sentient beings, for those who have created the karma to experience those diseases and those who are experiencing these now, these uncountable numbers of other sentient beings who are experiencing them and who will be experiencing them. When these bodhisattvas get sick they experience this for the sake of others.

You see, we pray when we get sick, leave aside those heavy diseases, even when we have a stomach ache or a toothache, a small disease, a small discomfort, we pray immediately to get rid of these,

immediately to obtain happiness for the self, to obtain comfort for the self. Whatever means there are, either taking medicine or whatever means there are, we run without delay, we seek whatever means there are to get rid of that, to make oneself happy. Whatever means you can find, if there is medicine you apply medicine, if there is no medicine, then whatever, some people who know the other means, mantras, try to recover by mantras, try to recover by pujas—trying various ways as there are various methods, and praying to be well, to be comfortable, to make oneself happy. Trying to obtain the conditions, trying to make the conditions perfect as much as possible to obtain comfort for oneself.

These holy beings who have bodhicitta, whose holy mind is enriched with bodhicitta, they wish, they pray, sincerely, from the heart, to experience the suffering for others. Whenever they receive disease or any bad circumstances, whatever problem they meet, the mind is very happy to experience it. And also they think, what they have been praying for they wish to actually experience, to take others' suffering, to experience these by themselves—whatever they have been wishing, whatever they have been praying, now it is accomplished.

So like this, besides the happiness and the comfort of what they experience—they dedicate that for other sentient beings—even the suffering such as disease, those things, they experience from the heart for the sake of others. Also such as taking the leprosy disease from that person who has leprosy disease, whose body is full of leprosy disease, without any fear or difficulty for the mind they offer service to that person who has leprosy disease, who is left out, who is not taken care of by anybody. Without any difficulties, without any fear, they completely dedicate to offer service, taking that disease. When he gets the disease then the other person gets recovered, things like that. There have been meditators, Tibetan monks and meditators, ascetic monks who lived on the mountains, who have had many stories like this. Also I think I heard of similar stories in the West. I don't know where, in Italy or somewhere—I think one person got leprosy disease, and the whole body was full of this disease, and I think there were no other people taking care, so one priest completely dedicated himself to offer service to this patient. Without having good qualities in the mind such as cherishing others more than oneself, without having such a good heart, one cannot do such a practice. Such things are extremely good.

Without telling many long stories—I have one friend, one meditator, a friend who lives an ascetic life in Dharamsala, where His Holiness the Dalai Lama usually lives, one meditator, one old meditator. This meditator, when he was living in the monastery in Tibet, in Sera monastery, he was a very naughty monk and he did not follow the disciplines of the monastery, the rules, the morning pujas or the debating time or the classes, the time when they are supposed to go to take teachings from the teachers very well.

Most of the time he plays around and he fights; most of the time he fights with other monks, with other similar monks and plays with other friends. He wears very ragged robes which have a lot of holes, a lot of patches and a lot of holes, kind of a hippie monk. But the mind is very happy. He doesn't follow the rules, nothing. If somebody comes along, like the one who looks after the monastery's discipline, the abbot or the *gegu*, the monk who looks after the discipline of the monks—then there are other monks, younger ones, different monks, who have the power to scold, who are responsible to look after the discipline of the monastery—when they come he just runs away into the corners, or around, behind the monastery, things like that. So anyway he lived a very naughty life in Tibet in the monastery.

So one time, I think he was teasing his friend, you know. He was waiting outside the gate of the monastery and he expected his friend to come after him, come through the door and he waited on the top of the gate, his hand full of snot, his hand full of spit and snot to hit his friend on his head. So he was waiting there and the monk who came was not his friend whom he used to tease, but one of the teachers of Geshe Rabten Rinpoche, one of my teachers, guru. Geshe Rabten, among the gurus that I have, is the most kind guru, from whom I received Dharma explanation on debating subject—the first guru, who gave the first teaching, the first explanation of teaching, the debating subject. That I have now, at the moment, a little bit of interest in meditation, in the lam.rim, is by the kindness of Geshe Rabten Rinpoche. He opened a center in Switzerland. Geshe Rinpoche was invited there to be the abbot of the Tibetan monastery, which was built by the Red Cross. The Red Cross is the group of people who support the Tibetan refugees in Switzerland. They built a monastery for the refugees, for the Tibetans. So afterwards, from India, from Dharamsala, Geshe Rinpoche started to give teachings for Western people, before he left for Switzerland. Then he was an abbot for some years there and then gradually he founded one center, one monastery, which is called Tharpa Choeling Monastery. I think, at the moment that is the only monastery in the West, a monastery where there are monks and they live together without being mixed with others.

However, it was one of Geshe Rinpoche's most kind teachers, his root guru, Geshe Jampa Thabgye, I think, it does not matter, one old monk, very, very learned, having various particular qualities, having a very subdued mind, a very good heart, by practicing lamrim, incredible qualities that he has, strict and learned and subdued, an incredible good monk, who was respected by everybody.

So this Jampa Wangdu, this monk who was doing naughty things, was waiting for his friend to come out, to throw this on his head. But instead of that it was Geshe Rabten Rinpoche's teacher, the most kind Jampa Thabgye, who appeared. Somebody with a bald head suddenly came out of the door, so Jampa Wangdu threw this thing. He did not realize it was the Geshe. The Geshe kept very quiet, this Geshe. He did not say anything, did not react. He just carried on walking. Then after some time, with his *zen*, he slowly wiped off the piece of snot.

This monk, this Geshe, his particular quality was having such an incredible good heart—he did not show any aspect of anger, not anything, did not say one word to him, just peacefully carried on walking. Then this monk, Jampa Wangdu, I guess he watched how this Geshe slowly took the snot off after some time.

Then another day, again he was doing the same thing for his friend and by accident one Geshe came. This Geshe got completely angry. This Geshe chased him—he got so angry I guess he wanted to beat him, you know, something like that. Then again he escaped. Sera monastery is quite large; it is not a small monastery like this. It is so large and there are many small sections, inside there are many small monasteries. So this monk called Jampa Wangdu crossed to the other side. There are maybe four main gates, walls around and then gates. He escaped to the other side, straight to the other side of the gate so this Geshe could not follow him, because he was running so fast. Anyway, he lived life like this in Tibet in the monastery, being so naughty, always fighting.

Anyway, after some time His Holiness the Dalai Lama's younger tutor, whose holy name is Trijang Rinpoche, who recently passed away—at one place, I think at one of the monasteries which was founded by a recent lineage lama of the lamrim teaching, the composer of the lineage of the *mahaanuttara* yoga tantra teaching, the highest tantra teaching, the most secret and profound *Guru Puja*—His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche was invited there, at this monastery founded by Tsecho Ling

Rinpoche. When he was giving this teaching on *Guru Puja*, this monk Jampa Wangdu attended this teaching. Many monks, educated monks and also uneducated ones—I think by receiving this teaching many of them did not finish their study in the monastery. They did not finish their geshe degrees. Many of them left after that, after this teaching they did not go back to the monastery, many of them decided to leave and went to live on the mountains, in the solitary places, to live ascetic lives where there were ascetic lamas to guide them in the high mountains, in different places in Tibet. So many of the monks' minds changed during that teaching and even though they did not finish their geshe degree—like a university degree—even though they did not finish their geshe studies they went to live ascetic lives, to practice and to actualize the lamrim, the graduated path to enlightenment.

So I think at that time, somehow during that teaching, he changed completely his mind, completely; that which was very naughty before, at that time somehow it completely changed. Then he went to see one very high lama, Patsun Rinpoche, who lived more than one hundred years, who used to be the holder of all four sects of the teaching—Sakya, Kagyu, Nyingma and Gelug—so that many people, lamas from other sects came to receive teachings and initiations from him. He is a recognized embodiment of Tara. I think that lama passed away and then reincarnated in Katmandu. So this lama was very happy with him, he gave him much advice.

Then he went to practice lamrim in the caves where the Kadampa geshe lived, such as Kadampa Geshe Kamlungpa or Pulchungwa. Also I think he did “taking the essence.” When you have difficulties to find the means of living, when you have difficulty with finding food, there are practices that you can do, taking the essence of water, taking the essence of flower, taking the essence of stone. You make pills with those, pills of collections of water, pills with various flowers—there are ways to accomplish this with tantra meditation, ways to do retreat; and then even if you don't find food, you can live on these pills, you can survive on them and you can do the practice. It has many advantages, the mind becoming very clear and then the body becoming very healthy and also young—it does not change much into the old aspect, the old age form. I think he did one of those retreats so that he does not have to go to the village to beg food all the time. In that way you get more time to continue your retreat, less distraction.

So when he was living in one of those Kadampa geshe's caves he used to practice *Jorcho*, the preliminary practice of the lamrim. He told me that he used to spend the whole day on *Jorcho*, from morning until night, just on *Jorcho*, putting much time in all those practices. Then after he escaped from Tibet to India, he continued his ascetic life and his experience of the lamrim path. Normally in India he used to live in caves, not large caves, not like my cave which is very luxurious, having a lot of things inside, not like that. Very small, even your body can't stand up straight, very small. He lived in such places for many years and continued his experiencing the path.

Many years ago he finished the experience of bodhicitta, of shunyata and of the thought of renouncing samsara—the three principles of the path. Many years ago, for him it is kind of very old, like the time you were learning ABCD. And also he completed samatha, tranquil abiding, he completed those realizations. I think there are many signs that he has clairvoyance because he completed samatha realization, tranquil abiding.

We are very close friends—he is one of the friends who makes the mind very happy, very happy to see and very happy to hear, very happy to talk with him any time, he brings the mind great joy.

There are many signs that he has clairvoyance, many times in the conversation there are various signs that he understands, that he has clairvoyance.

Among the meditators who live an ascetic life in Dharamsala on the mountains, he used to be one of the closest to His Holiness Dalai Lama. Whenever he wants he can see His Holiness the Dalai Lama without need for an appointment. The meditators, when they have found certain realizations they always go to check. Those who are very close to his Holiness the Dalai Lama go to check the experience or to make an offering of the realization that they have found to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Also sometimes to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's tutors, His Holiness Ling Rinpoche and His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche they go to make offering, sometimes to check their experiences, sometimes to make offerings.

There are many meditators, so my talk becomes very long. There are many meditators nowadays who did experiment or who accomplished the experience of the lamrim, the three principal paths. Also who are making experiments with the tantra path. There are many ascetic meditators in Dharamsala and also in the West who are on the way to achieve enlightenment, whose mind reached not only the first stage of the tantra path, the graduated path of generation, but even the second stage, the graduated path of accomplishment. There are meditators, Tibetan geshe, monks and meditators who have reached that level. It is not necessary to mention the names of the tantra path, the particular high realization that they have. Somebody who has received teachings, who understands, would get the feeling, "Oh, this is it." They would get the feeling, they would understand. Faith would arise. But for some people who have no idea, even if I would mention the names it would not make any sense.

Last year or the year before—it might have been last year when I was there taking teachings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama in his palace, with some other ascetic monks, incarnate lamas and geshe, there was a group of people from the West, I think they were American. They requested His Holiness the Dalai Lama to experiment on those meditators. Not with the mind, but I think to check how much heat they can generate through meditation.

I think fifteen people or something like that went out on the mountains to some of the meditators' place. I think they did not check all of them, they checked just one or two. I was very curious to hear what happened. I checked with my friend, this monk, what they discovered. For a long time I did not hear, it was kind of quiet. After some time I heard. I think they saw some result. They found what they wanted; they found some result of what these meditators had achieved. These meditators had already accomplished the realization of the three principal paths, and then on the basis of that they practice and experiment on the tantra path, the graduated path of accomplishment, the second stage.

Also we have a geshe, even in the center, in Manjushri Institute, whose mind reached very high levels long time ago, many years ago. I think even before he left for the West, a long time ago, he approached very high levels of the tantra path, the second one, the graduated path of accomplishment. The stages of the graduated path of accomplishment where it becomes definite, such as the seclusion of mind, those stages on which if one has realization, then that person, that meditator, has the definite possibility to achieve enlightenment in this lifetime, like Milarepa

However, there are so many meditators, educated ones, geshe, experimenting on the path now, after they did all these extensive, profound studies, and there are uneducated ones, who did not do

extensive studies in the monasteries, no extensive studies by debating, such as Jampa Wangdu, this monk, my friend. He did not do those things but somehow due to his past karma, somehow he has accumulated incredible merit from many past lives. Somehow, even though he did not do extensive studies, even though his early life was very naughty, his later life somehow became completely opposite, that you cannot imagine, that you can't believe. You can't imagine, you can't put together his early life and his later life, his mind so rich of realizations. I'm losing my point.

Some meditators live in Dharamsala—those who live the ascetic life, those geshe, educated ones and those who are not educated, who did not do extensive studies in the monastery, who did not finish, did not have degrees, all those meditators make experiments on the path, the sutra and tantra path. They live in Dharamsala, in the mountains. And then also there are other meditators who don't live in Dharamsala, but live in other different places, at their own places they make experiments and try to have the complete experience of the path. There are many others. One geshe who accomplished samatha, tranquil abiding, the real one, samatha, he wrote a letter to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, he made an offering of his realization to His Holiness the Dalai Lama by letter.

Here the older students who have received the teachings would understand a little, but as you are new, as most of you just started to hear teachings, you would not understand much—such as these three principal paths, the graduated path of tantra, of generation and accomplishment, what is explained in the teachings, what is explained in the scriptures by Buddha, by the pandits, those great yogis, Nagarjuna, Asanga, Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa, Lama Tsong Khapa, those realized lamas, those who themselves have accomplished and completed the experience of the path, and with the experience they taught the teachings, they gave commentaries.

The explanations on the path that are left by them, such as this teaching, which Shantideva explains in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, all these things, whether you can really generate the realization or not, as it is explained there, whether you can really experience that, whether you can really have the experience of that or not, whether you can have this bodhicitta in the mind, whether you can have the wisdom realizing shunyata, eliminating the root of samsara, the ignorance clinging to the “I” as truly existent. After having found the infallible teacher, the perfect teacher—who can show the path from beginning up to the end, up to enlightenment, the complete path, sutra and tantra—since one has met such a perfectly qualified teacher who can show the complete path without missing anything; since there are the teachings existing, then, whether you can generate realization, whether you can generate such as these realizations or not, the realization of the graduated path to enlightenment, such as the tantra realizations that Milarepa sings about, which makes him not an ordinary being, transcended, higher than ordinary beings, a great yogi who can transform poison into nectar, wine into nectar, who can transform kaka, excrement, into nectar, who has completely stepped over superstition. The realizations that Milarepa talks about, so proud—this does not mean he has pride—but what I am saying, what he is talking about, all these incredible experiences, all these things, since the teachings are existing, since you have met the teachings, since you have met such a perfectly qualified teacher, a virtuous friend, then whether one can realize the graduated path to enlightenment, whether one can become enlightened or not, like those previous pandits, those great yogis, Indians, in Nepal, in Tibet, after one has met the virtuous friend, the perfectly qualified virtuous teacher, and met the teachings.

Now the question is up to you, whether you can realize this path or not—the graduated path to enlightenment, whether you can become enlightened or not in this life is up to oneself, whether one correctly practices or not as it is explained by Buddha, as it is explained by the virtuous friend. The

question is up to whether one practices or not. As long as from one's own side one practices, from the side of the teachings there is no misleading. Definitely the way, the goal, whatever one wishes to achieve, liberation or omniscient mind, definitely it leads there, unless if from one's own side one does not practice, if one does not follow it correctly—so the question is up to yourself, whether you can realize or not.

As long as from one's own side one puts effort, one tries, one studies and one listens; in order to generate the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment one should meditate, do the practice of meditation. To do that correctly, in order to find infallible perfect realization of the graduated path to enlightenment, one should do correct meditation. In order to do correct meditation one should have correct understanding, and in order to have correct understanding, one should do correct listening.

Generally speaking, correct listening depends on two things—it depends on the virtuous friend, on the teacher and it depends on the disciple. To do correct listening one should listen to infallible teachings and that depends on the teacher who has the infallible understanding of the teaching. If your goal is to achieve omniscient mind, then the virtuous friend whom you are following, whom you are depending on, should have infallible understanding of the whole path from the beginning, from guru devotion up to enlightenment. He should be able to reveal the whole path. So it depends on a perfectly qualified guru who can reveal the complete path, without missing.

If the virtuous teacher is like this, then the disciple is a receptacle disciple. What “receptacle disciple” means is this: the main thing, the most important thing about the disciple is to be a receptacle. That means the disciple who can bear the hardships of practicing Dharma, who has the patience to practice Dharma, who is not expecting to receive enlightenment sitting on a comfortable bed, expecting to receive enlightenment within this hour, within three years, within six months, within one month. Who does not expect to receive enlightenment by living a luxury life, always wearing warm clothes, always sitting on a comfortable warm bed, always eating delicious food. Without talking much, it is not a person who does not want to spend much time to practice, to follow the path, who does not want to accumulate much merit, who does not wish to accumulate merit for three countless great eons, who does not wish to do the practice of purification for many hundreds of eons. One who expects with a lot of sleep, with a lot of eating, to receive enlightenment easily, comfortably, who can't bear any hardships. For such a disciple there is no hope to receive enlightenment in this life—for a disciple who can't face any difficulties, who has very little patience, who can't face any difficulties, it is difficult to generate even the fundamental realizations, leave aside the realizations of tantra.

One cannot even do pure Dharma practice—one who seeks so much the happiness for this life, one who clings too much to the happiness of this life. And then one who cherishes oneself so much, one who has only the thought of the happiness of this life, nothing else, no thought of the happiness of future lives. No concern even for one's own happiness of future lives, nothing which differentiates one from the animal; the attitude that is not higher or special, which doesn't differentiate from the animals, from the buffaloes, from those dogs, from those barking dogs. Even just pure Dharma practice, leave aside generating realizations, even pure Dharma practice; for such as that person it is difficult to practice Dharma.

As His Holiness the Fifth Dalai Lama said, if the guru is a perfectly qualified guru, who reveals the complete path up to omniscient mind without missing anything, and if the disciple is a receptacle



disciple, which means one who can bear hardships, then how easily enlightenment comes. What His Holiness himself said, the example that he used is the block of a statue. When you print that on mud it comes there exactly, the figure comes on the mud exactly as what is there on the block, it comes exactly there, without missing anything. Like that, how the disciple generates the realizations of the path to enlightenment, how the disciple becomes enlightened is so easy, like taking a picture, like the photo. When there is such a perfectly qualified teacher and such a qualified disciple, and those two meet together, then enlightenment comes so easy. Like the dough, the flour that is mixed with water, the dough that you can so easily make into any shape with the hands, if you want to make noodles, if you want to make bread, or whichever shape you want to make, you can make so easily. Like that, if the perfectly qualified teacher and the qualified disciple meet together, then enlightenment is so easy, like handmade.

Now, this moment, there are still many perfectly qualified teachers who can show the complete path to enlightenment without missing anything. One can find one, one can meet one now—there are still many living whose minds are living in the experience of the path. There is the opportunity to find such perfectly qualified teachers, to receive teachings and the correct, pure, complete understanding of the teaching, the experience of the path, the realizations of the path—those teachings exist in the mind of those perfectly qualified teachers. They still exist, the teaching is not degenerated yet, the teaching of sutra and tantra both, which reveal the complete path to omniscient mind, exist. One has the opportunity.

From one's own side, if one has not found the perfect human body qualified with eight freedoms and ten richnesses, from one's own side if one has not found a human body, then one cannot follow this, then there is no opportunity to practice. Even though the teaching exists, if one has not received the body that can practice, has not received the opportunity to practice, then it is difficult, then one cannot practice. So from one's own side one has received the precious human body; not only a human body but a human body which is qualified with the eight freedoms and ten richnesses. That is the perfect human body; one has found the perfect human body.

When these three things are gathered: the perfect human body from one's own side, the perfect virtuous teacher, and not only the teachings of Buddha existing, but the complete teaching of sutra and tantra existing—all these three precious things are gathered, which are so difficult to gather, are gathered now. So while there is the incredible opportunity to do listening, reflecting and meditating on the infallible path, on the complete path to enlightenment, while there is such an incredible opportunity, without knowing this, without recognizing this, not being careful, being careless—not knowing this opportunity, being careless of your own life.

Again, after all these, in so many past lives, in many hundreds of past lives we prayed so much, we accumulated much merit, we practiced much moral conduct with much hardship. How hard we find it even to keep one precept, to not kill and to not tell lies; how difficult it is to keep even one precept to not tell lies, to not have sexual misconduct, how hard we find it, how difficult it is not to use intoxicants, not to drink wine. It is difficult according to individuality—the different precepts we find difficult according to the different individuality but however, in general how difficult it is, how we find it difficult even to take one vow, besides this, to practice, besides living in it, continuously living in it without breaking it. How difficult it is if we relate to this present life, this present mind. Even if we took the vow in the presence of Buddha, in the presence of the abbot, in the presence of the guru, it is very difficult to keep it continuously. However, we have had so many lifetimes, so

many past lives practicing moral conduct with much hardship, making much charity and making so many prayers to find this perfect human body. In so many lifetimes you made prayers.

After all this, finally when you find this perfect human body, after all these hardships, creating the causes for this, praying so much then finally, after one has found this perfect human body, while having all these opportunities, after having found this precious human body qualified with the eight freedoms and ten riches, these eighteen rare things, qualified with eighteen precious things, which are so difficult to gather together—usually there is always something missing, it is imperfect. Finally, after one has found this, even if you meet the teachings revealed by Buddha who himself followed this path, who liberated himself from the two obscurations and became enlightened—the path that he has gone through and that he taught with that experience—even if you meet these infallible teachings, then, you see, besides not having the thought to practice, to actualize, to subdue the mind in this life, while one has met such precious teachings to subdue the mind, to check whether you can subdue the mind, whether you can make some change to this mind, some progression to this mind in this life, besides that—not even listening to the teaching, not even trying to understand and trying to check whether it is worthwhile to practice or not. How it is.

Even though there is the opportunity to hear teachings from qualified geshes, from perfectly qualified teachers who have spent their whole life in study, who did extensive study, who did deep study, who did much checking, who cut off much doubt by study, by deep study, by checking. Even though there are qualified teachers who are themselves living in the practice, so that there is no danger of misleading—not even trying to understand the teaching and check whether it is worthwhile to practice or not, to check and understand how it is what Buddha said. Not even doing that, just hanging around. Just completely wasting time, nothing to get, no future life, there is nothing to say that you will have a good future life and this present life good, you have happiness. Nothing to say, nothing to point out; empty of this life, empty of future life; nothing to say, “Oh, you will have a good future life and much happiness, you will receive a perfect human body, better than this life.” There is nothing to point out that there is something better in a future life, and even for this life, happiness, a good life, satisfaction, nothing to point out, completely empty. There is nothing good to get in this life, nothing good to get in the future life. Just very poor, very poor minded, unskillful.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself said in the teaching, “Bhikshus, the learned ones, check well my teaching, like you check gold, whether it is pure or not.” By cutting you check gold whether it is pure or not. By cutting, by rubbing and by burning—you check whether the gold is pure or not by doing these three. Like that. “Bhikshus, learned ones, check well, check my teaching like you check gold. Check well, then practice.” Not only by blind faith, not only by that. So Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself said how to check whether it is worthwhile to practice.

When you go to buy materials or clothing, when you go to buy food, when you go to buy fruit in the market, when you buy a car you check, you check carefully. Even to buy fruit for lunch, you try to check, then, of course, if that is worthwhile to spend time checking, then why not the teaching of Buddha? Even if you don't practice, check, try to understand, check whether it is worthwhile to practice. Without understanding, how can you check, there is no way to check. So in order to check, in order to find out whether it is worthwhile to practice or not, whether it is something that you want to practice, something that is worthwhile for you to practice or not. First one should have understanding. You have to check with wisdom.

It is a great loss, a great loss to not even try to understand. Whether one practices or not is in your hand, but first there is need for understanding. In order to check and in order to understand there is need to study. Without doing even this there is nothing to point out in life, nothing to benefit, no thought or action to benefit others. There is nothing that you can point out: this is an action to benefit for yourself, nothing to point out, it is completely empty—empty of benefit for others, empty of benefit to yourself. Empty. Completely.

Then sooner or later, as one hangs around, round, round, expecting this, expecting that, “Maybe this is good for my life, maybe that is good for my life, maybe that is good for my life, maybe I try this, maybe I try that, maybe now I try this. Now I am bored, I am not comfortable, I am bored of this, maybe after this, this...” Then, while one is hanging around and around and around, doing this and that, then, one day, one hour while you are doing something, while you are traveling or while you are eating food, even without completing the food that is in the plate, one reaches the future life, the future life happens. Even without having the opportunity to eat the rest of the food one has to go. Suddenly death happens, life is finished.

How much we regret, “Oh, I did not get anything done in my life, now I am dying.” As you breathe out it is difficult to breathe in, very loose, very strong, double, very strong to breathe out, very difficult to breathe in, very weak to breathe in. Then, as much as you regret your life, “I did not get anything done to benefit others, there is nothing good that I have done in this life,” however much one feels regretful at the time of death, however much one sees fearful karmic visions happening around that other people cannot see but you see, like a dream, the karmic visions, which are the signs to go to the lower realms of the narak, preta and animal; fearful visions, then a lot of screams come out of the mouth, “I see this, I see that, oh I get beaten, I get this and that,” a lot of screams, the other people around, family, relatives, can’t see anything, like a crazy person. As much as you see, like a dream, other people cannot see another person’s dream. He is scared of his dream but other people around cannot see his dream, like that. However many fearful karmic visions he experiences or however much he screams, because the signs of going to the lower realms started already from the death time on, then the time is finished, it is too late to practice Dharma.

I am going to stop soon. However the conclusion, without talking much, is this. You see, after all this, after we have found this precious human body then again we live the life without practicing Dharma, the holy Dharma. If we pass the life, the time, by doing only meaningless actions, non-virtuous actions, only the work for this life, passing the time by only doing the works for this life, or by doing non-virtuous actions. Actually if you let your life pass like this, doing only meaningless work, non-virtuous actions by following the three poisonous minds, purposely we have taken this human body, we have created so many causes with much hardships, and have taken this human body purposely to create negative karma. We create so much cause with much hardship, taking this human body in order to go to the lower realms. It is like purposely one came from the lower realms to the upper realm, the human realm, in order to create negative karma. We came up to create negative karma. It is like that.

If we pass our lifetime doing only meaningless work, the work of this life, non-virtuous actions, then you see, we are more ignorant than animals, in this way we are more foolish than animals. Why? Because animals can’t practice Dharma, they can’t meditate, they cannot understand, they have no opportunity to understand teachings because they don’t have a human body. They have limitations from the side of the body—they don’t have a human body so there is no opportunity to understand, to practice. But with our body, with the human body there is the opportunity to practice, to

understand and to practice. So you see, while we have the opportunity, if we pass the time, if we pass life doing non-virtuous actions, we are more foolish, more ignorant than the turtle, than pigs, more ignorant than pigs. There is no one more ignorant, more foolish than this.

So we should check whether we can subdue our minds in this life, in this body, by listening, reflecting and meditating on the teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment. Especially we should check whether we can generate bodhicitta. Then, in that way even this life becomes happy. By practicing the good heart this life is happy and even future lives are happy. One is happy and also it causes others also to be happy. However, we should try, as much as possible we should check whether we can generate bodhicitta by training the mind in this.

I think I stop here.

[Dedications]

I went too much over time.

Lecture 12: November 23<sup>rd</sup> am

[Prayers]

From the holy speech of my guru, the great bodhisattva, Khunu Lama Tenzin Gyaltzen, “If one doesn’t have bodhicitta in the mind, what is the use of being learned? If one doesn’t have bodhicitta in the mind, what is the use of being strict? If one doesn’t have bodhicitta in the mind, what is the use of being noble or generous? If one doesn’t have bodhicitta in the mind, what is the use even of being generous? Therefore, one must cherish bodhicitta.”

What Khunu Lama Rinpoche is advising is that however much the person is learned, having a high degree, a doctorate or whatever, even if one has much education, the highest degree in psychology, science, biology, all these things, even if one knows all the different countries on the earth, even if the person speaks all the different languages—if his mind is empty of the ultimate good heart, bodhicitta, then even if he spends so much of his life and time and puts that much energy into receiving all this education, still there is no peace in his mind. Still there are the same thoughts, still there is dissatisfaction in the mind, still there are relationship problems. And no matter how much education the person has, it doesn’t benefit others. Even if the person has such a great education, it’s all used for his own happiness. Due to the lack of bodhicitta, even the education, which he has achieved by studying with much hardship for many years, is dedicated purely for his own comfort. Still there is no peace in the mind.

Then not only that, but even somebody who has studied all the sutras and tantras, who can explain them well, who has memorized all the words of the sutra and tantra teachings, even if he can say all the eighty-four thousand teachings that are revealed by Buddha by heart and explain them, even if he can do this, even if he is that much learned—if there is a lack of bodhicitta, it is difficult for the person to be able to offer extensive benefits to others.

Even in everyday life, in order for the mind to be happy, like the minds of those who have bodhicitta, even if one has all this intellectual understanding of the sutra and tantra teachings, even if

one is so learned and educated in the scriptures, the extensive texts, and the philosophy teachings such as the debating subjects, even if one is so learned that nobody can defeat that person by debating them, as long as the mind is not subdued by bodhicitta, as long as the mind is still empty of bodhicitta, then even in everyday life it is difficult to have peace, difficult to have even temporary happiness—there is the problem of selfishness. But even if one is not much learned but one has bodhicitta in the mind, then even with the little education that one has whatever action of body, speech, and mind one does is of extensive benefit to others.

Also if one doesn't have bodhicitta in the mind, what is the use of being strict? Even one lives a very strict life, without need to depend on food, one's whole life lived in a solitary place, in silence, not seeing anybody; even if one lives in the two hundred and fifty-three precepts, purely, or for the female ones three hundred and sixty, I think now there is need for more—anyway I am joking—three hundred and sixty precepts, keeping them pure, there is no comparison between living in these precepts with bodhicitta and living in these precepts with no bodhicitta. When we talk about the advantages: which has the greatest advantage—living in the precepts having bodhicitta in the mind, or living in these precepts purely, strictly, without breaking them, but the mind being empty of bodhicitta? That doesn't have as much advantage as living in these precepts having bodhicitta in the mind.

People think of somebody who lives in a solitary place, who doesn't see anybody, who lives the whole life in silence—that that is the greatest essence of this life. However, if the mind of that person is empty of bodhicitta, if the mind of the practitioner who lives all his life like this is empty of bodhicitta, if he lives that life with worldly concern, there is no need to even talk about, what he is doing does not even become holy Dharma, it doesn't even become virtue. Then after some time even if all the teeth fall out—anyway, like this, if he doesn't have bodhicitta in the mind, what is the use? We are talking about the greatest advantage, the most beneficial thing for the life, what we should do to receive the greatest benefits for others.

You see, even if the person is normally generous, has a good heart, is happy to help others, happy to help those who have no material, those who have poverty, gives education to those who don't have education, gives food to animals and things like that, even if the person is normally generous like this, his good heart may not cover all sentient beings. Generally his mind is generous, but he doesn't have bodhicitta—wishing all the sentient beings to be free from suffering and wishing to lead them to the state of omniscient mind. The thought of loving kindness and great compassion, bodhicitta—if one doesn't have this—of course it is good, having that much generous mind, it is good, doing that much generous action. But it doesn't have as great an advantage as having bodhicitta in the mind.

You see, if one does not have bodhicitta in the mind, if the mind is empty of that, one cannot achieve the omniscient mind and in that way one cannot offer the greatest benefit of liberating all sentient beings from all suffering and leading them to the state of omniscient mind—the greatest benefit one can offer. There are always limitations in your method, in your understanding.

Therefore, Khunu Lama Rinpoche is advising that if you want to make your life highly meaningful, most beneficial for others, if you want to have the greatest profit in your life, then it is not enough to try to be learned. One should not be satisfied with that. Also, trying to be very strict—also not this. Even the mind being generous, giving others temporal benefits—one shouldn't be satisfied, one shouldn't practice just only that. The most important, most beneficial thing is to generate

bodhicitta. In that way one also becomes learned, as one seeks the methods to benefit others. The bodhisattva learns anything that could be beneficial for others. In order to benefit others, the bodhisattva learns and studies anything that is necessary for others, derived from this bodhicitta, cherishing others. Then also, by having bodhicitta, strictness also comes. Not letting oneself come under the control of self-cherishing thought, not letting oneself come under the control of anger, under the control of the unsubdued mind; strictness from the unsubdued mind, from the negative karma. If one has bodhicitta there is also strictness—a strict practice comes. And then bodhicitta itself—among the good hearts it is the ultimate good heart, the greatest.

So in order to plant the seed of bodhicitta in our mind and also to make the present action of listening to the teaching become the cause to achieve omniscient mind, the method to be able to offer extensive benefits to other sentient beings, you should listen to the teachings, such as the Mahayana teaching *Entering in the Bodhisattva's Actions*, possessed by the motive of bodhicitta. So please generate a brief motivation for listening to the teaching. Think, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all the mother sentient beings. Therefore I’m going to listen to the commentary to the *Bodhicharyavatara*.”

If a non-bodhisattva gets angry with another non-bodhisattva then, the way the anger destroys the merit... An example is when one makes prostrations to the holy object, the Triple Gem. If there is one atom covered—it is not possible, but just to get the idea clear—when the person makes one prostration if there is one atom covered by his body, he accumulates extensive merit to take birth as a wheel-turning king one thousand times.

The reason wheel-turning king is used as example in the sutra teachings by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is because to be born as a wheel-turning king one time, one needs infinite merit as the cause, because a wheel-turning king has a perfect body. Not only that, he has incredible power, enjoyments, possessions and surroundings, such as the king of devas like Indra—kings who own, who control one, two, three or four continents. The kings of the pure realms such as Shambhala, the king of the Kalachakra pure realm, like that. There are different kinds of wheel-turning kings, with perfect bodies, incredible power, enjoyments, and surroundings—such as the king of Shambhala, the pure realm of Kalachakra Buddha. This is unimaginable; there is no comparison with the enjoyments of the pure realm of Kalachakra, Shambhala. Even if all the American possessions were collected together—in the world everybody recognizes, everybody prays, everybody finds attraction in American power and wealth, everybody’s nirvana is to go to America; once you reach there you have received nirvana, not seeing the problems that are going to be experienced by being there. Kind of once you reach America you are liberated from suffering, like that. However, if all the world’s possessions and enjoyments were collected—the places, the food, the enjoyments of this whole earth put together—there would be no comparison. It is a hundred times, a thousand times, much better. However, to be born a wheel-turning king, one has to create infinite causes; one has to create so much merit. So therefore Guru Shakyamuni Buddha used the example of a wheel-turning king to get an idea of merit, how incredibly much merit is accumulated by making even one prostration.

So, if there is one atom under the body, it creates the extensive merit to be born as a wheel-turning king one thousand times. In fact, when we make one prostration, how many atoms the body covers is uncountable. From the surface of the ground into the earth down to the bottom where it finishes there are an uncountable numbers of atoms, so one accumulates incredible merit by making one prostration to the holy object, Buddha. However many atoms there are, it creates the merit to be born as a wheel-turning king one thousand times equaling the number of atoms, so one accumulates

unbelievable merit, causes of happiness and perfections. So if one wishes, if one desires happiness, happiness for this life, happiness for the future lives, even if one seeks power like a wheel-turning king, one should attempt as much as possible to create the cause of happiness, by methods such as the practice of prostrations, purifying unimaginable obscurations and negative karmas, accumulating extensive merit.

However, it does not mean that if one makes prostration that the merit that one achieves from that is only to be born as a wheel-turning king. This is just an example of how much extensive merit one accumulates, an idea, but what it becomes mainly depends on where you dedicate your merit. Which purpose you dedicate the merit. Like if you are riding on a horse, the horse runs according to which way you pull the rein, the rope. The horse runs in dependence on that, and then you can reach the place that you want to reach. So dedication of merit is like the reins that make the horse face the right direction.

However, any merit, any virtue that is accumulated in relationship to Buddha, even the idols, the symbolic figures, any virtuous action that is generated in relation to Buddha, not only prostrations but any virtuous action that is accumulated in relation to Buddha definitely becomes the cause of enlightenment, all the time, without depending on the particular motivation.

So the point of what I'm saying is this. If a non-bodhisattva gets angry at another non-bodhisattva, the duration of the time of enjoying the result becomes shortened and the power of the merit becomes weaker. Without arising anger you can enjoy the result for a long time. It's like with a battery that doesn't have much power, which doesn't last a long time, like that.

Also, how heavy the karma is that is done in relationship to the holy beings, such as the bodhisattva, even the small negative action that is done in relationship to a holy being, a bodhisattva, how heavy it is, is like taking out the eyes of all the sentient beings of the three realms, the realm of the form, formless and the desire realm. Taking out all their eyes...

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...much more heavy than that. And looking at the bodhisattva with cross eyes one time, creating the negative karma of disrespecting is much heavier than taking out the eyes of the sentient beings of the three realms.

And even the small virtuous action that is accumulated in relation to a bodhisattva, such a holy being, is incredibly powerful, it creates much more merit. Just looking at a bodhisattva's holy face, holy body, just looking at it with a calm mind, devoted, thinking how good, how pure it is, just looking at a bodhisattva respectfully, with a calm mind, one accumulates much more merit than—I think than guiding the lives of sentient beings in the three realms. Even—I'm not quite sure of this—even giving food to that many sentient beings for eons, I think there is something like this also.

So even a small virtuous action, a good action done in relation to a holy being, what incredible merit one accumulates; and even a small non-virtuous action done in relation to a holy being creates such heavy karma, the cause of suffering, which one will have to experience for such a long time. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained this in the teaching.

We don't even have ordinary clairvoyance, besides not having omniscient mind to see clearly each and every sentient being's level of mind without the slightest mistake. We don't even have ordinary clairvoyance to see what exactly is going to happen tomorrow in our life, and we cannot see even what exactly is going to happen this evening, even by time, even the very close things. We cannot even recognize what the disease in our body is.

How can we discriminate? Since we cannot understand, since we cannot see the level of other's mind, how can we discriminate? Only by the reason that in your view you see that the person is such and such, ordinary, you see the person as an ordinary person, doing mistakes, having suffering, having delusions, doing mistakes in his actions—just by these reasons, only by the reason that it appears like this to your mind, that he has mistakes according to your view, only that cannot prove that the other being's mind is not buddha, is not bodhisattva. That alone, your own projection, is no proof; your view is the projection or production of your karma, of your mind.

Your view, the projection of your own karma, depends on how pure the karma is, how pure your mind is. Depending on that you see the object. Also, one who is an enlightened being, one who is a bodhisattva, also how you see that being as pure depends on how pure your karma is, how pure your mind is. Dependent on how thin the karmic obscurations are, you see that enlightened being also as that pure.

Like the telescope—depending on the quality of the telescope or how clear the telescope is, you can see a much larger, clearer view. The individual karmic view of any object—whatever object, sentient beings, buddha, bodhisattva, any object that one perceives—how it appears to one's mind, how one perceives it, the view of suffering, the view of happiness, the view of beautiful objects, the view of ugly objects—all this is the production of and the result of karma, pure and impure karma.

Without talking much, there are so many stories to tell about different people's experiences—what one person sees another person does not see, he sees it a different way, he sees something completely opposite, different from what other people see. All of us, even when we look at one person—some people will find that person nice, beautiful, some people will find the person ugly, some will feel indifferent—different views. What we look at is one object, that person, but because we have different minds some find the same object beautiful, some find it indifferent. For some just by seeing the person's face anger arises—they don't want to even look at the person's face, and some are so happy to look at that person's body.

Same thing, similar, when we all look at one place, there will also be different views. Also with food, different views; when many people eat the same food some people find it delicious, some people find it disgusting. All these different views are the result of karma, the objects of the six senses, bad and good—all this is the result of karma.

We cannot prove, even by saying, "I actually saw it," "I actually saw this person get angry," "I actually saw this person having attachment," "I actually saw the person stealing." "I actually saw..." —even that alone does not prove that that being has delusion, that that being is not an enlightened being. Because I actually see it, that alone doesn't prove anything. When you take drugs, as long as the power of the drug, the power of the element has not gone away, you see all the dust as worms. You actually see all the worms moving, you actually see this You actually see all the dust as worms, as if the whole ground is full of worms. For your mind, you actually see it. And also with bile disease, bile fever, you see the white color as yellow—the white snow mountain is yellow in color.



You actually see it. For your mind you actually see it. And from a distance—in the West I did not see them, you see it more in India, more in primitive places—in order to protect the crops in the field, to keep the wild pigs and also birds from coming to eat the corn or rice and they put something, not professional like mannequins in the West, but they make something—they wrap a stick with cloth, and it looks like it has hands, a head—something black standing there, a scarecrow. That mannequin, until you come nearby, you believe to be a real person. Until this goes away you actually see a real person, “I really see it, look there. I really see it.” Until it goes away, until it disappears, until you come nearby; until you get proof that it’s not real, either by coming nearby or somebody explaining to you that it is not real. But until the view of the real person disappears, the person says, “I actually see it.”

So, just by the reason that I actually see it, “I actually see it in front of my eyes,” that doesn’t mean anything, that alone doesn’t prove anything. Your view, how you see a sentient being, that alone does not prove that a person is this or that, that it is not a buddha, not a bodhisattva. That alone is not proof. You can understand from this example.

Also, if you put the reason, the way things appear to our mind, things appear as permanent—it doesn’t mean they are permanent. Things appear to our mind as permanent even though they are not permanent. In regards to how things appear to our mind, in our view, if whatever appears to our mind is true, if all that is true, then the mannequin that you see as a real person should be a real person. Other people should also see it as a real person. Also the scarecrow—if everything that appears in our view true for your eyes or your mind, then that also should be a real person. And also the things that appear as permanent should be permanent.

Even the “I”, even this “I,” which is in fact completely empty of existing from its own side, if it were true that it exists as it appears to one’s own mind, then it should exist by itself, it should be independent. Then there is no reason why we should change all the time, whenever the mind does something, whenever the body does different actions, whenever the feet do different actions there would be no reason to change, no point to change, no point to label it with a different name. There would be no point if it was independent, existing without depending on the labeling base, the aggregates, and the thought and the name that we label on that—then there would be no point at all. Then we should be able to exist without depending on a label. The self, a being should be able to exist, whatever different actions the aggregates do, without labeling on the aggregates, “I am doing this, I am doing that, I’m suffering, I’m happy,” this and that. Without labeling, there is no way. Without a label there is no way that it can exist. Without labeling the being, or self, whatever it is called, whether the name is an English word, a Tibetan word or an Indian word, whatever it is, it is a label. There is no way for it to exist without a label.

There was something, I’m trying to remember, but I forgot.

However, it is clear, it is not independent, it is clear how it is dependent—even by checking now how the “I” exists, what the “I” is doing now, in everyday life experience one can understand how the “I” is dependent, merely labeled; it’s not completely true. The “I” that appears as independent, as existing by itself; which appears and which we believe in, is completely empty. Even, like this, there is nothing to trust. Whatever appears in our view, whatever we believe, just by this reason it doesn’t prove that the object has to be this. So you see, if you always trust, if you completely trust all the time, then there is great danger, you receive great loss. Another way of saying it is that you put yourself in problems, in suffering. You trap yourself in the problem of prison.

So the conclusion is this. Even in India, an unimaginable time ago...

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...appears Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself, without any effort, like the moon rising—when the moon rises, there are uncountable numbers of reflections of the moon in the various waters on this earth. When there are no obstacles, clouds or fog or rocks or something covering the water, when there are no obstacles, there are uncountable numbers of reflections of the moon equal to the waters of this earth, without any effort, without any thought or motivation from the side of the moon, such as, “I am going to reflect in the water.” Without any thought or motive, automatically the reflection of the moon in the water happens. Like this, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, after he became enlightened, manifested in the *sambhogakaya* aspect, in the aspect of the deities that you see in the tangkas such as Vajradhara, Yamantaka and Heruka, the various aspects of Buddha. He then transformed the mandala, then initiated the tantra teachings with that aspect. At the same time, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, in the aspect of nirmanakaya, the holy body of the sublime transformation, adorned with the signs—the thirty-two holy signs, the significations, then eighty exemplifications—in the nirmanakaya aspect revealed at the same time different teachings at different places for different levels of mind. This is done continuously with the holy body, holy speech and holy mind, doing the works according to the level of mind of the sentient beings.

When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was in India, usually in going for alms his holy feet never touched the ground. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha walked one inch above the ground, without touching the ground. And the creatures, the worms under Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s feet, over which Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy feet passed, even these creatures were in great bliss for seven days and also were not born in the lower realms after death, things like that.

In the general view, other people saw one arm’s length of beams that came from his holy body. In the general view, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s body was so magnificent, incredibly beautiful. As much as you look at it, you never get bored; you never finish looking at it. Just seeing him gives incredible bliss in the mind, incredible calmness in the mind. One person sees Guru Shakyamuni Buddha facing this way, but the person behind him sees Guru Shakyamuni facing and looking at him.

But at that time some of the Hindu followers who followed a path opposite to the Buddhist teaching, some of those wrong followers often criticized Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. They were jealous of him for doing incredible work for sentient beings. They had much heresy. These founders could not even see the one arm’s length of beams that the general people could see. They could not see that. When they met Guru Shakyamuni Buddha they saw a very ordinary monk who did not have any holy signs, such as chakras in the hands and feet—just a very simple poor ordinary monk. However, the problem was not that Guru Shakyamuni was not enlightened; it was not that. The problem is the heavy karmic obscuration, having created much negative karma by heresy and things like that, their minds were obscured so that they couldn’t see even the aspect that other people could generally see.

Like this, there are so many examples you can find about how the view is dependent on pure karma and impure karma—the pure view and the impure view.

So the point I'm making is that since we cannot discriminate who is Buddha and who is not Buddha, we have to be very careful. In regards to the side of creating virtuous actions, there is no danger with any object, with any being. Especially with the guru, the Buddha, a bodhisattva, the Dharma or Sangha, there is only great profit if we act in a virtuous way. There is no danger, no need to doubt about danger. But with such holy objects, if you create even a small non-virtuous action, a little bit wrong, the object, the holy being is so powerful that the karma is very heavy, it has many shortcomings. Therefore, since we do not wish suffering, even a small discomfort, we have to be very careful not to create the cause; we have to attempt not to create the cause.

Therefore, the whole point of this morning's talk is that when we are with other beings, especially when your mind is in danger of having anger arise, when you are in the situation in which anger can arise, or harm, or saying some bad words, doing some bad, harmful action or in danger of ill will arising, during those times you should be very cautious, you should think, "Maybe he is Buddha, maybe a bodhisattva, how can I tell? How can I know? My mind is so ignorant, my view is dependent on my mind, my karma." So like that one should give advice to oneself to be cautious.

Like when you are going over a very dangerous trail where it is very easy to slip and fall down a precipice, or on a very dangerous, unsafe bridge, where there is danger, you should be very careful. Similarly, we should be very careful with other sentient beings. Otherwise there is the danger of throwing oneself in the lower realms. Easily. Just the way you move your lips, a little bit your tongue goes, a little bit you put it together, then easily you will fall into the precipice, into the lower realms. Therefore, while we have the opportunity we should be careful.

I stop here.

[Dedications]

Lecture 13: November 24<sup>th</sup> am

[Prayers]

Praise to Manjushri.

I bow down to you Guru Manjushri,  
O compassionate one,  
Illuminate the darkness enclosing my mind  
Etc. (3x)

From the holy speech of my guru, the great bodhisattva, Khunu Lama Tenzin Gyaltzen, from *The Precious Lamp Admiring Bodhicitta*, "Generate bodhicitta, if you wish to benefit yourself. If you wish to benefit others, generate bodhicitta. If you wish to offer service to the teachings, generate bodhicitta. If you wish the path to happiness, generate bodhicitta."

Rinpoche is advising according to his own experience, according to what he discovered: the best way to benefit you, the best way to benefit others, the best way to offer service to the teachings, the best way to offer service to sentient beings and the best way even to achieve the path to happiness. According to him—a great pandit, a great meditator, a great yogi who completed the study of

listening, reflecting and meditation practice on the complete teachings of Buddha, sutra and tantra, whose holy mind is enriched with the experience of the path, Khunu Lama Rinpoche—what he discovered, according to that he gives advice. Not just out of blind faith, or not like a psychologist saying it might be this, it may be that, like doctors guessing what disease the patient has, trying to guess. There is no exact understanding of the problem of that person, the root of the problem of that person but trying to guess, mentioning some method, unsure whether it will benefit or not, unsure whether it works or not for that person. It is not like that. Like the scientist trying to experiment—maybe it is right, maybe it is wrong, maybe it works that way, maybe it does not work, making experiments. It is not like that.

Even if you are not concerned for others, even if you don't have any thought to benefit others, to offer service to others, even if the thought you have is only to benefit yourself, only for yourself to be happy, if that is what you wish, even for that there is the need of the good heart. Even for that it is best to have the ultimate good heart of bodhicitta. Through this, by generating bodhicitta, one can accomplish even the highest happiness—among the happiness even the highest happiness, the state of omniscient mind. One can accomplish even this. Besides, any temporal happiness and perfection, whatever one wishes, one can easily accomplish. Even for each day's means of living, it is so important, of the utmost need for the mind to be happy. For the mind to be happy is so important, it is of the utmost need: the bodhicitta, the good heart, that is the best, bodhicitta.

For example: parents, father and mother. Even if the father is very impatient, if the mother is not that impatient, if her mind is in the nature of the thought of loving kindness, in the nature of patience, anger does not rise that much in her mind—her mind is usually, mostly, in the nature of patience. Even if the anger arises it does not last long. It is only very rarely that it arises, and even if the anger arises, it does not last a long time—after one or two or three minutes it goes away, it disappears. So even though one of the parents is very impatient, as long as the other person is practicing patience, living in the practice of patience, usually it is rare to get angry, and even if the anger arises it does not last a long time. After one or two minutes it disappears, you see. This makes a big difference in the harmony, in the peace, in the relationship.

Even if the other person keeps on screaming all the time, the father—if it is a couple you know, husband and wife—either the wife screams all the time, very impatient, when the husband does a little bit of something wrong, coming home a little bit late after work, from the job, after four o'clock or five o'clock, maybe one hour or two hours late. The wife hears or sees the husband is going with somebody in the bars or to a party, going with another new girlfriend, or she hears somebody is pregnant. There is another girlfriend who has been kept secret by her husband for some years, then one day the wife hears the girlfriend is pregnant. Somebody makes a phone call or she makes a phone call, she discovers through friends or somebody. Then her heart is completely broken. Then she becomes completely crazy, beating herself—she cannot beat the husband, so she beats herself, beating the chest, then pulls her own hair.

Or else the husband... even if he makes money he does not bring it all home or he always comes back home drunk after he finishes his job, his work. He does not bring enough money; he spends it to drink or gives it to others. Then again the wife becomes mad. Like a session of meditation—the husband comes back home, then they start the session of fighting, after work, after four o'clock. In the morning before going to work there is another session of fighting, another meditation on fighting. The wife criticizes the husband, the husband criticizes the wife, then maybe they go for dinner and, after they come back, again there is another session of fighting. Before going to sleep,

maybe they have a long fight, a very late sleep. Anyway, you know more than I do. I don't need to repeat.

If the husband is busy, doing some work for other, helping others, he does not have much time to talk to the wife, to see the wife even for one or two days, just a few days he is so busy working for others, helping them, that he could not relax with her, could not find much time to see her. Then the wife becomes jealous or angry that he is not paying any more attention, or not looking after the baby, always only, "I have to do..." He does not take care, he does not pay attention, even for one day or two days, even just for a few days, he is busy with other people, helping other people, doing some work for others. However, then the wife becomes very nervous, very impatient. Whatever it is, then like this.

In a couple, there is also much fighting about expense. If the husband does not have much miserliness, the wife screams after the husband when he brings bills, buying things, screaming that he spends too much money, or because he does not come at the right time the food gets burned. You know... I'm joking.

However, you see, either the wife is impatient or the husband usually has great anger, but if both parents, the father and mother, the husband and wife both have very strong anger, if both minds are like a rock, like iron, very solid, then it is very difficult to get along. First of all for a long time, for months and years, for months and months, years and years, they attempt, working hard, making money, working very hard on that project, making many plans, thinking, "If I can live with this person, how it would be fantastic, how it would be great," thinking "If I can live with her or him my life would be such and such, so happy." Then, to accomplish that aim, month after month, year after year working so hard, to be able to live together; collecting the money or whatever it is, whatever arrangement has to be done, then with great excitement in the mind, great excitement to live together, to get married. Then one makes big expenses for the wedding, big preparation, gathering parents, all the relative, all the friends, big expenses.

Then, in the beginning when the opportunity to be together happens, there is much excitement and they are inseparable even for a minute. They can't stand to be without the other person; they can't wait even an hour without being together with the other person. Then one day goes, two days go, three days, then gradually—before you didn't understand the other's person mind so much, you only saw his or her body. You were interested in the body but you didn't understand the mind. Then by living together, one day goes, two days go, three days go and you learn more and more about the person's mind. Then more and more you see the nature of the personality, the nature of that person's mind, more and more and more, then—slowly, what the other person wants, what she likes is so strong and also what you want, what I want, what I like is so strong, my happiness is more important than the happiness that he wants, and there are two very strong selfish motives. However, you see the other person, you learn more and more his personality, the nature of her or his mind, you learn more and more.

Then after some time you see how her or his mind is like a garbage can. Outside is clean but inside is like garbage. Then day by day less and less you have interest in her or him and then afterwards, the object, which was so beautiful at the beginning, the most beautiful, so inseparable that you almost could decide, "If I separate from her or him I will die, I will kill myself," kind of like that, such a strong connection, but later, after a few days, as the months go, as a year goes, as years go... those are a little bit better ones, the little bit permanent ones.

Then, the one who was the most beautiful, as the days go, become more and more ugly and finally completely ugly. Then, they who were inseparable in the beginning, “If I separate from this I will die, I will kill, I will burn myself, I will burst...” like in the mountain, what do you call this? Volcano, like a volcano. Then at the end there is the strong wish, “How can I separate from him?” There is so much worry and fear, “How can I separate from him?” “What can I do?” There is either a wrathful way to separate from him or a peaceful way to separate from him, by cheating. “What can I do?” Then full of fear, you are completely trapped in her or his hand. You can’t do what you want. And then there is much fear and worry. However, you are so happy to separate from him even for a minute, an hour, so happy to be alone. So like this.

I think my conversation ran away somewhere else. I did not connect much with the teaching, I think. Anyway... afterwards, the one to whom you wanted to give everything at the beginning, everything, afterwards you don’t want to give even one penny. You don’t want to see him again forever; you pray to not see him or her forever. These are the shortcomings of samsara; dissatisfaction, nothing is definite in relationships.

The main point of what I am saying is that, even if one lives a family life, how important it is, how incredibly important it is to practice bodhicitta. How important it is for harmony—even in relationships to be harmonious is so important. You see, even if the husband is very impatient, if the wife has a better heart, more patience, then the relationship lasts longer, there is more harmony, there is more peace. Of course, there is no question that it gives more peace in her mind, in her life, but also it gives peace for the husband. You see, when the wife keeps quiet, when the wife just does not react, does not become emotional when the husband reacts, if you practice patience, if you practice the good heart then, the thought of loving kindness like this, you see, the husband alone, the husband can scream all day from morning until night. Day after day, month after month, how can he live like that without depending on somebody else reacting? He can’t live on that. If she does not react the husband would not know how to handle that. He would not know what to do with his anger; if she does not react, he has to stop. But if she says something, then he says something, then it gets worse and worse, then he again says something and it is worse and worse.

If the wife is very emotional, very impatient but the husband is practicing patience usually and has a better heart than her, then also this helps very much. Because of that, there is much more peace in their life. He helps her; he offers that much peace for her by not harming her, by not reacting to her. Also she learns from him. If he is a good example then she learns from him, if she is a good example then he learns from her, like a disciple takes the example of the good, perfectly qualified virtuous teacher who is living in moral conduct, who is living in good practice, who has the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment, who is living in good practice, living in pure moral conduct. Then, the disciple takes that example and the disciple also becomes good by taking that example. His life changes, he also becomes like that perfectly qualified virtuous teacher, his mind is enriched with realizations of the path to liberation, to omniscient mind—great understanding, and then also living in pure moral conduct.

I think I stop here, otherwise no chapters on patience get done, I think. Actually all this is motivation, the subject that I am talking about, that is actually in effect the same. To train the mind in bodhicitta, to have the good heart is a way to practice patience.

So Khunu Lama Rinpoche is saying, “If you wish to benefit yourself, generate bodhicitta. If you wish to benefit others, generate bodhicitta.” As Shantideva said in the *Bodhicaryavatara* in the chapter of the benefits of bodhicitta, Shakyamuni Buddha and all the buddhas have checked for many eons what is the most beneficial thing for sentient beings and they have discovered that the most beneficial thing for the sentient beings is bodhicitta, to have bodhicitta in the mind.

Even relating to everyday life, if the wife or the husband has bodhicitta in the mind it does not matter how many children one has, if one has bodhicitta then without any partial thought, distant or close, one knows that it is one’s own karma with whom you are living, whom you have to take care of. The children that you have to take care of are created by your own karma. If there is bodhicitta then also without any partial thought, distant or close, one sees that these are also part of kind sentient beings who have been one’s mother countless times. As one should benefit for all the sentient beings, same thing, one should help, one should benefit, one should take care of the children, of the husband, one should benefit whomever one can, since this is also the past life’s karma.

What I am saying is this—even if we don’t have bodhicitta now, we should train our mind in the thought to benefit others, to be able to offer greater benefit, to be able to continuously offer benefits to others. If one practices, even if we don’t have it now, train the mind in bodhicitta, then the confusions, aggressiveness, tiredness, boredom of taking care of the children, husband and wife—these thoughts don’t arise. Instead of rejecting, instead of thoughts of tiredness, instead of thinking, “When can I be free from this,” instead of aggressiveness or the spirit going down, unhappy, not enjoying life, all this does not happen. Instead of rejecting you accept—but the way you accept is a different way, the way you accept is with a good heart. As you have to benefit other sentient beings, all the sentient beings, so they are also part of it.

“Those for whom I always every day pray, for whom I accumulate merit, for whom I practice Dharma, for whom I meditate—they are included in that, they are part of it. As I should benefit others, I should benefit these sentient beings who are with me.” In that way, with good heart, with sincere mind, you enjoy your life. You are happy, even if there is trouble, your mind is happy. One feels oneself a slave, a servant for others. Not the others as a servant for oneself but oneself as a servant for others. This way there is much peace in your mind. Even in your mind there is all the time happiness, rejoicefulness. No aggression, no depression, when one’s life is dedicated like this, to doing this work with sincere mind, since it is one’s own karma to have such a life, whatever problem there is with the children or the husband or the wife.

The next one, “If one wishes to offer service to the teachings, one should generate bodhicitta.” Here it says teaching, if one wants to offer service for the teachings, but this applies to even if you are doing a job, not particularly involved in working for a center or something, which spreads Dharma. If you change your mind, even if you are doing a job, as I mentioned before, instead of having the selfish attitude, “I am working for myself,” “I am going to work for my happiness,”—right after you wake up from the dream, “Oh! I must go to work! I must go to work because I want money, because I want a comfortable life. I want to be happy.” Instead of keeping busy, running day and night just with the selfish attitude, instead of living the life with the selfish attitude, concerned only with my own happiness, instead of this, which is such an incredibly poor mind, a very poor quality of mind, ungenerous, kind of very shameful.

As we have a human body, as we have such a precious human body with which we can achieve any meaning, such a good body like this, having such an attitude is kind of very dirty, kind of very disgusting. If we check, if we look at our own attitude it is kind of disgusting. Instead of spending day and night with such an attitude, think, it is very good even if you don't have bodhicitta, which is the best of course to have. Actually, I think to do the works for others, doing the works for the center, working for the Dharma, such as working for a center, whatever it is, director, whatever the work is, any work that one does for others, business, whatever work one does, actually best is that first, I think what is needed, the best is that first you accomplish the three principal paths. Even if you do your own works, even if you do work for others, I think the best thing is if first you can do the three principal paths in your mind. Then you go to work in the city. Actually that is the best way.

Even while you are doing the work there are fewer problems, less negative karma with the relationships with others. The work is highly beneficial. However, we should train our mind in the good heart, bodhicitta. Instead of the selfish attitude, think of oneself as a slave, "I am a slave; I am going to work for the happiness of these people, the employers." Even if you can't think of all sentient beings, at least you think of the employers, "Those who make the money, who get the money, I am going to work for the happiness of them, I am their slave." Instead of rejecting you accept. In the mind you practice like this. "I am a slave."

Whatever one does, whether one does work in the center, whether you are doing a job for yourself, whatever work one does, whether it is work for many people or not, whether one has a salary or not, however, the way to practice, the way to think...

<end of tape>

And again while you are doing the work, in the morning when you wake up, and also at night time, again think: "The purpose, the reason that I have taken this human body is in order to offer service to others, to obtain happiness for other sentient beings. For that reason I have taken a human body, for that reason I exist, for that reason I am alive. Everyday that I am alive, even today, is only to offer happiness for the benefit for others. To obtain happiness for others, for only that reason, I exist. No other reason. Being alive today is also for no other reason. I don't exist for myself. I am able to be alive by the kindness of sentient beings. By the kindness of these around me here, I have my everyday comfort, my happiness, my opportunity to practice Dharma. The purpose for which I am alive today is only to obtain benefit, only to obtain happiness for other sentient beings, nothing else. Other sentient beings become my servant, but why shouldn't I become a servant for other sentient beings?"

Practice like this. In the morning when you get up, in the night time while you are working, while you have problems, confusion with work, think again and again that "I exist for others. I don't exist for myself, for my happiness, I exist to obtain happiness for others." Then it is very good, so good.

When you make the decision in your mind like this, that you are working for others, you are doing the work for others, when the attitude is transformed like this, then the mind is very happy, much more happy, much more calm than the selfish attitude, "I am working on this job, I am working for the center, I am doing this because I want reputation, I want happiness." That attitude, that mind is not happy, not calm, not relaxed. There is a big difference between those two attitudes: the self-centered attitude and the selfless attitude, the sincere mind, the pure attitude. There are big differences. So in that way when you change your attitude, you see yourself also working for others.



Otherwise even though you are doing the work for others, if the attitude is for self then there is much confusion, much conflict, and it is so easy for problems to arise, also dissatisfaction, so many things. Also one easily creates problems for others.

As the great bodhisattva Shantideva said in the teachings, pray like this. Also when one does this you see, when other people criticize, when you have changed your attitude like this, as a slave, when one's attitude is changed like this, when oneself is as a slave for others, then if one receives criticism for others you kind of accept it, "I am worthy of receiving criticism, I am the object of receiving criticism." It does not become a shock; it does not become a huge problem for the mind.

As Shantideva said in the teaching: "May I become the base of sentient beings' living, such as the wish-granting mantras." There are mantras that make all the different works successful, that stop the different problems. Whatever you wish it makes successful. So like wish-granting mantras, like a wish-granting vase.

As I am talking about this just the thought came of this Sai Baba. He puts his hand in a pot and produces white powder. Just the thought came, but I am not sure whether it was a wish-granting vase or not. I just remembered. However, like the wish-granting vase, by putting your hand into the vase whatever material perfection that you need you get—somehow it gets actualized by the power of the material, like the wish-granting vase, like the wish-granting trees, those trees in the pure realms; and you can pray, by praying whatever material you wish to possess, you get.

I left out one word, "May I become the base of sentient beings living forever." "Forever" is very important. "Forever" shows very strong will to be dedicated. It shows that your compassion is not for a few minutes. It shows, like when another person gives you nice things, talks nice things about you, says nice things; when another person is nice to you, you are nice to him, you are generous to him, you give things and you help the person. But when the other person dislikes you, you completely change your attitude; you completely change your body, speech and mind from the generous one; instead of benefiting, harming. Not like this. Not like this, you see, "forever." For ever, whatever change happens, whether sentient beings benefit you, whether sentient beings harm you, whatever happens, from your side forever. Like the example of the four great elements. How the earth is used by the sentient beings—they use the earth to grow crops, they fertilize, they cut, they use machines for crops then they build houses with earth, they make them on the earth, they use the earth to make roads. You see, it is up to the sentient beings. Whether they want to make the earth square, whether they want to make the earth a triangle shape, whether the sentient beings want to make the earth round... whatever they want to do, it is up to the sentient beings. It is not up to the earth, it is up to the sentient beings. How they use the earth is up to the sentient beings, up to their wish, it is in their hands. So like that, like that you're completely used.

That's the way we should practice, the way we should think, the way we should dedicate ourselves for others. Like the earth, it is completely up to the sentient beings how they want to use us for their happiness. Whether they make it round, whether triangle shape. Whichever way benefits their happiness, it is not up to oneself, is up to the sentient beings, like the earth. Like this we should train the mind, we should think like that in the mind.

Or like the water, how the sentient beings use the water. It is up to the sentient beings how they use it. Whether they shoot it up from below—like the river up to the mountain by electricity, they push it up, they use for machines, or to drink, to boil, whatever they do, however the sentient beings want

to use it for their means of living, for their happiness. So like water, we are completely used by sentient beings.

Like the wind. Sentient beings use air to be able to survive. How they use the wind or how they use the fire for their happiness. Like the sky, as we hear now [airplane passes], for traveling. If there is no sky there is resistance, if there is no sky you cannot travel from one's own place through the sky to somewhere else. Like—what is this called? Like the bat in France or America. They are not born as a bat but they make wings like a bat, their hands are tied with the wings and they jump over the cliffs, they run a few steps. Fortunately, if they didn't break their legs and if it becomes successful, they fly. Then there is another one, what is that called? You jump from the airplane without using a parachute. I think they might be carrying a parachute, but there was no parachute, they were not using one. Yes, afterwards...yes, might be. They come out from the airplane and they shake hands all around.

Student: Skydiving; one jumps without a parachute, the other one jumps out and hands him the parachute as he is flying down; he puts it on, then he uses the parachute but he has dropped out without a parachute.

Rinpoche: I see. He was without a parachute?

Student: The next one has an extra one, he hands it as he is flying down.

Rinpoche: He passed it to the other person. On the television, one man fell down. I think maybe he didn't use a parachute, I don't know what happened. They were two or three people hanging in space, they were able to kind of stay in space by holding hands, but one person fell down. But there were no rocks down there, I think just a field. But the person fell way down. Then there was one girl standing there, I think she was alone, probably with somebody else or not? She was criticizing the man, "How shameless he is," the one who fell down. Anyway, however, like the sky, always useful for sentient beings. Like that.

Like Shantideva says in the *Bodhicharyavatara*: We should even train saying the words and then also practice, train the mind in that. You see, the person who has such a strong self-cherishing thought is even unable to say the prayers. That person is unable, is scared to say even the prayer to renounce himself for others, even to say the prayer is scary for the mind. For somebody who has a very strong selfish attitude it is very scary even to do meditation such as giving and taking. So at least just the words, we should even train in saying the prayer, then practice according to the prayers that we said. "May I become the means of living for sentient beings, forever." As we say the prayer, the words that we receive from the teachings, said by holy beings, then also in practice we should do like that as much as we can.

Then whatever work we do without much problems. Mostly problems are because of the way of thinking. Your mind's way of thinking makes the problems in life. One way of thinking there is no problem but another way of thinking and there is a problem, confusion. Another way of thinking there is no problem—the problem doesn't exist. So one way of thinking there is a huge problem is just kind of a mind creation, dependent on how you think. That is the reason of Buddhism, it depends on that so there is need for Dharma practice. That is also one reason why there is need for Dharma practice in everyday life, need for practicing the good heart. The problem is not truly existent, not independent. As you are more beneficial, as your mind is more sincere, your works are

more beneficial, more effective for others. More enjoyable, even if you don't get any money, even if you don't get any physical things, the mind is so happy. There are a lot of advantages, even though at the moment one does not get any material things from that. Even if one doesn't get it, this itself is the cause of receiving materials. Good karma, this life and future lives.

Then the next line, "If you wish the path of happiness, generate bodhicitta." If one has generated bodhicitta then even if one does not become enlightened in this life, whatever path is generated in this life, the rest of the path one will be able to generate in the next life without much difficulty, without taking much time. Because by having bodhicitta one accumulates extensive, infinite merit all the time. Merit is the cause of the path, of generating the path. Without accumulating merit there is no cause of the path so one cannot generate the path in the mind. So whatever of the path there is left to generate in the mind, by being reborn in a pure realm or by taking a perfect human rebirth again, one is able to generate the rest of the path without taking much time—within three lives, within sixteen lives—without taking much time one is able to approach sublime happiness, the omniscient mind for the sake of others.

Just by praying or just only by talking how bodhicitta has great advantages—how good it is, how one receives great advantages from it—that alone does not generate bodhicitta in one's own mind. Therefore one should do extensive listening, reflecting and meditation practice on that. Listening, reflecting and meditation practice on that. Then the small good heart that we have now, the mind that we have generated now, we should develop day by day, month by month, year by year. Make it better next year than this year, like this. Through this, by knowing the teachings of that, by practicing these together like this, then what is called bodhicitta...

What made Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all the great yogis who became enlightened within three years in this body—the pundit Nagarjuna, Shantideva and those great yogis, Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Mila—what made those people enlightened is bodhicitta. This way, one day we will be able to have this same mind, realization of bodhicitta and receive the name; in that same minute receiving the name "bodhisattva." Even though one is not called a bodhisattva, at that time one becomes the base to receive the name bodhisattva. An object that other sentient beings, even devas, those who have much power, wealth and enjoyment, even the kings of devas have to make offerings to, have to prostrate to—one becomes an object of prostration even for those kings of devas. Even their crown has to touch one's feet, like that.

So I think I stop here. I think I didn't get to the part of patience.

Lecture 14: November 25<sup>th</sup> am

This time what I need to explain is a quotation about the benefits of bodhicitta, which takes much time to talk about. So however, through listening to teaching on the *Bodhicharyavatara*—normally I introduce the motivation that way, and it is kind of easy to understand. Knowing the different levels of motivation gives more freedom, knowing what is holy Dharma, what is not holy Dharma and what is worldly dharma gives more freedom. Whenever one wishes to practice Dharma one can transform the actions into holy Dharma, and however much one wants within that day, that night, however much time, however one wishes to practice holy Dharma, one has choice. If one does not have the Dharma wisdom to be able to discriminate, to be able to transform actions with choice, by knowing, if one does not have the Dharma wisdom to be able to transform actions into holy

Dharma, then sometimes by opportunity the actions become Dharma. Not by knowing, just by opportunity, even if the person has no particular goal.

Let's say there are four people reading the scriptures of the graduated path to enlightenment. One person reads the scripture of lamrim with the motive concerned with the happiness of this life, the happiness of his own life, only this life's happiness. Then one person read the scriptures and recites the prayer of the graduated path to enlightenment with the motive to find a better rebirth in the next life for himself. Then the next person reads the scripture, recites it, with the motive to achieve ever-release from samsara. Then the next person reads or recites the text with the motive to achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of others.

So you see the action of the very last person reading or reciting the scriptures becomes the cause of omniscient mind, because it is possessed by the motive of either the actual bodhicitta, effortless bodhicitta—that is without question. By having the actual realization of bodhicitta, for that there is no question, but even if it is possessed by effortful bodhicitta, you create the motive, the thought of bodhicitta by reasoning. You don't have the realization so it is with effort, you have to build it up, you have created the attitude so, effortful bodhicitta. However, if it is possessed by the motive of bodhicitta to achieve enlightenment in order to benefit sentient beings, if he is reading the scriptures, reciting with that motive, then it becomes the cause of omniscient mind.

The third person's action, the reading of the scripture, is done only with the motive of himself to achieve nirvana, the ever-release from samsara, with the motive to achieve this only for the sake of himself. His action of reading, of reciting, is not possessed by the motive of bodhicitta so it doesn't become the cause of omniscient mind; it only becomes the cause up to nirvana, only up to nirvana. It becomes the cause up to that goal.

Up to that: you see, the fourth person, by cutting off attachment he reads the scriptures, without clinging to this life, with aversion to this life, by cutting off the clinging of this life and also by cutting the clinging to nirvana for oneself—only with the motive to achieve omniscient mind for the sake of others. So you see his reading, his reciting that scripture does benefit even for this life. Even though he doesn't cling to the happiness of this life, he doesn't seek that, he doesn't seek the happiness of this life but what he does, his action, his reciting mantra does benefit the happiness of this life. Obtaining long life—to receive the necessary conditions to accomplish the Dharma practice, his action benefits the happiness of this life, even though he doesn't cling, even though he doesn't seek that, doesn't have attachment to the happiness of this life. Similar you see, it also benefits the future, his action, which is holy Dharma, even though he doesn't cling to the happiness of future lives, but the action, which becomes holy Dharma does benefit also the happiness of future lives. It is like without expectation from the side of the person, the person receives the result. Then also the release from samsara, particularly the omniscient mind, his reading of the scriptures, his reciting those prayers, it benefits up to that. It benefits from the present life up to omniscient mind, it benefits all—his holy Dharma benefits from this life up to omniscient mind, for all. It fulfills all the wishes.

Then the third person, his reading, his reciting prayers with the motive of receiving just only the release from samsara, again the same thing: that holy Dharma, which is done with the thought of renouncing the whole of samsara, not only the lower realms, not only having aversion to the lower realms but having aversion even to the three upper realms' happiness and perfections, not having the slightest interest, not finding even for a second attraction in samsaric happiness and perfections,

having the thought of renouncing the whole of samsara—his action, his holy Dharma done with that thought of renouncing the whole of samsara benefits the happiness of this life and of future lives, up to nirvana.

Then the second person, the holy Dharma done with the motive of seeking only the happiness of future lives: it benefits this life. Since it becomes holy Dharma there is no question that it benefits this life and it benefits the happiness of future lives. It becomes only the cause of happiness of future lives, not nirvana, not omniscient mind.

For the first person reading the scriptures, reciting the graduated path to enlightenment, his action didn't become the cause of omniscient mind, it didn't become the cause of release from samsara, it didn't become the cause even for the happiness of future lives. It didn't become holy Dharma. The subject, what he is reciting, is holy Dharma but his action of reciting the scripture, the prayer—that action, that karma didn't become holy Dharma. What he is reciting, what he is reading is holy Dharma, talking about the qualities of the buddhas, talking about the path, talking about the shortcomings of samsara, things like that, the true cause of suffering and the medicine. However, his action, the karma of reciting the scriptures doesn't become holy Dharma. What it becomes is worldly Dharma because it is done with worldly concern, which not only worldly human beings but even the creatures have, the same motive, the thought to obtain happiness for only this life.

Generally it is like this but there are particular actions done with holy objects, exceptional actions in relationship to holy objects. Those become holy Dharma without depending on a virtuous motive, such as making prostrations. Even if we don't see the actual Buddha, even if it is to the figure of the holy object of Buddha, Dharma, Sangha or the precious holy objects of stupas, which is the signification of Buddha's holy mind, those things, circumambulation, prostrations, making offerings, even if there is no mind thinking Buddha, the enlightened being, still every single action, such as offering one spoon of food, one stick of incense, one tiny rice, even a few grains of rice thrown into space, all these actions, even one glass of water, whatever, every single one of those particular actions are exceptional because they do not depend on the motive in order to become the cause of happiness. By the power of the holy object it becomes holy Dharma, so every single action like this, whatever is done, every single action such as making offerings, done with the holy object, always becomes the cause of omniscient mind, without depending on the motive. Even without the motive of bodhicitta.

Even looking at the figures of Buddha, statues and paintings of Buddha, even if one looks with an angry mind, just looking, the action of looking at the image of the Buddha becomes purification.

It is said in the sutra teachings by Buddha: the holy body of the One Gone to Bliss, of Buddha, drawn on the walls, even one looks at it with disturbed or angry mind, those sentient beings will gradually see ten million Buddhas. That karma of just seeing the figure of Buddha drawn on the wall causes one gradually to see ten millions of Buddhas. There is another quotation that I don't remember.

When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was in India there were the two arhats who were very close disciples. One was called *Shariputra*. I think you must have heard the story about him from Geshe-la when he was talking about how nothing is definite, how relationships change from one life to another life. The one who saw the complete change of the whole family from previous life to this

life: the mother born as a dog, the father born as a fish, the enemy born as the child of the family, as a child of the son by being attached to his wife.

Shariputra, the arhat, the reason he was able to be with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, able to go everywhere with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, always to be very close to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was because in one of his past lives when he was traveling he stopped at one house and in the nighttime he was fixing his shoe with a small light in front of him and when he got a little bit tired, when he took a rest, by accident somehow he looked at the wall and against the light, on the wall there was an extremely beautiful figure of Buddha. So he wonders, "This is so beautiful, so beautiful. How wonderful it is, if only I could be like that." Again he looked at the Buddha and again he generated the wish, "How wonderful it would be if I could be like that, so beautiful." He was not particularly thinking of the omniscient mind or remembering the qualities of the Buddha, nothing, just thinking "How beautiful. If only I could be like that." He generated the wish again and again, and that became the karma to be able to join Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in his next life, to be able to get teachings, to be able to offer service, to be able to always be with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

Besides making offerings, even just to look at them becomes purification of the unsubdued mind and negative karma. Even if you are very angry, even if your mind is very disturbed, you go in the meditation room or whatever it is and you just concentrate, you just sit down and look at the painting of Buddha, at a figure of Buddha, that nice painting of Buddha, at that statue. The way he is sitting is so relaxed, so peaceful, so subdued, so compassionate looking. If you just concentrate, just think of that, looking at it, it is so helpful, so beneficial for the mind. It brings great calmness to the mind, it subdues the mind; we generate the wish to be like that.

Wrathful buddhas have big eyes—they open big eyes, round, wrathful eyes. The round eyes are wrathful, opened big. The peaceful aspect of Buddha has the eyes half closed. Half open and half closed; that is how it is. This has great significance. Half open eyes shows the power of the holy action, the capability of Buddha. It shows the power of Buddha.

While the higher bodhisattvas, the arya bodhisattvas, the tenth bhumi bodhisattvas are able to one-pointedly concentrate on shunyata, on emptiness, like putting water into water, without any discrimination between subject and object, without any view of the all-obscuring truth, the conventional truth, dissolving all the views and one-pointedly concentrating on emptiness. Sentient beings and even the arya beings cannot concentrate one-pointedly on both emptiness and conventional truth. While one is single-pointedly concentrating on absolute truth, he cannot see conventional truth. He cannot see the all-obscuring truth. While the arya being's mind focuses on the all-obscuring truth, it cannot one-pointedly concentrate on the absolute truth, simultaneously. One mind cannot focus on both objects; it can only do so at different times.

So you see, the particular power of Buddha is that while Buddha's holy mind sees fully, concentrating on the emptiness only, on all existence, at the same time Buddha's holy mind sees all of the other existence, conventional truth, the all-obscuring truth, all other existence at the same time. While Buddha's holy mind is concentrating on emptiness only, like putting water into water, at the same time the holy mind sees all that is not emptiness-only—all other existence. He sees the all-obscuring truth very clearly without the slightest mistake. That is a particular power of Buddha's holy mind. Sentient beings and even the higher bodhisattvas cannot do this at the same time.

So, eyes half opened, eyes half looking and half closed, means Buddha's holy mind: half-closed signifies one-pointedly concentrating, seeing, concentrating, placing the mind on the emptiness-only of all existence, and at the same time the eyes half opened means seeing the all-obscurating truth with great love, all the sentient beings, all the different levels of mind of sentient beings, past, present and future. Half-opened eyes means out of great love doing the work for other sentient beings, looking at sentient beings all the time, seeing all the sentient beings. There is not even a slightest second that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's loving thought does not see, does not look at sentient beings, does not look at each of us, does not look at you. There is not even a second. Not only do they see, not only do they look, but they do the work according to the level of mind, the karma of sentient beings. If one knows the significance of the holy object, the figure, it makes it more attractive for the mind.

So the point of what I am saying is that since we wish happiness, without being lazy, as much as possible we should follow this infallible method, which is the cause of happiness, to accomplish happiness. It does not even depend on the motive; even such a particular action does not depend on creating the virtuous motive with effort. It is so easy for this to become virtue, so easy for it to become the cause of omniscient mind. So, while we have the opportunity, while we have this precious human body, and while we have the opportunity to accumulate as many causes of happiness as we want to create, as many years, as many days, as many hours, as many minutes—as much as one wishes one has the opportunity to create them, knowing this, recognizing this—one has the opportunity and also has the understanding, and it is so easy, it doesn't depend on much hardship, it becomes so easy to create the causes of happiness and the causes of omniscient mind. All these things—the resultant karma and the resultant happiness—are the experience of Buddha himself. He himself has gone through this. And it is also the experience of the great pandits, the great yogis, and the meditators. It is their experience too.

We don't even know thought directly; our limited knowledge cannot see. We don't even have ordinary clairvoyance. We have limited knowledge, limited wisdom. Our Dharma wisdom is so limited that we cannot see, we cannot remember how this happiness comes from past life's good actions, from good karma. We cannot remember this even though it is our own experience. It is your own experience but you don't remember; and you cannot see the result of the karmas that you are creating now, which you will experience in the future, due to limited knowledge you cannot see. Even though it is your own experience, you don't recognize it. You don't remember the past, you don't see the future; you don't see the relationship, how suffering is the result of non-virtuous actions. You don't see the connection. From which karma what kind of result arises—happiness arises from virtuous karma and suffering arises from non-virtuous karma.

One way of saying it, one way of thinking is that if one cannot trust the omniscient one, the fully knowing one like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, if one cannot trust the teachings taught by him, then there is nothing left in the world, there is nobody whom you can trust. In the world, on this earth there is nobody whom you can trust. You yourself don't have a fully knowing mind, an omniscient mind. Your own knowledge is limited; your power is limited, so how can you guide yourself? Since your knowledge is limited there is no way to guide yourself—you alone cannot guide yourself from all the true causes of suffering and from the true sufferings to omniscient mind. You alone cannot guide yourself.

For example, the scientists' definitions always change. They write books, explaining what they discovered about the mind, about the body, about things. What they explain in their books changes all the time, as they check more and more. In what they explained before they find mistakes, they

find that what they explained before, a few years ago, is wrong, so then they have to write a new book again. They find mistakes in the previous one, the more and more they check. The more they check the more they learn, so they find mistakes. They have to learn more and more and more, they find mistakes because of not having a fully knowing mind. They have to change their definitions, their explanations again and again; that is because of not having a fully knowing mind.

It is not even that they are explaining according to different levels of sentient beings' minds, like Buddha's teaching. Not even that. If it were like that then that would be something else: for some, for a certain level of mind, teaching, then gradually a better life, a human body, a deva's body, a better life, a body in which it is more beneficial to practice now, then nirvana, then enlightenment—like that, gradually, by different methods. If it were something like that it would be good, but it is not like that. It is by guessing, so then afterwards you find mistakes. In the world generally and particularly in the West, the scientist is whom one relies on and depends on, the one who gives the explanation, the definitions. That is all, nothing else. Then maybe on the machine—what is it called? That which gives answers, you set it up in that way and then it gives answers—computers. The next object of refuge is the computer.

Like this, there is nothing in the world you can trust, nobody whom you can rely on—if it's like this then it is very upsetting. That doesn't make the mind happy, so it is very upsetting. There is nobody who can guide you. There is nobody who can help you, nobody who can guide you from suffering without misleading you, without making mistakes in the method. That is very upsetting.

So then, if you think, "I don't see Buddha, I see only statues, paintings, but I don't see Buddha." The reason is only that I don't see it; I can't see things such as karma, perfection coming from our virtuous actions of charity, high rebirth, the body of the happy transmigrating being that is received by practicing moral conduct, these things. Practicing charity stops poverty and gives the result of wealth—such as these karmas, and achieving liberation, naraks, unfortunate beings.

Because you don't remember, and because you don't see it, it is not an object of knowledge. In that case why should we believe in the past histories that happened, because we don't remember? The same reason, because you don't remember the past histories that are explained in the books, explained by the ancient people, by ancient poets, ancient learned people, what they wrote, what they explained—that in such a time such things happened, this and that, stories about the families, the generations, the mother's mother's mother, the father's grandfather, the father's father's father. Stories of grandfathers are written in books and then we trust in this. We learn this, we memorize it and we speak about it, people believe it. But how we can trust in all these past things that we cannot see now, which don't exist now, things that you don't remember—how can you trust them? The same thing, it is exactly the same—but in these stories that the father told, stories that mother told, in these things we trust easily. Somebody explains it and then we trust it, like this. But we find it very hard to have faith in the teachings of Buddha.

Actually even just to have faith is very difficult, because to have faith in such incredible teachings, that person with faith has to be a very fortunate person, because this is not particularly based on the complete experience of the lamrim path and it is not based on the effortless experience of meditating—it is not that but in some ways it depends on it. If the mind is completely empty of faith... the person with faith is like a person with a realization. To have faith in such incredible teachings is difficult, of course, because it depends on having created the cause in the past, much merit. Having faith in karma, in the teachings of the omniscient one is not easy because it depends



on having created the cause of much merit in the past. Depending on that, that much faith comes. Therefore, on this earth there are more people who do not have faith and such a small number who have faith in the teachings of Buddha. This is also decided by how much merit is accumulated; it is decided by karma, by merit, like this. The reason there is such a small number is that it is difficult. That is one thing. Also there is such a small number to follow the infallible path, the teachings of Buddha, and that shows something—that follower, that person has created so many causes, so much merit.

It shows something, why? Because following the teaching of Buddha has great advantage. Like a business person who receives much profit has to have good karma, has to have accumulated that much good karma in the past. It depends on that. Therefore all the time, every time you make business, you plan how much profit to receive. You have the idea, the wish to receive great profit all the time. But it doesn't work all the time as you expected—you don't receive it as you planned all the time. It doesn't always work. Even though you might be successful one or two times, you are not successful forever, as if it were fixed. Like that, how difficult that is, it is the same. Following the teachings of Buddha is a great incredible advantage—to receive what you want to receive, that much merit needs to be accumulated.

Also you can figure out, for example, that there is existence. For example, there is the achievement of nirvana, the ever-release from samsara. When you meditate on shunyata, on emptiness only, when you meditate correctly, even from that small experience you can recognize what Buddha explained in the teaching—the object of your hallucinated mind, the “I” that doesn't exist, the truly existent “I” that doesn't exist, the “I” to which the ignorant, hallucinated mind clings to be truly existent. When you recognize that, and especially when you recognize that it is empty, you can figure out how the teaching works. This experience is the very root to the release from samsara, to nirvana—discovering the object of ignorance is empty.

Even meditating on impermanence and death cuts off and controls attachment, cuts off anger, makes one lose anger. Doing these fundamental lam-rim meditations, you can experience how they affect the mind, how they benefit the mind, how they bring peace in the mind, overwhelming the delusions. By practicing, through meditation, you can figure it out, even from a small experience.

However, even to have faith depends on karma, as it is explained by Buddha in the teachings. Even for that, one should accumulate much merit; one should practice purification; the obstacles and heavy karmic obscurations that are collected through heresy arising in the past need to be purified. So one needs to practice—it is just that without causes and conditions it doesn't come, faith does not happen.

Just making light offering to Buddha has ten benefits. Even without a particular virtuous motive, just by thinking of Buddha, whether there is a Buddha statue or not in the room or in front of you, something substantial, just by thinking of and visualizing Buddha and even making one light offering, the ten benefits arise.

For example, the achievement of clairvoyance; clairvoyance of hearing, the deva's hearing, the deva's eye, which is able to see very distant things—no matter how far it is, miles distant, one can see the sentient being's level of mind or objects, or is able to read other's thoughts. Without this it is difficult to perfectly work for others. Then the ignorance of not knowing Dharma is decreased, it becomes thinner. Then the Dharma wisdom increases in this life and future lives. The mind

becomes very sharp and intelligent. It is easy to understand the teachings, so easy to memorize the words—so easy, by just looking at them, you get the words, and are able to memorize and understand all the profound meanings quickly and immediately, things like that.

Then, while you are in samsara, you will not be born in the place where there's no light. There are human beings who have to live life in the dark, who have to live many years in darkness. There are also creatures who never see any light in their life, however many hundreds of years they live. So while one is still in samsara one will not be born in a place where there is no light. Particularly in the West where there is electricity, like this.

We are enjoying the result of the good karma that we created in the past, so now, knowing this, in this life we should create as many causes as possible for the future; knowing that these enjoyments are the result of one's own past lives' merit, if you want them again or even better than that, you should create the virtuous causes as much as possible, by doing virtuous actions. Before death comes you should hurry up to create the cause, without delay.

Then also it causes one to receive perfections and wealth in their future lives. This doesn't mean that it doesn't benefit this life, but that it particularly causes the perfection of wealth in future lives. Then, also it causes one to achieve nirvana, and the omniscient mind.

So even just one small light, one tiny light offered while just simply thinking of Buddha, thinking, "I'm making offering to Buddha," has those ten benefits. So, like this, any offering that one does to a holy object, any offering, has ten benefits, ten benefits. Even, if a particular virtuous action is done without a virtuous motive, it always becomes the cause of omniscient mind. One always receives this result.

It is like this. You see, if you plant corn in the field and then you pray, "Please may it not grow," however much you pray, even if you pray a hundred times a day, if the conditions are perfect, it will definitely grow. Similar, with these particular virtuous actions done in relation to the holy object of Buddha, however much you pray, "May I not become enlightened," you become enlightened. It becomes the cause of omniscient mind. As regards motive, generally it is like this.

In the West among young people, those who are called hippies by other people, they are like this also—even if the person doesn't talk about the next life, future lives, even if the person doesn't talk about omniscient mind, doesn't talk about nirvana, doesn't talk about the future lives, in Dharma terms, even if the person doesn't know the definition of holy Dharma and doesn't know what is not holy Dharma, even if the person doesn't know good karma and bad karma—I mean, he does talk about bad and good actions, but he doesn't know the clear definitions as explained in the teachings. In the West, particularly among the young people, there are many people who feel that the selfish attitude is bad. Somehow, even though they don't understand so much about karma, somehow the selfish attitude is bad, that is a bad thought, which one shouldn't have. I think sometimes, also when the emotional "I" comes up, I think they call it ego. When the emotional "I" is very strong, they call this truly existent "I" having strong ego.

Also there are those who have an incredibly good personality and do not have so much miserliness in their possessions—giving, sharing with each other. When somebody runs out of money, when somebody is having trouble, when somebody is sick, when somebody has something they share it with others. This is fantastic, very good—taking care of the other person as yourself. Even though

you don't think the other person is more important, more precious than you, at least you take care of them in the same way. I think this is really very good. They really help each other with whatever is there: food, clothes, whatever one has. They sincerely try to do things for others without expectation. This is one of the most beautiful things that I find in the minds of Western people— young ones, and in the Western old ones too—the most beautiful thing that I find is those who do not have expectation of the result, and that is really so beautiful. I think that is a most beautiful thing.

This is more beautiful than somebody who accepts karma, somebody who has faith in karma but expects so much result, "If I do this, I will get this result," you know. Like for example the Tibetans, or in Thailand, Japan or those Buddhist countries—those families who are Buddhists. Mostly there's not so much understanding, they just have faith and the example grows from the grandfather, from the examples of the mother—what is seen by the eyes, not so much by understanding but based on faith. Like the Tibetans, for whom faith is an incredibly important thing. The object to whom they go for refuge, in which they place their faith, with that object there is no mistake, no danger, no misguiding.

But those who think, "If I make this charity, I will be rich," or "If I make offering to the monastery, I will be rich in a future life, I will be rich in this life, I will have no sickness, a long life and my business will be successful," things like that mostly. Even though they have faith in karma, there is so much clinging. It looks like—this is my own view, I am talking about my own view—I'm not saying all, but even though generally there's faith, there is belief in karma, the virtuous actions are done so much in order to get results "for me," to get something "for me," clinging so much. It is good, compared to nothing this is very good, it is no mistake; in terms of the object to whom they make offerings, there is no mistake at all, no doubt.

I mean, the action, offering to Buddha, there is no mistake with that, it is reliable. In regards to that the Tibetans are very fortunate. And they have incredible high lamas, such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama—no doubt, that is very fortunate. I mean, without need to speak much, they have an incredible opportunity. But you see generally it is like this. There are lay people—again, at the same time they have incredibly strong compassion, so generous for others, so much compassion, there are those like this among the lay people but normally, generally, it looks like whatever is done is done for me, for me in future lives to be happy, to have a good body, to not be born in the naraks. So much is done for oneself, to make preparation for oneself.

But these young people, these hippies have very good minds, many of them. I mean, there are also some things but so many are more wonderful than somebody who, like these Tibetans, are too much expecting for oneself. Compared to that, it is really beautiful. There is no expectation, nothing—whatever you have you use to help others, you share, you give to others; you give it and it is finished. You give sincerely, something that benefits them. You give it and then it is very clean, there is no expectation for reputation, no expectation that "I did it," that "I gave it." There is no expectation, no particular expectation for this life, and of course, there is no talking about future lives. Anyway, those people sincerely help and they are sincerely concerned with others' peace and happiness, really concerned about others' happiness and about relieving others' suffering. That is really true Dharma, pure Dharma, even though the person doesn't talk about future lives.

What I am saying is that it becomes virtue by opportunity. Things like that cause wealth in the future life. So definitely, there are beautiful things that I discovered during these years, most beautiful

things. Even if you need them, even though these are things that you need for your own comfort, you give them to the others—those are very beautiful things, real Dharma, pure Dharma. This is practicing pure Dharma without a selfish attitude, without a self-centered attitude. That is something that I admire so much, it is a beautiful quality. I don't know whether it happens by taking drugs, I don't know what makes them share this. Eating mushrooms, or whatever, I don't know. I think we better eat something.

I am sorry, again I didn't get through.

[Dedications]

Lecture 15: November 26<sup>th</sup> am

Manjushri Prayer [prayers]

It is very important during this time to do the visualization of purifying the obscurations and negative karma, the obstacles, the hindrances to complete and accomplish the listening of the Dharma. Listening to Dharma is not something that doesn't have an end. It is not like that. The purpose of listening to Dharma is to finish the sufferings of self, to finish the obscurations within one's own mind, to cease them. Whenever the obscurations in the mind are ceased, when the realization of the path is complete, then listening to the Dharma is finished, the work of listening to the Dharma is finished, and reflection and meditation are finished. It is not like worldly work, which never has an end.

As long as we are in samsara, until we are free, until we have cut off the continuation of these aggregates, until we have ended joining the continuation of aggregates from one life to another life, until we break this, all the time, the work for autumn, for winter, for summer, for spring, the work for those different seasons, cultivating different crops—this work never gets finished. There is no end. Until you break this cycle there is no way to finish the work.

In general there is no way to finish, although without choice it ends by impermanence, by death—now it's summer and they are doing some work, now it's winter and they are doing some different work, autumn, spring, moving to a different place, doing different cultivation—all these things. Or they do a job and go to school, or to the office, whatever it is. Then there are a certain number of holidays in the year, Christmas and others, I don't remember, several holidays, then either you go for camping or you go to the beach, or trekking, traveling the countries where you have not been or where you have been before, whether in this life or not, and even during those times there is the worry of not having enough enjoyment, of not finding pleasure. And even when one comes back to work there is again worry and fear and suffering; and again one goes for holidays, again one goes trekking, whatever it is, and again there is worry, fear, something is not right, something is missing in the mind.

Whatever you do, when you are away from work, when you come back, while you are working, there is always something missing in the mind, something not right. Whatever you try, whatever different style of life you try, always something is wrong. There is always something missing in the mind—something is not fulfilled, not satisfied. Always something is missing there. No matter what you try, even when you experience pleasure but even while you are experiencing pleasure, in the mind there

is something missing, always. Whatever you do, even if you get it, even while you experience the pleasure, the mind is not completely satisfied. There is always something missing. That is the most painful suffering of samsara.

Even though you try, even though you work so hard to get it, even when you do get it there is something missing, not completely satisfied. There is something missing. Then again you seek that. That is the contagious disease, the worst; much more dangerous than cancer, than any of these diseases. This is the dissatisfied mind, and that is what makes one circle in samsara, and there is no end. The dissatisfaction obliges you always to work in order to fulfill desire.

You keep on trying all these different styles of life, “Maybe now if I do this, this life will be happier, maybe if I give up school, maybe if I attend the circus now—that looks like great fun.” You don’t know the pain; you don’t know the suffering inside. Then try a wealthy life, “If I become like that, those wealthy people with a big apartment, lots of cars and lots of things, that looks like it’s great, that looks good, like there is much happiness there.” So you try, you work very hard for many years, and when you become that, again there are many problems. There are problems with having those things, having wealth. There is fear that it will be taken by others, controlled by others, robbers, terrorists, wrathful people, those who make phone calls—you know, “If you don’t give a million dollars, if you don’t leave it at this place, then I will kill you.”

We had one Italian, one guy—I’m not sure, but when he had that problem he must have been rich. I think he received a phone call several times, the people rang his home and told him that if he didn’t leave a lot of money in some place—I don’t know the name of the place where he was supposed to leave the money, maybe a shop, I am not sure. He was living alone in an apartment and one day suddenly the people came. He must have a lot of money because otherwise these people wouldn’t try. Anyway, one day they showed up—I think that he did not have any other friends; he stayed alone in this apartment. I am sure that these people must have known. So they came up and two people worked on him and the rest of the people stayed around in the room. Two people tied his legs, and arms to the chair and one person held a gun at his neck, like this. Then one person asked him where all the money was.

I don’t know whether he said anything or not. Downstairs a lady heard some noise, something happening upstairs. She called the police. The people searched his room and found some money, and then they suddenly left because they heard the downstairs lady make a phone call.

He came twice during the course. At that time Lama Tzong Khapa Institute didn’t exist; we were doing the course in a priest’s place, where people came to do retreat. Maybe a monastery—a very nice, very beautiful retreat place. There were very good priests and they also came during the lectures. They had very good understanding. I think when this problem happened the center wasn’t there.

Lama Yeshe sent one Italian monk, Piero, to protect this man’s life. There was the danger that the people would come to kill him, so they asked him to come to the center. And since he was quite an old man and alone, Lama thought that if he could travel without too many problems, if he had enough money to do this, it would be good—otherwise he might lose his life and also he would live his life in fear. Piero the monk went to get him and helped him pack, and they came back together to Kopan. I think he didn’t realize Lama’s kindness, he didn’t recognize the guidance, I guess; after a few days, he couldn’t stand it here. There was no course, he was just staying relaxed in his room, up

in the tower. After five days he couldn't stand it. He left with another Italian guy. I am not sure what he is doing now, I don't know where he is now. Maybe he is reincarnated, maybe one of those kidnappers—I am joking. So there are these kinds of problems.

Then again giving it up, giving all these things away. “Oh now maybe it will be better if I lead a hippie life, just being free, doing whatever I want, traveling, going anywhere I want, doing anything I want, with freedom, complete freedom. Maybe there's great peace in that life.” Then try that. “No problems, something very simple, very successful life, very happy life, very smooth life.” However, again there are different kinds of problems, which are nothing new, and again there is dissatisfaction. Always something missing, whatever you do, wherever you travel.

Following desire, expecting to fulfill it, and working for that—the result is dissatisfaction. Following desire, clinging to and seeking samsaric perfections, expecting to fulfill desire, even with effort, even if working with effort you get what you want; even if you get it, the mind is not satisfied. So again you work for that, again you work for desire. If you don't get it, then of course, but even if you do get it, the mind is not satisfied. It goes on and on and on like this.

This work is done in order to fulfill desire, in order to get satisfaction. For example, even an action such as stealing, or even if one is able to make profit in business, a thousand dollars, a hundred dollars, then, “This is not enough; I should get more.” Then, a thousand dollars; still it is not enough. Even if one does get a thousand dollars, one should get a million dollars, one wants more. Even if you get it, there's something missing in the mind, something not completely happy, not full. The work is done in order to fulfill the desire but by following the desire the result is always dissatisfaction. The purpose of doing the work is to fulfill the desire, that's the aim, but it doesn't happen. Instead of that there is dissatisfaction, so the work is repeated over and over and over, for the whole life.

So in this life the work itself doesn't have an end and, without choice, this life, related to this body, ends by impermanence and death. But since you still wander in samsara, since the continuity of these aggregates joins the next life without a break, one is caught in samsara, and no matter what samsaric aggregates are taken, again it is the same thing—work for desire, and again the result is dissatisfaction. So it goes on and on and on like this.

This work and the dissatisfaction don't have a beginning. Its continuation has no beginning. It has no beginning and as long as we work for desire, it has no end. Suffering and dissatisfaction have no end; they always continue. So that is the nature; working for desire, what you get is dissatisfaction.

You see, practicing Dharma—I don't remember the quotation exactly—Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said in the sutra teachings that as long as one follows desire one will not be satisfied; until one renounces desire, one will never be satisfied. After that, I don't remember the words exactly, but what Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said was that the one who follows desire is always suffering; the one who is satisfied by Dharma wisdom is always happy. The practice of Dharma brings satisfaction.

This does not mean just shaving the hair, wearing robes or changing the dress. It doesn't mean living in a monastery or a center, or in a hermitage, or just reciting prayers or circumambulating stupas or temples. It doesn't even mean just meditation. Practicing Dharma doesn't mean just this.

So how does practicing the holy Dharma bring satisfaction in the mind, bring peace in the mind? Taking care of desire is the problem of life; that itself is the fundamental confusion of life. All the problems that we hear of all the time in the West, in the newspapers, on television, all this, with the family or the single person, whatever, all these problems are shortcomings of following desire, seeking samsaric happiness and perfections, seeking comfort, seeking the pleasure of this life. Practicing Dharma—whenever one starts to practice the holy Dharma, right in that minute, right at that time, the result in the mind, the effect in the mind is peace, relaxation and calmness. The other one is unsubdued, uncontrolled.

For example: if one has much worry and fear about not having a better quality of material possessions, then instead of keeping busy worrying, having fear of not getting better, not getting more material possessions; if it is an apartment, I need this, I need that, thinking what the house needs, when you think of the comfort, so many things one needs, you can make so many lists of things...

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... while you have such fear and worry, think, “This is enough for me.” Suddenly, when you make a decision, when you renounce the desire, the dissatisfaction, thinking, “Oh, this is enough,” then even though the mind was very disturbed before, very unpeaceful, filled with the worry and fear of not receiving, when you suddenly make the decision, “Oh, this is enough for me, I’m also not sure how long I will live my life,” suddenly those fears and worry are stopped. Immediately, there is peace and calm, relaxation in the mind.

Or, for example, one’s wife follows another man; she runs away and lives with another person. Before there was much worry and fear. Then if one thinks, “So for that many years I lived with her. I myself lived that many years with her, had a good time with her, so now why can’t he have her. I lived with her that many months and years, so why can’t he have her. As I want her, he also wants her for his comfort, same thing. He desires happiness, doesn’t desire suffering; he wants to enjoy with her, same thing. So there is not the slightest reason that I am more important, that my happiness is more important than his happiness, not the slightest reason to prove that he can’t have her and that I should have her.”

Before you thought, “Why can’t he have her?” You were seeking desire, your mind was in great pain, in great confusion but suddenly when you think of this, instead of worrying and having fear, instead of being angry all the time—equalizing yourself and the other person, dedicating for him, doing the practice of dedication for him, “As I want her, he also wants her, so why can’t he have her?” When you dedicate for him, the great pain that your mind produced by one way of thinking stops. All that great competition stops in the mind. Immediately, when you dedicated her to him, that means you renounced your desire. That dedication, renouncing the desire: that is the real holy Dharma.

So while you are dissatisfied with perfections, suddenly be content, thinking, “This is enough, this is okay,” cutting off desire, renouncing desire, that itself is the real holy Dharma. When one renounces desire suddenly there is great peace in the mind—the immediate effect in the mind is great peace and calmness, relaxation.

Here, the point that I am making is about this desire but generally, when there is the danger of anger arising, by practicing patience you are renouncing anger, not letting the anger arise. That is the real

holy Dharma, practicing the real holy Dharma. Whether one recites mantra or not, whether one makes offerings in front of holy objects, in daily life one practices like this, trying to control the mind, trying to subdue the mind, which is unsubdued, unpeaceful and uncontrolled. One tries to control it, trying to have freedom from the mind that is overwhelmed by unsubdued delusions, turning it upside down, trying to get the delusions under the control of mind instead of the mind under the control of the delusions, trying to give freedom to the mind. You give freedom to your mind. This is the real practice of holy Dharma, whether one works in the office or lives in a family or in a hermitage, whether one lives in a center, in a monastery, whether one lives in ordination or not in ordination. If one practices like this, wherever one lives, in the West or in the East, in a city or outside the city, in the mountains—in each day of life there is so much peace.

Otherwise, if you just leave your life up to the delusions, in the hand of the delusions, if you let yourself be overwhelmed by delusions, if you give too much freedom to the delusions, then even this precious human body with which one can accomplish many great meanings, any perfection, happiness, this body, which has incredible great opportunity; if you take too much refuge in the delusions, if you live your life in the hand of the delusions, if you give too much freedom to the delusions, then even while you are alive there will be no happiness, much disaster and so much confusion. There will be thousands of confusions—with this person, with that person, with the husband—everywhere, no matter where you are—in the office or in the family, wherever you go, so much. Always emotional; then always you have to take so much medicine for the mind, for the body. And there will be too many expenses. Then there is so much worry because you are unable to pay, and there is not even a minute to relax. No happiness, incredible. Because of that you are always so busy. While you are alive, life passes like this, day after day, month after month, year after year. And then when you die, even if you were born with suffering, even if you lived the life with much confusion, when you die if you died with great happiness, that would be something else, that would be something good. Also if at the time of death you have nothing to regret.

But at the end of life, even you could live long, even if you could have this precious human body with which you can achieve any happiness and perfection for many years, even if nobody caused you to have a short life, even if nobody executes you, you kill yourself. You cause yourself to have a short life. Like this, you end up at the end of life in great fear, instead of great happiness. You end up with worry, in a terrible way, which scares everybody who sees it. However all this is a mistake, giving too much freedom to the delusions. Instead of giving more freedom to yourself, you give more freedom to the delusions. Like this. It's a mistake of being too friendly with the inner enemy.

The point that I started from here is that it is very important to do such practices as requesting, with the visualization that I explained before. With this visualization it's very important to make the request. It is very important to do the visualization of purifying the obstacles to complete the listening, reflecting and meditation on the graduated path to enlightenment, on those teachings. It is not easy. Even the work of this life, to obtain education, to get a degree—just by wishing it doesn't happen. Just because you have the wish, only from that, it does not happen, but that doesn't mean that it is definite that you will get it. There are so many hindrances and it is so difficult. Even to obtain happiness one month, one year, making business—just having the wish to get it alone doesn't make it successful. There are many hindrances.

So what we are doing here is trying to accomplish omniscient mind, the sublime happiness of the omniscient mind. This is not for the sake of oneself but for the sake of others, for the sake of uncountable numbers of sentient beings. There is no greater goal than that. There's nothing more



important than practicing holy Dharma in order to achieve this goal. There's nothing more important than the work to benefit others, not only liberating yourself from suffering and leading yourself to ultimate happiness, but also freeing each and every sentient being from all suffering and leading them to the state of omniscient mind, into sublime happiness. There is nothing more important than that aim, nothing more important than that work.

So of course, if even the works just to obtain this life's happiness, to obtain happiness for a few months, a few years, is so difficult to do, then of course, why not practicing holy Dharma? If that is difficult, then of course practicing holy Dharma should be much more difficult, of course there will be many more hindrances, so many hindrances even to listening to the teachings, then to understanding, to actualizing—so many outer, inner and secret hindrances.

So there is need to make requests, because by relying on Manjushri and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the fully knowing one, the one who has perfect power, infinite compassion; since you do not have perfect power and fully knowing mind, since you alone cannot guide yourself, cannot do it by yourself, you have to rely on another separate being who has greater power, who has greater knowledge. You should rely on that. Like, for example, the old man who cannot stand up—if he relies on a stick he can stand up; or a person who is very weak, who cannot carry his load, who depends on a strong person to carry his food and his sleeping bag, his luggage. One has to rely on somebody. Since one does not have the power, one has to rely on somebody. So one has to rely on these enlightened beings and make requests.

Even though this is not your experience of how it works, it is the experience of those who have been practicing the Holy Dharma, those who are meditators on the graduated path to enlightenment. This is their experience of how it works. If it is not your experience, because you haven't done the practice, haven't had the experience of the path yet, it is the experience of those who have been practicing. So if it benefits them, if those same human beings who accomplished the path, who achieved omniscient mind, if they received the benefits of these practices then why not us? Why not oneself? We are the same, we are human beings. We have the same potential in mind, so why not? It is just a matter of experimenting, like a scientist, just a matter of experimenting, a matter of practice, a matter of whether the practice is done or not.

So, without saying the rest of the prayers, I will start straight away. Please generate the motivation, at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking that I am going to listen to the commentary on the *Bodhicharyavatara* in order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all kind mother sentient beings. Instead of thinking, "I am going to listen to the teaching for the sake of my happiness," you should think, "I am going to listen to the teaching for the sake of happiness of other sentient beings." That is important.

One does create negative karma if one gets angry, even at a non-sentient being. It is said in sutra teachings by Buddha that because of that one shouldn't get angry even with a log of wood. So there is no need to talk about getting angry with the bodies that have a consciousness, no need to question that one creates negative karma.

There is a story that happened—I think probably he was a monk—he passed a tree that belonged to the monastery. He had to go around it and somehow he banged his head against the branches of the tree. So he got very angry and he broke the branches of that tree, which belonged to the sangha, to the monastery. Then because of that karma he was reborn as a naga and when Guru Shakyamuni

Buddha was giving teachings to many disciples one day, the naga came in the aspect of a king, well-decorated with jewels, among the disciples. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha asked him, “Tomorrow come in your own form, not in this form.”

So the next day he came in his own form, as a naga, his head in the form of a snake, with an incredible long tail that went on for miles. Even though the head was in the presence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the tail was way down in the village. From his head a tree grew, and when the tree moved, because of his karma, even the root of the tree moved, and he had an incredible, unbelievable headache. Then all the disciples who came there to receive teachings ran away because this snake came.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s omniscient mind can see even the most subtle karma, not only the gross karma, without the slightest mistake. So Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained to the disciples how he created the karma when he was a monk—I think he was a monk—how one day he was passing this tree and got incredibly angry and hit his head and broke the branches of the tree; and how by that result this happened. *Elledarma* is the name of that particular tree.

When we are in the mountains, there’s an animal, a worm under the ground but you see grass growing from its head. There is grass growing from the head—if you watch the grass, among the piles of grass there’s grass moving like this. It’s a red worm, with a red body and inside it’s white. When you see this grass moving the worm is below. The villagers eat the dead body of the worm because the inside is white—when it becomes dry it is white. I don’t know the tantra. But they eat this because it gives strength to the body, it is like vitamins. I think that worm does not have grass on the head, but in the mouth. Maybe you don’t even believe this example. You can go to Solu Khumbu and check. Or another one: you can create the karma, and then you can see. You can see by yourself, on your own body. Anyway I didn’t want to talk so much.

The conclusion, however, is that one should work hard to protect oneself from the harmful mind such as anger, the inner enemy. Also from the mind of heresy, which destroys merit. It destroys the merits that one has accumulated with much hardship.

You see, in this life, from birth until death, even in our human life, there are more times that delusions, the unsubdued minds arise than that don’t. Even if anger doesn’t arise, attachment arises, and even if attachment doesn’t arise, ignorance arises. If that doesn’t arise pride arises. Jealous mind arises. Even if one doesn’t arise, another one arises, one after another, then one produces non-virtuous actions. So there are more times, even in a human life, in which delusions arise than when delusions do not arise; there are more times of collecting non-virtuous actions than the rare times of accumulating virtue. Even if we do accumulate merit, it happens very rarely and is so difficult to do. There are so many hindrances even to accumulate one virtue; hindrances from outside, hindrances from inside; hindrances from the unsubdued mind, from delusions, from laziness, not wanting to pray and not wanting to practice. Even if one wishes to do so, one is lazy. Also there are hindrances from outside.

It is so difficult to accumulate virtue, even if one wishes to, even if one has interest in accumulating virtue. Even if one wishes to practice charity, there are so many hindrances from outside and inside. Even if one wishes to accumulate virtue by practicing, by protecting moral conduct, taking precepts, things like that, to take just one precept, not to tell lies, not to take others’ lives or not to commit sexual misconduct, even to accumulate the virtue of taking one precept is so difficult. It is much

harder for the mind than climbing a very steep rocky mountain—that you find easy, even though it's dangerous, even though you are not sure to climb that very high peak where there is much danger, avalanches, high cliff, not one hundred percent sure that you are going to come back from that, that you are going to reach the top. So hard is it, to climb this mountain, how dangerous it is, and climbing that is recognized as very brave.

Two years ago, I think, there was a group of people who came from Yugoslavia. I met them at the airport in the mountains, on the Japanese airstrip. These people made a plan, they made a project. They went on the mountain and then they came back and they made a plan, they made a new trail to go onto the mountain. They did not like to climb the mountain in the normal way, so they made a new project, a dangerous way without oxygen or something. They made a new plan to climb the mountain. They had to wait a few days at the airport because they didn't get a flight. I was next to them, in the next room. I think they were very lonely. There was nothing else to do, no jobs. Of course if they knew Dharma they could have meditated, enjoying the time, meditating the whole day. But they didn't have anything to do. Or they could have recited mantras. They could have used the time for something meaningful. But there was nothing else to do there on that mountain. I think finally they got a helicopter or something.

One night we did puja in that room because it was a special day so we had to do some meditation practice. There were some other students who also had a commitment to do this puja, the practice of Vajrayana. I didn't realize it would disturb them. I think there was one person sleeping just behind that wooden wall, and I think they heard our chanting. I was leading the prayers, you see, and the person who was behind the wooden wall knew I was the leader of the disturbance. Each time I would start to chant the person would bang the wall. So after some time we tried to finish quickly with lower voices. I was scared he might show up in the door and scream.

So that one is recognized as very brave, in spite of all these dangers to the life. One renounces even the life completely, in spite of all the dangers, just to get the reputation, just to hear the dry words, the reputation, "Such and such a person climbed Mount Everest." Or maybe there is some present to be received from the Queen of England, or whatever it is, one piece of material labeled something, labeled precious. Then one is able to completely give up the life.

Accumulating virtue—even if it was finally successful, if the person didn't die due to avalanche, or didn't fall down, even if the person could climb the mountain and come back, even if he gets a reputation, people talk about it for a few years, and the person's name might be written in the papers, there are pictures of when they climbed the mountain, but after a few years his consciousness is somewhere else. If one has a human body it's good. But it's difficult to make sure of that. It is dependent upon how he lived that life, so it's difficult to say. To find a human body again is difficult. Without having created the cause you cannot experience the result, so that is difficult. After a few years maybe the person takes a body full of hairs, with horns growing, with a tail, chewing grass; or in the lake where the person used to go for fishing, on that beach or in that lake. Then running around—another fisherman catches him, maybe his son, and hooks the fish, cutting the body in half. All that reputation, even if the name is left in that book, or there are pictures that other people can see on this earth, what is the use, what does it benefit? Nothing; for the person himself nothing, for the future life, nothing, nothing to say, no better body, a human body or a deva's body, to be able to offer great benefits for others. Then for the past life, there is nothing to say. The life is finished. Even though one was born with a human life, it's finished, empty.

The real bravery, the real hero is the one who can fight anger, the one who can overwhelm and climb over the anger; the one who can face the inner enemy, the most difficult one, the most dangerous one. One person's anger kills sixty million people, one person's mind's anger. How dangerous it is. It is much more dangerous than the atomic bomb. There is no comparison between one person's anger and the atomic bomb. How harmful the anger is, so harmful, much more so than the atomic bomb! The danger of the atomic bomb is that it harms others, destroys the whole earth, more than half of the world, all these millions and millions of human beings and creatures. There are so many creatures, uncountable numbers, in the water, under the ground, in the bushes, in the sky—so many, unbelievable. All this gets destroyed; not only human beings, but also creatures; then so many buildings, bridges and cities. All these things that so many thousands and thousands of people, for so many years, made plans for and spent so much money on, worked so hard in order to collect the money to give to the workers—all these enjoyments of sentient beings, of human beings, all these rich and comfortable apartments, all took so much time and effort, these huge buildings—they put so much effort into building all this and in one minute it all gets destroyed. In just one minute, one hour. In so many of these cities, it is unbelievable how much effort they put into it; they suffered so much to construct all this, then one day, in one hour, all this is completely destroyed.

How dangerous the atomic bomb is comes from anger. Without anger, if there is patience this would not happen. Even without talking about the naraks, how anger produces negatives karma, without talking about karma—something that you can see, just straight talking, how it is so harmful, so dangerous. If you talk about karma it is unbelievable—when you think about the suffering result of that, there is no need to talk much. Today's anger arises toward another sentient being and this anger causes harm from life to life, and suffering from life to life. The result of that, suffering, is experienced from life to life, for such a long time. Particularly if we think of karma creating the result that is similar to the cause, particularly when we think of this result, we understand. Because of the habit of getting angry in this life, then again we see that if we do not cease it in this life, again the habit comes out in the next life, anger arises; and so it goes on and on like this.

As it is explained in the *Bodhicharyavatara* by Shantideva, even if all the devas, worldly gods and all the human beings, even if all sentient beings became your enemy, they could not lead you to the fire of the narak realms. Even if they all became your enemy, became aggressive toward you, they could not lead you into the fire of the narak realms, they could not put you in the fire of the narak realms. But if you meet the inner enemy, the unsubdued mind, this powerful enemy destroys whatever one needs. It turns even great mountains into dust; besides the fragile bodies of other sentient beings, it destroys even very solid, concrete mountains and makes them non-existent. So the real hero, the real bravery, is being able to face, fight and defeat the powerful great inner enemies, such as anger and attachment and the unsubdued minds. Particularly you should face whatever is stronger in your mind—jealousy or pride or anger. If you can do this, if you can defeat this true enemy, the inner enemy, you are a real hero and that is real bravery.

All those leaders who have many ranks and medals due to killing—he was in such and such a war, he killed that many, then he gets extra colors, different materials. People think of that as brave. Especially when there is a mark somewhere on the hand or somewhere where the bullet went through, people recognize him as so precious and think of the person as very important. They think of him as a historical person, with a kind of long story, very important, very brave, very competent. Then, like this, the one who climbed a rocky mountain, a snow mountain, they call a brave, competent person. However in fact this is wrong. This is not a real hero, not real bravery, not real

competency. He who is able to defeat the delusions is able accomplish temporal or ultimate happiness. The real bravery, the real hero is one who is able to face the unsubdued mind of anger and attachment, these things, who, between non-virtue and virtue, by defeating the delusions is able to accumulate more virtue, even in one's day life. The one who is able to live in precepts, because living in precepts means that you have faced the delusions, the inner enemy. The delusions are one group and you are one. Then precepts are making war with the delusions. A person who lives in precepts is a real army, the inner army. That is a worthwhile army, an army to accomplish nirvana, omniscient mind.

That is an army, which by defeating the delusions accomplishes liberation, ever-release from samsara. The real army is the person who is living in precepts—that's the real army, the one who can really benefit the world. This is the real army, who can really benefit, bringing peace in one's own mind and in the mind of others. Because even by keeping eight precepts for one day, in twenty-four hours, you are facing the delusions, the ones who never give happiness, who never give peace in the mind, who only give trouble in all the three times—past, present and future. This one you try to defeat twenty-four hours and, without surrendering to the delusions, the inner enemy, without letting yourself be overwhelmed by that, you always watch yourself, protect yourself from this enemy of the delusions. Always watching, always being careful, always conscious when it comes. Always spying, then when it comes you use the remedy, the meditation practice, the thought training.

Living in precepts itself is not letting yourself be overwhelmed by the delusions, not following the delusions. That's what it means. Once you do not follow the delusions there is peace. In those twenty-four hours there is much peace, as one does not follow the delusions living in the precepts. Killing, telling lies, sexual misconduct, all these things are actions done out of delusion, done out of attachment, out of anger—so once you do not follow these delusions, once you face them, once you try to defeat them, there is no way, no opportunity to create these non-virtuous actions. Once you are not friendly with the delusions there is no way to create these negative karmas that come from the delusions. There is no way; only the virtue, living in precepts, the opposite.

So you see, in that day, without talking about the merit that you accumulate with each precept, without talking about this, just even during that twenty-four hours, there is so much peace and relaxation in the mind. And not only that, how it brings peace, just when we talk about it straight, practically, the very close benefit that you can see—even if you don't see the far benefits such as omniscient mind, all this, becoming a high bodhisattva, blah, blah, blah, all these great benefits for sentient beings—just straight, the very close advantages that you can offer each day to others by living in the precepts, not following anger, attachment and those other delusions, besides having relaxation and peace in your mind, since you do not get angry you do not disturb the others who are living peacefully. As you don't get angry, so also you don't cause others to get angry. When there is anger there is no peace, and when there is no anger, there is that much peace in the mind of that person. The mind is not following the delusions, so your actions of speech and body are subdued and peaceful. That makes others also happy. One does not disturb others, but keeps others happy.

Even if you don't help, you don't give benefit, at least you are not giving harm by living in the precepts. Not following the unsubdued mind benefits. Those whose minds are relaxed and happy you don't make unhappy, and those whose minds are unhappy you don't cause to be more unhappy. It helps so much to not confuse others. Just straight, every day, what you can offer to others by living in precepts, by facing the delusions. So it is so good, even if one stops disturbing, causing

unhappiness to three or four people, even that many. Even if you cannot bring peace in the mind of all sentient beings on this earth, at least these three or four who are living with you in that day, in that twenty-four hours, you bring that much peace in the world, in the minds of these people. That is how one can benefit. So, one should attempt to prevent anger.

I will just read one stanza here.

There is no evil like hatred  
And no fortitude like patience.  
Thus I should strive in various ways  
To meditate on patience.

I stop here.

The point is... I didn't finish, excuse me, I didn't make it clear. The armies who fight are supposed to be for peace. But even though they are there to protect the rest of the people in the country, the population, they have to kill other sentient beings. To protect other sentient beings they have to give harm, besides themselves being harmed. But the army of the person facing the delusions—the Dharma practitioner—doesn't harm oneself, doesn't harm anybody. Besides not harming, it even gives benefit to others. At least it doesn't give harm. That's the big difference between these two armies—the army against the delusions, the Dharma practitioner, and the outside army. That is the big difference. That's all.

[Dedications]

Precepts Ceremony November 27<sup>th</sup> am

[Prayers]

In order to take the pratimoksha ordination of the eight precepts, this Mahayana ordination, reviving and purifying—purifying the non-virtue and reviving the virtue, storing up the virtue—one of the most important things to make it a Mahayana ordination is the motivation of bodhicitta. So please generate a strong motivation of bodhicitta, at least the effortful bodhicitta.

In front of oneself at one side you put a big pile, a mountain of diamonds and on the other side a perfect human body. Then think, check the value of that many diamonds, high as mountains, and the value of this precious human body, which is qualified with eight freedoms and ten riches.

Think this way: “Without having a perfect human body, with that many jewels alone, even wish-granting jewels (making it even more precious) worth more than diamonds, even a mountain of diamonds cannot save me from the lower realms. It cannot benefit me so that I am born into the realm of the happy transmigratory beings. That alone cannot benefit. Even if you achieve the blissful state of peace, ever-release from samsara, this many jewels alone cannot lead me to omniscient mind, cannot do extensive works for other sentient beings. But even if I don't have that many jewels, I have this precious human body; even if I don't have even one diamond, one tiny diamond or ornament, I have this precious human body qualified with eight freedoms and ten riches, and with this I can stop rebirth in the lower realms, I can achieve rebirth as a happy transmigratory

being, I can find a perfect human body again in the next life, ever-release from samsara and the state of omniscient mind to accomplish the work for other sentient beings. With this I can achieve the three great meanings. This is what I have now.”

Then think: “This is what I have now and this is difficult to find again in the future life. I cannot have it in my hand; I can’t have it forever. Definitely the time comes—in one month, one year, one hour—when I will lose it. It is definite that I will have to separate from this body, without freedom. Death can happen at any time—it can happen this year, this month, this week or even today.

When somebody is dead we receive a telegram: suddenly, somewhere, saying such and such has died. After the name it says “dead.” We are surprised, with big eyes. It’s a shock. We cry, we say “wauw.” However, now *we* are receiving the telegram—other people die and we receive a telegram. We are the ones who receive the telegram. But there will be one day that some others receive a telegram saying, “Today Zopa died,” or, if the name is Joseph, “Joseph died.” The story of the telegram will be about you; your name, then after your own name, “dead.” One day, it is one’s own turn.

This can happen even today. Somebody receives a phone call, “This person died in Nepal.” Or somebody receives a telegram, the friends or parents. As it happens to others, it can also happen to us, today. Suddenly one becomes unconscious, suddenly one falls down—on the way to the toilet, outside the room, or even during meditation time suddenly one falls, and doesn’t come back. Suddenly the body becomes very pale, white—either that or suddenly the breathing out is very strong and the breathing in becomes weaker, and you know, “I am dying,” whether it is at home in the West or no matter where it is. Nothing can be done to stop the death. Nothing can be done.

Then the mind is so upset, with fear and no method; even though the mind is upset there is nothing that can be done, even though the mind is in great fear, nothing can be done. Dearest friends, greatest friends, most beloved friends around oneself, full of tears—it is time now to separate from them, to leave them and the possessions. With much negative karma, with that much miserliness that one collected with much hardship, it is time to leave.

The body becomes a corpse. The name, whatever it is called, people say “dead.” The body is at the cemetery, in the tomb or in the firewood and the consciousness or the self is facing the lower realms. Then the relatives, the husband, parents or friends are left at the funeral place, and all the possessions are left in the house—those possessions earned with much hardship and much miserliness. The car, everything—all the money, all the possessions are left there in the house. These things collected with much hardship now belong to somebody else, become somebody else’s possessions. Whatever work is not finished, such as building a house, traveling, writing a book, or an office job, studying, whatever, whether it is finished or not finished, it is left. Doing retreat or whatever—whether it is finished or not finished, it is ended by impermanence and death.

“Such a thing is definite to happen, so without being lazy from now on I should be careful with life, with what is still left.” How many years, how many months, how many days, how many minutes, how many seconds—from now until death one should be careful with it. With effort, by putting the lower lip under the teeth—that is an expression: to put all your energy, all your effort, into making the life meaningful, as much as possible, as much as is left of life, without cheating yourself you should make the life meaningful. Knowing such a thing can happen, being aware of it and then practicing the holy Dharma, practicing the good heart in everyday life; also the practice of living in precepts, which is an incredible advantage to ourselves and for others, for the whole world.

You should make this precious human body highly meaningful. Then at the time of death, for the best Dharma practitioners, their mind is so happy—like going to a picnic, like going back home, to the parents, so happy. Like that. Being able to go to the pure realm, so happy. However, if you cannot do that at the time of death, having a happy mind, not having fear, knowing that you will receive a perfect human body and again have the opportunity practice Dharma, for sure you should not have doubt at the time of death, to be sure that you are not going to be born in the lower realms. You should have confidence in your own mind where you are going to be reborn. You should have confidence like this by having prepared. We should prepare now, make preparations, by practicing Dharma. The only thing that can benefit at the time of death is the holy Dharma.

“So, just as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, by taking the pratimoksha ordination, by following the graduated path became enlightened, I myself also have the opportunity to be able to benefit, like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, to enlighten numberless sentient beings. I also have the same potential to be able to benefit others. I myself can become enlightened and I myself can enlighten all sentient beings. So while I have this great opportunity, such potential and opportunity to practice the holy Dharma, especially the Mahayana path, if I seek only happiness for myself, ever-release from samsara, then it is no different from the animal’s attitude. Sentient beings are so kind, so precious, so extremely kind—they are those from whom I receive all my three times’ happiness and perfections. While I am in samsara, without depending on the kindness of sentient beings, there is no way that I can begin Dharma practice and receive omniscient mind. There is no way without depending on the kindness of sentient beings.

“What the sentient beings want is happiness and what they do not want is suffering, so there is nothing more important in my life, nothing more precious than this work in my life—the work that frees all sentient beings from suffering and leads them into the state of omniscient mind. There is nothing more important than this work, nothing more meaningful than this work, than this job. So for sentient beings I must achieve the state of omniscient mind. The cause of the path to omniscient mind, the method of accumulating merit to reach omniscient mind, the path towards omniscient mind, is ordination. Therefore I am going to take the Mahayana ordination for the sake of all sentient beings.”

Think that the purpose of taking the ordination is for the happiness of others, for the uncountable number of sentient beings, particularly who are on this earth, as well as all other sentient beings, human beings who are suffering so much.

Visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, you make three prostrations to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

Then if you can, if you have no problem with the legs, kneel in the position with the right knee up and the left down, putting the palms of the hands together in the mudra of prostration, respectfully. With this respectful action of body—I think when someone requests a king for something, then one takes that position out of humbleness, a respectful manner to make requests. Like this I think.

[Ceremony]

“All Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions, with your divine wisdom, please pay attention to me. As the previous tathagathas, the arhats, the fully enlightened buddhas, like a divine skillful wise horse, a great elephant, did what had to be done...”



This is relating to examples of the power of Buddha, how he is capable of doing the works for others. Only from the commentary can you understand. It is quite difficult to understand just from the words here, it might sound a little bit strange—it might sound as if you are turning into animals, elephants or something like that.

Mention all your names. If you have twenty names you mention them here. I think the purpose of mentioning names is not to let the mind wander, to make sure to take the ordination for the sake of others. Like when you go to the bank and put your signature.

“...for the sake of all that lives, in order to benefit all, in order to prevent famine...”

When we say this you should remember particularly all the problems of the sentient beings on this particular world, those that you know of, that you remember. When you say these words, you should remember them, as well as all the rest of the sentient beings. This is not the only world; even the scientists have discovered that there are many universes.

“...in order to prevent mental and physical sickness...”

This time you should remember all the patients in hospitals, and their incredible, unbelievable sufferings; it is kind of hopeless that they will recover. Remember these sentient beings, these human beings, in the hospitals. Even today, there are so many who can't recover, who can't be helped by the doctors, who wish to live but have no chance to recover. They have so much pain, screaming, so much suffering. You should remember these. You take precepts to free them from the sufferings. Then there are so many refugees dying from starvation...

[Second and third repetitions]

“...in order to prevent mental and physical sicknesses...”

So here you should remember the people who create much negative karma. Even having taken a human body they create much negative karma, due to lack of Dharma wisdom, lack of faith in karma. You take precepts to liberate them from suffering.

[Ceremony continues]

Then think: “Now I have received the pure Mahayana ordination.” Feel great rejoicefulness, like having found a mountain of wish-granting jewels, like having found a trillion dollars. If you found a trillion dollars you would be spaced out. Like a dream, we wouldn't believe it, thinking maybe it is a dream. Between the value of that and the value of one precept, there is no comparison. Taking the vow of not taking others' lives; taking others' lives causes the suffering result, but when you live in the vow of not taking others lives, it is the cause of the good result. The way to understand this is to see the opposites—how it brings the good result, the opposite of suffering, and how bad actions cause the ripening aspect result of rebirth in the lower realms, a suffering body instead of the body of a happy transmigratory being in the deva realm or the human realm. Like that, the opposite, you have to figure it out. Not only that, not only happiness and perfection in samsara, but each of these precepts becomes a cause to achieve the qualities of a Buddha's holy body, holy speech and holy mind, in order to do the works for all other sentient beings. So there is temporal and ultimate

benefit for you. As it is taken with the motive of bodhicitta, one precept has infinite benefits. Now here we are taking eight precepts, which are much more—so a trillion dollars is nothing compared to the value of this. Each of these precepts is the cause to have happiness and perfections lifetime after lifetime for so many lifetimes. Remembering this, you should feel great happiness.

“From now on I shall not kill, nor steal other’s possession, nor engage in sexual misconduct...”

The Pratimoksha ordination is not a Mahayana ordination, not like this particular Mahayana ordination. It does not involve visualizing the guru in Buddha. Visualizing the guru as Buddha, guru yoga practice, is tantric practice. [inaudible]

“...nor lie. I shall avoid intoxicants from which many mistakes arise...”

Intoxicants in the Pratimoksha ordination just means wine, which makes the mind go crazy and makes one become a not-normal human being. Wine makes you become shameless. First you have shame, then after you drink the wine, you become shameless. But here in this particular Mahayana ordination it means also cigarettes—with the other precepts, the five precepts, it means particularly wine, it does not mean cigarettes. Cigarettes don’t completely change the mind like wine does, but here cigarettes is a type of black food. Like when you drink coffee, for some people it makes the mind a little bit unstable when you concentrate—not like that, but a black food. Anyway, in Tibetan we say that wine is a typical black food. In the Tibetan prayer it says, “Wine, from which many mistakes arise.”

“...I shall not sit on large, high, expensive beds...”

There is no precept to not sit on a throne. Before giving I also have taken the ordination. I don’t know how expensive this bed is! However, the main thing with all these precepts is the motivation; they are meant to overwhelm the delusions, to destroy them, to make them non-existent. That is the main point. In that way, they are meant to benefit for ultimate happiness for you and to liberate others, to lead them to ultimate happiness. So it is so much dependent on the motive, whether it is for Dharma reasons or not, whether it becomes work for others—that is the whole point. Like sitting on a throne like this, giving teaching, that is for a Dharma reason, respecting the Dharma, the teaching, by sitting on a high throne; it’s not only the reason that other people cannot see, but for the Dharma reason, it becomes work for others.

If you suddenly become sick and the medicine that you need to cure your disease is wine, you can take it—especially when you are very thirsty. I am joking. Then if you take the wine your sickness gets better, and you can do much more practice. If you are very sick you can’t do anything. In order to practice Dharma, in order to reach enlightenment for the sake of others, for that reason your body should be healthy. You take it for that reason, not because you want happiness in this life. So you see, you take it with a Dharma reason, to benefit others, purely to do the work for others. Things like sitting on a throne, even if the person took ordination, things like that are not fixed—you have to examine the motive first before you change your action and then there is no danger. The whole point is if it is something that benefits others, one should do it and if it does not benefit others, one does not do it. Like that.

“I shall not eat food at the wrong times.”

This means not to eat after twelve o'clock, one meal. By making the vow at this time you are doing the action for the sake of all sentient beings. During retreat, if one takes Mahayana ordination all the time for a whole month or so, then you can take breakfast. But when one takes it only occasionally, it is better to take it strictly.

“I shall avoid singing, dancing and playing music, and I shall not wear perfumes, rosaries or ornaments.

“As arhats have avoided the wrong actions such as taking the lives of others, I shall also avoid these actions, such as taking the lives of others. May I quickly receive enlightenment and may the living beings who are experiencing the various sufferings be released from the ocean of samsara.”

Then please repeat this mantra.

OM AH MO GA SHI LA SAM BARA BARA BARA MAHA SHUDA SAH TO PEMA BE BOKITE BHUD ZE DARA  
DARA SA MAN TO AH WA LO KITE HUNG PEH SO HA

Please dedicate the three time merits accumulated by oneself, especially by taking ordination, then all the merits of other sentient beings. Dedicate these merits to generate bodhicitta, renouncing self and cherishing others, in the minds of oneself and of others. And that the bodhicitta of ones who already have this will increase.

“Due to all these merits may my parents, the sentient beings, have great happiness. May they all have happiness. May the three lower realms be empty forever, may they not exist any more. Wherever there are bodhisattvas, may all their wishes be fulfilled, may all their prayers be fulfilled.”

Their prayers are that all the sentient beings, including oneself, will be free from all the undesirable things and have all happiness, including omniscient mind. That is what the bodhisattva prayer includes. So if this becomes fulfilled, then all our wishes become fulfilled. So please dedicate like this that—wherever there are buddhas and bodhisattvas may all their prayers be fulfilled immediately.

“The bodhisattvas Jampal and Kuntu Zangpo, however they dedicated their merits, so will I dedicate my merit. Then, as the three time buddhas have dedicated their merits, I will also dedicate my merits to quickly enlighten sentient beings.”

Then during the rest of the day, the most helpful, most beneficial thing, not only during meditation time, but also in break times, is again and again to remember: “Today I am doing a great work. Today I’m accomplishing a great work for the benefit of others. Usually my life is empty, doing nothing for other sentient beings, only doing work for myself—eating, sleeping, walking, talking—all these actions I do only for myself.”

Try to generate happiness by knowing what you are doing and that what you are doing offers great benefit to others. Think: “I don’t exist for myself; I exist for the sake of others, for the sake of sentient beings.” If you see a bird, creatures, ants, worms, even human beings, think, “I exist for them. The purpose of my having this perfect human body is only to obtain happiness for them. Not for me, only for them. Today I am doing this to benefit them, to bring them happiness.”

This way it helps not to break the precepts, if there is more care for others. Also this morning you made a vow for the sake of others, in the presence of Buddha, so you can't cheat others, the uncountable number of sentient beings. Because of the care of others, especially when you are very hungry, it makes you aware and helps you be aware, even if the hand touches the fruit or the biscuit. It makes the mind more conscious.

If the vow is one meal, then you eat as much as you can, as much as you want, huge, but once you stop, then you stop. Not then again you eat and then you stop, changing your mind again. If you start again then that is not one meal. It becomes two. Thank you.

Lecture 16: November 27<sup>th</sup> am

[Prayers]

Please listen to the teaching by generating at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking: "At any rate, I must achieve enlightenment for the sake of all the kind mother sentient beings. Therefore I am going to listen to the commentary on the *Bodhicharyavatara*, and in particular the commentary on the chapter on patience."

As I mentioned yesterday morning—how difficult it is to accumulate virtue and how rare it is. In our mind, non-virtue arises so much. There are more times that delusions arise than times that delusions don't arise. As the mind is unsubdued, delusions arise uncontrollably—anger, attachment, pride, jealous mind. This happens even though you know that it is painful, that it is only the suffering nature, that the nature of that unsubdued mind is painful. Even though one does not wish to get angry, uncontrollably it arises and so, like that, non-virtuous actions uncontrollably arise. But virtuous actions, even if you have the wish to accumulate them are so difficult to cause to arise, there are so many hindrances. Even if you try to put effort there are so many hindrances that one is unable to accumulate them.

So, virtue is very rare, like the lightning in the sky, as mentioned in the beginning of the *Bodhicharyavatara*, in the benefits of bodhicitta. The mind of samsaric beings, our mind, is like nighttime, without moon, even without stars, completely dark. Our mind is like that. Even if one generates virtue, it happens for a very short time, like lightning in that darkness. So the cause of happiness, the little virtue that has been accumulated by opportunity or with much effort by knowing Dharma wisdom, if we destroy this little that we have with anger, then how is it? If we let anger arise without applying the remedy, patience, if we let it destroy that little cause of happiness that we have accumulated in the mind—it is so important, since we have this great wish not only for ultimate happiness but even for small comfort, small happiness. If you have desire, if you want this, then you should protect the cause as much as you can, with all effort, as much as you can. This little cause that we have created in the mind we should protect with all effort from the enemy, anger.

In order to destroy anger one should know the shortcomings of anger; to stop anger from arising we should know the shortcomings of anger and the benefits of patience. In regards the shortcomings of anger: there are those that you can see with the eye and those that you cannot.

"There is no evil like hatred,"

Which disturbs the generation of the path to enlightenment; there is no greater enemy than that. There is no greater enemy than this to destroy the virtue and merit. Then, also:

“There is no fortitude like patience.”

There is no other mind that bears greater hardships than patience; that bears greater difficulties than patience, which is the remedy for the hot, unsubdued mind of anger, which is like a fire, burning and destroying oneself.

“Thus I should strive in various ways  
To meditate on patience.”

Meditating on patience with various methods will be explained in the following subjects.

The next is the shortcomings of anger that can be seen by the eye—how anger doesn’t give the opportunity for the body and mind to have comfort. Even while body and mind are relaxed and comfortable, anger stops and disturbs. Even if the person experiences comfort of body and mind the anger suddenly stops it, it disturbs. Also, it destroys friends, relatives, even those who help you.

“My mind will not experience peace  
If it fosters painful thoughts of hatred.  
I shall find no joy or happiness,  
Unable to sleep, I shall feel unsettled.”

So, you see, from anger arises great discomfort—very undesirable, very painful, great suffering. If one keeps and harbors the painful mind, the hatred, then one does not experience happiness and peace, pacified of suffering. So, one does not receive happiness in the mind. One does not even receive comfort for the body. Even at nighttime one won’t sleep, and even in the daytime there is no relaxation. Unsettled, body and mind—both unsettled; no relaxation, no peace.

Even if you are invited by somebody to a restaurant, or a party, even though the food is so delicious, so expensive, so delicious, even if each mushroom costs thirty, sixty, seventy dollars, even though the food costs hundreds of dollars, even though it is so delicious, if there is somebody who sits next to you in that group, who has a little bit undesirable manners towards you, just a little bit, just one or two words, the way it is formed, the way it is put together—by that your mind is so disturbed. If one does not practice patience, the mind is easily disturbed; suddenly the mind becomes so unhappy, as the anger rises, so uncomfortable. If the person says something that disturbs your reputation, talks about some of your mistakes, after you have eaten you don’t even remember how it tasted. You don’t even remember. You ate so fast, you were not aware of the taste of the food, because the mind is completely concentrating on the subject of the anger, which causes anger, the one that gives harm, to arise. Or maybe reciting mantra in the mind, “How terrible he is, how bad he is, he’s telling me this and that,” like reciting OM MANI PADME HUNG.

There is no comfort, no comfort at all for the body and mind without practicing patience, even when you are lying down on that very comfortable, soft bed, which is so large that you can roll any way, any direction—it is comfortable, with no fleas. From outside there’s nothing that makes it painful, that hurts. If you press it down it comes up, if you step on it, it comes up like this. Even if your body is on such a comfortable bed, there is no comfort if the mind doesn’t practice patience, if

you are meditating in order to get angry—not to stop the anger but in order to get angry. The mind meditates in order to create more negative karma, trying to remember the harm given by the enemy, how he did it, the way he insulted you, the way he complained, with such a manner, with such a face. Trying to remember every single thing, how he did it, at such and such place, counting, “In such and such a place he treated me badly, also he said this and this”; either you count, you try to find more and more ways he gave you harm or you think over and over about the same harm.

You do not meditate on the way he gave harm in order to generate patience, in order to generate compassion for him. You think about how he created so much negative karma in relation to me, the cause of sufferings. Not like this, but you think over and over how he gave harm, harboring it in the mind, in the depth of the heart—meditating like this on the harm that is given by the enemy—and you to get more and more angry. Even though the body is in such a comfortable soft bed, warm, there is no comfort, the mind is full of anger so one does not experience comfort, one doesn't feel it. The mind is full of anger, so painful; at nighttime you can't get to sleep, the whole night you turn this way, that way, you try to sleep upside down, or up, or turn on the other side. At nighttime you go to bed with anger, in the morning you get up with anger. All these hours you live your life with anger. So much negative karma is accumulated during these hours; the little negative karma that one had accumulated gets very powerful by continuing like this.

Then also you think about how to give harm back. The whole night and also in the daytime, even while you are eating, you are always thinking about how to retaliate, how to give harm back. Even if you can't harm the body, you think about the words, what would be the most painful thing that you could say to him if you see him again. If one gets the opportunity to say the most painful words, if it really hurts his mind, then you feel so happy, “Oh, it worked.” You feel happy, “Oh, it is so good; I expressed what I wanted to say.” “What I was keeping in the mind, I expressed. Now I am free.” There is a feeling of rejoicfulness, of happiness, which makes the karma much heavier, the negative karma of harming others much heavier. Instead of feeling happiness when some other people say bad words to you, feeling happiness, that it is very good, that it is extremely good.

When some others badly treat you, it is very good. When others badly treat you, when others give very heavy harms, when others say very painful words to you, you should feel so happy in your mind, instead of feeling depressed, instead of being angry or aggressive—that is extremely worthwhile. You should not have great happiness that he is creating negative karma, not that one. You should feel happiness because you are receiving the harm. By thinking of the kindness of the enemy, by thinking like this: “By his giving me harm, from all the negative karma that I have accumulated he helps me to finish one negative karma. How kind he is.”

You see, that enemy badly treating you is the result of one's own previous karma, that enemy is just a condition. As you see how kind he is, among all these uncountable numbers of negative karmas he is helping you to finish experiencing one negative karma now, instead of having to experience it in the future in the lower realms, from life to life, for hundreds of years or eons. He is helping you to finish experiencing this in this life, in a short time. So you should feel happiness and remember the kindness like that. Also remember the kindness in this way.

Also, feel happiness that he's giving you an opportunity to practice *tonglen*, taking on other's suffering and experiencing it oneself. “He is giving me the opportunity to practice the Mahayana thought training.” When somebody gives harm, think: “I'm not the only one who is badly treated by others; there are many other sentient beings, uncountable numbers of sentient beings who are badly

treated, who are suffering, who are tortured, who are insulted, who are suffering like this.” Even if you cannot think of the heavy sufferings, at least you think of some of them, the same type of suffering that you are experiencing.

Even if you can't think of the heavier sufferings that others are experiencing, even if you can't bear to think to take these on yourself and to experience these by yourself, think: “There are many others who are suffering like this, so when that enemy is badly treating me, giving me harm, may this be the substitute for all the sentient beings who receive harm. May I receive all the harms that other sentient beings receive. May this be the substitute.”

Think, “I am experiencing this, I am taking the harm on behalf of all the sentient beings who suffer by receiving harm. I am the representative, I am the substitute of all those others. I am the member of all sentient beings, like a country sends a member to meetings in another country. I am the member of all sentient beings; taking the harm and experiencing the suffering.” One should pray like this many times and one should request, again and again. Each time a person gives harm one should think, “Oh, this is the substitute.”

Also if a person dislikes you, when you find that your friend dislikes you, think also again and again, “I am experiencing this on behalf of the sentient beings, I am experiencing this undesirable thing on the behalf of all sentient beings.” You see, choosing in the mind, making the determination: “Instead of all the sentient beings receiving undesirable things, experiencing undesirable things, let me experience it, let me have all the undesirable things. Disliking each other is painful for the mind; instead of other sentient beings suffering this, receiving these harms, I should experience them, I should receive them.” Pray like this and then think that sentient beings have become empty of sufferings, that they have virtue and not suffering. Think like this.

Then also one can do the visualization of taking others' sufferings. Especially while you are receiving harm, while somebody is complaining, criticizing you, while somebody is badly treating you, then think these things and also visualize. All those beings who are receiving harm from others, all those sufferings, think: “I am receiving them in the form of fog; the cause of receiving harms and the resulting harm, all in the form of pollution.” You visualize it like fog coming, like when you are in the mountains and fog is coming from down there, from all sides fog is coming and covering the whole place; like that you are receiving it from all directions, from all the sentient beings, then going through the nose, through the doors, then absorbing into the selfish attitude. You give it to the selfish attitude, which always harms you in so many ways and never gives you peace. You give all these sufferings, the cause of suffering and the result of suffering, to the self-cherishing thought, the selfish attitude.

You can do the same thing also with anger. All the sufferings of the sentient beings in the form of pollution, the harms, the experience of suffering, the cause of sufferings, and the one who gives harm, the anger, from where the harm comes, the anger, the cause of anger, even that, the motive that is in the nature of anger, as smoke, pollution, absorbing into the self-cherishing attitude.

So one can do meditation and also do the visualization. Feel happiness that this enemy is very kind, giving you the opportunity to do the practice of purification by taking others' sufferings on oneself, purifying others, purifying yourself, your own heavy negative karma. Then also, accumulating infinite merits each time you take their sufferings. Again remember the kindness of the enemy who gives this opportunity. One can feel happiness in the mind like this; one can feel happiness in the mind for

having the opportunity. The main thing that makes the mind happy is having the opportunity to experience the sufferings on behalf of others. You yourself have the opportunity to experience suffering on the behalf of others. Then feel happiness.

It is also very good like this—if you are with somebody who dislikes you, who criticizes you, who always talks about your mistakes, then you sit with him. You make preparation from the beginning to practice patience, to practice thought-training, then you sit with him and you wait to hear. You wait to hear. You see, like waiting, if you cannot beat the enemy by yourself, you are weak; you are scared that you might not have the strength, you are very weak and there is danger that the enemy might put you in bad shape, that you might lose. So you are waiting for a friend, somebody who is stronger, to give harm, to beat the enemy, to destroy the enemy—somebody who is more powerful, you are waiting for his help to destroy the enemy. Exactly the same, like that you wait; you sit down with him and wait for the criticism. Then each time he gives criticism, you give that criticism to your inner enemy, the self-cherishing thought.

Instead of repeating over and over, “He is criticizing me,” instead of accepting that for yourself, instead of possessing it, you think “This harm is for me,” you give what the other person criticizes to your enemy, the real enemy, the selfish attitude. You give that criticism right on top of the self-cherishing thought. Right on that, right on the head of the self-cherishing thought. Each time the person says something you give it to the self-cherishing thought. In that way, all his criticism, whatever terrible things he says all becomes true, it all becomes weapons to destroy the inner enemy, the self-cherishing thought. Even if the person beats you it becomes a weapon to beat the self-cherishing thought; if you think that way it becomes beating the self-cherishing thought. So in that way you are happier; the worse things the person says, the more painful, the happier you are, more fun. Maybe there comes a worry to not receive painful ones, that he is not saying terrible things, only good ones!

Definitely there are big differences. When you think the criticism is for you, when you accept it is for you, then there are only problems, only confusion. When you give the criticism, the harm to the self-cherishing thought, by remembering the selfish attitude, the anger, when you think of the shortcomings of that, even the suffering of death-time or even stomach pain, even a disease, if you give it to the self-cherishing thought, instead of thinking, “I am sick, I am this and that,” instead of thinking “I, the most precious one, the one more important than anybody else, is sick,” this and that, instead of worrying what to do, instead of thinking, “my pain, my this and that,” instead of that you give it to the self-cherishing thought. When you give it to the self-cherishing thought, the selfish attitude, immediately the pain becomes less, the pain becomes weaker. Instead of thinking, “I am sick, this is my pain,” immediately when you give it to the self-cherishing thought, there is a big difference. Sooner or later it disappears and at least immediately it becomes weaker. Even the pain, the harm, the pain becomes very effective; it even becomes a teaching for the mind.

If one practices like this it is very effective for the mind, very useful, very beneficial. If one practices thought-training in this way even the harm, the bad circumstances such as this disease become a method of accumulating extensive merit; the best method of purification, the best method of accumulating merit. In the benefits of bodhicitta, if one has bodhicitta whatever heavy karma one has accumulated can be purified by bodhicitta. So if one practices this thought-training, the bodhicitta practice, renouncing self and cherishing others, it becomes a great purification. If one practices thought-training like this then, when one meets bad circumstances, it is like a broom cleaning the garbage. It becomes like a mop wiping off the sufferings.



Also these bad circumstances become a means to persuade, reminding you of Dharma practice, persuading you to practice virtue, to follow the path to omniscient mind, to practice bodhicitta. It becomes beneficial; the bad circumstances become beneficial, persuading you to practice holy Dharma, not to be lazy.

Similarly with the enemy: if one practices patience, if one practices thought-training a little bit, then the enemy becomes the virtuous teacher who benefits you to accumulate merit, to purify the obscurations. The enemy becomes like a virtuous friend, helping like this, the virtuous friend who persuades you to practice Dharma. In this way the enemy also becomes the virtuous teacher, checking, examining whether you are practicing the Dharma or not, creating the conditions, creating the miserable conditions then checking to see whether you are practicing holy Dharma or not; how much you are able to practice holy Dharma when you are in such a situation like this, how much you are able to cope. It becomes the examiner, the virtuous teacher who examines you.

When one meets bad circumstances or miserable conditions, one can discover how much one is able to practice Dharma. If you are practicing thought-training, you can examine how much your mind is trained in thought-training. You can discover how pure a Dharma practitioner you are when you meet miserable circumstances, when somebody harms you, when somebody treats you badly. So from this, one can examine, one can discover how much one is able to practice.

There is one geshe who was living in Ganden Monastery. Before he left the monastery, he was the disciplinarian, the one who looks after the discipline. I guess he finished his term, so he made offerings to all the monks. Just before that he received teachings on the *Bodhicharyavatara*, a complete explanation from the abbot of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's temple in Dharamsala. The abbot belonged to the same college, Ganden Monastery.

So in the puja, while the monks were having tea, he read the requests and then he told the abbot and the monks that he did not have any problem, nothing that needs to be discussed, that there was nothing to talk about, and then he said a few words from the chapter on concentration, which says to go to a solitary place to meditate, in the forest. "This is what I am going to practice," he announced to all the monks. He said this is what we have heard recently and this is what I am going to do. And he left. He is not recognized, not well known, not highly educated, learned; not particularly recognized by the monks but very happy, usually a very happy monk. He is a very good monk, good understanding, having understanding of the basic scriptures, the five great treatises.

Then he left the monastery and he lived in the southern part of India. Sometimes he lived with *sadhus*, in those holy places; many times he lived alone in the different mountains in caves. Then sometimes I think he lived in Indian villages. He had nothing. He carried one begging bowl and just this yellow robe, his *Bodhicharyavatara* text, his practice of tantra, his special deity practice and then the dedication prayer, the bodhisattva's prayer—nothing else. The Indian villagers, when they discovered there was some monk in a cave, offered him some food. He spent some years like this, and in that time he was able to generate bodhicitta.

Recently he was asked for by his Holiness Dalai Lama and he traveled from South India to Bombay to Dharamsala. Along the way, somewhere there was much rain so he became completely wet. He rarely traveled by car or train, mostly he walked and even before, he never accepted money. Even when people come to offer food, he accepted very little or he did not accept it all. However, one day

there was much rain, it was a little bit hard time, a hard day, so he asked himself, “My body is like this but how is the mind? Is the mind happy or not? The mind is happy.” He discovered the mind is happy. So he advised himself, “That is good.” He was telling himself, “You say you want to avoid suffering; so if you want to avoid suffering then you should bear hardships. Without bearing hardships, how can you avoid suffering?” He told himself this.

Then after some time, he stopped to have tea in one village. He took off his robes and hung them on some trees to dry and he wanted to make some tea. Then he asked for firewood. One lady kind of signaled by moving her head that it was okay to cut the branch of a tree. But after he cut the tree the owner of the land came, the owner of the property, and he beat the geshe, he kicked him and beat him with his hands, so much, so much. Then he went back and came again with a long stick to beat him more. Then there were some other Indians who fought this man who came with the stick, so I think he was not beaten by the stick a second time. Anyway, during those times, the ascetic geshe told me that during those times, as much as he was beaten and kicked with the feet, during these times the slightest anger did not come. “One good thing was my mind: the slightest anger did not come.” So then afterwards he felt the unbelievable kindness of that person who beat him; much more than a mother. So like this.

I think I stop here. The next story I will tell you tomorrow.

However you see, even if we can't do much practice, even if we cannot achieve the higher tantric path or the higher bodhisattva path, even if we cannot achieve much in this life, at least we should try to be able to practice like this monk, like this geshe; at least, in our life. Then it is very beautiful and then there is great happiness. He keeps normally only thirty rupees, twenty rupees and if he gets more he gives it away. Later, I think after he generated the realization of bodhicitta, those kind of realizations, he accepted offerings but he never kept them, he always gave them to the old folks' homes where the Tibetan old men are kept. He gave donations to schools and hospitals, like that, he always gives it away. When the Tibetan people recognized him as an ascetic monk with such and such realizations, living in a cave, many people made offerings when he came for alms, begging. So one day I think he had a talk with His Holiness the Dalai Lama; he explained to His Holiness what he does with the money and His Holiness asked him to give some money to the Tibetan hospital in Dharamsala. The reason was not so much the material, why His Holiness asked was not so much because of the material but because the person from whom the money comes is a bodhisattva. You see, the money he gives to the hospital comes out of the pure motive of bodhicitta, dedicated for those patients to be recovered soon, so it has power to benefit the patients; it's not so much the material. The reason His Holiness asked him to give the money is that.

I stop here.

[Dedications]

Lecture 17: November 27<sup>th</sup> pm

[Prayers]

I must have mentioned before, I might have said before, there is no fortitude like patience to destroy the unsubdued mind, anger, which is like the fire burning. I think I might have mentioned this at the

beginning. “There’s no evil like hatred to destroy the virtue, disturbing the generation of the path in the mind. Therefore I must meditate on patience in the various ways, which will be explained in the following.”

One can say it this way, understanding the shortcomings of anger, understanding the benefits of patience, then making the determination what to do—to follow more on the side of the anger or follow more on the side of the patience. Following anger, you receive only shortcomings, not the slightest benefit, only shortcomings. Following patience, there is only benefit. You should say, “I’m going to do this, I am going to meditate. Therefore I must meditate,” making a plan, making determination about what to do in everyday life. Shantideva advises like this; anger is like this, patience is like this. If you follow anger you receive only harm, not the slightest benefit and if you practice patience, then there is not the slightest harm, only benefits. So therefore you must meditate and try to control the anger with various methods, which I will explain later.

The previous stanza explains the shortcomings of anger that cannot be seen by the eye; one experiences them but they cannot be seen by the eye. Next is explaining the shortcomings that can be seen by the eye.

Even if the person normally looks very beautiful, once there is anger in the mind even the shape of the face changes completely. Even when he normally looks very beautiful, when anger arises, when there is anger in the mind you get scared when you see their face—other people who see that person get scared. It is ugly. Even if normally it is a beautiful shape, when there is anger in the mind the whole face completely changes, even the colors; the whole thing turns very ugly, very aggressive, very ugly, terrifying. Then even if the body is full of ornaments, decorated with lots of ornaments on the hairs, the ears, even if the person’s body is well decorated with ornaments, when there is anger in the mind you don’t see its beauty. It looks funny.

Then the next one: if you keep anger, how harmful it is. Day and night, all the time, for you there is no happiness for the mind, no comfort for the body. Besides that it destroys friends and relatives, even those who are extremely kind.

“A master who has hatred  
Is in danger of being killed  
Even by those who for their wealth and happiness  
Depend upon his kindness.

“By it, friends and relatives are disheartened;  
Though drawn by my generosity they will not trust me.”

The angry servants who are dependent on the master kill the kind master, although the master has been so kind to them, giving them wealth and health, benefiting them. They kill the kind master, the master on whom their life depends, from whom they receive their means of living. These angry servants kill this kind master who has anger. This is talking about the shortcomings of the anger of the servants and the shortcomings of the anger of the master, both. The servants killing the most kind master, such heavy negative karma, comes from their anger. Also the master who experiences this, who is executed by the servants, this experience also comes from his anger, from retaliating back with anger. When the servants say something he retaliates with anger.

One can think about how here in this stanza, the great bodhisattva Shantideva put it this way—the angry servant killing the kind master. And then also one can think the other way: the master killed the servants, those who offered service, those who worked for him, those from whom he receives his comfort, his happiness, respect, reputation or wealth. He makes money with the help of those workers and when he has anger he kills them. When he has anger toward the workers, the servants, he kills even those kind ones, on whom his life depends and from whom he receives his comfort and wealth.

It is happening in the world all the time, like that—the problems that are happening in the world. If one has what is called anger, this unsubdued mind, it is very dangerous. If one does not do the practice of patience to pacify the anger, once the anger rises, it is very difficult, it is very dangerous, and the life is in great danger—your own life and others' lives. The lives of the others who are the object of anger are also in danger.

Once the anger arises, even if it is the kind mother, who has been kind in giving this body, who experienced much hardship giving this body, who experienced much hardship to educate oneself, or the father, who experienced much hardship and put much effort into educating oneself, so that now you can easily find a job, you are able to do work together with other human beings, sit on a chair with other people in the office, able to write and able to speak, all these things, able to make money, having all these enjoyments, living in a nice, good, comfortable apartment, having these enjoyments as one wishes—all these things are received by depending on the kindness of the parents, the actual parents or even the substitutes. Even if you lost your parents, even if you don't remember your own parents, if something happened in an earlier time when you were a child, even if you don't remember them, those who brought you up, who took care of you, some other family that took care of you—all of those who were extremely kind, who educated you, who took care of life—then, you see, no matter how kind the mother is, how kind the father is, once the anger arises, there is no hesitation in killing them. If there is a weapon or something around, there is no hesitation in killing the mother, killing the father—that kindest person, who took care of you with much loving thought. Once the anger arises towards this person, there is nothing to think about, the thought to kill, to destroy just comes. Just to hit this person with whatever is available around there—bottles or stones, knives, guns or tables. You throw tables on the head of the other person; you throw cups in his face. If the person throws cakes I think that's nice, then the other person can taste it. I'm joking. Or ice cream.

There's not so much to think about when the anger arises, the mind is completely dark. Just one-pointedly concentrating on harming, destroying the other—that's all, nothing else, like this. Even if you understand Dharma, even if normally you talk about Dharma, even if you talk about karma, even if it looks like there is faith in karma when the person speaks normally, once the anger arises karma is forgotten. Normally it looks like he has much faith in the Triple Gem, much faith in the teachings about karma—he talks about karma and this and that but once the anger arises all these things are completely forgotten, far away. Or when you meet the person who gives harm, who easily tells lies, who cheats you, who one-pointedly concentrates on putting you in prison, telling the police. Immediately you go there and fight. Or afterwards, at home, you discover that you are cheated. Immediately, without delay you go back to the person's place or shop and then fight. Or try to have him punished, making application to the court, to the government. I think, I'm not sure, I think I might have met one boy, in Australia, somebody who killed his mother, or something like that, one student who was in the course in Australia.

So it is a great danger. Once the anger arises it takes just a minute to kill the wife, to kill the husband, even to kill the children—it is dangerous. In such countries as Spain or Italy they are throwing bombs all the time, destroying the hotels, destroying the banks, destroying big huge buildings where there are a lot of people—destroying other sentient beings' perfections and enjoyments that they built with much hardship. Then in one day, in one or two hours, it is completely destroyed by a bomb. Those are the shortcomings of anger.

Recently in Delhi, in the newspaper there were two Indian men who executed one wealthy family. I think the father was maybe in the army, a commissioner or something, somebody who is well-known, who has much reputation. I'm not sure what the profession of the father was. I think normally how these two Indian men live their lives is by stealing, by harming others. So one day somehow these two men met the young son of that family, I think he was not even very grown-up, he sounded very young. They met the son and daughter of that family when they were going to the park or the railway station or something like that. These two Indian men met the son and daughter. Then I think first they put a knife up and accused the son or the daughter, I'm not sure. Anyway, they were accusing one of them and the other, the son or the daughter didn't run away, the other one stayed there somehow, they could not separate. So I think they put a knife to both, the son and the daughter, they put them in the car and then they put the knife, and then again they asked them things, then again they put the knife, thirty or forty times over the body. Then again they gave them ice cream and again they asked, and then again put the knife. And then they did terrible things also with this young daughter.

Somehow I think the court could not find these two men for a long time. They sent spies all over India and they could not find them. Then one day these two men were on the train and they tried to steal the things of an Indian soldier who was sleeping in one compartment. Somehow this soldier grabbed both of them and took them to court. Then later on they found out that those two were the ones who had executed the young son and daughter of this family. So just before I left it said in the newspaper that they would be hanged. They were going to execute these two people by hanging and if people wanted to come and watch there would be only twenty or nineteen people allowed, something like that. These two people made petitions and it was postponed for month or something like that, but the plans were that they were going to be executed. Then the newsmen went to see these two men, to see what they had to say. Then one of the people said, "I have too much to say, or I have nothing else to say." One of the men answered like this. However, they had executed the young son and the daughter because of jealousy or anger toward the wealthy family. This is how anger is so harmful.

The next verse explains the shortcomings of anger in brief.

Just before mentioning this: I think it was two or three years ago that a terrible thing happened in Sikkim. I think one Indian woman was supposed to get married with somebody from Himachal Pradesh, that area. But she came to Sikkim and I think she married with a doctor there. So after some time, some young Indian men came from Himachal Pradesh or Kangra, from one of those places. They were very angry with the doctor who married this lady. So these three or four young Indian men entered the house of the doctor and they fastened his hands and then his legs on the chair. Then they took off the doctor's clothes completely and cut the doctor's penis and put it in his mouth and then cut both ears, and they hung both ears like this. The room was full of blood; the whole floor was full of blood. Then they let the wife sit in front of the doctor on a chair, facing the doctor, like this. And then they accused and they also wanted to treat the wife badly, so she said, "I

am pregnant.” Then the young people threatened her that if she told the court about their mistakes, about their killing the husband, the doctor, it would be just a minute before they would come to kill her. They threatened her like this.

So the people found out what happened there, I think the blood was dried on the floor, but when they asked the wife she answered, “I don’t know what happened, I was out.” She said something like that. Such karma, like experiencing the narak realms; this is like experiencing narak suffering with a human body. Those are shortcomings of anger—such terrible harm, so scary. Creating incredible heavy negative karma is the shortcoming of anger. And the reason the doctor experienced this is also because in a past life in a similar way he harmed others with anger and in this life that karma ripened, so it is experienced.

So, explaining the shortcomings of anger in short. Shantideva is saying that, in short, there is nobody who is happy with anger. “In brief, there is nobody who lives happily with anger.” Therefore, the ultimate cause of the suffering of this life, the sufferings of the future lives, is the inner enemy of anger. This is the ultimate cause of the suffering of this life and the sufferings of the future lives. The shortcomings that were explained destroy the merits, the virtues. It doesn’t say this in the words but they also create negative karma and cause one to experiencing the suffering result for a long time. Then there are the problems of this life that come from anger. So this is the utmost, ultimate cause. Anger is the ultimate cause of this life and future lives’ suffering.

The next verse is the benefits of patience. One verse is left that I did not read yet:

“In brief there is nobody  
Who lives happily with anger.

“Hence the enemy, anger,  
Creates sufferings such as these.

[pause] The benefits of patience:

“But whoever assiduously overcomes it  
Finds happiness now and hereafter.”

Thinking well about the shortcomings of anger, those who destroy the anger with effort create only the cause of happiness of this and future lives. So therefore one must attempt to avoid anger.

Then next: comprehending and reflecting on the method of actualizing patience. The way of reflecting on the method of actualizing patience, ceasing the cause of anger, and meditating on the benefits of patience. Then particularly here in this next verse we see how anger generates suffering:

“Having found its fuel of mental unhappiness  
In the prevention of what I wish for  
And in doing what I do not want,  
Hatred increases and then destroys me.”

The unhappy mind arises when undesirable things are done to me and to my possessions or my relatives or my friends; and also when there is disturbance to the fulfillment of my wishes. The

unhappy mind that comes from this is the food that increases hatred. Finding the food, the unhappy mind, strengthens the body of hatred, makes the body of hatred stronger. So in this way hatred destroys this life and other lives. It destroys me in this life and it destroys me in other lives. It harms me.

You see, when somebody does some undesirable thing, something that you do not want, that you do not like, if somebody does undesirable things to you or to your possessions, to your relatives, wife, husband, children or friends, when somebody does undesirable things that you do not wish, which disturb the fulfillment of your wishes, your mind becomes unhappy. Because your mind becomes unhappy, anger arises. That makes the mind unhappy, so the anger arises. But somebody who helps you, somebody who gives you something, somebody who does desirable things, who does what you like, what you want, if somebody does desirable things to you and to your possessions, to your friends or relatives, then the mind is happy. And you would not get angry due to the reason that your mind is happy. “My mind is happy so I get angry.” “He made my mind happy so I get angry at him.” That is not our experience. The experience is that by doing undesirable things to you and to your possessions or surroundings, the mind becomes unhappy and anger arises. So that’s why the unhappy mind is used as an example, like food. Then the anger is the body and the food develops the body, gives strength to the body. So when somebody is disturbing you, if you do not practice patience and thought-training, then your mind becomes unhappy and from that anger arises and destroys you in this life and future lives.

Then next: giving the advice to attempt to change the anger, to stop the anger.

“Therefore I should totally eradicate  
The fuel of this enemy;  
For this enemy has no other function  
Than that of causing me harm.”

Therefore, I must destroy the unhappy mind, the food of my enemy, the hatred. There is nothing but harm—no benefit at all from my enemy, hatred; it only harms me. I do not receive the slightest benefit from my enemy, the anger, except that it harms me. So therefore, with all this effort I must attempt to destroy the principal enemy, anger.

The next stanza is the actual method to stop the anger. Explaining how it is not worthy to let your own mind be unhappy, and the reasons for that; how to get rid of the unhappy mind.

“Whatever befalls me  
I shall not disturb my mental joy;  
For having been made unhappy, I shall not accomplish what I wish  
And my virtues will decline.”

By reflecting on and thinking about the benefits of voluntarily taking on suffering, accepting the suffering instead of rejecting it, whatever important work you are doing—any place, any time, anywhere—you should never let your mind get disturbed by anger. Shantideva is advising is to think like this, to make a determination like this.

Imagine if you are doing retreat, doing meditation, for example, and somebody disturbs you outside, somebody makes noise, somebody suddenly bangs on the door—you are having an incredible time,

a blissful trip, a blissful time, then somebody comes right at that point. The person doesn't come, doesn't disturb you when you are not doing meditation but when you are having such a good time, then he comes along, screaming outside or banging on the door, walking into your room without even asking whether he can come inside. However, even if what you are doing is Dharma, working to achieve the omniscient mind for the sake of others, if somebody disturbs that work, you should never disturb your mind with anger. You should never allow anger to arise within your mind and to disturb you, making your mind unhappy. This happens very easily. With other works it might sometimes be easy to practice patience, it might be easy to control the anger, but when you are doing Dharma work such as retreat or meditation, especially when you are having a good time then it is very easy for the anger to arise and also sometimes it is very easy to go crazy if you are too concerned about quiet. For somebody who has wind disease it is easily possible to become crazy.

There is nothing more important than the work to achieve omniscient mind but even if somebody disturbs this, you should never give anger the opportunity to arise and disturb your mind. You can understand this from Shantideva's advice; even for Dharma reasons you cannot get angry. Even if the purpose is Dharma, you cannot insult others, you cannot badly treat them, you cannot insult others with anger. It is never allowed. There's no permission for anger even if the reason is Dharma. Doing these things—harming others, scolding others, fighting others, beating others, things like that—with anger, kind of, “I am doing retreat and these people are disturbing me so much, so it is worthwhile to get angry, I am angry for a good reason, for a pure reason—I am getting angry for the omniscient mind,” that is completely wrong. “I am getting angry in order to practice Dharma.” It's like saying my anger is worthwhile in order to control anger. It becomes like this, contradictory, because retreat is actually retreating from anger. Otherwise, it does not make sense to do retreat if one does not protect oneself from anger, if one does not retreat from anger. Then it does not make sense, one is not making retreat from delusions. That is not a real beneficial retreat that becomes the remedy to the delusions, which destroys the delusions, the cause of suffering.

The actions of speech and body can be wrathful, for Dharma reasons, to benefit that specific sentient being, but not the mind. The motive of anger, whenever it arises, only harms you, as Shantideva mentioned just before—what you receive from anger is nothing but harm. So the mind that harms you is never allowed. Why is it never allowed, why is there no permission given by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha? Because it harms you, it harms sentient beings. But if it is for the sake of that person, for the sake of that sentient being, for his happiness or for the prosperity or happiness of the community, of the majority, if it is of benefit, then wrathful actions of speech and wrathful actions of body can be done. But they must be without anger and with the thought of loving kindness. The motive of doing the wrathful action of body toward a sentient being can only be the thought of loving kindness, compassion, the thought concerned with their happiness. If it is done with such a motive it becomes Dharma.

A happy mind is the remedy to the unhappy mind, so whatever undesirable thing happens to you in your life, no matter how much you dislike it, how undesirable it is, even if none of your wishes are becoming successful, if your mind is unhappy with undesirable things even the virtues that you have been collecting, which bring the desirable result of happiness, degenerate. Those virtues will degenerate and all the suffering will arise from the unhappy mind—being unhappy with undesirable things and the anger that arises from that.



The next one shows why there is no reason, no point, no use in being unhappy when there is an undesirable situation. When you meet undesirable things, the mind becomes unhappy. This is why there is no use, no benefits to making your mind unhappy when you meet undesirable things:

“Why be unhappy about something  
If it can be remedied?  
And what is the use of being unhappy about something  
If it cannot be remedied?”

I think I stop here.

[Dedications]

Precepts Ceremony: November 28<sup>th</sup> am

Refuge to the Guru and the Triple Gem: “The Guru is Buddha, the Guru is Dharma, the Guru is Sangha; the Guru is also the creator of all happiness. To all Gurus I go for refuge.”

Generating bodhicitta: “I will generate the enlightenment thought in order to attain success for myself and all other living beings.”

“May all the realms where sentient beings are be purified and devoid of thorns and impure objects, and may they be transformed into the smooth flexible nature of lapis lazuli, as plain as the hand’s palm.

“May the entire realms of space be filled with the offerings of gods and men, both those that are physically offered and those that are visualized, and with clouds of offerings of Samantabhadra. [OM NAMO BHAGAWATI...]

“May my offerings become like this by the power of the truth of the three gems, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the blessing of all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, their spiritual energy and the immaculate, inconceivable Dharmadhatu, ultimate reality.”

For the Mahayana ordination, the eight precepts, please generate the motivation of bodhicitta in brief at least, like this, a short explanation.

“On this earth, among the human beings who were born on the same day as I was born, so many of them are already dead—they couldn’t survive, they couldn’t live as human beings.” Many people whom one has known and met, with whom one has made business, with whom one has played or with whom one did a course or traveled—many of them are already dead. As a year goes by, as a month goes by—they are already dead. They left this human body already. You can make a list of as many as you can remember—those whom you met, who used to live in different countries, in the same country, in the same area, who were at the same school, things like that. Even in the family, the grandfather, grandmother, the grandfather’s father, the grandmother’s mother—they are already dead. Even among the parents are dead ones who already left the body. Among the ones who gave us this body, there are also dead ones. Then among the relatives, among the friends, there are also dead ones, who already left this body. There are so many of them who were doing different types of

jobs, last year, doing different types of work, living different styles of life. There are so many of them who were still living last year, but this year you cannot see them, they don't exist as human beings in this year.

Even yesterday there were so many people on this earth without any expectation that they would die that day. Even though they had big projects, last night they didn't have any expectation, they didn't have any doubt, they had complete trust that they would live for many more years—forty, fifty, sixty, seventy years. They had complete trust, complete belief and big projects that would take so many years to complete. They were doing big construction, making factories, having big plans, having made sketches on paper, things like that, or traveling, making business, or having done big shopping yesterday that would last for a few months, or making preparations to get married, arranging everything—between then and now death came, they already left. The person already left, without having the opportunity to join the wedding party or whatever the person was planning yesterday—they left without completing it today. Whether it was writing a book, writing his life story or whatever it was, or perhaps the person was doing three year retreat—whatever it is, it had to stop somewhere in the middle. Maybe it was writing letters without finishing, but it had to stop somewhere and even without putting the signature on it the person left. He didn't finish them yesterday; he left them to be finished today but between those times death came. The person has already left, unable to complete the letter.

Like this, there are so many things that happen on this earth, and a great change in life happens between yesterday and today. Yesterday there was no disease, no cancer, no heart-attack—not even a headache, not even a pain. The person was so healthy yesterday, fat, very strong. There were even those who can stop a car, who are trained to lift up very heavy things, irons, who had big muscles yesterday, but no matter how strong the person was, how healthy he was yesterday, unexpectedly, even though he didn't have any disease, suddenly at the end of the day the breath stopped. Suddenly in the middle of the night he felt thirsty, very thirsty, he asked for water and before he got the water he passed away. He didn't even have the opportunity to wait for the water, he passed away. There are many people for whom death happens like this.

I have one benefactor, one old mother, in a place called Buxa, where I lived for eight years. I used to be in the particular place where the rest of the monks who came from Lhasa, from the three famous monasteries, stayed. Besides the Gelugpa sect there were also other sects—Sakya, Kagyu, Nyingma—the monks who wanted to continue their studies lived there for quite a number of years. This old mother went every morning to circumambulate the monastery and she used to come up and circumambulate where the monks do puja and debate. She used to come and circumambulate the whole monastery every morning.

So one day she came down, she was very healthy, she didn't have any problems—she came down to her house after finishing circumambulating that day, then she sat on a chair and she felt thirsty, she asked her son for water. And before her son brought the water she passed away on the chair. That is the condition of death. But actually she was a very lucky old lady; before she passed away she told her son, “Thank you very much for being very kind to me.”

She took her son's hand and then she told him, “Thank you very much, you've been extremely kind to me, thank you very much. But I feel thirsty, could you bring me water?” Then before the water came she passed away, while she was sitting on the chair; she died very easily. She was a very good mother, with a good heart. Circumambulating; she didn't have much work, the other family

members did the work, so she went to circumambulate the monastery, reciting mantra with incredible faith in the Triple Gem, the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, and gurus. She recited many mantras, the Vajrayogini mantra, things like that.

There are many stories like that, similar stories. In the middle of the night, people who were very healthy, who didn't have any problems or sicknesses, died suddenly between yesterday and today. This morning that healthy person, who didn't have any problems, left the body on that comfortable bed or on a hard bed. The consciousness is separated. The body is left, the consciousness is somewhere else. The body is there in a very frightening form that nobody is able to touch, which is scary to look at. The person's consciousness is somewhere else, in the intermediate state and he is experiencing fear from his karmic visions, which are like a fearful dream.

However, if you would die, like those human beings who have already died, if you were unable to survive until today or if you had died in the mother's womb by abortion, or during childhood, if you were not taken care of, or if you died last year, you may have been born in the realm of the narak, where the ground is only hot red iron, in doorless, iron houses that are oneness with the fire, without doors or windows, with no way to escape, due to your own karma. The narak realm is one's own karmic vision, the production of impure, evil thoughts. What can you do once you are born in such a suffering realm? Now what can you do? Nothing; you would have no opportunity to practice Dharma. If a fire spark falls on your body, you can't stand it even for a minute or a second, besides having no opportunity to practice Dharma or meditate.

And if by now, having died last month, today one was born as a lobster and ended up in a restaurant, with those small white animals—what are they called? The white ones that have a lot of fat, that they eat so much in Hong Kong—frogs? Yes, frogs, that's right. If you were born in the same house as the frogs, in the aquarium, unsure when you will be picked up to be put in the boiling hot water. I heard that a lobster makes a noise like a train when you put it in hot water—it makes an incredible noise for some time, screaming like a train, so long. Then after some time when it cannot scream anymore the teeth make a “chop-chop-chop” sound for some time. That is the last noise. One Tibetan lady had to serve this to another lady who wanted to eat the meat, so she knows this. So if you were now born as a lobster, what would you do? Nothing. Besides having no opportunity to practice Dharma, there is not even temporal pleasure.

We are so extremely fortunate. Think, feel—think of other human beings who don't live that long, while we are able to live long. And think of those who have already left and didn't even meet the Dharma, who had an empty life. They died with an empty life. Feel great happiness in the mind that you have been able to survive until now.

Even if you just think about the breath, how fragile it is. This is effective for the mind. If it were a machine, you could fix it; you could fix something that is broken and make it work again. But this breath, breathing in and out, being alive—in other words, being alive is up to the breath, this fragile breath, this breath that goes out and comes in, goes out and comes in. As long as it is there, it's alive; as long as it is there, as long as it is functioning, there is life. Once it has stopped, it doesn't function any more, it's finished. There's no more life. How long to keep the breath is not up to you, but how long you live is up to the breath. It is not up to you how long you own the breath. If it were in your hands, under your control, then once you were born you could live without dying. But you can't. At the moment you can't. Until you are free from delusion and karma there is no way to stop it, to not experience death.

From this you can understand how fragile life is, how we live on this breath, in and out, in and out, since we were born until now. The breath can easily be stopped but so far, somehow, it has been running, it didn't stop yet. So far it didn't stop running, somehow—quite amazing. It has been running in and out and so far it didn't stop, so that's why so far you have been alive. It is very amazing that so far you have lived, since you were born from your mother's womb until now. You have been able to remain in this human life, which is something very amazing. It is something that is so difficult to happen, but it has happened.

However, just being a human being, just having survived is not so much of a surprise. The biggest surprise, the most surprising thing, the most amazing thing that has happened is having been able to meet the Dharma. Just the Buddhadharmas themselves are like having found a mountain of wish-granting jewels or diamonds. Also, having met the Mahayana teachings is so difficult and so rare. To meet the Mahayana teachings the person has to create much merit; that person is a very fortunate person. It is like having found a diamond the size of this earth.

Having met the Vajrayana teachings is like having found a diamond that fills all of space, the whole sky. In fact it is much more than material. It is so rare—the people who meet the Vajrayana teachings are so few in number. Even though there are Mahayana teachings in many other countries besides Tibet and even though they practice the bodhisattvas' path, they do not practice tantra.

So we should feel great happiness in the mind for having met the teachings. And since one's life is so fragile, as we can see when we think about the breath, how living is up to the breath, how death can happen at any time, this year, this month, this week, even today, in an hour, in a minute—so while one has the opportunity, without cheating oneself one should practice as much as one can.

Like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha who, by taking the Mahayana ordination, by following the path, became enlightened and enlightened numberless sentient beings. Even now he is working for us, the sentient beings—by accumulating merit in our minds, by keeping precepts, by taking ordination, by doing meditation on the teachings that he left, by practicing that—even now he is working for us, guiding us to liberation, to omniscient mind.

“And I have also the same potential as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to benefit others, to do extensive works for others. So while I have such an opportunity as this, a selfish motive, seeking happiness only for myself is not different from the attitude of the buffaloes and goats. Each mother sentient being, including even the enemies, is the field from which I receive all my happiness and perfections. Even today, it is the field from which I receive all comforts. What they want is happiness, what they do not wish is suffering, therefore the best way for me to benefit all sentient beings is to free them from all suffering and to lead them to omniscient mind. In order to do that, I must achieve omniscient mind, and therefore I'm going to take ordination until tomorrow at sunrise.”

Then visualize the guru who grants the ordination as Shakyamuni Buddha, surrounded by numberless Buddhas and bodhisattvas, and make three prostrations.

Taking the precepts, motivate by remembering the benefits, remembering what I explained yesterday, how the results are temporal and ultimate—temporal results are the happiness and perfections that one experiences from life to life in so many lives, and also you are creating the cause for the qualities of Buddha, for the sake of others. This itself is also making preparations for death.

Also, living in each of the precepts is for the purpose of bringing peace in the world, to benefit the world, the place, and the sentient beings.

As I mentioned yesterday, remember the suffering of human beings, particularly those who are on this earth, and then all the rest; all the suffering of old age, suffering of birth, suffering of sicknesses, those who have so many problems besides that, with a confused life. Also remember that you are taking ordination for their benefit.

[Ceremony]

Also I think this ordination is one of the methods to prevent war, so the more people who take it benefit in the sense of stopping war. Nowadays the whole world is in the fear of having a third war. There is the danger of having a third war in the world. So it is important, this is one of the methods. Two years or one year ago, at the end of one of the courses, some student asked what to do because there was a great danger of big fighting with one of the countries where there is oil. So it came in the observation—it was at the airport, not here but at the airport, I was leaving for India—it came out that taking this ordination would be highly beneficial for that situation. Other methods, I don't know.

So also you should feel great rejoicefulness about these merits from living with ordination, from taking precepts, “That much merit that I receive, I can offer to other sentient beings, I can dedicate to other sentient beings, I can offer all the sentient beings.” One should feel happiness like one has something to give; now you have something beneficial to offer, to give others for their happiness. So you should feel happy. “All this merit is not for me, it's for other sentient beings.” You should feel happiness that you have something to offer.

Please repeat the prayer of the precepts.

[Ceremony]

“Due to the merit of having taken ordination, together with the three times merit and all merit created by others, keeping this without mistakes and keeping it purely and without pride, may my paramita of moral conduct be completed.

“And due to all these merits accumulated by myself and others, may bodhicitta, renouncing oneself and cherishing others, be generated in the minds of me and others who do not have bodhicitta, and may the bodhicitta in the minds of others be increased.

“Due to all the three-time merits may my parents and sentient beings have all happiness and may the three lower realms be empty for ever.

“And due to all the three-time merits, wherever there are bodhisattvas may their prayers be fulfilled immediately. As the bodhisattvas Samantabhadra, Kungtu Sangpo and Manjushri, Jampel, have dedicated their merits, in the same way I dedicate my merits.

“As the three-time buddhas have dedicated their merits I will dedicate all my merits to quickly enlighten sentient beings by myself.”

Lecture 18: November 29<sup>th</sup> am

[Prayers]

From the great bodhisattva, Shantideva, about the benefits of bodhicitta: “To the one who has the precious holy thought, to that holy being and holy body I prostrate.” Not frustrate, prostrate. Sometimes my words sound a little funny, kind of strange. So, prostrate to the originator of happiness, in you I take refuge.

Anyway, by that explanation you might understand it a little bit more clearly. Those are the words from the *Bodhicharyavatara*, at the very end of the chapter on the benefits of bodhicitta.

Shantideva himself, the author of the scripture the *Bodhicharyavatara*, is showing that he himself has great devotion to those holy beings who have generated bodhicitta, because of all the benefits it has, as I explained above. He has devotion, because of those reasons, those advantages, for any being who has this precious holy thought, renouncing self and cherishing others, utterly renouncing the self, completely renouncing the self. Not just emotional for a few hours, not like a water bubble, having great compassion for a few hours, and then it disappears—for a few hours tears come out, you are very emotional, then after a few hours it disappears and something else comes instead of that. Not for just one or two days but completely, utterly, absolutely renouncing the self and one-pointedly cherishing others all the time. Not just for one week, one month or one year, but all the time, forever.

Anyone, any being, whatever caste he is, a king, a blacksmith or whatever caste—in some countries they care so much about caste, in some Eastern countries—so whatever caste he is, whether he is a wealthy person or poor, a straight looking person living in society or a person who is not living in society, even hippy-looking, wearing ragged clothes, with his hair reaching down to the heels—I am just joking. Anyway, however dirty he looks, even having an imperfect body, missing a limb, no matter how he looks, any being, even an animal who has bodhicitta, any being who has such a precious holy thought, completely renouncing the self forever and one-pointedly cherishing others forever, to that holy being’s holy body, I, Shantideva, with the three doors of body, speech, and mind, mind, prostrate—how? With great devotion to the holy beings; the body paying homage, bowing down to that holy being, to that holy body.

Those bodhisattvas are amazing. They have special qualities that ordinary beings do not have. It is so amazing that without choice, seeing this, hearing this, seeing these qualities of the bodhisattva’s holy mind, the bodhisattva’s holy conduct, without choice devotion arises and we feel the value of bodhicitta as more amazing.

So, what is the particular thing? In the case of ordinary worldly beings, even ordinary human beings, leave aside the animals, if somebody harms them they retaliate. Leave aside any action to benefit in return, even *the thought* to benefit in return for the harm does not arise. It is so difficult for this to arise, so difficult.

Also, even if somebody advises, “You shouldn’t generate ill will, you should stop anger from arising, stop giving harm,” even if somebody, a virtuous teacher or even a Dharma friend, even if somebody tries to help, then instead of listening, instead of accepting that, even if the person says, “What is the

point of generating the thought to benefit him, there's no reason to benefit in return for harm." He even says, "He harmed me and because he harmed me he is bad. He is a bad person. Why, because he harmed me. He disturbed me. Why? Me. He disturbed me. So he's bad." In return, instead of accepting it, the person is labeling the other person as bad, evil. He is never the object of giving help. One should never help that person; even if the person sees somebody else helping his enemy, he goes to tell those people, "Don't help that enemy." He runs to do that, saying, "Don't help." Besides himself being unable to give help, he will not benefit the other and he will stop even those who would help, telling them how bad the person is, making up a whole story, even if it is not the case. Even if that didn't happen, he makes it up in order to stop those people from giving help, to cause them to have dislike for the enemy. Even if those people are willing to give help, stopping them from helping the enemy, saying it is no use to benefit the enemy.

Khunu Lama Tenzin Gyaltzen used to say this when giving an explanation on patience. In previous times, outside of Lhasa there was a fence. Inside there are many temples, especially the most precious Shakyamuni statue that was brought from India to China to Tibet, or something like that, with Srongtsen Gampo, one of the previous Tibetan kinds. He invited one secret wife from Nepal and one wife from China in order to bring two precious statues from those places. This statue came with the secret one.

Anyway, without talking too much about that statue—there are so many stories about that. This is the statue that many Tibetans come by foot for months and months to see and make offerings to. A few days ago I heard from one Tibetan government [official] who taught me Tibetan handwriting for a short time. He used to be in the Tibetan government and worked for a long time for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Private Office, and he is now working for the Tibetan education department.

The Chinese made it very strict for the people—now it is maybe a little bit better but before they didn't allow the people to see the Shakyamuni Buddha statue. And what happened was, somewhere close to that, I don't have any idea of the place but I think not so far, there is a huge rock and a Shakyamuni Buddha statue, the same size as the one in the temple, intuitively appeared from the rock. When he was in Tibet, just the face was out but what happened now, the whole complete body has come of the rock intuitively. I think when Tibet was about to be overtaken by the Chinese just the face was coming out. They couldn't see the rest of the holy body; but now the complete holy body, the same size as in the temple, has completely come out. So even though the Chinese made it very strict so that the people couldn't see the main one in the temple, they go to make offerings to the other one, the stone statue, the Shakyamuni Buddha statue that intuitively came out of the rock. The young Tibetans, all the children, go there to make offerings. That Shakyamuni Buddha statue is called "Shakyamuni Buddha for the young people, for the youthful ones." Now I think there come crowds of young people, many young Tibetans go there to make offerings.

I wonder what the scientists would say about that kind of thing, what their explanation would be. Is there something? I wonder how they explain it. Aren't there things like this in the West? [inaudible discussion]

One person was circumambulating outside this fence in Lhasa, and there was one person sitting in meditation position, and the first person asked the other, "What are you doing?" The person said, "I am meditating on patience." And the other person said, "You are meditating on patience—you eat kaka." Then the other person said, "You eat kaka!" Immediately, without delay, he replied "You eat

kaka!” even though just before he said he was meditating on patience. He couldn’t even bear the words, “You eat kaka!” He couldn’t bear even those few words; immediately he retaliated, even though he just talked about patience. Even with a word, he had to try and retaliate.

Bodhisattvas, the holy beings, are not like this, not like those ordinary beings. Bodhisattvas, those who have the thought of loving kindness and compassion, the compassionate thought of bodhicitta, even if others harm them—with ordinary people, human beings, if others benefit you, you benefit them. If somebody helps you, you help back and if another harms you, you harm back. This is common in the world of ordinary human beings. This is their kind of philosophy. Even if somebody helps them, they harm back. If benefit is given to a bodhisattva, the bodhisattva does not harm back in return. But if someone harms a bodhisattva, that bodhisattva will never harm them. In return for the harm, a bodhisattva generates only happiness.

For example, look at the biography of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha when he was a bodhisattva, when he was a king, Mighty Great Love. The actual story is quite long and I don’t remember it all. The five *nōjin*, who are a kind of spirit, not regarded as human beings, often give harm. I think *nōjin* is normally translated into Sanskrit but we don’t understand Sanskrit so there’s no point, the Tibetan term is better.

Five of these *nōjin* sucked the blood of the bodhisattva. But this bodhisattva, Mighty Great Love, instead of retaliating, prayed that they would become his disciples in a future life and that he would turn the wheel of Dharma and lead them to liberation, to the state of omniscient mind. The bodhisattva, Mighty Great Love, in return for the harm, prayed to be able to benefit them. And because of that, after Guru Shakyamuni Buddha became enlightened in Bodhgaya, in the holy place near Varanasi where there is a stupa, Sarnath, he turned the first wheel of Dharma and taught the four noble truths. There were five disciples, the special object to be subdued by that teaching, the first Dharma Wheel. So by revealing the teachings of the four noble truths to them, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha led them to the arya path; they actualized the right-seeing path and generated the wisdom fully realizing shunyata. So gradually Guru Shakyamuni Buddha led them to the state of omniscient mind.

These five became Guru Shakyamuni’s disciples and had the opportunity to receive teachings and be the special disciples of the first Dharma Wheel because in previous times when Guru Shakyamuni was the bodhisattva Mighty Great Love, they were the five *nōjin* who drank the blood of the holy body of the bodhisattva. He made prayers to subdue their minds in the future and lead them to the state of omniscient mind. That was how they were able to meet again and how they were able to receive teachings from the holy mouth of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

So even though they harmed him, in return Guru Shakyamuni Buddha only gave benefit, generated only happiness in their minds. The harm that was given to him he related to happiness, generating the path to liberation and the path to omniscience. He made prayers, because of giving harm, and as a result, they were able to enter the happy path. So he related the harm that he received to happiness, giving the result of generating the path to liberation and enlightened mind.

Also, when Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was a bodhisattva called the Preacher of Patience, he was meditating in a forest, in a cave, and one day a king called Kalingka came. Just to tell the essence of that story, Kalingka and his wife went in the forest to hunt or to work in the forest, I don’t know exactly, with servants. They rested somewhere and the king fell asleep, and his wife and servants



went to pick flowers in the forest. Then by accident they met the bodhisattva, the Preacher of Patience, in the forest.

The king woke up after some time and couldn't see his wife or the servants, so he went to search for them. He reached the place where the bodhisattva was and saw that the bodhisattva was giving teachings to his wife and his servants, who were sitting down there. So King Kalingka got very angry, and screamed at the bodhisattva, "Why are you sitting with my wife?" I don't remember the words exactly. I think he asked, "What are you doing?" or something like that. Then he said, "I am meditating on patience." Then he cut one limb, and the king asked again, "What are you doing?" Again he said, "I am meditating on patience." He cut another limb and again was asked, "What are you doing?" Then again: "Meditating on patience." He had cut his four limbs, but in spite of that, the slightest anger did not arise and again he made a prayer that the king would become his disciple in the future and to benefit his mind by revealing the teachings.

The bodhisattva related the harm that he received from King Kalingka back to the happiness of this king. Due to this, he made the prayer to lead him in the path of happiness in the future. In the future the king became his disciple and through the Buddha revealing the teaching, the king generated the right seeing path, the arya path and was led to liberation, to omniscient mind, by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. All this happened because in his past life he harmed the bodhisattva Preacher of Patience and the bodhisattva related that to happiness. In this way you can see that the bodhisattva is the originator of happiness.

You can think about it in two ways: even from this story you can understand how a bodhisattva is the originator of happiness and then, as I explained before, how all one's own three times' happiness and perfections, everything came from Dharma, from virtuous actions, and how Dharma came from the Buddha, Buddha came from bodhisattva and bodhisattva came from bodhicitta. So even from the explanation of how other sentient beings are kind and precious we can understand how the bodhisattva is the originator of all happiness—of all one's own three time happiness as well as other sentient beings' three time happiness. The bodhisattva is the originator of all happiness. So to that bodhisattva I take refuge, Shantideva says.

Also it is said in thought-training teachings that the holy beings in the world—I don't remember exactly the quotation—in return for harm, they repay with good action; in return for harm they offer benefit. In return for anger, for dislike, they offer compassion. If another person has anger or dislike toward the holy being, no matter how much he hates, the holy being only has the thought to benefit back, only compassion for that enemy. From the side of that holy being, he has only the thought to benefit that enemy, only compassion. Even if somebody criticizes the holy being with thoughts of dislike, in return that holy being gives only admiration. That is how kind he is. The enemy who has thoughts of dislike, however much he abuses and criticizes the holy being, from the side of the holy being there is only admiration in return.

As it is explained in the *Thirty-seven Practices of a Bodhisattva* by the great bodhisattva Thogme Zangpo, "Even if somebody announces one's mistakes in all three galaxies, the practice of a bodhisattva, the son of the Victorious One, is expressing the qualities of that person." This is what the great bodhisattva Thogme Zangpo is saying. Even if somebody gives harm like this, announcing faults not only on this earth but in the newspapers, on the radio, through television, what else is there? The one that goes up and then comes down—the satellite! Besides that, even if one announces your mistakes in so many thousands and thousands of worlds, in the three galaxies, in many universes, in

return, a bodhisattva, instead of being depressed, criticizing back, being aggressive and trying to announce all the mistakes of the enemy, or instead of having anger arise, he generates the thought of loving kindness. That is how the holy beings, the bodhisattvas, practice. That is how they benefit with their relationships with sentient beings, even those who give harm.

But for us, of course, how can we stand it if somebody announces our mistakes even in a small country, in the newspaper, even in a small village? We can't stand it. There is the danger that you go there at nighttime to the person who put it in the newspaper with the thought to harm. Instead of generating the thought of loving kindness, we generate the thought of harm. We think so much how to harm back. Leave aside somebody announcing our mistake in the radio or newspaper, even if he only tells you, announcing it only to you, without telling others, even that we cannot stand. Suddenly the mind becomes like nighttime, suddenly becoming uptight, painful and very aggressive. Suddenly the face that was smiling and peaceful before becomes dark, immediately in that minute it becomes a tough, black, angry face.

The bodhisattva, for the sake of other sentient beings...

<end of tape>

...for the bodhisattva himself, to be in samsara is like being caught in a fire. He can't stand even one second of being in the fire—for the bodhisattva himself it is like this. He has the incredible strong thought of renouncing samsara, a stronger thought of renouncing samsara than even the followers of the Lesser Vehicle path, the Hearers and the Self-Conquerors, and even those arhats who have generated the path to liberation.

For him, samsara is like that—it is unbearable to be in samsara for even a second. But for the sake of others, if it is beneficial for others, for the sake of other sentient beings, even if one doesn't achieve enlightenment, even if one has to remain for an uncountable number of eons in samsara, if it benefits others to be in samsara, then for a bodhisattva to be in samsara for an uncountable number of eons is like being in a beautiful park, like living in a beautiful park, so happy. Even to remain for an uncountable number of eons in the narak realm for the sake of each sentient being, to be in the fire of the naraks, a bodhisattva is so happy. Like the ordinary worldly people enjoying a beautiful park, like they want to be in a beautiful park, as they are happy to be in a beautiful park, for the sake of others, if a bodhisattva is born in the fire of the naraks for countless eons, his happiness is actually much more than the happiness of worldly people who are happy to be in a beautiful park. So to be in the fire of the naraks for the sake of others is like being in a beautiful park, so happy.

For us, we can't bear even a small difficult work for the temporal benefit of others, to carry something or to help, we can't bear even a small hardship for the sake of others. There is nothing else in the mind except happiness for the self. In the daytime, in the nighttime, like this, all the time, there is nothing else. For such a person, like me also, there is nothing else in the mind except happiness for the self. Instead of seeking happiness for others, we seek happiness only for the self. Bodhisattvas pray to be born in the naraks for the sake of others but we pray to be born in the pure realms, where there is greater happiness and enjoyment for the self. If somebody knows about the pure realms, they pray for that, if somebody doesn't know, then whatever is the best. The best that he knows, the highest pleasure, he prays for that, for himself.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama mentioned something to those ascetic monks, the meditators, those who are close to him, who come often to see him to offer their realizations or to check up with him. His Holiness told them that for himself he wished the situation in Tibet to be more difficult, so that he can work harder for the sake of others, for the Tibetans. For him it would be better, the harder it is. The more problems, for him, the happier he is—the harder the situation, the work for Tibet, the happier his mind is, because he has to work harder for others. That shows that he is a great bodhisattva. Normally, in a particular view, he is Chenrezig, the Compassion Buddha. Then in the general way, which anybody can feel and understand, he is a great bodhisattva, a bodhisattva who has completely renounced himself, completely given himself up, like we give up vomited food. A bodhisattva who cherishes others, who has completely given up the works for self, like we give up vomited food—we don't look after vomited food, we don't take care of vomited food—but for him, the works for others are like nectar—the harder it is, like nectar. He is happy to do it, so happy to suffer for that, to bear hardships for that; like we drink coffee.

The conclusion is that we should be able to practice like those bodhisattvas. Like the bodhisattva Thogme Zangpo said, “In return, generating only the thought of loving kindness; instead of criticizing, only talking of good qualities, the good side of the enemy.” Even if it is so difficult to say something good about the enemy who complains about you, who dislikes you, even though it is so difficult to think about it, even if it is so difficult to say one word, even if it is so difficult for the words to come out, to express them, like climbing a huge mountain, we should train our mind and our speech in that way—to be able to express good things about the person we hate or who hates us.

Then, before death, we should pray to be able to act only for the benefit of all sentient beings, to be able to be in the line of these bodhisattvas, to be able to be in this group of holy beings. For that reason we should create the cause for that, accumulating merit, practicing purification and praying. In everyday life, mind training, little by little.

So this morning patience didn't come; I am sorry.

Lecture 19: November 29<sup>th</sup> pm

[Short mandala]

Please listen to the teaching by generating at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind in order to lead all kind mother sentient beings into the state of omniscient mind. Therefore I am going to listen to the commentary on the *Bodhicharyavatara*.”

We are on the chapter on patience, the actual method to stop anger, how it is not worthwhile to generate an unhappy mind, and the reasons for that.

“Whatever befalls me, I shall not disturb my mental joy;  
For having been made unhappy,  
I shall not accomplish what I wish,  
And my virtues will decline.”

This is very true. What is called anger, such an unsubdued mind, should never be allowed to rise in one's mind in any place, any time, to anybody—friend, enemy or stranger, human being, non-human being—to anybody, any place, any time. It doesn't matter what you do, even the times when you are doing retreat, when you are accumulating virtue, if somebody disturbs you, [plane flying overhead] even with machines, with airplanes. Even while one is accumulating virtue, doing prostrations, making offerings, doing sessions, even if somebody disturbs you, you should never give anger the opportunity to arise, by immediately remembering, "If I get angry, what is the point of what I am doing here, all this, making offerings, doing prostrations? I am doing all these things, these sessions, this retreat to subdue my mind, to destroy the delusions, that's why I do the various practices. So, if I let anger arise, then what is this? I am childish. It doesn't make sense. On one hand I do this, on the other hand I let anger arise. I give the anger the opportunity to arise, to defeat me. This doesn't make sense. What I am doing is crazy." One should tell oneself this, immediately one should remember that this is not practicing Dharma: "If I let my mind be controlled by anger without subduing it, not protecting the mind from anger, then how can I subdue my mind? When can I subdue my mind?"

Also think like this: even if somebody made a great mistake, even with the work in the centers or the work that involves a big group, no matter how important the work is, even if it deals with thousands or millions of people, however, even if the person makes a mistake in the work or even if it is small, not a great important work, not dealing with thousands and millions of people, just somebody criticizing you, one person, or even a small flea biting you—from such a small thing up to somebody responsible for the prosperity or the happiness of that many people, one can show a different aspect, a wrathful or peaceful aspect, and benefit, scolding or gently speaking but at all times without anger. As much as possible this should be done with the thought of loving kindness, with the compassionate thought; it should be done with the thought to benefit others, even if a great mistake is done in important work.

While one does retreat, even if somebody comes to break the house, to take away the parts of the retreat house, whatever happens you should think, "If I don't practice patience now, then when should I practice patience? If I don't practice patience today, then when should I practice patience?" You ask yourself, "When will I practice patience? If I don't practice patience with this person who disturbs me, with whom am I going to practice patience? While I am with the enemy, with this kind enemy, while I am with him, if I don't practice patience, then with whom should I practice patience? There is nobody, nobody with whom I can practice patience. If I don't practice patience with this person right now, with whom will I practice patience? There is nobody, there is nobody other than that."

You give advice to yourself, you strengthen your mind instead of getting spaced out, instead of screaming, running up and down, going here and there to all the friends shouting, "This person this, this person that, this person is doing this and that," counting, announcing to everyone around, everywhere. If you want to announce to others, then announce the good qualities of that person. Do not announce the bad qualities, but the good qualities of the person.

Even if you know the *Bodhicharyavatara*, if you have received teachings on it, have read it completely, received commentary on that and know it well, if you do not practice, even if you can explain it well to others, it's like this: one day you get angry, one day goes without practicing patience and then one month goes without practicing. When the circumstances happen you don't practice patience, you let anger arise and let it destroy the virtue that you have accumulated with much hardship, with many

prayers in the past lives. Even if you were able to accumulate merit, even if you did many prayers to accumulate merit again, you let anger destroy it. When you meet with those bad circumstances, one day goes like this without practicing patience, one month goes like this without practicing patience, one year goes like this without practicing patience. Then the life goes like this, without having done the practice of patience. One year goes like this, another year and another year goes—then one day suddenly death happens and the practice of patience never gets done, even if one has received so many teachings, even if one is very learned about the teachings on patience, about what Lama Tsong Khapa explained in the great commentary on the lam.rim or what is explained in the *Bodhicharyavatara*, even if one knows it very well, the practice never gets done.

Even if one remembers at the time of death, it is too late, it is finished. There is nothing you can do at that time. You can't say, "Oh, I was born without legs, I must go back into the mother's womb and start again, with complete legs." You can't do that, same thing.

Therefore, you can see, every day you don't have somebody disturbing you. For somebody who is practicing patience, it is very good to have somebody disturbing you day and night, all the time. Otherwise life just goes and, even though you know the teachings very well, you don't get the practice done. Days go, months go, years go by but also you can't do much with the virtue. Even though one is doing some kind of work for others, giving teachings or whatever it is, because one never controls the anger, one cannot generate realizations quickly. The best way to benefit others is to generate realizations, bodhicitta, the graduated path to enlightenment, shunyata, the graduated path of tantra. That is the best way to benefit others, the real way. To quickly free sentient beings from suffering and lead them to omniscient mind, one should generate the path to omniscient mind quickly. And anger disturbs that. Each time the anger arises, if you don't control the anger it disturbs even all sentient beings.

If you think in this way: it disturbs you to be able to offer extensive benefits to all sentient beings, to be able to do that and to be able to do that quickly, because the more you get angry, the more you let anger arise without practicing patience, even if you dedicate the merits done with the motivation of bodhicitta, even if they get destroyed, the result gets postponed. So your extensive work for sentient beings gets postponed. So you see how important it is, even concerning the uncountable number of sentient beings. Even when you feel so much the kindness of your mother, your father or your friends, the best way to repay them is with ultimate help, to lead them to the state of omniscient mind. The anger postpones and disturbs being able to give ultimate help; it postpones the completion of that work.

Thinking in this way is also very useful to realize how one minute of anger is harmful. Besides destroying my own temporal and ultimate happiness, how it harms others. In particular, in the case of anger but you can think in a similar way with the other unsubdued minds. When you think like this in various ways, with many reasons like this, you can see more and more how important it is, how the anger is completely useless, how it is an extremely harmful enemy.

So try one day, you plan like this: you read the *Bodhicharyavatara*. If one wants to practice, if one wants to control anger, one reads the teachings or the notes on patience or the thought-training teachings, whichever is the most effective and then you decide, "If today anger arises when somebody harms me, I am going to think this and this." You should make a plan like this. Either, you read certain stanzas, certain parts that become very effective for the mind and then you think, "I am going to think this and this," or you copy out the most effective ones, make a separate note. You

plan it; you make yourself ready to fight the anger, to control it and when the anger rises, to destroy it. Immediately destroy it, defeat it.

If you make a plan like this, then when you are in a dangerous situation, knowing that now anger will arise—there is some sign, some light, some beam that comes from your body, a signal that anger is arising. Like in the airport before the airplane comes and all the lights go on, and light up in all the different colors. Anyway, you will know if you are aware—the best is to remember when it is about to arise. But even if you can't remember the remedy, the teaching, the meditation at that time, even if you are too late to remember to practice the remedy, even if anger comes before you remember to practice the remedy, even if the anger does arise then instead of thinking, "This is my life, this is the way I should live my life, there's no other way to live my life without anger," following anger as if it's your life, as if this is the way you should live your life—instead of that, even if the anger has already risen, without taking much time, as quickly as possible try to stop it by practicing the remedy, by remembering the advice that Shantideva gave in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, the advice that you received from the holy mouth of the guru.

If you practice like this one day, the next day it is easier, if you continuously make plans like this. A few years before the anger would last many hours, days and days, and now even if somebody disturbs or does something undesirable the anger may still arise but now, this year, even though it still arises it is very rare, not as easy as before and also it doesn't last a long time. When an undesirable thing happens, if somebody treats you badly or something, anger does arise but the duration is like snapping your fingers—it arises and goes away. It doesn't last a long time.

[Rinpoche blows his nose.] If the noise of my nose disturbs you, then please try to practice patience.

Definitely, if one practices, the change will happen, even from one year to another year, year to year. As the year gradually goes you can see a big difference in your mind, between a few years ago and this year, in the quality of your mind. And there is that much more peace if the anger rarely rises, if it arises not as easily as before. Before when you were at the house, when you were in the office, when you were outside, every single thing disturbed you, almost even the branches of the tree moving. Even if in the room some flies or some creatures make noise you get angry—very impatient.

So it is just a matter of practice. The path that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained, the path to omniscient mind is just a matter of practice. Whether I can have bodhicitta, whether I can realize shunyata, whether I can generate those tantric realizations, the graduated path of accomplishment, those incredible experiences of which you might think it is impossible for me, it might happen for the Tibetans who are born from Tibetan mothers who speak Tibetan language, but I am *Inji*, having yellow hair and blue eyes, yellow eyes. I am not sure about "white eyes." The Sherpas, when they talk about Westerners, call them "white-eyes," they say "some white-eye people came and bought this." But I don't know why they call them white-eyes. They could refer to the color of the body, more or less but I don't know why the eyes.

I think I lost my point. So the path that explains the sutra and tantra teachings, all these incredible experiences that the great yogis talk about, whether one has these realizations in one's own mind is just up to whether one practices or not. It is up to whether or not one makes the perfect cause for that in one's own mind. One perfects the cause, having accumulated extensive merits, doing the practice of purification and, while one is doing those practices, also studying the teachings of the path that one is going to generate, the advice that is given by the well-experienced lamas. And

following the guru's advice, pleasing the guru, doing the guru practice, the essence of which is trying to stop heresy and wrong views toward the guru from arising. This essence, to try to remember, is to stop heresy and wrong views toward the guru, which disturb reaching omniscient mind and generating the path within your mind, and disturb complete happiness and perfection in this and future lives. In order to stop heresy from arising, look at the essence of Buddha. Whether you visualize the aspect as Buddha or not, the essence is Buddha, so one-pointedly concentrate and look at it as Buddha. Then, read the quotations and use the advice given by the guru on how to meditate on this, to look at, to see Buddha, the essence.

Devotion to the guru, remembering his kindness, looking at him as Buddha, feeling that he is the essence as Buddha, not an ordinary being, definitely not an ordinary being; this experience, this feeling, this recognition, when there is a little of that, by reading the teachings, through your own experience with the relationship with the guru, the particular qualities that you yourself feel, from that you can decide this is Buddha or, if it's not Buddha, then definitely a bodhisattva—there is some recognition, some feeling, finding these qualities—the particular holy actions that you cannot do or that others cannot do, that anybody cannot do.

Then from that, thinking of the reasons, remembering the teachings, stabilize that little recognition of Buddha and increase the guru devotion. Remember the kindness, see the guru as Buddha and generate devotion for that.

When this guru devotion develops, when these causes are perfected in the mind, for the teachings of bodhicitta, shunyata, correct view—there is great possibility. When these things are perfected in your mind, the guru's holy mind is pleased. Then, even if you haven't done meditation for years and years, even if you didn't do retreat, just in a few days the real experience comes in the mind—such as the realization that Lama Tsong Khapa taught, the unification of emptiness and dependent arising, and renouncing self and cherishing others. Even though you do not expect to realize this, to have those feelings during the retreat, even though you don't expect this, it happens.

Even though you didn't expect it to happen during that retreat, when all the causes are perfected in the mind, the experience comes. Then gradually when the experience comes, especially when you have the realization of the unification of emptiness and dependent arising, stronger devotion arises because you find it to be exactly as it is explained in the teachings. Things are like that, the "I" is like that; the nature of the "I" is like that. So now, there is greater devotion to the guru, a stronger feeling of the unbearable kindness of the guru from the depth of the heart, stronger than before. You feel the kindness is unbearable. The guru helped you, by giving teachings and in various different ways as it is mentioned in the lamrim teachings—such as the kindness in teaching the Dharma, blessing the mind, guiding the mind to Dharma by giving miscellaneous things, giving the disciple food and clothing, material things, in order to subdue the mind in order to practice Dharma. Like this the guru benefits you, generating the path in the mind, leading you in the path of happiness. You feel the kindness is unbearable and whenever one thinks of the kindness, tears come out.

And also as I explained this morning, for the sake of sentient beings, immediately you want to be born in the naraks. Instead of achieving omniscient mind, you have such a strong wish to give yourself up for the sake of others, to suffer in the naraks, immediately, right now, for the sake of others, instead of others—so strong is the determination.

Also, spontaneously, when you think of how others suffer, there is no choice, you uncontrollably cry when you think of others. Generating all those incredible experiences that you have seen in the teachings of tantra in the mind does not depend on caste or on what color you have, whether you are black, whether you are white, whether you are Tibetan or whether you are Inji—it does not depend upon any of those things. It is only up to whether one attempts the practice or not, whether one practices or not. The whole thing is up to that—if one practices correctly it is not impossible, there is nothing in the path that is impossible to generate in the mind. Definitely, if one practices, the change does come in the mind.

Such things as guru devotion are not a particular subject in this chapter on the practice of patience; however, it happened. Anyway, it is kind of a scientific thing. Because of the relationship between the guru who is revealing the teaching and the disciple, the object of the guru is the most important. Because of this contact one receives initiation, teachings, ordination or whatever is received—the Dharma. So among the objects it is the highest, the most powerful. If one does good actions in relation to that, the advantage is incredible, and if one does wrong actions in relation to that, the shortcomings are so great. So it is kind of a dangerous object. Among the objects—ordinary sentient beings, parents, arhats, those who are living in the ordination, monks and nuns, arya beings, bodhisattvas and then Buddhas—then there is guru. Among these, the guru is the highest and most powerful. Not just the “in general” guru, anyone who is named guru, not that one—but one with whom you have individual contact, the guru-disciple relationship, receiving teachings. This is the highest and most powerful object among all these holy objects.

Then, whether the guru is Buddha or not, whether from his own side he is enlightened or not, if one lets heresy arise toward the guru from whom one has received teachings, where there is the connection of guru and disciple, with whom one has Dharma contact, if wrong view arises in relation to that, then because it is a very dangerous, powerful object it harms oneself, it disturbs the achievement of omniscient mind. It disturbs the generation of the path and not only that, one also experiences many shortcomings in this life because the object is so powerful. The karma is very heavy, so one starts to experience its result even in this life. I am not going to talk about that. There are so many stories, of others’ experiences, one’s own experience—there is so much to talk about but it is not part of the subject, so I am not going to talk about it.

Anyway, there are so many shortcomings even in this life and also in future lives; from life to life, like this.

Therefore, if the main aim is to accomplish extensive benefit for sentient beings, if your main aim is to accomplish that, to help others, for you to do that, to accomplish that, simply to help others, depends on achieving omniscient mind, generating the graduated path to omniscient mind, starting from the realization of the perfect human rebirth, the eight freedoms and ten richnesses, up to omniscient mind; from the graduated path of the lower capable being, to the graduated path of the middle capable being, to the graduated path of the higher capable being—those are the graduated paths that lead to omniscient mind.

In order to generate this quickly, you should stop the hindrances. If you do not stop the hindrances, if you let hindrances occur, no matter how much you train your mind in the path, it doesn’t happen. For example, if you have a glass that has a hole, even if you pour nectar inside, no matter how much you pour inside, you won’t be able to get anything to drink. In order to drink from that glass, the hole should be stopped. So, successfully generating the path, because there are hindrances, depends



on how much you are able to prevent hindrances from arising. Then depending on that, that much quicker you will be able to generate the path in the mind.

The greatest hindrance to generating the path is wrong view towards the virtuous teacher. It is dependent on how much you can stop that hindrance from arising. Therefore, in order to stop the wrong view toward the guru, the method is meditation on the guru, looking at the guru as in essence Buddha. Always try to see the positive, as much as possible try to see the good qualities. And without thinking about the mistakes that you see in your view, try to see the good qualities that you find in your view, in the guru. Even the mistakes that one finds, try to see them either as one's own hallucination due to impure karma or as mistakes that are purposely done for your own practice.

Try to see the guru as Buddha by remembering the quotations, the advice, and the reasons. That helps to stop heresy. This helps you to become successful in your wishes, and in that way you are able to offer extensive benefit for all sentient beings.

If the practice is done, it helps you, you get profit. If the practice is not done, you receive only loss. So it is for your sake. Like taking care of a field; the field itself doesn't have the thought, "Oh, this family is so kind, they always come to take care of me. They are so kind; they always come to look at me." The field itself doesn't have thought that the family is kind. "So many times they plant rice, corn, barley—how kind they are." The field doesn't have the thought like this. To the field it doesn't make any difference whether the family plants rice or not, whether they come there on the field or not. But all that work, taking care of the field, working the field, planting the crops, is only for the sake of the family itself. It is the same with the guru practice.

This just happened; this conversation just came by the way. Normally when other lamas give teachings, they give complete lamrim teachings, complete from the beginning up to the end, guru devotion, all the things, if it's one week or even one month. This does not happen so much in our courses, even in the West—only recently in some particular courses, such as mahamudra. However, this talk on guru devotion is part of the lam-rim subject—the essence, the purpose.

If the family takes care of the land and plants crops, the family and the person himself get the profit, the joy. If he doesn't do that he doesn't receive enjoyment, it gets lost.

It is like electricity, a scientific thing. Electricity is so beneficial. Think of New York, how the whole city is living on electricity; even without thinking here, just thinking there, New York or wherever it is, California, Sydney, wherever it is—people move, people eat, people do everything by depending on electricity. They survive by depending on electricity; I don't mean they eat electricity, but they are dependent on that. I didn't hear yet of having wires inside, putting electricity on and then people living but anyway, for heaters, telegraph and all these things, for communication, telephone. On the other hand, if one is not careful it is also very dangerous. Many times houses get destroyed, people get killed. It is a very powerful object. If you use it in a good way, there are many great advantages, but if you're not careful, if you use it in a wrong way, it is very dangerous. Like that, it is scientific—the virtuous teacher is similar, only one is a living being and the other one is not a living being. The other one is more on the physical level, easy to understand. This one is also physical, you can see it on a physical level—the result of that practice of the guru. The results of wrong practices, the results of right practices—on a physical level you can see them. So that goes to the subject of karma.

I think I stop here.

These are subjects mainly that you prove with your own experience. As you practice, you can prove them with your own experience. I mean, you can hear a lot of stories but you can identify them clearly, really discover them, with your own experience. The teachings on patience, on thought training, whatever we have heard, even the little we have heard, even if the understanding of it is very little, if you can put it into action, especially when you meet those circumstances, if the practice gets done, it develops, year by year.

[Dedications]

Lecture 20: November 30<sup>th</sup> am

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate, I must achieve enlightenment for the sake of all mother sentient beings.” Which means that in our life, whatever work we think is important among all the work that we have, the plans that we make, among all these nothing is more important than achieving omniscient mind for the sake of other sentient beings, who are extremely kind to us in all the three times. There is nothing more important than this plan, this work. There is nothing more important than completing this work, this aim. Even concerning oneself, this is the most important. Concerning the work for others, freeing others from all suffering, also, there is nothing more important than this. However much you think and try to find, how can we find something that is more important than this? If even the omniscient ones cannot find it, cannot see anything for us to do that would be more important than this, how can you find it? You cannot find it. This is the most practical, the most beneficial thing. So you see, “at any rate” means all other work doesn’t matter, is not that important; if it happens, it happens, if it doesn’t happen, it doesn’t happen. But if *this* work, accomplishing the omniscient mind for the sake of others, doesn’t get accomplished, doesn’t get done—there are many other sentient beings with whom you have karmic contact or whom you have to enlighten, not just thinking, “all sentient beings.” There are also sentient beings that you have to enlighten. Until you become enlightened they have to continuously experience suffering in samsara.

It is like this: if you and your mother both fall down in the mud, in the quagmire, sinking down, or in the ocean, you yourself get free from that and then with some other means try to get her out, you help her to get out. First you try to get free from that danger, that quagmire and then with some other means you try to get her out. Until you are free yourself you can’t do anything, you yourself are drowning so you can’t help her. So she has to wait and suffer, in great fear, in the quagmire or in the ocean. Chased by waves, attacked, chased by the strong waves of unsubdued mind and karma, attacked by the three types of suffering like sharks, those animals who live in the ocean and bite—the three types of sufferings are like that; the suffering of pervasive formation, the suffering of changes and the suffering of suffering. Like that, until one becomes enlightened, sentient beings have to continuously suffer in samsara.

Especially when you think of others, you can’t stand it when you think how they are suffering in samsara, even when you think of just the worldly problems. Even when you just think of the suffering of human beings, without thinking of the sufferings of the lower realms, even if you don’t have faith in those particular sufferings of the naraks, if you don’t understand them, just think about human beings’ sufferings that you can see by eye; even if you don’t know the suffering of rebirth, even if you don’t have faith, if you don’t remember and cannot understand the sufferings of that.

Although it is very easy to understand just from the way the baby looks when it comes out, it is easy to figure out, easy to understand from the face of the baby. The reason the baby is screaming when it is coming out, even without being beaten—how it screams—this is so easy to figure out from the face. How the baby feels dirty, uncomfortable, painful, wanting to come out, like wanting to come out of a toilet tank, wanting to come out so badly. You can figure it out from the expression on the face.

You can figure out the pain from the color of the body and from the face. Otherwise the baby could have come out with a smiling face, with a very happy face. When the face is out and the rest of the body is still inside it should be a very smiling face, laughing. These are very simple things to figure out and understand for somebody who is intelligent—it doesn't have to depend on faith in the teaching that explains. The eyes are so tightly closed, he didn't want to be there, he wanted to come out. Like when somebody puts a knife, does surgery without a painkiller—that's how the face looks, similar.

Even the mother wouldn't understand; she has her own pains, she doesn't experience the baby's pain. The baby's suffering is the result of his own karma and the mother's pain is the result of her own karma. Except if the mother has clairvoyance—if the mother can remember coming out of the mother's womb, then she can understand. Otherwise the baby cannot experience the mother's pain and the mother can't experience the baby's pain. They are two separate beings who have their own karmas, two separate minds.

Just look at the old-folks' home; remember an old-folks home and meditate on it, how incredible their suffering is. You can see it by the eyes, those old men and women, unable to die. They can't stand the suffering, they wish that death happens soon, their expectation is that after that nothing happens, then blank, freedom, there's no continuation of mind and suffering is ceased. They believe in that way. Even those who are able to speak, to hear, those who are living in the old folks' home, those who are living at the house—there is nothing they know, they have no Dharma wisdom about how to make the life highly meaningful, they know nothing about how to make life meaningful. So there is no opportunity to purify; they don't even know a little practice of purification, even reciting mantra. Even the six syllable mantra OM MANI PADME HUNG, even just that, what even small Tibetan children, even Tibetan beggars who didn't hear any teachings know—somehow there is something they can do with their life. Even if that is the only thing they know, it makes the life meaningful, even though they are not very wealthy, living on begging each day, a few paisa, a bowl of food, whatever they find. But somehow knowing just a little refuge prayer or making offerings—whatever they know, they practice that. Since the object to whom they pray or make offering is an infallible object, a pure object, there is no doubt that they receive guidance, unless if from one's own side they don't take refuge or follow. Like this, there is something to think about, even if the beggar knows nothing about the teachings, doesn't know so much about karma, when he is sick or even when death comes there is something to think about, someone whom they can trust or rely on, an object of refuge.

But these people in the old-folks' homes, their mind is empty, they have no infallible holy object to rely on, to take refuge in. The whole day is just waiting for death, suffering because of not having death soon; it is not like a Dharma practitioner who is waiting for death, every minute, hour, every day, always day and night making preparation for death and for the happiness of future lives, one-pointedly working to benefit others, day and night waiting for death. That is something else. The Dharma practitioner is happy for death to happen, waiting for death, happy for death. That is

something else. If it were like this it would be something else. But it is not like that, making preparation for death, for the happiness of future lives, to benefit others. Because then even if death doesn't happen, the mind is happy. If death happens, mind is happy. Then it is very good, that is what is necessary. If one gets sick it is good, if one doesn't get sick it is good. Whatever happens it is good. That is what is necessary; that is what is needed in life.

But most of life is gone—half by doing meaningless work, nothing getting done that is beneficial for the happiness of the future life, for others, nothing that you can feel rejoicfulness for, “I am satisfied with my life, I've done that much work to benefit others, I am happy with my life.” There is nothing to feel rejoicfulness in; the life is finished in distraction. In child time, young time, in grown-up time—they met Dharma, didn't do any practice.

However, even now, when the senses are still functioning, one is able to talk, to see and even though one doesn't have any work to do, one lives on a pension, and even somebody gives food, one doesn't know what to do with life. If those who live in the old-folks' home are able to walk a little bit with a stick, by taking refuge in the stick one goes to the park sometimes, staying there, with an upset face, on benches, looking at the young people, then getting upset remembering their young time, the life they lived when they were young and seeing now the decay of the body. Then one is upset and there is nothing else to think about, nothing else that one can do. Then one comes back home with the stick, then all day is spent looking through the window, looking at the street, the passing cars, the people. Then in the afternoon, after the sun comes out, one sits on the chair and the old mother talks with the old father. If there is a companion, then they talk. They spend life like this, day after day, until everything collapses. As long as the senses are functioning, it is like this, suffering so much from dissatisfaction.

Then, as Buddha said in the teachings, it is exactly like this during childhood. Meeting the undesirable object, having to separate from the desirable object; not finding the desirable object, it is also dissatisfactory even if one finds it. This is the suffering even during childhood. Then even during the grown-up time, the suffering is much more, there is greater fear and more worry. Again, similar, these fundamental sufferings: dissatisfaction, having to separate from the desirable object, from friends, husband and wife, possessions, job, not finding jobs. This is different from childhood but a similar type of problem. Though what you see is kind of different, the type of suffering is the same.

Not finding those desirable objects, passing the time by quarreling, fighting and depression, passing the time with much worries of life. Separating from the four desirable objects, meeting the four undesirable objects; and then gradually experiencing the sufferings of old age.

Life begins with the great suffering of rebirth and, besides experiencing all these sufferings and worries in between, life ends up with huge sufferings, with great fear and worry of the suffering of death.

Just think about when you go to see a hospital, when you see the patients, how pitiful they are. Each one has a different disease, their experience is different. One doesn't have that particular disease but he has something else, another doesn't have that particular disease but he has something else. They have to eat undesirable food—one cannot have the food one wishes, one cannot taste it, one cannot eat it. Also the fear of death is in the mind. While somebody is screaming with much pain,

somebody is dying, suddenly somebody's breath stops, suddenly somebody is having a heart attack. They depend on getting food through tubes put inside the body.

Just think how unbearable it is when one has a stomachache, when one has headache. Even when we have a small disease like that how unbearable it is—like a toothache. You who are experiencing this suffering are just one but those who experience a similar type of disease are so many. One can even generate compassion by figuring it out, trying to think of how it is unbearable. “As it is unbearable for me, there are so many others who are experiencing that, an uncountable number of others are experiencing a headache, a toothache.” Even without thinking of others' sufferings, how it is unbearable. For this you don't particularly need faith, even just by thinking like this you can generate compassion.

Also, besides the human beings who are experiencing the suffering of old age and sicknesses, there are those children who are mute, kind of like animals, who can't speak, autistic children. Also, you think about freaks. I don't mean freaks, I don't know exactly, sometimes people use “freaks” like hippies, I'm not sure. I went to see a freaks' place in Spain, in Barcelona, while I was there. It was something to see, something while I was there, seven days I think. The purpose was to give one night's lecture in Barcelona but I think I was there for five or seven days, something like that. Anyway, I couldn't think of much to see, I thought to go to see something useful for my mind; I think the old folks' home was a little bit far and somehow I didn't get to see it, so I asked if there were any freak places. There was one quite close so one of the students at the Nagarjuna center, her name is Carla, I think she worked at that place before; anyway she made a phone call and arranged it with the missionary. Maybe they were Catholic, I don't know, they wear a white robe.

She said, “Don't bring many people,” so we went. Before we went upstairs to see, she gave us a short introduction on how they run the freak-place. They don't ask others to help with funds and things, and they don't accept somebody who comes to help, “I will do this, I will send money to you each month,” to take from the income tax or whatever, somebody who comes with a fixed plan. I don't know, maybe it is true, however, she told us that they don't accept even that, because if they accept that, if somebody comes and says he will send money each month or each year, it is kind of fixed and that way it doesn't feel that they are receiving it from God, so they don't accept it.

Six times or three times, something like that, everybody gathers in the chapel and they pray to God, and then it just comes, that's what she was telling us. She introduced me and one Italian monk, Piero, who also came. She said they do their work with a good heart, without a selfish attitude and then things happen—the help, financial help or whatever comes, things becomes successful—which is true, it is the same thing as Buddha said in the teachings.

Anyway, after a short introduction she took us to each room. I asked her to show us only the bad ones, the very bad looking freaks. There was a children's side, a women's side and a men's side. I think if you go there, the understanding of karma becomes clearer. Also especially it helps very much if you don't feel so much how your body is so precious, qualified with eight freedoms and ten richnesses, if you don't feel how it is so meaningful. Then it is very good, very helpful to go to those places, purposely to go to those places and watch.

It helps in so many ways; it inspires us to practice Dharma by discovering what a perfect body we have, able to speak, able to hear, able to read and study. It makes us feel more precious by thinking of what we can do and they cannot do, knowing that. Also, it gives more feeling for karma; it leads

to more definite understanding, seeing their sufferings, which are the result of their own karma, created out of ignorance. Also they become objects of compassion. Understanding and knowing their suffering becomes the cause of compassion for them—it makes you wonder what you can do for them, to help them, not only giving them food and clothing, not only that, not only making them survive, not only that, but to completely cease the cause all of the sufferings that you see on others now and those you don't see at the moment. Generating compassion causes the question, "What can I do?" to arise, what can you yourself offer them, how can you help them. So the most practical, most beneficial way is to make the cause of sufferings in the minds of sentient beings, the unsubdued mind and karma, non-existent. Like this.

It's amazing. I shook hands, in the men's part, and while I was shaking hands with them, sometimes I could not believe it. It was like a dream, very strange. The face was this much, so huge, the body this much and the face so big. With each of them while I was shaking hands, it was hard to believe somehow. Then in the section of the old mothers, I shook their hands also. They were very happy to see us in the men's part and in the women's part. They were very happy to see us. Those who could smile, who could say a little bit, were smiling and very happy to shake hands.

There was one mother who I think couldn't get up from the bed. She was very thin, extremely thin and I think she had what sounded like a good family. She said when she saw me that she felt that I'm her son. So I told her, "I am your son." I think the nun who was introducing us said we were people who come from the Himalayas and I think some of them didn't know what Himalayas means, didn't have any idea but they were very happy to shake hands, to see us somehow.

Of those who were a little bit better each one had jobs, just part time. They made many holes in newspapers and then they sewed back and forth by putting thread. Some of them couldn't control their limbs and had to move all the time. Then there were young ones, quite young, seventeen or seven, eight, around that age, young ones, and if they would let them free without binding their limbs with iron, they would completely destroy themselves, completely scratch and kill themselves. So how they managed is very nice, I think it's a very good way of doing it actually. Instead of binding them with ropes, they were very skillful. They had iron bars like this, like a stool with four wheels, and the arms are tied like this, so they could stand and walk because the wheels move. Also they can't harm themselves. There are many like that, just the whole day they hang onto that. They cannot speak, cannot do anything. Some make noise.

And there was one small child, maybe twelve or ten, amazing, unbelievable. She had a very small body, her body was about eight or nine years old but the head was this much and the eyes round, very small, and all the teeth were out, you could see the gums. I mean if you saw that, suddenly walking around here, even in the daytime, I think everybody would scream. I think normally she has great fear and when we came there, she couldn't walk very fast, she kind of got stuck. She was kind of trying to run away but she couldn't run fast, but she was very scared to see us. One of the nuns who was taking care of that section held her up and kissed her, trying to show some affection I think. And when we were leaving, even though her face was like this, I think she was taught by them to say "Tata," and when we leaving, the nun held her legs and then she was doing this.

They were kept very clean; there were no bad smells there. It was incredibly clean, so neat. They look very well, very good, running the organization very well. The building, the place was very clean, very rich looking. They didn't have torn clothes; they were kept very clean in a clean place. Then at

the end, when we came out of the house, the nun said, “What we practice here is renouncing self and cherishing others.”

First of all I was very surprised and also found much attraction and rejoicefulness in how these nuns are dedicated, taking care of these people who can't do much. It is not like you sponsor somebody's children and hope you can educate them or send them to school, that they can become something. These people are not like that, that you hope by taking care of them now they can become educated or something like that—nothing like that. They take care of these children until they die, you have to take care of them just for them to survive, and they can't do much. I don't know why, but there were one or two girls who looked okay. I don't know what's wrong with them, I didn't get to ask, but there were one or two girls, age twenty or a little bit under, who looked okay. They were doing exercises, physical exercises.

Besides her saying this, just to see the work they do there is unbelievable. I thought really, they are the ones who are really practicing the Mahayana teaching, incredible dedication. And these are people that nobody wants to take care of. Even the parents do not want them but these nuns take care of them. Even the parents who gave birth to them due to their own karma don't want them. So these missionaries take care of them. It is an incredible practice that they do. Seeing the practice, not so much the talk but the practice is unbelievable. I found it very attractive, rejoicing, very inspiring even for my own practice—I do nothing, just talk but nothing is practiced. So at the end she said this. I don't know what she is actually. I gave her a donation of ten dollars. I told her that I'm not rich and this won't cover any expenses here, even a small thing, but just to spend this for any expenses; that I would do prayers for them and please use it for other expenses. She said at the beginning that we weren't obliged to give donations or things like that. I think she didn't want the ten dollars, I guess I forced her a little bit. Maybe it was too little.

Just the suffering of the human beings that we see in the cities, that we see around, is unbearable. And how many there are, numberless, is unbearable. Even for these reasons, even if you don't know the naraks' or devas' sufferings, if you don't know these particular sufferings, just think of these that you can see, whether you can bear it or not. Think of one sentient being's suffering, whether you can bear it or not. Even one sentient being's suffering is unbearable, without thinking about the uncountable number of others.

As long as they're not liberated from the cause of suffering, from unsubdued mind and karma, even if you build houses for them, give them food and clothing, even if you take care of them in this life, try to benefit this life, continuously they will experience these problems, the sufferings of samsara, over and over. The best way to benefit other kind mother sentient beings is to cause their minds to be empty of unsubdued mind and karma. So we have to think what we should do about that. That is the most important. If it is possible to help by giving temporal benefits, of course we should do it but at the same time we should also think of the most important one. “What I should do for that reason,” that is very important.

Revealing the teachings is the best method to free them from the cause of suffering. The best way to guide them is by revealing the teachings, revealing the infallible path, the graduated path to omniscient mind however it fits them. There are various methods. There are various methods, such as giving material possessions, many different ways. Like Buddha does, sometimes by acting as crazy, sometimes by acting as a prostitute, sometimes being a king, being a servant or being a beggar, allowing others to accumulate merit. Being a beggar, you become the condition for others to

accumulate virtue by making charity. There are various ways, as there are various minds of sentient beings; so many different methods according to so many different levels. Exactly how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha does, as it is explained in the teachings.

However, to do all these without any mistakes, one should achieve omniscient mind. There is no other way without achieving omniscient mind. So like this, “at any rate.” So among all the works that we think are important, nothing is more important than this.

By remembering when we generate the motivation, at this time, even though we don’t understand the suffering of all sentient beings, we should remember at least what we can see by the eye. At least we should think of this, we should be aware of this and then generate compassion. And then we should generate the motive of bodhicitta to achieve omniscient mind for the sake of others, for all sentient beings.

I think I stop here.

Lecture 21 December 1<sup>st</sup> am

[Prayers]

As I mentioned yesterday in the morning about the motivation, “at any rate,” in Tibetan *ti ne ga*, “at any rate”—since the work to accomplish the state of omniscient mind for the sake of others is the most important and the most beneficial for others, one should never, whatever it costs, even if it costs your life; since sentient beings are the most precious thing in life, the most important thing, even at the cost of life danger, this work, achieving omniscient mind for other beings, should never be renounced at any time. Any other kind of work, one can leave, one can give up—whatever is regarded in the world by people as important, whatever you believe is important, you can give up. But this one, this work to accomplish extensive benefits for others, should never be renounced, should never be given up. Whatever danger you are in, this should never be given up.

The bodhicitta thought, the wishing thought of bodhicitta, the wish to achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of others, wishing to follow the Buddhist path of conduct, to follow the bodhisattva actions, such as the bodhisattva vows—such thoughts one should never give up, “at any rate.”

Then also it means this. One great eon has twenty intermediate eons. The eon of degeneration of this world system is twenty intermediate eons. Then space becomes empty, without earth, without water, for one great eon. Then there is evolution for one great eon and existence for one great eon—each of which is twenty intermediate eons. It is said that the duration of this world, after it is completed, the whole evolution, each time is one great eon, so that is twenty intermediate eons. This starts with the unimaginable lifespan of human beings, which means so many years, then degenerates down to a lifespan of ten years, then goes up to eighty and then comes down again.

For three countless great eons, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has followed the path to omniscient mind, bearing much hardship, accumulating merit, purifying obscurations. Three countless great eons—you get a little idea of one great eon from the twenty intermediate eons; also, one great eon has one second, and then those seconds a minute, and of that minute an hour, of that twenty-four



hours, a day, a month, a year, like this. However, this is just talking about the Buddha's strength of mind, the will to follow the path for the sake of others, expressing that.

A bodhisattva wishes to benefit sentient beings by suffering for the sake of each sentient being, by experiencing the suffering of the naraks himself, so that other sentient beings don't have to experience it, if it benefits them. A bodhisattva wishes from the depth of the heart to experience suffering in the narak for a number of eons equaling the number of drops of water in the Atlantic, the greatest ocean. That kind of time, eons, one hundred million eons, countless great eons—even if it takes that much time to finish the work of accumulating merit, to follow the path to omniscient mind; even if one has to bear hardships in order to achieve omniscient mind for the sake of others, "I will do it, I will follow the path, I will accumulate merit, I will do the practices of purification."

The one who has a great will like this, who is intending this, who is making a plan like this, for that type of practitioner it becomes possible to achieve enlightenment in one brief lifetime of degenerated time, which is even shorter than before; not only one lifetime, but much shorter than before—before it was thousands, billions of years—much shorter than the age in those times, much shorter. So achieving enlightenment, receiving the unified state of Vajradhara in one brief lifetime of the degenerated time is possible for a practitioner like this, a person who has such a strong will.

One who cannot bear any kind of hardship in order to practice Dharma, to train the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment, who cannot bear any hardship to protect karma, who in daily life cannot bear any hardship, who wishes to generate the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment, expecting to achieve omniscient mind without bearing much hardship, by living only a luxury life, with plenty of food, with plenty of clothes, in a luxury place with a comfortable soft bed, without need to experience any hardship, any difficulties, within a year or a month; just by mentioning it something happens in the mind, just by sitting down, just by going to the mountain and sitting in a cave or just by sitting down and closing the eyes, something happens to the mind. Something happens in the mind, kind of like in the West there's a restaurant somewhere, you press a button and the food comes, like that. Like a lift. You press the button and then you go to whichever floor you want. Except sometimes when the electricity doesn't work, you get stuck. Sometimes you fall down, when the electricity doesn't work or the wire is broken.

Anyway, expecting this, so easy and then it doesn't happen, it takes much time, it takes so many lifetimes.

But one who can bear hardships, who plans for no matter how long it takes, to practice, to follow the path; the practitioner who plans like this, who has such a strong will to bear hardships for the sake of others, for the sake of sentient beings, to overwhelm and finish the delusions; for such a practitioner, such a person, his will and his practice allow him to quickly generate the realizations of the path to omniscient mind. His will and his practice allow him to quickly accomplish the path.

For example, the great yogi Milarepa and those great yogis who became enlightened in one brief lifetime of the degenerated time. Already in many of their past lives they planted many seeds in their minds by doing extensive listening, reflecting and meditation on the graduated path to enlightenment, the sutra and tantra teachings. In so many lifetimes they made so much preparation for that. Not only during their lifetime did they live in caves on snow mountains and bore hardship but also in their past lives, in many past lives. They trained their mind in the three principles of the path. By having such a great will to practice the remedy of the delusions, the path, to bear the

hardships, they become enlightened in one brief lifetime. From Milarepa's side, not only having found the guru, an enlightened being, a real Vajrasattva, a real Heruka; not only that, but also Milarepa had such great will to practice.

So, "At any rate, no matter how difficult it is, how long it takes, I will do it that," is what it means.

"At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind to free all my kind mother sentient beings from all the sufferings and to lead them to the state of omniscient mind, by myself. Therefore, I'm going to listen to the commentary on the *Bodhicharyavatara*," generating at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta. The listening subject is the *Bodhicharyavatara*, the chapter on patience.

The reason it is not worthwhile to make your mind unhappy:

If it is something which can be managed,  
What is the use to be unhappy?  
Even if it cannot be managed,  
What is the point to be unhappy?

What is the benefit? Nothing. If it is something that cannot be managed and you make your own mind unhappy, there is no benefit at all, it doesn't benefit in any way. There is not the slightest benefit. So there is no point in making your mind unhappy. It is meaningless. It is like being unhappy with the sky. "The sky is empty of form. Oh, I don't like it." I mean, what can you do? The sky is empty of resistance, empty of form and being unhappy with that has not the slightest benefit. The sky is empty of resistance, you can't make it resistant, you can't make it substantial. So for something that you cannot do, something that is impossible to do, what is the point, what benefit is there in being unhappy.

The same thing at death time, when one is dying, even at death time, when you know you are going to die, if there is some method you know you can do to make death meaningful and beneficial, using the death as a path, as a practice, use the death like a horse that you ride, like a motorcycle, making a lot of noise, waking up all the people who have houses on that road. Anyway, like this, something for which there is a method, so that you can experience it with a happy mind instead of worry and fear. Death, intermediate state and rebirth; instead of using them only as causes of samsara, you can use these as a practice to achieve omniscient mind, by practicing the method of tantra, the special meditations of Vajrayana, the Maha-anuttarayoga Tantra.

If one can apply the practice of thought-training, such as the practice of the secret mantra, if one can apply it at this time, one can find a better body to practice Dharma, a better body than this, a special body, not a suffering body; a special body in a pure realm. One can reach a better realm. If you have a method, something to do, you can apply this. If you don't know anything, it is something else, but if one has received teachings and advice on what to do, the different practices, then instead of worry and fear, apply it and you can manage.

But even if one doesn't have any particular method to apply, this is normal. Death happens to everybody, everybody has to go through this. Since one was born, one has to die, it's natural. Even those huge buildings in New York, especially that part where they keep the money, what is it called, what is the name; anyway I am joking. However, all these huge buildings, after they are built up for sure they have to collapse. What comes at the end is the collapse—after they are built up they have

to collapse, fall down. That is the nature, it is nothing special. It is nothing to get shocked about; this is not something I have experienced only this time, not something that I experienced for the first time. That is one way to think, “This is not the first time that I experienced it—numberless times.”

If one cannot think, “Oh, this happens to everybody, everybody, animals, even human beings, everybody on this earth, everybody has to go through this gradually. The whole family, everybody, so why not me? How can I expect to live forever without experiencing death? While I’m seeing in this world, every day so many human beings die, going through this, so how can I expect myself to live without experiencing death?” At least thinking like this. Even by thinking that it is the nature of life, it cuts down the fear and there is less worry.

Such as this: when one’s friend, wife, husband, father or mother, when somebody is dead and the body is at the funeral or when the body is taken out of the house or the room where he used to live before, when the house is becoming empty of that member of the family, the other relatives are crying. Or when one hears that somebody died in an airplane crash or somebody is executed, then there is so much worry, pulling hairs and beating oneself, hitting oneself on the chest with the hands. This is something that you cannot manage; you cannot make life come back. This is something that you can’t manage. The body becomes pieces but you can’t manage to put it together and come back alive.

One day, not this year but last year, when I came back from last year’s tour, I went to see the largest place where they burn the dead bodies in Delhi. This time, when I came back from the West, also one morning I went to see the same place, the largest place where they bring dead bodies in India.

It’s a very interesting place, another scene of life, another movie of life, of you and what is happening now to others. There was one mother, and I think the body that was burnt was her husband’s. I don’t know, I could not understand the language. Anyway, the body was there. Just a few steps away, being burned by the fire, all around covered by wood, with the body inside of that. Then there were some people, I think they were quite poor people, some relatives of that person who came with her. The mother was crying so much. I think she was talking about some good qualities of that person. She was pointing on and on like this toward the body that was in the fire, saying so much, and it looked like she was trying to tell some good things about the person who had already gone. Then she was beating her chest with her hands and she kind of went nearer and nearer to the fire, so then the other people, the relatives grabbed her.

All those things, all those worries, are of no use, completely useless. It doesn’t benefit him to find a better rebirth, it doesn’t benefit him to have a happy mind—at that time he is already gone, the mind is already separated from the body. If one can benefit then one should do it before the consciousness separates from the body. Something that benefits at the time of death should be done before. It doesn’t benefit her either, this screaming.

Then also being scared of having the third war. “If the third war comes something will happen to me.” There might be some who are concerned of others, worried for others, but mostly they have much fear in the mind if the third war happens. In some ways it’s a little bit strange, being more concerned about the third war than about death, which will definitely happen. It is more definite that this will happen than the third war. At any time, any day, any night. It is definite and for sure, more than the third war. However, even when they think about death, if one hasn’t met the Dharma, if one’s mind is empty of method, of Dharma wisdom, of Dharma understanding it is not

of so much use. It is the same as an animal being scared of death. Like animals being scared of death—birds, worms, goats and cows being scared of death, the same thing. The mind is completely empty of method. Then what is there is only fear. So that is useless; without method in the mind, Dharma practice, just having fear is useless, useless fear. You cannot stop death.

What Shantideva is saying is that until you enter the arya path, the right seeing path, you cannot prevent death. It is impossible to not experience death, you cannot do it. So, it is useless fear. For something that you cannot manage, it is nothing. But the fear or awareness of death, the awareness of reincarnation, of what comes next, the awareness of karma, this life and the past, the fear that comes from that can be used to practice holy Dharma. You can use the fear of death to completely stop the experience of death and rebirth, which is forced by the unsubdued mind and karma—but as there is nothing like this, no method in the mind, there is no use for fear.

However, if you lead a good life, every day practicing patience, the good heart, not harming others, if from one's own side one practices Dharma well in everyday life, making preparation for death in everyday life, waiting for death in everyday life, from morning until night, waiting for death instead of rejecting it, waiting for it and making preparation all the time; in this way, if you have confidence, there is no mistake in the way of living life.

If you are prepared from your side, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter even if the third war comes. It is just a matter of changing the body, taking another body. The consciousness leaves this body and takes another body. It is just a matter of changing to another body, maybe better than this life, with more opportunity to practice Dharma. There is no worry, no need to be born in the lower realms. If one leads a good life, practicing the good heart, practicing well the good actions benefiting others, avoiding the bad actions of harming others, if one has not created the cause of the lower realms then even if somebody else kills you with a knife or with a gun, even if somebody badly treats you, there is no need to be worried or have fear, because there is no need to be born in the lower realms. It is just a matter of changing to another body, entering another human body. Like moving from one apartment to another apartment, a better apartment, better than before, more clean, with more things, with more enjoyments.

Generally, a third world war, the sufferings such as this degeneration is dependent on the group of human beings, on collective karma, general karma. What one can do to prevent that, according to the capability that one has—one tries as much as possible to prevent such things, the problems of the world, not only world wars but also epidemic disease, many famines, so many problems that happen in the world. If all the human beings would practice patience then there would be no wars, no fighting. If in all the minds of all human beings there is bodhicitta, renouncing self and cherishing others, then there is no problem of even quarreling between two persons, besides countries. There is no atomic danger.

So the best thing is to subdue your own mind. Among the human beings living on this earth you are one, so the best thing is to subdue your own mind, to start the patience in your own mind, to start bodhicitta in your own mind, renouncing self and cherishing others. Be a good example for others. For those whom it fits, who understand the teachings, talk about the practice to subdue the mind, to develop the good heart in order for others to generate bodhicitta and to have patience. Spread the practice of patience and bodhicitta in the minds of others. Without changing the mind, the problem cannot be stopped because the problem does not exist from the side of the problem; it is dependent

on the minds of the human beings who live on this earth. It came from the mind, it is created by the mind, the self-cherishing thought, the most harmful mind, anger.

Then, live in the precepts such as the Mahayana ordination, which has incredible benefit. There are so many stories about how this has benefited the country in the past. In the past in India and in certain countries where Buddhadharmā existed, the kings made laws that on special days like the eighth, fifteenth and thirtieth, everybody should live in the eight Mahayana precepts. Then, even though before there were many problems such as famine and people dying of starvation, later the whole country became rich, with less disease; the whole country was affected by that, as a result of the karma of not stealing, living in the vows, fasting and those things, practicing the remedy to attachment. The crops and enjoyments grew in better quality, more than before. Great prosperity happened. From one's own side, what you can do to benefit others, instead of running around making other people more confused, use the capability that you have, the little understanding that you have, to practice, to benefit yourself and others.

Shantideva is saying if the object on which the unhappy mind arises can be remedied, if it can be changed, if it is something that you can manage, then what is the point of being unhappy with that object, which can be changed? Instead of being unhappy, why don't you change the object?

This covers many things. It is the same with many of the problems of our life. For example if somebody is dead, if you make business and you receive a great loss, then it is already finished, gone, so what's the point of worrying? Worrying about it, while you are sitting on a chair, while you are eating, while you are in bed, at nighttime you go to bed without falling asleep, worrying. What is the use of that? You cannot change it, it is past, already finished; you cannot change it, so it is better to accept it. That is a result of karma, so accept it instead of being worried—again and again you breathe out so strongly. Then, cancer, all these things arising, can be a condition for those things, being worried so much, useless worry. For something that is past, which you cannot change, there is no point in making your mind upset. Better to think that these are the result of things such as ill will, disturbing others' work in the past, in this life or in past lives. In the past years, the past months, in the past life, one disturbed others with ill will, disturbing others to complete their works. Being jealous, also covetousness, being attached to others' possessions, wanting things that are possessed by others, things like that.

All this is the result of having given harm to others with self-cherishing thought. So it is better to accept the situation. Since there is nothing else you can do it is better to accept it, thinking, "The causes are created by myself, so who else should experience the result; no one else except me. If I don't experience it, then who should experience it? Because the karma, the cause is created by me, so who has to experience it is no one else except me. So this is a teaching to me from now on to be careful with such as the ten non-virtuous actions. This is a teaching to me to not have bad thoughts towards others, to not harm others. It's a signal telling me that if I do it again, if I create the same causes as before by following the self-cherishing thought, if I harm others again then again I will experience the same problems. This is a signal to tell me that."

Or think, "My material possessions are lost, stolen by others, and there are many other sentient beings who are experiencing the same problems and who will experience the same problems. So what I experience is a substitute on behalf of sentient beings. On behalf of others I am experiencing this loss." Then also pray, "By the virtue of this may they be devoid of this problem and the cause, and may I experience it myself." And feel happiness, "Now I have received as I prayed and I am

experiencing.” So feel happiness by thinking, “I have received it as I wished, as I prayed, and I am experiencing it now.”

Or think of the shortcomings of the samsaric perfections, “How kind he is; if I had those possessions I would have that much miserliness and attachment, and that clinging to those possessions ties me to samsara. He is taking away what ties me to samsara, so that I have no object of clinging. He is helping me to cut off the clinging.” And also, “How kind he is, if he didn’t steal it, if he didn’t take it away I wouldn’t create the merit of charity. Now he has taken it away and has given me the opportunity to accumulate virtue, charity. How kind he is. How precious he is.”

If you say, “Well, he is not kind, he is not precious, how can you say he is kind, he is precious, he doesn’t have any thought of loving kindness for me, he doesn’t have any thought to help me, only to give harm, so he is not precious to me.” Then in that case a million dollars is also not precious. You don’t call “kind” what is not a sentient being, what does not have mind. A million dollars is not kind, but precious. It is all the same thing. This million dollars doesn’t have the thought to benefit you, to be kind, “Oh, my beloved such and such, my dear such-and-such, I must help him, I must give him food, give him house, give coffee and lots of biscuits,” it doesn’t have this thought of loving kindness, not at all. So the same thing: the million dollars and that thief. By the reason that he doesn’t have loving kindness, the thought to help you, then it is the same thing.

Why do you take more care of that one million dollars than him? What benefits you can receive from the million dollars, by that reason you hold it, you recognize it as precious, important and beneficial, so it is the same thing. How much benefit you can receive from that one million dollars depends on how skillfully you use it; and it is the same thing with that thief, how precious he is, how much benefit you receive from him is dependent on how you use it, how you think of it—exactly equal. The thought-training, thinking of all the advantages of him making the object non-existent for you, helps to cut off the attachment that ties one to samsara. Also, it is beneficial to practice thought-training, it benefits not to create any more negative karma, to be careful; then also to practice charity. There are so many ways to practice, dependent on how much understanding of Dharma practice you have. It is the same as the million dollars. For somebody who doesn’t know that a million dollars is precious and useful, who doesn’t know how to use it, it becomes the same as garbage, just keeping a piece of paper. So it is similar with the way we use the enemy, the way we think, depending on that he becomes that precious, important, so kind.

I think from now on I should talk less.

[Dedications]

Lecture 22: December 1<sup>st</sup> pm

[Prayers]

Again, please generate at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings, therefore I’m going to listen to the commentary on the *Bodhicaryavatara*.”

For myself and for my friends

I want no suffering, no disrespect,  
No harsh words and nothing unpleasant;  
But for my enemies it is opposite.

The essence of the last stanza is to examine well the causes of generating anger and then attempt to eliminate and dispel the unsubdued mind.

The way to attempt to stop the unsubdued mind is by checking well the cause of generating anger. First of all, it shows the different objects of anger, and then the way to stop anger toward somebody who did undesirable actions and disturbs the fulfillment of one's wishes.

Shantideva is saying that for oneself and one's relatives, friends and close ones, we do not wish suffering that harms the body or the suffering feeling that harms the mind, such as criticism. Criticism doesn't hurt the body, doesn't wound the body but it harms the mind. Then also the mind is harmed by not receiving material, not receiving gifts. In the case of somebody who normally gives gifts on birthdays or at Christmas and then, one time, one day stops giving, it hurts the mind, even though you don't die of starvation. By not receiving that piece of cake you don't die of starvation but it hurts the mind. Then insulting, saying words face to face, not just gossiping, not just criticizing in a room where that person is not present but using harsh, hurting words. Sometimes the words can be nice but they give very deep pain in the heart. Certain words that the person doesn't express straight—they look nice but they contain something that hurts the person's mind, however the words look. The point is to hurt the person's mind, although sometimes it is presented in a nice way; anyway harsh words, hurting words, which are spoken face to face, straight.

So hurting words, uninteresting words, then also bad reputation—these four undesirable things: suffering, not receiving material things, uninteresting words and bad reputation. These four undesirable objects one does not wish for oneself and also one does not wish for one's friends and relatives. One wishes the opposite of these four undesirable things: happiness, receiving material things, sweet words, good reputation for oneself and for one's friends and relatives. But what we wish for the enemy is the complete opposite, we wish that they receive the four undesirable things and not receive the four desirable things. We seek and wish the eight worldly dharmas for oneself and one's relatives and friends.

Practicing patience is like this—when suffering is generated, whenever we meet suffering, we practice patience. When somebody badly treats us, and doesn't give us material help, we practice patience. When somebody insults us, we practice patience. When somebody gives us bad reputation, we practice patience. When these four undesirable things happen to you, when you meet these four undesirable things; practice patience. Then also, when the four undesirable things happen to one's own friends and relatives; practice patience. When somebody causes harm to one's close ones, friends and relatives, when they suffer, then also practice patience. Then also, when material help is not given to them; practice patience with that object who doesn't help your friends and relatives. Then also practice patience on the object, those who insult them, who give them a bad reputation.

Then also, when the enemy is happy, when somebody causes the enemy to receive perfections, to be happy, it is unbearable. It is unbearable that the enemy is happy, we dislike that the enemy is happy, that the enemy doesn't have problems, that he is comfortable. However, then practice patience; when somebody makes the enemy happy, practice patience. Because you dislike that, again practice patience.

Then when somebody gives material possessions, when the enemy receives material offerings, again you practice patience. If you don't practice patience you become jealous, you dislike that and when you see or hear that, the mind becomes very confused, unhappy. So, again practice patience when you feel, when you know the enemy has received material things.

Then, when the enemy receives compliments, sweet words, then again you can't stand it—you become mad. When somebody says nice things about the enemy you can't stand it, suddenly you have to stop talking. You were having some conversation, before you were so excited, very involved, then suddenly the other person talks nicely about your enemy and suddenly you are in retreat, in silence, without choice, with a heavy face. So practice patience; when you hear nice things, compliments about the enemy, practice patience.

Then, good reputation: when you find out that your enemy has received a good reputation, then again practice patience. Instead of criticizing, "He is not worth receiving a good reputation, he is not qualified," or "He didn't do that," then again practice patience.

So like this, twelve objects to practice patience.

Then again, if somebody disturbs one's pleasure, if somebody disturbs your comfort, while you were having such a good time, while you were very warm in your sleeping bag, sleeping very comfortably, suddenly, while you were in such great comfort, having very good sleep or having a very pleasant dream, with a friend going to a beautiful park, or having very great entertainment or great excitement, something is going to happen, you were going to do something, like that, good sleep, good dream, then suddenly a flea bites you on the leg or under the thumb, so that it disturbs your comfort. Then again, practice patience.

The same thing, when somebody disturbs you from receiving material things, when someone sent some present but somebody else used it, ate it or didn't give it to you—money, clothes or whatever the possession is. However, when somebody disturbs you from receiving material things, again practice patience. When somebody disturbs you by complaining about you, then practice patience. When somebody disturbs your reputation, then practice patience.

Then same thing, like this—you need to practice patience when these four hindrances happen to receiving the four desirable things for you and when this happens for your parents and relatives.

Then again, with the enemy, if, while he is suffering someone stops his suffering, gives him medicine, if a doctor comes along and gives medicine, when you see this, you can't stand that doctor. You can't stand the doctor ending the enemy's suffering. So again practice patience. The same thing if somebody disturbs the enemy's not receiving material things; when you can't stand it, practice patience. If somebody disturbs his not receiving sweet words, then again practice patience, and if somebody disturbs his not receiving a bad reputation, again practice patience.

There are about twenty-four objects of patience with which we have to stop the anger arising toward the sentient being who does undesirable things.



According to the following stanzas, according to this outline, stopping anger arising toward the sentient beings who harm oneself and one's relatives; stopping the anger towards the enemy and the sentient being who gives help to one's own enemy.

The way of practicing stopping the anger toward the sentient being who harms oneself when the suffering arises is to meditate on patience, voluntarily taking on the suffering, bearing the suffering; particularly thinking that these contaminated aggregates of attachment, this samsara, are not beyond the nature of suffering.

The causes of happiness sometimes occur,  
But the causes for suffering are very many.

In samsara, the causes of happiness occur only sometimes. They don't happen all the time, only sometimes, seldom. The causes of happiness, virtue, happen only sometimes. The causes of suffering happen so much. This is the nature of samsara; it is not beyond the nature of suffering, so if the suffering arises it is worthwhile to practice patience, to bear it.

The four major sufferings—the suffering of rebirth, which is particularly related to us human beings, the suffering of rebirth, old age, sickness and the suffering of death—then all the rest of the problems that we experience between rebirth and death, all the rest of the sufferings of mind and body, all those other problems. Why is there so much suffering of suffering and less comfort and happiness, why? That is because the causes of suffering are so many and so the results, the suffering of suffering, are also many. The causes of happiness are less, so the results are also less.

All the sufferings of suffering, the four major ones and then the rest, all that happens after rebirth and before death, is like a water bubble coming from the water—the bubble doesn't come from space but comes from the water, like that. Without water there wouldn't be the water bubble. Similarly, without the body there wouldn't be the diseases, painful wounds, leprosy and those dangerous diseases. The four major sufferings and all the rest of the sufferings that one experiences, the suffering of suffering between rebirth and death, all this is like a water bubble that comes from the water. Like this, all the suffering comes from where? The suffering of body and mind comes from samsara; this is like the ocean and those sufferings like a water bubble.

All these sufferings came from the contaminated aggregates of attachment, samsara. Even the suffering of change, the pleasures of samsara, the comforts that one experiences by having samsaric perfections, even these temporary samsaric pleasures, which don't last, which change into suffering, which are in the nature of suffering, which change into greater suffering, these also come from samsara, the contaminated aggregates of attachment—the suffering of changes. The samsaric pleasures, comforts, those things are called suffering only because they do not last. The main reason they do not last is because their nature is suffering. The base on which we label pleasure and comfort is itself suffering.

For example, at the beginning there is much suffering of poverty, not having a house, not having the means of living. After one has found these, the previous heavy suffering stops, but then again it is not satisfactory; one wants a better quality and more. When one receives this, there is some kind of comfort and pleasure, the previous heavy suffering of not having anything is stopped, but then the dissatisfied, discontented mind arises, wanting more, wanting better quality, and as this grows stronger and stronger, then another suffering arises.

Also, when the stomach is empty, when there is great hunger, then when one takes the first spoonful of food, the discomfort of having a stomach full of food starts—it starts so small that you can't discriminate, you can't feel it—and the heavy suffering of the hunger starts to decrease from great to small when you receive the first spoonful of food. Then as you take more and more, the base one labels pleasure or comfort is when the suffering of hunger decreases from great, and the discomfort and pain of the body starts from small. When it is kind of balanced, that feeling is called pleasure, comfort. "Now I am feeling comfortable, happy." Then as one takes more and more, the discomfort of the body having a stomach full of food, which was very small at the beginning, becomes greater and greater by the condition of taking more food. The pleasure and comfort change, on the base that you call comfort. So the comfort doesn't last. There is no hunger anymore; no suffering of hunger, but now there is another different problem, pain, discomfort.

Similarly, after sitting two hours, one hour...

<end of tape>

...while the mind is confused, the subject is not clear, you couldn't understand—either not clear from the side of the subject or the way it is spoken, or a mistake from the listener, the mind not being familiar with the subject, not having heard it before—but that is not my main point.

So, after sitting so long, as soon as one stands up the heavy suffering of sitting starts to decrease from great to small, and the tiredness of standing starts from very small, from the very first moment that you stand up. But that is called comfort, pleasure, sort of "Wow!" after sitting all these hours. On that feeling, on that base, it is called comfort. But as you are standing more and more, the discomfort, the tiredness of standing—which started from the very beginning as very small, from the very first moment—with the condition of standing longer, increases. The longer you stand, the more the tiredness of standing increases. So, the change of the base; it is no longer comfort. That is how the comfort has changed—now there is no longer comfort but the tiredness of standing, even though there is no tiredness of sitting. Like this, all the samsaric comforts are in the nature of suffering. And also the suffering of change comes from this samsara, having taken this samsara, the contaminated aggregates of attachment.

So you see, as the nature of the water bubble is that it comes from the water, like that, all the suffering of suffering and the suffering of changes comes from these aggregates, which is the suffering of pervasive formation.

This last one I finish, then stop.

This last one, the third one, which is the main thing we should renounce, the main thing we should be detached from, the contaminated aggregates of attachment; when you understand the twelve links, the way they work, the way they finish within two or three lifetimes, once you understand that, this is very easy to understand—the suffering of pervasive formation, the meaning of this, the contaminated aggregates of attachment. And if you understand the twelve links, then you will understand the meaning of the term "contaminated aggregates of attachment."

For contaminated, the Tibetan term is *sa.cha*, means having delusion, deluded, contaminated. Contaminated aggregates, contaminated by what? By the unsubdued mind.

These aggregates, even from the very beginning, from the very first second in the mother's womb, were with the seed of delusion. They were born with the seed of delusion. It is not that the aggregates are born, and after they come from the mother's womb and as the baby grows up, as it starts to talk, the delusions start. Before there is no delusion, then afterwards when the baby starts to speak, the delusions start; before that there is no delusion, when the baby doesn't speak, doesn't read books—not the baby, I mean, the child, when he doesn't know the names of things, he doesn't have delusion, but after that, when he sees things, hears things, and knows the names of things, then he has delusions. It is not like that.

From the very beginning, from the intermediate state, the aggregates were one with the seed of delusion, so one is born with this seed of delusion. It is there from the very beginning, from birth; contaminated by the seed of delusion.

The contaminated aggregates of attachment, *sa.che, nyer.len gye phun.bo*, the aggregates of attachment; it is made simple, shorter, by saying attachment but otherwise *nyer len*, these two words—one means craving and one means grasping. In the twelve links, when the craving and grasping of that set of twelve links occurs, it doesn't matter whether it is a dog or a human body, whenever that is experienced, whenever that happens at the time of death, the seed that was planted, that was left by karmic formation that causes the human body, the ripening aspect in the result of the human body is made ready by the craving and grasping that arises at the time of death.

But I would say that sometimes, due to tantra methods, like pujas or meditations, the secret tantra methods, even if the craving and grasping makes the seed that has been planted, left there by karmic formation, which brings the ripening aspect result the human body, ready, rising up through the intermediate state and ready to take the human body...

I will put it this way: somebody is going to be born in the narak realms. The craving and grasping made the seed, the potential that was left on the consciousness by karmic formation, to bring the ripened aspect of the resultant body in the naraks. Then the being goes through the intermediate state and then takes the narak body. But according to that sentient being's karma or luck, certain high lamas can make it possible that even though he is already in the intermediate state, through certain very powerful meditations and pujas, this person doesn't get reborn in the naraks. Even though the potential was created, and already made one ready to be born in the naraks by the craving and grasping at the time of death, still by these methods he can take another human body or may be born in a pure realm—due to the lama who does the meditation, the power of the method and the power of his realizations.

But usually after craving and grasping have met the potential that was left on the consciousness ready to take the ripening aspect result, the body, a human body or an animal, then immediately after that the consciousness goes to the intermediate state and then migrates into that body, whatever it is. So you see, that body is the ripened aspect result, and its close cause is craving and grasping, the unsubdued mind of craving and grasping.

It is the same thing with this set of twelve links of this human body. This present human body is formed or caused by the close cause of craving and grasping that arose at the time of death in the past life. That craving and grasping arising at the time of death made the potential of this present human body ready. The potential was left before by karmic formations, which came out of

ignorance and also attachment. Then this potential was made ready by craving and grasping, which is called “becoming,” symbolized by a pregnant woman. So that is the close cause, craving and grasping. Then, after that, the consciousness goes into the intermediate state and migrates into this human body.

So there are the contaminated aggregates of attachment, *myer len*, craving and grasping. It is just to make it short in English that it is called attachment, because craving and grasping are both attachment; the main cause that ties the self to this samsara like a rope or a chain is attachment. So when you think of the meaning of this term you understand how it is in the nature of suffering. This result, these aggregates are impure and the cause is impure—craving and grasping, the unsubdued mind, ignorance.

First of all, ignorance, the hallucinated mind: while the “I” is empty of true existence, clinging to it as truly existent; then also the attachment seeking this body, craving to receive this body.

Making it simple: the ignorance of true existence, then craving and grasping—those three delusions; then karmic formations that come out of ignorance, that action; then becoming, which comes from craving and grasping, is one action. So there are two actions and three delusions. By delusion and karma the aggregates are formed, by the unsubdued mind, so the result is impure and is in the nature of suffering, the nature of impurity, containing thirty-two impurities. As also the cause is impure, the unsubdued mind, the nature of suffering.

The contaminated aggregates of attachment themselves are the suffering of pervasive formation. This, itself is the fundamental suffering of samsara. Just on the basis of this, contaminated by the seed of delusion, we don’t have much control, so that when we meet different objects, very easily delusions arise. When we meet one object very easily anger arises, when we meet another object, very easily attachment arises, with another object very easily pride arises, ignorance arises. Uncontrollably these arise. That is due to the contaminated seed of delusion. Also, because of that we have no control over the mind. Even if we want to do very peaceful meditation without any distraction, we want to meditate on lamrim or meditate one-pointedly on Buddha, we are without freedom, without choice—the mind doesn’t work as we wish, it is unable to be kept continuously on the object of virtue.

Same thing, we cannot use the body to practice virtue as we wish. Soon you get tired, exhausted, pains all over the body, knees, back, behind, hunger, thirst, no control over the body. We cannot use the body to practice virtue as we wish. That is because it is with the seed of delusion.

So like this, the contaminated aggregates of attachment is fundamental and is the main suffering, from which we should be free, which we should renounce. Pervasive formation, the same meaning, formation, is formed by unsubdued mind and karma. “Pervasive” means from this, from this pervasive formation, these aggregates, the suffering of suffering and the suffering of changes come. It covers both, that is why it is called pervasive.

These aggregates themselves, samsara, itself is formed by unsubdued mind and karma, this is under the control of the unsubdued mind and karma; it is the seed of that. So you can see it is not beyond the nature of suffering; it is formed by unsubdued mind and karma, and with the seed of delusion; this *itself* is the suffering, without needing to talk about the suffering of suffering and the suffering of changes. Just talking about this, the contaminated aggregates of attachment, this, itself is suffering.

What Shantideva is saying is that we should practice patience. When we experience suffering, we should be aware that the aggregates themselves are in the nature of suffering, *are* the suffering of pervasive formation. We should be aware that these contaminated aggregates of attachment are the suffering of pervasive formation and are not beyond the nature of suffering.

From having taken this samsara, then of course the suffering of suffering and suffering of changes arise. So there's nothing to get excited about, nothing to get shocked over—if you have a headache, toothache, diarrhea, whatever it is. There's no reason to be shocked, it is obvious and it is natural. Once you have taken these aggregates, which are the suffering of pervasive formation, in that nature, of course you experience the suffering of suffering and the suffering of changes. By thinking how it is nature, one should bear suffering, and by bearing the suffering with patience one should practice Dharma, thinking that these contaminated aggregates of attachment are the pot of suffering. One should think when one experiences many problems, “This is the pot of suffering, since I have taken this pot of suffering it is natural to experience all these problems. So what is the surprise, what is the shock, why am I worried?”

I think I stop here. This is practicing patience by voluntarily taking on the suffering.

Lecture 23: December 2<sup>nd</sup> am

By visualizing the parents, father and mother, the friend, enemy and all the rest of the sentient beings around, as I explained before, please do the visualization pacifying the hindrances, generating the profound graduated path and the extensive path at the same time.

Starting from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, make the first repetition of the requesting prayer, pacifying the hindrances of the profound graduated path. Then the second time, the second request, a replica of the lineage lamas, starting from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, then Maitreya Buddha, Asanga, like this. Then similar with the next ones, making requests, and then a replica of Shakyamuni Buddha, Manjushri, Nagarjuna and Shantideva absorb into one's heart and also in the hearts of all sentient beings, becoming oneness. Think that they are oneness, they have received all the qualities and realizations that each of them have in their holy minds.

When you pray to pacify hindrances and to generate the extensive and profound graduated path to enlightenment, it also includes sicknesses. It refers to not only the ultimate obscurations, but even temporary problems. You make requests to pacify all that, your own and others'. Then make requests to generate the realizations.

Those who would like to can just read in English.

[Prayers]

Also at that time, what can be done is the Manjushri visualization, or visualize the number of gurus with whom you have Dharma contact, from whom you have received even three or four syllables, even the oral transmission of the six syllables OM MANI PADME HUNG, or the oral transmission of even four syllables, even those who taught you the alphabet with Dharma reasons, with Dharma purpose, without missing one visualize these gurus around, down below—around Lama Losang

Thubwang Dorje Chang or Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, who is visualized in the center. Around Lama Losang Thubwang Dorje Chang, if you have visualized the guru in the aspect of Lama Tsong Khapa, at the heart is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and at his heart is Vajradhara or Manjushri. Here, at the beginning when you make the request you can do it that way, instead of Vajradhara, Manjushri.

Around Guru Shakyamuni Buddha are one's own gurus from whom one has received commentaries, initiations, oral transmissions and things like that. Then when you say this requesting prayer, the same thing—the second time a replica of each of them absorbs into your heart as well as all sentient beings, becoming oneness. This is the same visualization for all the requests—the first one, the second one, seven requests to the lineage gurus—the same visualization can be done. Purify what is mentioned here in the prayer, purify the wrong views, and then a replica of the gurus enters into one's own heart and become oneness.

These gurus moved by loving compassion  
Make the Dharma clear by teaching it with skillful and effective means.  
They are the best bridge for all those of good fortune....

Actually in Tibetan it is *door*, door for the fortunate ones to cross, to approach the liberation, release from samsara, and reach omniscient mind.

They are the best bridge for all those of good fortunate to cross to liberation,  
And the eyes for seeing all the vast scriptural texts.  
From all you gurus I request inspiration.

It says, "I request inspiration." This is okay, but the request is to pacify all these hindrances and then to generate the entire graduated profound path and extensive path to omniscient mind. The request is for one's own body, speech and mind to become oneness with the guru's vajra holy body, holy speech and holy mind, to be able to accomplish the works for other sentient beings.

May I never develop for even a moment wrong views  
towards the deeds of my glorious gurus.  
With faith and respect gained from seeing their goodness,  
May the gurus' inspiration flow into my mind.

This inspiration is probably a limited idea of the request, "May the gurus blessings enter into my mind." What *blessing* actually means is this: the qualities of the guru, the qualities of the holy body, holy speech and holy mind enter into one's body, speech and mind. That is the blessing. In that way you are able to do work for other sentient beings. So I think *inspiration* is limited; it gives a limited idea of what enters into the mind.

Why *mind*? Because by changing the mind from the unsubdued mind, from anger, from vicious thoughts, evil thoughts, unpeaceful and painful thoughts such as attachment, you can also change the body and speech. By developing the good quality of the mind, the good qualities and actions of the body and speech also develop. So the development of the good qualities of your body and speech are dependent, they actually depend on your mind very much. However much the good quality of your mind degenerates, however much it becomes less, also the actions of body and speech get worse and worse.

So it is dependent on the mind—the creator is the mind. That's why the request is so much to do with the mind—for the blessing, the empowerment to enter the mind. To clean the mind is so important. One has to clean the mind with the blessing of the guru.

When one meditates on the eight freedoms and ten riches, reading the scriptures, hearing teachings, one feels that this precious human body is more and more precious. Before you didn't feel it was precious but now you feel it's precious, so valuable. Then you can't even stand spending just one hour, passing one hour just sitting and talking about unnecessary things—you feel great loss of life, of this precious human body. Even one hour wasted you feel is a great loss. Because you realize, you see how precious it is—the body that is qualified with eight freedoms and ten riches. That is a sign of having received the blessing of the guru, when you have such wisdom, such Dharma wisdom. You feel it is precious.

And then as well, discovering it is highly meaningful and then feeling that it is so rare, that one cannot find it again and again. It is not like it is fixed. You have the thought that it's so rare to have this, so difficult to find it again.

Then, you see your own life and have the vision that this life is not long, but very short. You have the feeling in the depth of your heart, the uncertainty that you might die this month, even this week—even today. You do not have the vision of a long life but the vision that this life is very short.

You have such a thought, that this life is very short. When one has uncertainty about when death will happen from the depth of the heart, not just saying it from the mouth, repeating what the teachings say, not the creative thought but from the depth of the heart. Every morning when we get up, in all the actions we do, talking, eating or walking, whatever we do, we believe that I will live long. Spontaneously, without effort this thought arises. So then, without effort there is the thought that life is very short and uncertain, that death can happen any time.

Then at the same time, because of that, we do not cling. Whatever happens, happy or suffering, if you are happy or having difficulties, not having a good place to stay, not having desirable food to eat, even if you are badly treated, whatever happens in this life doesn't matter so much, is not that important. If one is happy, if one is suffering, it doesn't matter so much, this life is so short. Besides being so short, there is this uncertainty *when* the death will occur—this month, this week, even today. Then, future lives are more important. What is called future lives, the lives coming after this life are more important, much more important. The happiness of the lives coming after this are much more important and we see that, in the depths of the heart, and take more care of that and less care for this life.

It's okay, whatever happens, it doesn't make much difference for the mind—even if somebody praises us so much, even if we receive a bad reputation, that's okay, it doesn't matter so much. Even if you receive a good reputation that's okay, it doesn't matter so much. Even if one receives a million dollars, even if one doesn't receive it, it's okay; it doesn't make much difference for the mind. Whether you receive the four desirable objects or whether you receive the four undesirable objects, you don't care. It doesn't cause big excitement, it doesn't give big upsetness, it doesn't cause great depression. The four desirable things and the four undesirable things are equalized for your mind. You don't care whatever you receive.

In the depths of the heart, when it comes to this life, things are not so important. The next lives are very important, so when you think of self, it is not that important but when you think of others, they are so important, so precious. This is uncreated thought spontaneously arising from the depths of the heart.

These are the signs. Such changes of the mind are the blessings of the guru, the blessings of the guru-Buddha. Then there are outer changes that even other people can see—the changes in the actions of your body, the changes in the actions of your speech. They are different, better than before. Those are the signs of having received blessings. Like this one can receive the blessing from the beginning of the path up to enlightenment.

“Seeing the guru’s actions in pure view.”

Because this is written here, I will just mention it. This is just how to practice, how one should practice. From one’s own side, in one’s own view one finds no mistake in the actions of the guru, seeing him with the pure view, using the advice that is explained in the teachings about how to follow the guru. If the disciple practices like this, it is beneficial for the disciple himself, it doesn’t matter whatever it is from the side of the guru. Whatever it is, it benefits the disciple—from the side of the disciple, he stops the wrong views, which are the obstacles to quickly generate realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment. By looking at the guru with pure view, in goodness, in pure action, by the arising of wrong view, heresy towards one’s guru is stopped. This benefits the disciple himself; how much he is able to practice, that much quicker he is able to generate realization of the graduated path to enlightenment.

But it doesn’t mean that whatever the guru does oneself should do, it doesn’t mean that in practice. I think one should look at it in goodness, in good actions, but it doesn’t mean that whatever the guru does is what one should practice. It doesn’t mean that, “Oh, my guru does this, I should do that.”

I think if one does this without checking one’s own capability of mind, saying this, “Then if my guru does not keep precepts, he does this and that, so why not me, I am the disciple, so why not me? My guru is disrobed so why not me? Why can’t I?” For example, like that. “My guru drinks wine so why not me? My guru smokes cigarettes, so why not me?” that kind of thing. “My guru is a married lama, so I should do that also, I don’t need to practice, I don’t need to keep precepts, I don’t need to live in ordination,” things like that. Those things you have to check—whether you can do whatever the guru does. If you are able to do what the guru does, then when the guru eats poison, you should be able to eat poison. You see, when the guru experiences the poison as nectar, when you eat poison, when you eat kaka you should also be able to experience it as nectar. You should check the capability of your mind, the level of realization should be the same. Then in that case you can imitate whatever the guru does.

If from the side of the guru, he has reached a high level of tantra, the graduated path of completion, the second stage of the tantric path, on such high levels then he has those powers, and then the guru uses drinking wine and the secret wisdom female being in order to become enlightened in this life, to complete the rest of the path of tantra, to create the conditions to quickly generate the rest of the path to omniscient mind.

Then for oneself, the disciple, to imitate what the guru does, whether one can or not, to answer that question one should examine one’s level of mind, capability of mind. If it is the same as the guru,



then of course, it is better to have those things than not to have them. When one is at those levels, it is better to have them. If one has those, then one achieves omniscient mind quicker when one is at that level. Instead of becoming a distraction, it becomes only benefit to achieve omniscient mind, only a benefit for others. Like this, particularly as one is living in celibacy, then like that.

The actions that the guru does, which look from the outside to be contradictory to Buddha's teachings, certain actions that look like mistakes, non-virtue, whether you can do them or not depends on the capability and level of your mind. Checking that, you can give the answer to yourself. However, if it benefits you to reach omniscient mind quicker, instead of only disturbing, and is only for the benefit of others, then one can do them, even if it looks like non-virtue. Those actions such as the three actions of body—killing, stealing and sexual misconduct—and the four of speech—harshly speaking, [divisive speech,] gossiping, telling lies, all those four—can be transformed, can become virtuous or non-virtuous. So generally it is like this. This is the way to check.

If the advice that the guru gives is according to what Buddha says in the teachings, if it is not contradictory to what the Buddha says, if it is similar to what the Buddha says in the teachings, then one can practice that advice. If it is contradictory to Buddha's sutra and tantra teachings, then just leave it without criticizing. One doesn't need to also criticize—saying this and that, how he is foolish, how he is ignorant, not knowing the teachings. Within negative karma, the karma of criticizing the guru and the karma created in the relationship with the guru is the heaviest. So one doesn't need to criticize or have wrong views toward the guru, but leave it in an indifferent state. If the advice is contradictory to Buddha's teachings, leave it in an indifferent state. Then skillfully, respectfully explain that you have no capability to do that at all, skillfully managing, try to get permission without disturbing the holy mind.

The advice that is similar to what Buddha said in the teachings, one should practice. Which is most important, the Buddha's teaching or the guru's advice? Buddha's teaching is more important. If one wants to check for oneself to practice which is more important, then normally one should regard Buddha's teaching as more important. Follow the advice of what is right to do and what is not right to do, and then leave anything else in indifferent state.

This is just to mention. Anyway it might help you in the future if you keep it in mind.

Please generate the motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, "At any rate I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all kind mother sentient beings, therefore I am going to listen to the commentary of the *Bodhicharyavatara*."

In the *Great Commentary on the Lamrim*, Lama Tsong Khapa discusses what happens when one's mind becomes unhappy, angry and paranoid. Lama Tsong Khapa did not particularly say paranoid; I am just making it up.

As I mentioned yesterday in terms of the three types of sufferings, from the contaminated aggregates of attachment the three types of feeling come—pleasant feeling, suffering feeling and indifferent feeling. Each time a different feeling arises—when there's a pleasant feeling, attachment arises, then when there is a suffering feeling, anger or aversion arises, when there is an indifferent feeling, ignorance arises—Lama Tsong Khapa gives advice about what to do, what remedies one should practice when one experience different feelings, and the different unsubdued minds arise.

When attachment arises, on the base, which is only suffering, we label pleasure. That type of feeling, which is only suffering, is labeled pleasure. So think that the nature of that is suffering; analyze its nature and try to see the nature of that feeling.

When ignorance arises, there is an indifferent feeling. Think the nature of the object is impermanent; analyze it, be aware of it. This stops the wrong conception that clings to it as permanent, thinking that as it appears as permanent, it is permanent. Then also think of its nature, which is empty of independence and so is dependent. Think how it is empty of independence, how it is dependent. This stops the wrong conception clinging to the wrong view, clinging to the appearance that it is independent, truly existent. It stops those wrong conceptions, the mind that is ignorant of the nature of that object.

When attachment arises, looking at the object and the feeling as being in the nature of suffering cuts off the clinging; it stops the clinging and cuts off the confused mind.

When there is anger, paranoia or depression—when there is a suffering feeling coming from these aggregates, when one has problems, too much dislike in the mind, paranoia, great depression—Lama Tsong Khapa's advice is to think that these aggregates are the pot of sufferings, the container of sufferings. What Lama Tsong Khapa is saying is to think that these contaminated aggregates of attachment are the container of suffering. Since one has taken these it is in our nature to experience suffering and various problems. It is its nature. He didn't say it exactly word by word like this in the teaching but this is what Lama Tsong Khapa means. So thinking of this stops paranoia, aggression and depression.

As the Kadampa geshe Potowa says, "There is existence of death, so that is why it happens." Death exists, so that is why it happens. Not experiencing something that doesn't exist, one experiences something that does exist, so what is the point of having great fear, what's the point of having great shock? Death exists, so one experiences it.

What Kadampa Geshe Potowa is saying is that of course if you experience something that doesn't exist, it is a great shock. Without having this samsara, without these contaminated aggregates of attachment, if you get sick, of course, it's a great surprise, a great shock. Without having this, if one experiences rebirth and death caused by unsubdued mind and karma, it's a great shock. Without having taken this samsara, the contaminated aggregates of attachment, rebirth and death under the control of unsubdued mind and karma do not exist. They are impossible to experience. So, while one doesn't have the contaminated aggregates of attachment, this samsara, if one experiences such things as death and rebirth under the control of unsubdued mind and karma, then it's a great shock.

Same thing, disease exists, so one experiences it. There is nothing to be surprised about or to get shocked over. Because one has created the cause of that disease, there is nothing to get shocked about when experiencing the result.

Thinking like this, meditate on patience by voluntarily taking on suffering. Thinking like this makes the mind happy, it stops the unhappy mind. Actually, the practice of patience in the *Bodhicharyavatara* is the best psychology. The best study of psychology is studying the *Bodhicharyavatara*—the Wisdom chapter about *shunyata*, about emptiness-only, how things are dependent, how everything is empty, and the chapter on patience. Those chapters are the best study of psychology. They benefit this life,

benefit future lives, benefit the development of omniscient mind and benefit all sentient beings. The benefits are definite. One doesn't need to have doubt—however many years I study, will it benefit or not? There is no need to doubt. Even one day of study, even one day reading this book is a great advantage. It's not like this: thirty, forty years you spend in the university or college or something. With the thought to benefit others, this is good, trying what you can, the method that you find in that country, but you see, after forty or fifty years studying, putting much effort and time, I don't know how much the person can treat his mind when he has a problem. I don't know how much the method works. I think it's good to know those different things, studying, having different education—it's good but I think it's not enough. From the effect, from the result, when we think of that, I think it is difficult to be satisfied with that alone. First of all...

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...patience—you have to know the cause, you have to have some idea of the cause. If you can do something with the cause, if you can remove the cause, if you can check the cause a little bit, then there is some result. Without knowing the cause at all, there is nothing. Imagine a person has some problem, for example somebody puts poison in the water-tank and the poisonous water goes all over the city in the pipes, in the taps. When you search for where it comes from, you find the tank. Then you clean that and you put another medicine inside to stop the poison, whatever it is.

Also like the poisonous tree—in order to destroy the branches of a poisonous tree that harms a lot of people, you have to find the root. Once you've recognized the root you can do something, there is always a method. If you do not find the root, if you do not recognize it, it grows again and again.

If some change isn't made to the water tank where the poison is put, however much the people in the city take medicine, the water can still give poison. However, as much as the person knows the cause of the problems, then I think there's more freedom for treatment, more benefits, also, depending on how much one's methods fit the cause, how much it can change the cause, dependent on that, the problems can be pacified.

I think I will stop here.

[Dedication prayers]

Lecture 24: December 3<sup>rd</sup> am

[Praise to Manjushri]

Please listen to the teaching generating at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, 'At any rate I must achieve omniscient mind, especially for kind mother sentient beings. Therefore, I'm going to listen to the commentary on the *Bodhicharyavatara*.'

The listening subject is the *Bodhicharyavatara*, the subject of patience; how to stop anger when somebody harms oneself and how to meditate on patience, taking the suffering voluntarily. What I said before when explaining these two verses on the contaminated aggregates is how this is not beyond the nature of suffering. It does not mean that one shouldn't have treatment when one gets sick; that it's the nature of samsara so one shouldn't do anything; it's the nature of samsara, so one

shouldn't eat food, one shouldn't drink anything or one shouldn't seek treatment because it's the nature of samsara.

Some practitioners whose minds are well-trained in thought training or whose minds have very high realizations, those special, particular beings purposely take the aspect of sickness. Then also there are those who have no need treatment for themselves but take treatment for the sake of others to be able to accumulate merit. In that way some sentient beings accumulate so much merit by taking on the aspect of sickness.

Practitioners whose minds are well-trained in thought training, like a child riding on a horse is the other example. I mean, it can be a child, but a person who is well-trained in riding on a horse, no matter how violent the horse is, even though his mind is distracted, he is not thinking of the horse but is thinking of something else. His mind is distracted by very sweet sounds, music or something, and he is not paying attention to the horse. But however violent the horse is, however the horse goes, his position, he has no fear in his mind and whatever needs to be done according to how the horse goes, he knows what to do and it happens automatically, without paying much attention. There's no danger of falling down. A person whose mind is not well-trained in thought training is like a child riding on a violent horse.

It depends on the practitioner himself whether he wants to continuously experience it without treatment or, even though the body has pain, the mind is not depressed, the mind is extremely happy. I remember my friend, the monk whose story I spoke of before—one day, two years ago I think, two or three years ago this ascetic monk had much pain in the knees, I think for a whole month. He had to walk with a stick. But he told me that his mind was extremely happy having the pain. Even though his body had pain, the mind was extremely happy.

There was another monk who might have been his disciple, one monk from tantric college, who wanted to do the retreat of taking the essence, which means that even if he did not find the means of living all the time, he could live on pills. Sometimes if he doesn't find food, he is able to continue the retreat. So this one monk from tantric college asked the ascetic monk to guide his retreat. He was in a place called Dalhousie, not Dharamsala, where the monk was doing this retreat of taking the essence.

This ascetic monk, Gen Jampa Wangdu, went to request His Holiness the Dalai Lama to give him permission to go to Dalhousie, I think for just one day, some hours by bus from Dharamsala to Dalhousie. His Holiness told this ascetic monk when he was leaving, "On the way you check your views, how things appear, you check on the way." His Holiness gave this advice.

So he went to see this monk in Dalhousie and on the way back at this place called Pathankot, which is on the way to Dharamsala, at nighttime at Pathankot—I don't know what happened, I don't remember the conditions. I think it was nighttime, and the Indian people who were sleeping outside were fighting each other. They were quarreling so much that they woke up all the people who live upstairs, in the restaurants, in the houses. The people who lived outside screamed so much, fighting so much and all the people who lived upstairs woke up and got angry and they began to fight. Then they were all fighting, the upstairs people and the downstairs people. I think something happened with this monk, I don't remember. Somehow it became a huge thing and all the people became very angry because they could not sleep. They threw water from the windows on the Indians who were sleeping on the beds outside. The upstairs people threw water from the windows and they were all

quarreling with each other. The upstairs people were complaining, 'Why don't you keep quiet? We can't sleep.' Then I don't know what happened.

Then I think the police came and somehow put this monk in prison. They asked him, 'Where were you born, what are you doing?' But the police couldn't do anything with him; he sat in the prison for hours and hours, I think he was sitting there all day, his head wrapped up with his *zen*. I think he was doing meditation, but the people didn't know what he was doing. He was caught in prison at nighttime, and then in the daytime in the evening the police didn't know what to do with him., I think the problem was not so serious, so they asked him to go. He said, 'I don't want to go.' I think he was able to speak a little bit of Hindi so he asked the police, "Babu," can I can stay here. Anyway the police insisted that he go.

At nighttime when those Indians were quarreling, the Tibetan man who lived in the restaurant upstairs didn't know that this ascetic monk had come. He didn't know the whole thing, the whole evolution. So the next day the monk came to the restaurant and they heard his story, how he lived his life, and they respected him very much. He went to the train station—I think the police put him in the train station?—I don't know. Then he met many young army men. They didn't know him, and he didn't know them, but somehow they liked him very much. The army asked him where he wanted to go, and he said Dharamsala so one army man came with him especially to bring him to Dharamsala. Somehow it was very funny how things happened on the way from Dalhousie to Dharamsala—it became some kind of big dream.

Then afterwards he went to see His Holiness and His Holiness asked, "What did you see?" The monk explained the whole thing. Then His Holiness asked him, "What do you think about it?" Because already from the very beginning His Holiness told him, "You check your view on the way." It's just a very funny thing, nothing serious, so many people quarreling such-and-such and he then had to be in prison—kind of something happened out of nothing, sort of. So His Holiness asked him, "What do you think, what do you think yourself?" Then he explained to His Holiness, "All these situations made me understand that I think I have finished training my mind in thought-training. I have confidence in it. This is what I discovered." That was what he answered His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Also one day we were taking teachings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the palace and there were many other ascetic monks, many geshes and the Tantric College monks. There was much rain, and in the pee-pee break this ascetic monk fell down on the cement steps that go to the office. It was very wet, so he fell and had a wound here [on the head], with blood.

He used to come quite often to see us, to have parties. When he came it used to be the best party. During that teaching His Holiness blew with his holy breath on his wound. Then that night when he came to see us, he told us that he fell down and even though a lot of blood came his experience was of incredible bliss, no pain at all, incredible bliss. I think His Holiness sent a car for him, to bring him to the medical center. He is one of the oldest meditators, with incredible experience, highly fortunate, also very rare in the world, with the experience of the graduated path to enlightenment, on his way to complete the path. So whenever there is need for treatment or something needs to be done, he is always well taken care of by His Holiness' office, and wherever he needs to go by car he is always served by the office of His Holiness.

The reason why this ascetic had much pain in his knee, even though he had no mental pain, was because when he was living in Sera Monastery he lived as kind of a hippie monk life, being very naughty. One day with no reason at all the thought to beat an old monk came, in the debating place, in the courtyard, outside. The ground there is laid by pieces of sand and chopped stones—so it is a little bit warm where the monks sit on the debating ground. He saw one old monk there and he had the thought to beat this old monk, and he found a stick somewhere around there and beat the old monks' two knees with the stick so many times. The old monk couldn't do much to him as he was quite an old one.

He explained to me that during his sickness, during his pain in the knees, during those months, he could remember nothing else then that time when he was in the monastery, that he had beaten this old monk with the stick on the knees. That thought came so strongly in his mind. Because he is a great practitioner with realization of the lamrim, bodhicitta and the right view, even the small karmas that are left there to experience get purified by the power of his realizations and practice, instead of being experienced in the future lives for a long time. Even the small karmas are experienced in this life, without need for experiencing them in the lower realms for a long time. The karma of beating the monk was finished by having this pain for that short duration.

I think many holy beings, such as the Khunu Lama Tenzin Gyaltzen, take that aspect so that some sentient beings get the opportunity to accumulate merit by making offerings of treatment. There are also transformations of buddhas in the form of beggars and in the form of patients, making different methods for sentient beings to accumulate merit.

The conclusion of what I am saying is this. For us, ordinary persons, especially those whose minds are not well trained in thought-training, when we experience problems such as sickness, then without having treatment it is like if one is experiencing much hunger and one doesn't eat food—one cannot practice. Similar, without having treatment we become worse and worse and we cannot do the practice, we cannot continue with the practice. So whatever we can do, whatever conditions there are to help, medicine and so forth, we should do, otherwise we cannot continue with the practice. But at the same time while we are experiencing the problem, while we are experiencing the pain, we should practice patience. While we are experiencing it we should apply the thought training, we should do the practice of thought training.

In that way, even during the time one is experiencing the pain, the mind is happy. It stops the unhappy mind, the aggression, the depression—these kinds of things. When the mind is happy there is always the will to practice Dharma, one is continuously practicing. Without talking about the problems or pain one is experiencing becoming highly meaningful, becoming the path to the omniscient mind, purifying the obscurations—besides that, while one is experiencing these things, if one practices patience, if one applies the advice of the thought training, in the meantime the mind is very happy. So to make the mind happy is the most important thing.

The next two verses show how to make suffering beneficial for oneself; reflecting the benefits of meditating on suffering.

Without suffering there is no renunciation;  
Therefore, mind, you should stand firm.

It is worthwhile to think how samsara, the contaminated aggregates of attachment, is in the nature of suffering. Without thinking about the sufferings of samsara, there is no way to generate the thought of renouncing samsara, leaving samsara behind. Without generating the thought of renouncing samsara in the mind, one cannot even enter the path of liberation from the bondage of the unsubdued mind and karma. Without entering the path there is no way one can achieve liberation. Without practicing the path, the remedy that ends the obscurations of the unsubdued mind, there is no way to achieve liberation.

So even to achieve liberation, if one seeks liberation for oneself, one should generate the thought of renouncing samsara, the door of the path to liberation. To do that one must reflect on the shortcomings of samsara, how samsara is in the nature of suffering. Like the person who took drugs, who has taken *datura*—in the beginning he didn't know what is going to happen, he had such a hard time, almost caused him life danger, vomiting, pains, much fear. Then because of that shock he doesn't want to even touch drugs; he has complete aversion, he doesn't want even to look at them, feels disgusted even to see the *datura*. Or when you eat food in a restaurant and it makes you really sick for seven days. Afterwards, because of the awareness of that, remembering that, you don't even want to stay in that place, besides not eating food there.

We look at samsara whose nature is suffering and, not realizing this, not being aware of this, we project it as a beautiful park. We look at it as happiness, as pleasant. We hallucinate like this. In that way we never get aversion, as long as we don't see the samsara that is in the nature of suffering as suffering, we don't get the thought of renouncing it, wanting to be free from that. The thought doesn't come so continuously we get caught in samsara, and continuously experience problems, on and on.

Like a child who doesn't know the ground is covered with fiery red-hot coals, who thinks it is covered with flowers, who doesn't know that it will burn the body and cause life-danger. Instead of wanting to be away from that, that child has the thought to be inside it, to live there, to go there. So to save the child from the life-danger of jumping in the fire, to protect it from that, it should know that it burns the body, and then the child has fear of being in it, and the thought to be free from that, to be liberated from that.

If one doesn't realize how samsara is in the nature of suffering, that it is suffering, then the thought to be liberated from it never comes. So therefore it is important to meditate, to study the teachings of the four noble truths, the true cause of suffering, true suffering—not just what you heard during the course but very extensively studying the scriptures, not just a few outlines that you heard during the course, not being satisfied with that, not only that, but what the Omniscient One explained—the true cause of suffering and the true suffering, the evolution of samsara and how samsara is in the nature of suffering. One should do listening, reflecting and meditation practice.

Even to achieve omniscient mind for the sake of other sentient beings, one should generate bodhicitta. Without the thought of renouncing samsara, one cannot generate bodhicitta. In order to generate effortless bodhicitta within one's mind, one should have the root of bodhicitta, great compassion, feeling that it is unbearable that other sentient beings experience suffering in samsara. One should have great compassion like a spear has gone into one's own heart, feeling it is so unbearable to see others in samsara, experiencing suffering. When you think of others, how others are experiencing the suffering of samsara, you should feel it is so unbearable. One should practice great compassion, like the mother whose only most beloved child fell in the fire, such great

compassion, wishing right this minute, this second, that the child to be free from that, with incredible strong compassion that the child be free from that suffering. You cannot relax without doing something for that child. While the child is suffering in the fire, you cannot relax, play music, drink or take much time eating food without doing something. You cannot relax even a minute, even one second. Like that, great compassion, unbearable. Feel that with the samsara of others, such unbearable compassion.

With one's own samsara one should feel it is unbearable, like a spear into the heart. One should not find any attraction to be in samsara, not wanting to be in samsara even for a second. Day and night, continuously the thought to escape from this, to be liberated from this, should be present. You should have the strong, effortless wish to be liberated from your own samsara. You should have this, such a strong effortless thought of renouncing samsara.

How quickly you generate bodhicitta in your mind is dependent on how much you feel your own samsara is unbearable. That depends on reflecting much and extensively, again and again, not just one or two times but continuously for years and years—thinking, meditating how one's own samsara is in the nature of suffering.

So we are talking here how thinking of the suffering, meditating on the suffering is beneficial for your own liberation and also for the liberation of others. Without the thought of renouncing samsara even liberation cannot be achieved, leave aside the omniscient mind, so therefore take the suffering voluntarily. It is worthwhile to practice patience with the suffering of samsara. If one doesn't practice patience with the suffering of samsara then whatever practice one does, one cannot continuously practice. If one cares too much about problems, "Oh I have this problem, that problem," one cannot do the meditation practice. The less patience you have, the more and more problems you find and care about, and also they become greater. As your mind cares more they become greater and greater, they become bigger for your mind.

If some ascetics and the people of Kanapa  
Endure the pain of cuts and burns for no reason  
Then for the sake of liberation, why have I no courage?

I think what it is saying might mean this—when Mahadeva lived an ascetic life, taking hardships, such as not having sexual intercourse with the wife, Deva Uma, when he was in concentration, the Mahadevi caused him to develop attachment. The contact degenerated Mahadeva's bearing the hardships. Probably it might be a similar example when the husband is doing his meditation session and the wife is screaming. Or when the wife is in the meditation session and the husband can't stand it and screams at her, "You're not talking to me..."

<end of tape>

So the Hindu followers, those who have faith in Mahadevi, in order to please her, in the autumn time, around the ninth day fast for either one or three days. They don't eat food and they also burn and cut their own bodies. In order to please her, Mahadevi, the Hindu followers do this. They kind of torture themselves, put their own body on fire or cut their own limbs—things like that.

In South India, in the place called Karnataka, near the area of Mysore, in order to compete with each other the people who live there—maybe for the same reason, to please Mahadevi—have a



competition of cutting the body, two different countries or maybe two individuals compete for who can cut more of their own body.

For those sufferings, without any meaning, there is no worth at all. If those people are able to bear those incredible sufferings, those hardships, which don't have any meaning, which don't have any good result, then why not us? Why can't we bear suffering in order to liberate all sentient beings from suffering? If those people, without any meaning, with no slight benefit for the person himself, or for others, nothing, are able to bear great incredible suffering pain, why not us? Why can't we bear to experience suffering, why can't we bear what they experience in order to liberate all the sentient beings from suffering?

You see, if we bear the hardships that these people bear in order to practice Dharma, for the happiness of future lives, it has that much meaning. It is not the greatest meaning but it has that much meaning if we bear that much hardship to practice Dharma to obtain the happiness of future lives. If it has that much meaning, benefiting many future lives, this is more worthwhile than their bearing those great hardships and sufferings.

Bearing that much great hardship, burning the body, cutting the limbs, all these things, fasting, no food for many days, to practice Dharma for oneself to achieve liberation, ever-release from samsara—this has greater meaning and is much more worthwhile than the previous one. Then, bearing that much great hardship—this happens in many other countries, not only India—and suffering to practice Dharma, to achieve omniscient mind for the sake of other sentient beings, to liberate all sentient beings from all suffering, not from some part of the suffering, but from each and every suffering, that is much more worthwhile than experiencing that much hardship to achieve liberation for oneself. To practice the holy Dharma, if we even could bear that much hardship as these people bear for nothing, even if we could bear that much to achieve omniscient mind, to follow the path to omniscient mind, to liberate sentient beings from all suffering, according to the advantage and result that one achieves, the benefits that all sentient beings receive, the great advantages that all sentient beings receive, if we experience that much hardship, it is small. Even if we are able to bear what they bear, it is still nothing if we think about the result we will achieve, the extensive benefits that each sentient being receives, temporally and ultimately.

So now, the suffering that we bear is little bit of cold in the morning but still we have lots of clothes, we don't have a bare body. The purpose of taking ordination, the prayers, is purely for the sake of others. You can understand this even when you think of the prayer. Then there is a little bit of pain when you sit for two hours, maybe a little bit of pain in the knees, in the back, then maybe a little bit of a runny nose, a little bit of a cold, which is nothing. Then maybe there is a little bit of diarrhea, a little bit of discomfort in the stomach and maybe there's a little bit hunger in the evening time during ordination days. We are not experiencing that much hardship that these other people are bearing for nothing, not the slightest benefit for themselves or others. The conclusion is this: these people are able to bear this for a result of nothingness. Leaving aside the ever-release from samsara for oneself, for us to achieve omniscient mind, to liberate each sentient being, to free them from all the causes of suffering and the result, true suffering, is the greatest purpose, the greatest meaning—but even for this we are unable to bear it. We are not bearing hardships as they bear them and we cannot bear even a small discomfort for Dharma practice.

We think that those people are that much more foolish but, at the same time, the words that we say, what we practice, the meditation that we do, the ordination that we take—even though it has the

greatest purpose to achieve omniscient mind for the sake of others, and is incredibly worthwhile, in fact we should bear greater hardships, greater suffering than those people bear and experience. In regards to the purpose, thinking of the purpose, the hardships we should experience should be greater than what they experience—but in fact we cannot bear even the smallest discomfort, a little bit of tiredness of the body, even to be sitting two hours for the sake of others. That shows how much limitation there is in the mind, how the thought to benefit others is limited, how strong the selfish attitude is, concerned for self-comfort and happiness. One can see clearly from that.

However, before coming to the course one should think well whether one should come or not. Once one has accepted to come, once one has entered then, the meditation, the studies, whatever it is, do it as best as one can, as pure as one can, make it as beneficial as one can. At least try to understand, even if you do not agree with the practice. There is great worth, there is a great meaning in trying to understand, trying to have at least an intellectual understanding. There is a great meaning in even just attempting that. Then if you feel there is need, that it is correct, beneficial and worthwhile for your life, you take it and then you practice. First of all understanding is very important—without understanding how can you check whether it is pure or not? How can you check anything without understanding? Also, if one doesn't do this, what else you can do in the world, what is the best you can do in the world in your life? Without doing this, developing the mind with this practice, what is there in the world that is more important, more beneficial, what is there left in the world that you can do, what else can you do? Without doing this, what else can you do in the world that benefits all sentient beings? What else brings ultimate benefit and happiness for yourself and ultimate benefit and happiness for other sentient beings? What else you can do better than this? What is there? You check.

There is nothing else. If one has some money then go traveling, go to see the primitive countries, different countries that you have not seen before. Until the money is finished, until you run out of money, then again you get some money; spend some months at the beach, like that. Then come back to work, or hang around in the world. You try this religion, try this ashram, you stay a few years then you get fed up, then you join another group, you meet somebody who tells you how nice it is, then you join that group, then you stay some years, then again you see a lot of faults, again you get fed up with that guru, whatever it is, finding a lot of mistakes, this and that, and then again you get fed up. Then again you hang around, go to another country, join another group, and then one day the life has finished and nothing has been done. The life is completely empty; you didn't get anything worthwhile done for yourself, for the sake of others.

I think I stop here. It's important to check like this, to look at the world. Think about what you are doing here, the purpose, the subject. Then you look at the rest of the world, and you try to understand.

[Dedication prayers]

Lecture 25: December 3<sup>rd</sup> pm

Again please generate at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve omniscient mind in order to lead all sentient beings, who have been my mother and so kind, to the state of omniscient mind; therefore I'm going to listen to the commentary on the *Bodhicaryavatara*.”

We don't need to talk only about Indian examples, burning their bodies, cutting their limbs, fasting so many days to please Mahadevi, or those people in Karnataka in South India who compete with each other, cutting off their limbs. Also they beat themselves so much as purification. I think also they walk with one leg even though they have two legs. There are many things like this. I thought to mention some other examples but I think maybe I will do that a little bit later.

So, to end this morning's subject, in order to liberate all sentient beings from all the sufferings, even greater hardships than those people bear, we can bear much more hardship. Because our purpose is to practice Dharma in order to liberate all sentient beings from suffering. This is the greatest purpose. So how much hardship one meets and has to experience is greatly worthwhile. It's not for the self; it's for the sentient beings.

Then the next verse shows that if the mind gets trained, nothing becomes difficult. The more the mind gets trained, the easier and easier things become. The remedy, the practice of patience, becomes easier and easier. The question arises, "I can bear small sufferings but how can I bear great sufferings, such as cutting off my head and limbs, how can I practice patience those? I can practice patience with small sufferings but how can I practice those great sufferings, cutting off the head and limbs?"

The answer is that it's a matter of training. As the mind gets trained, it will be easier and easier to practice patience even if you meet great sufferings.

There is nothing whatsoever  
That is not made easier through acquaintance.

If the mind gets trained, even one is suffering one can bear any great suffering. Even if somebody cuts the body in pieces, one can bear it because of the way the mind thinks of the object, the way the mind holds the object. That is all up to the root, how much the mind is trained.

A person who normally practices thought training, patience, always watches his own mind day and night, all the time, like a movie, who always pays attention to what is happening in his mind, each time what thought is coming. Whether a non-virtuous thought arises or whether a virtuous thought arises. He always watches his mind, like a spy who is always watching the person about whom the government has doubts. The spy spies on that person, day and night, all the time. The object of concentration is that person. What he does, where he goes—all the time the spy watches the person that he suspects could harm the country.

Similarly, like this, the Dharma practitioner always watches his mind, spies on his mind and always practices awareness and remembrance with his mind. When there is the danger of anger arising, he practices the remedy of patience, thought training. For example, the person who has generated the realization of impermanence and death, the person who has generated the thought of renouncing samsara or the person who has stronger thought to cherish others than himself, whose mind has strong thought of loving kindness and great compassion toward others. In previous times, a few years back, for this person it was so difficult to control the mind, to control the anger—it was kind of impossible. When the anger starts to arise nothing works, only the anger works. Even though you try to think of something, it is difficult, very difficult. Even if somebody gives advice to practice patience, it is very difficult to obey. If somebody tries to give advice, you think, "Oh, I am a hundred

percent right. I think that he is bad, he is evil and I am a hundred percent right. He shouldn't do that to me, he has no right to do that to me."

Even if somebody tries to give teachings, then this person one-pointedly thinks, "What the teachings say might be right but this enemy is absolutely bad, he is absolutely bad, he is something that is not included in the teachings. Those enemies that are explained in the teachings are light enemies, but this enemy who gives harm, who criticizes me, is absolutely wrong. I am a hundred percent right, he is absolutely wrong. There is no way to prove that he is right and there is no way to look at him as positive. If I would look at him as a kind virtuous teacher, this would be completely wrong. This is not the enemy with whom I should practice. This is some other enemy."

A few years back, even in one day, anger arises six or seven times. It arises in one day so easily, so many times. Now, it is very difficult for anger to arise and there is such a big difference from a few years back, the nature of mind has become so different. The present nature of the mind is so different, now it becomes so difficult for anger to arise. Even if somebody gives you terrible harm, somebody puts you in prison and what you hear for days and days is only scolding, and you are badly treated, beaten, not given food and drink, and given terrible harms, it doesn't disturb the mind. The mind is full of happiness, rejoicefulness, having the opportunity to experience suffering for the sake of others and remembering from the depth of the heart the kindness of the other person. Whatever harm is given, whatever harm one receives from others, nothing disturbs the mind, nothing makes the mind unhappy. Before, a few years ago, even such small things easily caused you to be angry or made the mind so unhappy.

So definitely there is the possibility that one can make the mind change. As I often say, it is up to the practice. Definitely, no matter how much the mind is terrible, negative, so evil, so violent, definitely one can make it change, except if from ones' own side one doesn't practice, doesn't try. Otherwise there is definitely the possibility to change the mind.

The whole thing is up to the root, the way the mind gets more trained. The way the mind thinks, the way the mind recognizes the enemy, the way the mind interprets, the way the mind views or thinks of this person, the enemy. It only thinks how bad he is because he gave such-and-such harm to me, disturbed my happiness, my relatives and my friends. It uses that as a reason that he is bad. It remembers the way he gave harm and uses that as a tool to label and prove that he is bad, that he is evil. The mind thinks that way; that he gave harm and disturbance to oneself and by that reason he is bad, and more anger arises. The more the mind views and projects in that way, "He is the enemy who gives me harm," the more the mind thinks in that way, the anger arises stronger and stronger.

Then the opposite; instead of using "he is giving me harm" to prove that he is bad, use, "Oh, he is disturbing me, criticizing me and abusing me," as a reason to identify how kind he is, how he is a virtuous teacher obliging me to put the teachings on patience that I heard from the guru into practice. He is the practical virtuous teacher who obliges me to put things into practice. He is giving me the opportunity, asking me, persuading me, not from the mouth but persuading me to put it into action, to put it into practice with him, to train the mind in patience with him. He is helping; he is giving me the opportunity. Use that—his action, the disturbance—instead of proof that he is bad, he is evil, to prove how kind he is. Use it to prove how kind he is and how he is the practical virtuous teacher who wants me to put the teachings on patience straight into practice.

So actually what he is doing is not harming. Actually what he is doing to me, all this criticism, whatever he is doing with body, speech and mind, everything he is doing is benefiting me, benefiting my mind, the development of my mind, the practice of the good heart. Actually everything that he does benefits me. The more and more you think in this way—in the beginning it's just words, but if you think of the kindness, the benefits, the incredible benefits you receive from the enemy, the person who dislikes you—the more you really feel, “He is the one and only practical teacher, the only person with whom I can bring my mind in good shape.”

Tame the untamed mind, like the crazy elephant.

The untamed mind, like the untamed tiger, which is tamed by special people who have experience in taming the violent, vicious tiger; like that, my mind is like the vicious, violent tiger, like the crazy elephant that scares everyone and makes everybody run away. It causes disharmonies, upsetting sentient beings, upsetting even holy beings and virtuous teachers by harming other sentient beings, the object of their compassion, for whom the buddhas work day and night. One-pointedly they work and then this untamed mind harms them.

“Because I harm others, even the holy beings get upset, as they one-pointedly live their life only for the sake of others, and day and night work for other sentient beings. This untamed, unsubdued mind makes them upset. The one who is called enemy, who dislikes me, who badly treats me, are the only ones who can tame this vicious, untamed mind. The ones to tame and subdue this mind are only these sentient beings who dislike me.”

The more and more you think of the kindness and great benefit you receive from the enemy, the more and more you feel his kindness from the heart. At the same time you don't see the person as an object of dislike but in beauty. More and more you feel kindness from the heart, and more and more you see the person in the aspect of beauty. The other way, the more and more you think in a negative way, “He is harming me,” and use that harm to prove that he is bad, the thought of dislike arises stronger from the heart, at the same time you see the person as an object of dislike, more and more in ugliness.

Also, when you feel the kindness of the person more and more from the heart, when you see the person more and more in the aspect of beauty, you want to offer something for his kindness. The thought of loving kindness arises very strongly, “What can I do for him? He has been so kind to me, so beneficial for my mind, what I can do for him?” Automatically the thought of loving kindness arises, the thought to help, “What I can do for him?”

The peace that you have received in the mind, the benefits that you receive from the enemy, by his harming you, the opportunity of the practice to subdue your mind is so much. What you have received from the enemy is priceless. The mental peace, the tranquility, the opportunity to practice thought training, patience—this is what you get from him by depending on his kindness, and it is priceless. Even if you give the enemy one mountain of diamonds as a present for thanks, still it is nothing; it doesn't cover the kindness of the enemy. Because the benefits that you have received are so great, the mental peace is so great. The opportunity to practice has incredible benefits and is so great, even if you give him that much, a mountain of dollars, equal in number to grains of dust, even if you give him that many dollars, it is nothing.

If somebody gives piles of dollars the size of mountains, great mountains of dollars, piled up, “Oh, this is for you,” piled up on the ground the size of a mountain, or many rolls of dollars dropped from an airplane, “Oh, this is for you.” You see, even if you get that many dollars, the mental peace that you get from the enemy, by his complaining, by his criticizing, by his badly treating you, the tranquility and mental peace that you get from practicing patience, thought training—this you don’t experience. This peace of mind is so beneficial, deep inside the heart, so beneficial, way inside and has very deep benefits. This peace you don’t get, you don’t experience—even if somebody gives you mountains of dollars heaped up in front of you, you don’t get this. With this you have no opportunity to practice patience—except if you get angry with a mountain of dollars!

Anyway the benefits you get in the mind from the enemy are priceless. It’s priceless; you can’t really put a price on it. So, the enemy is incredibly kind. Somebody puts mountains of dollars, billions of dollars in your hand, saying, “This is for you, you can do whatever you want.” But the person who practices thought training, patience, has a much happier mind if somebody criticizes him or slanders him to the teacher or the employer, or if somebody creates a bad relationship. Actually for the practitioner of patience, of thought training, the mind is much happier than if somebody gives you mountains of dollars.

You see, the whole thing is dependent on mind training. The way the mind thinks, the way you think is the very root. With one way of thinking of the person, interpreting and looking at what he does, your mind becomes unhappy and dislikes. The other way your mind is happy, so happy to have him around, so happy to see him again; you want to see him again, and see him as very attractive, in the aspect of beauty. I don’t mean physical beauty but the beauty of remembering his kindness.

One evening here at Boudha I went to make some light offerings at the stupa. Somebody’s mother had died so I went to make some light offerings there. There was one man who had kind of long thick hair, like a dog’s. I don’t think a Western dog. When you don’t keep the dog’s hair clean it becomes, I don’t know what you call it—matted. You know, it becomes kind of thick when it’s not kept clean, sort of like tantric practitioners, what the Tibetans call *ngakpa*, a practitioner of tantra. Normally they have that kind of outside-looking form. So there were some people there in the line, I don’t think they knew me, I think they thought maybe I came from India. So there were some laypeople taking the hand-blessing, what the Tibetans call hand empowerment.

I think this person asked where I was from so I said I came from Kopan. I think he didn’t like it. After he heard I came from Kopan the other laypeople took the hand-blessing but this person was scared. At that time he asked something that I don’t remember, but somehow he was scared that my hand would come on his head, both of his hands were kind of like this, like the armies when you have lost the war, they surrender. He was very scared, because he was in the line, that my hand would come over his head. Suddenly there was some kind of discomfort in the mind but after that I discovered that he is my best remedy to subdue and destroy my pride. Myself, I am friend of pride; myself I don’t destroy pride, I am only a friend of pride, I develop more pride. So I am supposed to destroy the pride but I am a friend of pride. This man showed me pride, and helped me to destroy my pride. Actually I should destroy my pride but I don’t. But he does destroy my pride. I remember so much his kindness. Otherwise, myself, I don’t do anything to destroy the unsubdued mind of pride. I don’t do anything—I keep it, I take care of it. I help it, I care for it. He becomes the remedy, helping to destroy my pride. So I felt his kindness very much. Even when I came back in my room I remembered it.

Also one time in Dharamsala there was one very learned geshe who wrote many books. One day I went to see him. I thought he might be happy so I bowed down and put my mouth in the Tibetan custom [Rinpoche shows], because he is an elder monk. Then he was expressing like this [Rinpoche makes gesture] keeping his nose in space, what do you call that, has it got some name, not only the nose in the air but mouth down like this? It hasn't got a name yet?

Anyway, then suddenly, immediately I thought, "Oh, I wasted my respect!" Immediately, "Oh, I wasted my respect!" Suddenly there was discomfort but then after one, two, three steps I thought in the same way: Myself, I never destroy pride or anger, the unsubdued minds. Myself, I am supposed to be against delusion to destroy it but I am only its friend. He helped me to destroy the unsubdued mind, being the remedy. When I think of that, his kindness, then there is no discomfort, no unhappiness in the mind. There is only much calmness and peace. So I really felt his kindness from the heart. Even when I reached my room, again and again I thought about his kindness. So I thought, next time I see him I will bow more down and if he does more of this, it will be more effective for my mind. I get more profit. I get more profit—whatever he gets I don't know. I thought to do that next time I saw him but unfortunately I left for Nepal. So I didn't get much chance. I didn't see him after that.

However you see, what I am saying is, Geshe Rabten Rinpoche, one of my gurus—you heard his life story one night I think. Geshe and other monks criticize him and say bad things about him, not in front of him, and when they come to see him in his house, he asks one of his disciples called Geshe Pemba, whom nobody can remember that he got angry in his life, no other monks who lived with him can remember that he got angry anytime, he is a real ascetic monk. So when Geshe Rinpoche was in Dharamsala, when he came from Switzerland, this ascetic monk, his disciple Geshe Pemba, makes the tea and the food and cleans Geshe-la's house.

This monk Geshe Pemba—outside it looks like he doesn't know Dharma; he does not look like an educated monk. He did much study in the monastery but outside you don't see him as an educated monk, he doesn't appear like that. Every day he just recites OM MANI PADME HUM. He has Geshe Rabten Rinpoche's prayer wheel, a small one, and he keeps it at his pillow and turns it, reciting the Chenrezig mantra. It was given to him and he uses that, and most of the time he recites that mantra. When he gets bugs and lice on his body he takes them and puts them in another place. He takes them from his shirt and puts them in the undershirt. He just shifts their place, like people shift from one place to another place. He doesn't put them outside; he can't bear to put them outside in a cold place. When they're biting he just moves them to another place.

In Tibet there was one great lama, one Nyingmapa yogi, who took other people's lice and bugs, completely. I think his name is Rinchen Nyingpa, I don't remember the name exactly. Those are real practitioners of exchanging oneself with others, making charity of the body, becoming a means of living for the bugs and lice.

Anyway, Geshe-la's servant is a great practitioner, a bodhisattva.

So you see when Geshe Rinpoche receives people who talk about him and criticize him behind his back, Geshe Rinpoche asks Geshe Pemba to make *momos* and delicious tea for them. He gives them good talks, pleasing talks and good food, and then they go away. That is what Geshe Rabten Rinpoche does. Instead of showing a bad face when the person comes, a black face and not speaking, keeping silence.

Also one time at Swayambunath, the head lama of one monastery whose holy name was Serkong Dorje Chang, the embodiment of Marpa—when you see him you wouldn't find any differences with the previous great yogis, Tilopa, Naropa and Marpa. You wouldn't find any differences; it is so easy to have faith that he is those deities you see in the tangkas, those aspects of Buddha. There is no doubt—just by seeing him, you can feel it, you get firm faith.

However, that great yogi, in his past life he was a married lama, a Gelugpa married lama who accomplished very high tantric realizations. The one who passed away one or two years ago, his past life's son, was called Serkong Tsenshab. When he was in Tibet he assisted His Holiness, not exactly as a teacher, but helping His Holiness when he was in the aspect of youth. At that time there were very learned monks who were chosen from Sera, Ganden and Drepung, those famous monasteries, to help His Holiness to debate, to discuss Dharma, to help His Holiness debate. Besides his two tutors, there were very learned monks chosen from each college. So the son of the previous life of Serkong Dorje Chang, the one who was the assistant for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's debating, is called Tsenshab. After, he came to India and became His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teacher. His Holiness took many teachings from him.

This great yogi, Serkong Dorje Chang, passed away at Swayambunath. Their monastery had a big cooking pot and one day it was stolen by somebody, by some Tibetans I think. I think it was stolen by some poor people who live down below Swayambunath. The manager of the monastery found out and asked Rinpoche to make observations. Rinpoche told them to invite this thief to the monastery and then to offer lunch and to offer scarves, and that they should say thanks for stealing the pot. I am not sure whether they did it or not, if the monks listened to Rinpoche's advice or not, but that was the advice given by Rinpoche.

The reason I am telling these stories is not to pretend that I am a Dharma practitioner or any particular thing. This is not what I express. What I am saying is that when you think like this, when you think of the kindness, there is benefit. What I'm saying is that. I think sometimes it is like this. If you try to change the mind by practicing patience, controlling anger, which is so difficult in the beginning, definitely it gets easier. Definitely the mind can be changed.

<end of tape>

Then remembering the kindness becomes not just imitating the texts, not just imitating what the scriptures say. When you think of the kindness of the enemy, the one who dislikes you, this kindness is felt from the depth of your bones, from the depth of your heart, and actually so much more than the kindness of the mother, whose reason is only that she gave food, gave this and gave that, gave food and clothing, gave body, like this. The kindness of the enemy is so deep.

I think I will stop here, I will read some verses.

If the mind gets trained in patience, one is able to bear even the greatest sufferings. If it's put in the form of a question, how does it happen? The way the mind is unable to bear even a small suffering, even a small discomfort, is up to the way the mind thinks of it, which way the mind makes use of that, thinks of that. So the way of thinking in which your mind is more trained is the very root. If the mind is trained and acquainted, there is no phenomenon of mind, existence of mind, that doesn't become easier. Did I say that the wrong way? If the mind is trained, acquainted, then there is no



phenomenon of mind that doesn't become easier. Because of that reason, meditating on patience, voluntarily taking on even the small harm, such as cold and heat, others insulting or criticizing you, "You are crazy," saying "You're so bad." Then in the future you can bear even great harms, such as the fires of the naraks. So Shantideva is saying, telling us and you should understand this.

For example, bearing the small harms for the sake of others, such as cold in the morning during ordination time; then during teachings, during meditation sessions, pain in the body, exhaustion, and tiredness; then being bored during listening to the teaching because he is repeating so many times. Or taking much time to translate, being unable to stand waiting for such a long time.

Anyway, usually when lamas give teachings to Tibetans they repeat things many times. It is a method to repeat three times in one day. Actually four times. First of all the elaborate explanations, then shorter than that, then shorter than that and the fourth repetition is the next morning. This is because among the audience or the disciples there are many learned geshe, actually there is nothing new they can learn but still they come to hear the teachings. In regards to the words there is nothing left that they don't know, nothing left in the scriptures that they don't know. They have studied it many times, they can explain it very well but still they come to listen to the teachings when the guru is there to explain, to give commentary, even though they have received them many times before, even though they have listened many times. So the aim is not to hear new words. That is not the aim. The aim is to subdue the mind, from where many problems come. To subdue the mind is the main aim of those Dharma practitioners, geshe and learned lamas. That is because they know how to listen to Dharma, even though there's nothing left in the scriptures that they don't know; even though they spend their whole life debating, going over each word, analyzing the meaning of each word, spending so much time on each word. Their main aim is to subdue the mind, so each time they hear teachings over and over, they remember what they forgot before, and also each time when they hear them, there is a different effect on the mind.

Of course, when one doesn't know how to listen to the teachings, it is very easy for them to become boring. This is the case when the aim is not to subdue the mind, when the aim is to hear something new, when the thought is not of oneself as the patient, Dharma as the medicine and the teacher as a skilled doctor. There is complete advice about how to listen to the teaching. It comes at the beginning of the lamrim teaching before the actual subject. There's a whole outline about how to make the teachings effective and useful for your mind, and not to let listening to the teachings become the development of unsubdued mind.

However, without talking much, among the disciples there are different levels. There are disciples with very high intelligence, enough for the first explanation, and then there are middle intelligence and lower intelligence disciples. There is the elaborate explanation, then shorter, then shortest, for those different levels of intelligence to understand. Otherwise when you give an elaborate explanation, the lower intelligent souls cannot understand, they cannot put it together, they cannot comprehend it. The method is to cover, to benefit everybody, to get something for everybody. Also after three repetitions they get a clear idea so there is another explanation the next morning in case they forget or didn't remember some part of it, to remind them.

Then it is uncomfortable, boring. What Shantideva is saying, if we relate it to us, is that the small discomforts, the harms that we experience during the meditation course, whatever we experience in the morning, in the afternoon or in the evening, if we can meditate on patience by voluntarily taking these small harms, not for the sake of ourselves but for the sake of others, if we can bear these small

harms now for the sake of others, by this mind training, in the future, like those great bodhisattvas, even if one has to be in the fire of the naraks experiencing the suffering of burning for a number of eons equaling the water drops in the Atlantic, then without any hesitation, willingly, with great happiness, like a swan entering the lake or an elephant burned by the sun entering the water, very pleausurably, with great happiness, one is able to bear those sufferings.

For example, making charity of one's body to other sentient beings, like Buddha Shakyamuni did, making charity of his holy body to the hungry mother tiger and her children who were in danger of death at Namobuddha, that holy place. Like that, by training in patience with small harms that we experience every day for the sake of others, for practicing Dharma, for the sake of others, then even great harms in the future can be borne with great happiness for the sake of others.

The next one is proving this by examples, proving how one can gets trained.

I think if you keep warm it helps. This was my recent experience. I do not have any experience to express of lam.rim but I know how to recover from a cold.

Lecture 26: December 4<sup>th</sup> am

[Preliminary prayers]

By training the mind, this is possible. As it is explained in the sutra teachings, there is a concentration called *covering happiness to all dharmas, to all existence*. When the meditator, the bodhisattva, achieves this concentration, then on any object that he looks at, the bodhisattva experiences only happiness or bliss and never experiences suffering. So even toward sentient beings who harm that bodhisattva, the bodhisattva himself has recognition of happiness, he experiences a blissful feeling. This might be according to the bodhisattva bhūmis.

Also, when your mind approaches a very high level of steps of the path of accomplishment of secret mantra, and also after you achieve the stage of the graduated path of generation, the mind has reached a high stage of accomplishment of secret mantra and whatever you touch or wherever you look, there is pure view and also one experiences bliss. It looks impossible for this to happen but by mind training it happens, there are ways by which the mind can reach that stage. Instead of experiencing pain one experiences bliss. Even when receiving harm, before one experienced pain and discomfort but now you experience bliss with the same conditions.

Also when a new bodhisattva makes charity of his holy body to other sentient beings, just because he has very strong will and great compassion and finds the suffering of other sentient beings unbearable, with incredible great will he is able to bear the sufferings. Even though there is incredible pain, he is able to bear it with unbearable compassion for others, unfathomable, uncontrollable. You can't control it, this incredible compassion. But when the bodhisattva reaches the arya path, after he has achieved the right-seeing path there is no pain. When he makes charity of his body there is no pain.

All these great changes happen by mind training. So what Shantideva is saying is that we shouldn't have a fixed mind. "How my mind is, what I do, this is it—there is no other way to lead my life differently from this, from how I look right now, from how I act now, and we can't exist without

attachment, without anger.” Like they normally say in the West, “How can you live the life without attachment?” “You need anger to destroy your enemy.” I haven’t heard exactly that, but they say, “Without unshuffled mind, attachment, how can you live life? There is no way to live life.” This is it. The present, whatever the personality and capability of the mind as it looks now, this is it. This is how the mind is; it cannot be different from this. If the unshuffled mind of attachment ceases, then the continuity of mind completely ceases. The person doesn’t say that exactly but it comes to that point. This is the idea, it comes to that point.

So what the great bodhisattva Shantideva is saying is that we shouldn’t have a fixed mind in regards to the capability of mind, with regard to life, to the nature of the mind, thinking, “This is it; there is no way that it can be better than this.”

The next verse is how one can meditate on patience with great suffering, how one can do it, by explaining the examples.

Who has not seen this to be so with trifling sufferings  
Such as the bites of snakes and insects,  
Feelings of hunger and thirst  
And with such minor things as rashes?

The question is, how can one bear great suffering? One cannot bear it, one cannot meditate on patience, training the mind with small harms; one cannot bear even the small harms. Shantideva is saying, with harms such as snake bites, mosquito stings, fleas, lice, feeling hunger and thirst, heat and cold, disease, itching and rashes—if one’s mind gets trained in those sufferings that are without any purpose, then it becomes easier, easy to bear. If the mind is not trained with these small sufferings—you actually see how difficult it is if the mind is not trained—then even such small sufferings are very difficult to bear. Therefore, it is greatly worthwhile to train the mind, to practice patience with sufferings, even those without any special purpose. If the mind is trained with those small harms, then you find it very easy to bear. For a person who is not trained you can see how it is so difficult to bear, even such small harms are so difficult to bear.

If a person doesn’t get a good night’s sleep because of fleas biting, then the next day he moves. He is completely shocked by that house and the next day he wants to move from that place to another house. For other people, even if the place is full of mosquitoes or fleas, for them it is normal, it is their everyday life. They live their whole life with mosquitoes and fleas, that’s the way they live their life, it’s nothing, these problems for them are normal. And for some people, even though it hasn’t been their daily life, somehow because of their way of thinking, it doesn’t become a problem for their mind. That is also why they don’t find it a disturbing, terrible place. Due to mind training, due to the way of thinking, the people who live in such a place are not really bothered. But the other person, the tourist who comes from the West, doesn’t have the experience of living in such a place. That is because he is not trained, not acquainted with these small harms.

Similarly, some people come from the West to Katmandu. They plan to stay a few months in Katmandu, something like that. So they came today, saw a little bit of Katmandu, and they couldn’t stand how dirty it is, how they couldn’t get what they wanted, how they couldn’t find things that they can get in the West, then the next day they go back to the West. They try to get back as quickly as possible. While for some people, Katmandu is such a pleasant place, they are so happy. This is a kind of mind training, the way the mind thinks of it.

Also in the West there are these people who ride on motorcycles. There is a line of buses and they jump from where a bus starts over the top to the other end of the bus. I am sure the person cannot put a signature each time that his body will be all right, that nothing will damage his body. He might not have complete confidence in the mind if somebody asks him to put a signature. There might not be complete confidence that the body will not be damaged. Even though there is danger for the life, if he checks up with a straight mind the person cannot say, "I won't be damaged, I won't be dead." But even though there is no complete certainty or confidence in the mind, still the person is able to do something that is very dangerous for the life, to bear the hardships, to bear the danger. The way the person is able to bear that is also because of the way the mind thinks of it.

Also, car racing, those fast cars: many times your legs get broken and you have to go to the hospital, stay a few weeks, get fixed, then again you do car racing and again something gets broken, just a little bit better than complete death. Always something is wrong, something broken, again you spend a few weeks in the hospital, then you come back, again car racing. Even though you had many troubles, still you are able to bear the hardships, even though you have to bear many problems. This is all mind training, the way the mind thinks of it.

But we cannot bear it if a tiny mosquito comes, the blood it takes is nothing, not even a spoonful; what it gets is such a tiny drop. The hungry, pitiful mosquito who is completely empty, the stomach is completely transparent, and what it takes from you is such a tiny drop but because of this tiny drop we cannot bear it, it becomes a huge problem for the mind. Even a flea, even though it doesn't bite, it just jumps around, "Oh there is a flea," great fear comes into the mind. We are unable to make charity, unable to bear it. But to do those things, such as bearing the danger of losing life, car racing, always breaking limbs, always many expenses, or such things as climbing very dangerous mountains, very high cliffs, where there are many dangers of avalanches—those one is able to bear. Such great dangers to life one is able to bear, but such a tiny thing one is unable to bear. Even if it is to make charity to others, one is unable to bear it; the fleas—immediately when you see it, you spray. You kill it, either with the hand or with a special thing, a material made to kill that.

Even if you see a fly in the house, in your bedroom or in the dining room while you are eating food, a fly, which doesn't bite, just flying around, it becomes a huge disturbance for your mind. Even if the insect doesn't really harm the body, seeing it in the house becomes a huge discomfort. However, on the other hand, a great danger for life one can bear. All these are just the way the mind thinks about it; this is due to mind training.

Regarding the people that I mentioned the other day, the Yugoslavians—I heard from one of the gentlemen here that these people made plans last year to climb the mountain, not the usual way that normal expeditions take but the most dangerous way. They made a new project, a new plan to climb the most dangerous way without oxygen. So some of these people came back from the mountain with their limbs frostbitten; two or three of the people who were able to come back had their limbs destroyed; they lost everything, they had no money, they had great trouble at Pokhara.

So check, all the hardships that they bear, all this, just check—what is the benefit for this life, really? For peace of mind, what is there really? Even just for themselves, without thinking of others. They came back, so what? Even if they were able to come back from the mountain alive, so what—what did it do for their peace of mind? Nothing. They do not even have the nice body they had before. It is completely ruined but what is the benefit for the future life? Nothing. There is nothing to point

out. And what does it benefit, to free others from suffering? It is completely empty, completely empty. All these hardships are for nothing, empty, all this; all these hundreds of thousands of dollars that they spent for everything. Coming from the West—how much time, how much energy they spent making arrangements for it, all these things. Whatever they spent, a million dollars or whatever they spent for that, doesn't bring much result. Empty. Nothingness.

Coming from the West, spending that much money and one doesn't even receive any teachings in the East. One has not even received the six-syllable mantra, the oral transmission of OM MANI PADME HUM, even just this. Even hearing one hour of teaching on bodhicitta—there is no comparison if you think of the advantages of an hour's teaching on bodhicitta, on *shunyata*, the real method to eliminate the very root of suffering, the ignorance of true existence. Just one hour, it doesn't matter even if you don't understand. If the teaching that you hear is correct, pure, then even just one hour, even just the six-syllable mantra OM MANI PADME HUM, which contains all the sutra and tantra teachings, the immeasurable qualities of Buddha's path, the essence of all Dharma—even just hearing the oral transmission of the six-syllable mantra, leave aside the other teachings, how much you spend to come here from the West is nothing, if you think deeply from the heart.

It depends on understanding the advantages. I mean, if a person doesn't have the understanding of the advantages, then he cannot see, he cannot check, he cannot compare the advantages that he gets, the arrangement that is done in the mind for this life, for many future lives, the preparation that is made in the mind to achieve sublime happiness, omniscient mind, in the future. However much material one spends for that, it is nothing. Even just to hear the oral transmission of one mantra. Even one stanza of the infallible teachings, even if you don't understand, as long as it's pure and correct, that's the most important thing. First you hear and plant the seed. Then gradually you understand. Even if you don't understand it now, hearing it becomes the cause to understand it in the future, clearer, deeper. Then to realize the meaning that it contains.

There is also a story with Nagarjuna and Lopon Ingyen, one of the great pandits. I think most people know this story, those who have attended the previous courses. However, it is important to remember, it helps the mind. When Lopon Ingyen was reciting the *Abhidharmakosha* by heart in the cave, there was a pigeon living right above the cave, and each time the great pandit was reciting the *Abhidharmakosha*, this scripture, the pigeon could hear it. He couldn't understand it but he could hear it. He couldn't understand the meaning but he could hear the words.

So what happened was that after some time that pigeon died and then the great pandit Lopon Ingyen checked out where he was reborn, with his clairvoyance. He found out that he was reborn in that area, in one of the villages. So he went to see this family, to see the baby and he told the parents, "This is going to be my disciple." Then he explained the baby's past life and asked the parents to give the baby to him. Then the child became a monk and became an expert in the teaching that he had heard when he was a pigeon. He wrote three or four commentaries on that text, what he had heard before, when he was a pigeon. His holy name was Lopon Loden, a great pandit.

I heard also a story that when Lopon Loden was a small child—I think I heard the story from His Holiness Song Rinpoche—there was a small Tara statue and even as a small child he offered candles. You know, he offered to the statue of Tara by thinking of her as a real being. He offered it to the statue as a real Tara and it didn't stay there, it fell down. Then somehow because of his incredible faith, he cried, so the second time when he put it up, the statue stretched out its arm and he was able to put it in its hand.

There are many stories like this about how important it is, even if you don't understand the meaning of the teachings clearly now, how important it is at least to plant an impression on the mind. To make an arrangement in the mind so that in the future, in this life or in the next lives you will have clear understanding. And not only that, the main thing is to realize what it talks about, the path that is revealed, to realize that.

It is not easy work that we are doing here, not simple work. The job that we are doing is very difficult. It is the most difficult work, the most beneficial and the most practical. By studying Dharma, how much you can understand Dharma in this life, how extensively and deeply; how quickly you can generate the realizations by doing meditation; all these things depend on how much impression was left, prepared from past lives. It is so dependent on how much preparation was done in the past, in the mind. So like that, in the future lives for it to be easier, to not find difficulties in generating realizations, we should work hard in this life.

A person who already did much practice in past lives, who did much meditation, lamrim, who heard many teachings, in this life just by seeing, just by hearing, without much explanation, that person can easily understand, can easily feel great compassion and great love, exchanging self for others. One easily recognizes the refuted object, what one should realize as empty. Just by thinking about it one time, just by doing one meditation one time, with the four-point analysis or, even if you don't do the four-point analysis, just by thinking of two or three words, you see so clearly. You experience it right away, immediately. You recognize immediately what it is that doesn't exist, the refuted object, the "I" that doesn't exist. Immediately you see that the object of ignorance, the truly existent "I," does not exist, it is empty. So without depending on much hardship, without needing to spend years meditating on lamrim, in a month, even in a week, it is so easy for some people who have already prepared, who did much preparation in the past lives, leaving impressions on the mind, who accumulated much merit and practiced much purification.

There was one monk, he was married but he lived a family life before. Then after some time he lived in the army, for many years he did army training. Then after some time, something happened, some conditions made him have aversion to the worldly life, aversion arose due to some conditions, which I don't know. Then he went to Dharamsala to take teachings from, I think, one of the tutors to His Holiness Dalai Lama, and also from one very learned great meditator, very learned geshe, a teacher of Lama Yeshe, also our teacher. First he took lam.rim teachings from this learned geshe and then he lived in the mountains, where the other ascetic monks lived in retreat. He didn't do much study in the monastery on extensive philosophical subjects, he took lamrim teachings and then whenever His Holiness gave teachings he would come to hear. And, somehow, so easily he was able to generate the three principal paths, within a few years. He is not a young person, quite an old person, maybe forty, around that age, I think. Anyway, within the ten years that he lived in Dharamsala in the mountains, he generated the three principal paths and then reached a very high level of tantra, the graduated path of the completion stage, the second one. Then he was able to utilize his chakras, nadis, winds—those things—the seeds, so quickly. So quickly he was able to experience the path.

So, so much depends on how much preparation was done in the past, how much merit was accumulated. If you don't have much merit accumulated, if you don't have the cause of merit, then no matter how much you study, even if you understand the teachings, it is difficult to generate realizations. Even though you do have understanding from studying—without merit, without much

cause, it is difficult, it takes a long time, one has to bear much hardship and there are many hindrances.

One American monk came from the West to do *samatha* retreat, tranquil abiding. He planned to achieve this; I think it looks like he planned to achieve it within six months. He had studied debating subjects, the *Prajnaparamita*, how they normally study. He did some basic studies, he read the scriptures, he received teachings on *samatha* and I think he planned to achieve this in six months. He went to the mountains where the ascetic monks were living in retreat. He found one house that belonged to an ascetic monk. So this friend Jampa Wangdu, whose story I told yesterday, gave him advice. This monk had much respect for Jampa Wangdu, who is a well experienced meditator. He said, "If you are going to do this retreat on tranquil abiding, if you have wind disease then you cannot do it." He said that he didn't have wind disease. And then Jampa Wangdu said, "You should be very careful if you do this to not get angry. Sometimes the Indians' sheep come around to eat grass and it's very easy to get angry."

So anyway, after a few months I think one day these goats came, the shepherds came around this hermitage. Then, maybe he didn't remember what the meditator had advised him and, I think, he threw stones. There must have been stones around the house and he threw those stones. I think he was quite angry, unable to control it.

The meditator, Jampa Wangdu, heard this when he was coming down to his house and met an Indian man on the road. In the Indian villages they respect him very, very much, they like him very much. They always say, "The one who lives in the cave, under the rock; the monk who lives under the rock." I think he was the only one there in previous times so the Indians know about him. They know and really like him. Not like in the West where some people would think he was crazy; if he lives in a cave under a rock there must be something wrong with the person, "He needs to see a psychiatrist. Maybe he needs to go to an institution." The Indians see things very differently. They have great respect for him because they know that to give up desire is a very difficult thing, the most difficult job. So they respect him very much; this is something they can't do so they have much faith. They understand. Anyway, the villagers, when they see him they bow down and touch his feet, like that.

That Indian man told Gen. Jampa Wangdu, "There is one American monk up there and one day he threw a big stone at the animals. What is he doing? How does he practice Dharma?" This meditator told him, "Don't worry, I will tell him." I heard from this meditator himself. Somehow, due to past karma, due to wind disease the meditation didn't work, much wind disease happened so he couldn't continue; much pain, much wind disease—he couldn't even move his limbs and he had much pain.

I think he had one guru who lived in a small monastery in Sri Lanka, in the forest. He was eighty or ninety years old, a very old monk. He was very learned, still studying. He lived with him as his guide, guru. The American monk didn't work much, due to much pain he couldn't manage it, so finally he thought to go to a swami, an Indian swami and the teacher agreed and went with him to help.

This swami, when they went to Bombay to see him, told the monk, "I know your problem." So with his hands, both palms, he went like this without touching his body from the head down to the feet. And he felt something releasing. It helped a bit and every day they would meditate together—the monk, the teacher and the swami. Then I think the swami gave them *chapati*, every day they had *chapati*. Then this American monk thought, "How good it would be if we could have some rice," and

that same day the swami gave rice. Then there was one type of vegetable he used to think of so much, and one day the swami gave him that vegetable. That day the swami told him, “You won’t get here everything you think of!” I don’t know how much he recovered but now he has come back to Dharamsala and makes mandala offerings, mostly the preliminary practices and meditating on lam.rim, rather than doing just *samatha*, one-pointed meditation. Now he is very happy.

You see, a person has to be really very fortunate to accomplish the path, to generate realizations of the path. So according to that, there is less hindrance, without taking much time.

Generally, first of all, without hearing the teachings you won’t even understand the benefits of the teachings. You won’t understand how much value they have. So you also won’t understand how important it is to leave the impressions on the mind.

In the West, even if somebody has the thought to seek a spiritual path, a new method of living, it is difficult for even just the thought to arise, to allow oneself the opportunity to meet the infallible path to achieve liberation and omniscient mind by opening one’s mind, or to at least to create the infallible causes for happiness, without mistake, in future lives. To open the mind is very difficult, so rare and difficult. Many people are so closed-minded and have such a limited view, seeing only their own life and nothing else.

And then, even if they find some book on the teaching of Buddha, they can’t find a guru, a guide to explain it. And even if the thought is there to seek a guru, they wait so many years, thinking and planning. Then even if one comes to the East, thinking that this is the place to seek, as one travels around and meets somebody, even if one meets the guru, who can show the infallible cause of happiness—they all talk about something but to find the infallible teachings that really bring happiness by practicing, and stop suffering, the method that brings the result one desires, happiness. At least to find the guru who can correctly introduce this, the guru who emphasizes the importance of working for the happiness of future lives over this life. This life is short, a few years, a few months—the future lives are long. Not one, two or three lives—it’s long, it’s a long way. It is important to work for the happiness of future lives, and to meet a guru like this is fortunate. To that extent, it is fortunate, so that the disciple does something worthwhile, some preparation for future lives. Otherwise life is empty. Otherwise the only preparation that is done is non-virtuous actions, whose result is experiencing suffering in the future lives; or becoming hallucinated with wrong conceptions that one didn’t have before, extra ones. Besides wrong conceptions of true existence, there are wrong conceptions of permanence—completely hallucinating, finishing life in that fantasy.

However, I think with these learned geshes, even to hear one stanza of the infallible teaching, by practicing that, one can get what one desires, the goal one seeks: liberation, omniscient mind, which has been the experience of an uncountable number of buddhas, great yogis, pandits, recent meditators and present meditators—it is their experience and the experience of others. It is not a teaching that depends only on faith, which is nobody’s experience. If you ask, “Who has achieved this by doing the practice, how many are there? Are there many followers who have achieved this?” If you ask this, there is nothing to point out, only emphasizing, “If you do this, it will happen,” nothing else; there is nothing to talk about, to prove. No stories, no previous practitioners, no present ones, nothing to talk about. It is not like that.

However, you are highly fortunate, I think. In the future, when you understand more Dharma, then you will understand better. You will see. At that time, you will be able to see how fortunate you are



now. During that time you'll understand. The more you understand the teachings, the more you meditate, the more you experience the path, the more you will see that in the future. Like that.

Also, like this, if you sponsor to kill somebody because you will get a lot of money, then you will get killed afterwards. And there is much worry; I'm not sure how much pain but much worry, like the person who is used as a bullet from the artillery, who with a parachute, I think, has to jump over a lake or something, very far. I've seen it on television. I'm not sure how much pain he had; that person couldn't reach over the lake, he was supposed to reach over the lake. So you see, in the world so many people bear incredible hardships, danger to life, for nothing.

As I mentioned yesterday, just like that is foolish; it is also foolish if, for a great aim, a great purpose, such as to accomplish the path to omniscient mind for the sake of others, one cannot bear great hardships. That is also kind of foolish. As the other one is foolish, this is also kind of foolish: something great, worthwhile, not to be able to bear hardships for that. However, the conclusion is that mind training is greatly worthwhile. If the mind can be trained it is vastly worthwhile to practice patience with suffering, both small suffering and also great suffering.

[Dedication prayers]

Lecture 27 December 4<sup>th</sup> pm

[Preliminary prayers]

Please generate the motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, "At any rate I must achieve omniscient mind in order to lead all sentient beings, who have been my mother and kind, to the state of omniscient mind. Therefore, I am going to listen to the commentary on the *Bodhicharyavatara*."

This morning, the stanza that I was talking about was, if the mind is trained with small harms, even though they don't have any purpose, one finds it easy to bear; but if the mind is not trained even though it is a small harm, one finds it very difficult to bear. You can see this actually, it's obvious—you can see it even with your own experience. That is what it is saying. Therefore, it is greatly worthwhile to train the mind in patience with suffering.

The next verse shows the objects with which one practices, the objects of patience that one bears.

I should not be impatient  
With heat and cold, wind and rain,  
Sickness, bondage and beatings;  
For if I am, the harm they cause will increase.

What Shantideva is saying is that one should not have a small mind, small patience, a mind that can't bear anything, which gets disturbed so easily, an easily irritated mind. A person who has that kind of mind finds so many discomforts, so many harms. We see this sometimes with old people, how they find so many wrong things—wrong place, the house where one is staying, "There is no this, no that, no garden, no good water, noisy, this and that; then the food this and that, the jam is missing, the peanut butter is missing ...." Even smaller than that, so many problems to count, which for others are no problem at all, none of this is a problem. One person staying at this place finds twenty or

thirty problems in a place in which somebody else can't find any problem—a very narrow mind, too concerned with the self. This happens when the mind is too concerned with the happiness of self and there is too strong self-cherishing thought, then also this comes, finding so many harms so easily with the people, these kinds of problems. Also it is easy for paranoia to happen to that kind of person. There is too much self-cherishing mind; too much concern for the happiness of the self.

With an irritated mind, one would have small patience when one meets conditions like hot and cold, wind, rain, disease, being tied with a rope, beaten with a stick. Shantideva is saying if one doesn't have much patience with such small harms, if one has very small patience with very small harms, if you are too much concerned with the happiness of the self, never practicing patience with suffering, then the small harm increases and patience becomes smaller.

Even though the harm itself does not increase, the condition itself does not increase, if you think over and over, "Oh, how this is uncomfortable, how this is bad," if you think over and over like this, if you meditate like this, reciting the mantra, "Oh, how uncomfortable this is, how this bed is so uncomfortable," if you think this over and over and over, if you think only that for a long time, "Oh, how terrible, how terrible," visualizing those comfortable beds, thinking of those very comfortable, soft, huge beds—then this solid, hard one becomes harder. Somehow, even though it doesn't become harder, the mind that cannot bear the suffering, thinking how bad it is over and over again, kind of becomes worse and worse. So if you continue like this, the patience becomes smaller and smaller. But if you bear it when it is small with patience, then the harm stops increasing. Also, when it increases, you are able to bear the greater harm.

Especially for a person who practices Dharma, this is very important—bearing it, practicing patience with suffering is so important. Because, for instance, if you are going to do retreat and expect to do retreat without the slightest problem or difficulty, then in the house this and that needs to be fixed, the roof needs to be fixed, the floor needs to be fixed, not only that but so many things, "I need this and that." If one is going to wait until everything is so perfect, until your mind is satisfied, without the slightest problem, without the slightest discomfort, if one has very small patience when there is discomfort, then today one cannot start retreat because of doing this and that, and tomorrow can't start because "I need this and that," then the day after tomorrow again, this and that. Then in one week, it doesn't get done and in one month it doesn't get done—the retreat doesn't get done.

This is just an example, showing that one has to make a limit for the desire, to arrange enough to protect the body from great harms yet enough to continue the practice. If I am too much concerned with comfort, having very small patience with hardships and even with small harms, those things themselves become a distraction. They become a distraction to the session, even to the daily practice of sitting meditation, and even active practice, physical active practice, any practice, you don't get done. Even when you do, you just do it very short, you don't get much done. So, as much as one clings to the happiness of this life, the smaller patience one has and that much it becomes itself a hindrance to practice the holy Dharma.

Then also very easily with the people to become...

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...when they talk about you, or when they talk to you if there is something from the side of the word, something you don't like or, if you are interpreting in the wrong way, it harms you, you

interpret it negatively, “Oh, she might be thinking bad, the way she says this, she might be thinking bad of me,” something like that, interpreting in a negative way. This becomes very easy to happen because one is too much concerned with the happiness of the self. It is very easy to get disturbed and also one becomes disharmonious with others so easily.

I was going to mention it this morning but I forgot, about being bound by a rope. In the West there is one play, I think you must have seen it; it must be familiar to your eyes. I don't know what it is called, that play. Three or four people tie a gentleman's body completely with a rope, from the legs up to... I didn't see the neck tied. So the legs, then both hands behind, completely tied up. Then they put the rope up by the side, they put the man upside down, hanging like this and then one person pulls the ropes and the man goes up. Then the man is up there and they put kerosene or something. The man is hanging there and then there is the rope, I think it's on the beams, then just right above the man they put kerosene or something. Maybe that part I have forgotten, how they light it up.

They put kerosene or something, I think, some stuff and then they light it, they make the fire while the man is hanging in space upside down and the flame comes down and before the flame reaches his body, he is supposed to be released from the bondage. I think if the person is not skillful with the rope, then he will know! Anyway they put fire here and the flame is coming down like this, like death, coming closer and closer. The flame comes down like this and this person is hanging there, his hands are completely tied up, he is upside down and there is nobody who can do anything. And there are thousands of people watching, I don't know, not just one thousand—I think there must be at least sixty, seventy thousand, so many people around, watching.

The people who tied him with ropes all over go away. Then the man is hanging in space and this flame is coming down closer, closer, while the man is turning back and forth, not with the hands, because the hands are tied. I don't know how he does it. He goes back and forth like this. So the flame is coming down, the fire sparks. There is some stuff, they put it there so that it catches fire, I think, and it falls down. Like when you burn the husk or when you burn dried grass and things fall down. It falls down on his face—really it must be quite painful.

While he is trying to escape from that, the fire falling down, so many thousands and thousands of people are watching him and then, I think, somehow he didn't get it done well. I think he just was able to escape. When the fire was just about to catch him, then he was just able, just enough in time for his body not to be burnt, but somehow I think he wasn't skillful and somehow he fell down, I think he knocked on the floor with his knees. Then I think two other people did quite well, the flame was coming down and they were able to escape, not as bad as the other person, somehow they were able to release from that rope.

I think after that the person showed how he did it, his arms going like this. I think he must be showing how he achieves nirvana. Anyway, one person was quite hurt I think. Then afterwards they all came, all those people who did the play. I don't know for what, when the play is finished—but all the people who did the play, whose bodies were bound by the rope, came out, and there were some other people also, maybe for the people to say thank you or something. So again they thanked those two who did quite well, and then again this man came with the bad knees, the unsuccessful one, to receive thanks.

It looked quite dangerous. If sometimes by karma it didn't work, I thought what torture it was, while I was sitting at the television. I didn't see it in actual fact but saw on television, and I thought what torture for the person, what fear for the person himself, even though he might get a little bit of money. I don't know how much is covered for expenses but one has to go through fear and tragedy. I guess this is his way of managing, his way of living life. That's the way he earns his means of living, by putting himself in fear and tragedy.

Because that is his way of earning his living, even though it's quite a fearful and dangerous thing, somehow the mind is able to bear it, the mind is able to bear the hardships. It takes quite a long time, when the fire is coming down, he can't wait. He was just going like this, not taking it with his hands but just turning it around. However, that kind of patience, those kinds of things, to get whatever he gets from that, \$100, whatever he gets, he's bearing the hardships to earn that much. Even if he got a million dollars—I don't think he gets a million dollars—but even if he got a million dollars, by his play becoming successful, there's no advantage. Between the few seconds of generating the motivation of bodhicitta or making one prostration to the holy object of Buddha, and the million dollars that person gets by experiencing great fear, there's no comparison. Even if he gets a million dollars, he might get some comfort from that for this life. Maybe he doesn't get to use that, maybe he doesn't even get to enjoy that, bearing the hardships, then nothing.

The difference—in making one prostration to Buddha, for two or three seconds just generating the motivation of bodhicitta—compared to this, getting a million or a trillion dollars is like an atom, while the advantage you get from bearing hardships, to think of it in substantial form, is like the whole earth. The benefits of the motivation of bodhicitta, if even for a few seconds it manifested materially, there would be no space, no empty space left. If the benefits of the motivation of bodhicitta materialized, if it were in form, there wouldn't be any empty space left.

So you can see again it's just a matter of the way the mind thinks, how this person is able to bear that much hardship.

Next one, same example, generating the power of patience: if the mind is trained, the suffering doesn't give harm.

Some when they see their own blood  
Become especially brave and steady;  
But some when they see the blood of others  
Faint and fall unconscious.

When some brave people see their own blood if they are wounded by guns or a sword in a war, their bravery increases. Seeing the cut, seeing the wound made by the weapon, they become braver and continue to fight, instead of being discouraged and escaping. Also, they use the cut as an ornament, as a decoration, to show the bravery, "Oh, when I was in such-and-such a war, I was beaten badly, this is my cut." It becomes a decoration of the body, an ornament. They show it as a sign of how brave they are.

When some other people even see the blood of others, leave aside seeing their own blood, they become unconscious and faint. They are so scared. That is not because of the difference of the object. The outside object—one is weak and one is very powerful; one body is very tough, very solid and one is very kind of fragile; one has great power, one has no power. It is not because of the

difference of the body, it is not because of the difference of the weapon. One, instead of getting discouraged, so scared, becomes so brave, willing to fight more. The other one, even seeing the blood of others, become unconscious, faint. That is due to the mind. This comes from the mind being either steady or timid, the way the mind thinks of it. Because of this there is a difference—the way the mind thinks of it, the way the mind is trained, how it thinks of the wound, the blood and the injury. The point is the same—it's not up to the object but it's up to the mind, this is the difference in how it happens. So therefore, if the mind is trained in bearing suffering, then even if there are many cuts and injuries, it causes stronger patience, it causes the person to be able to bear more. The power of patience even increases if one bears it if one is injured. Instead of hurting the mind, seeing the wound makes the mind braver. Instead of causing more fear, seeing the suffering, seeing the wound, one is braver, with less fear.

There are ways by which the mind gets trained in patience, so one should attempt to meditate on patience, taking on suffering voluntarily. The point is this: Shantideva is not emphasizing that one should bear suffering in order to create the cause, to create non-virtuous actions, for worldly work, to do worldly dharma—not holy Dharma but worldly dharma—creating the cause of the lower realms. That is the wrong patience.

Those examples that I mentioned, of how worldly people bear suffering, those very simple examples that I mentioned of how much hardship those people bear—in fact, if you check the motive of those people, if you reflect on that, then it is actually creating the cause of the lower realms. They bear all these hardships to create the cause for the lower realms. So it is a completely useless, wrong patience. Bearing hardships, practicing patience and bearing suffering in order to create the cause of happiness, the body of the happy transmigratory being, virtuous karma—those are worthwhile. Bearing those hardships and suffering, one will receive the result of happiness; one can enjoy so many results of happiness and perfection. But the other one, practicing the patience of bearing sufferings only to create the cause of happiness of this life...

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... works only for the happiness of this life, all the works done with the motive of clinging to the happiness of this life, with worldly concern, concerned only with the happiness of this life, of oneself and of this life. For that reason, any works that are done—to gain food, clothing, reputation—however much suffering one bears for this, it is a wrong practice, the practice of wrong patience.

This reason it is useless is because the result is rebirth, taking the ripened aspect result, the body of the suffering transmigratory being. The result is only suffering.

An example is these Nepalese villagers. They get up around two or three o'clock, while it is still very cold, and then they go up into the mountains, huge mountains, to get firewood. They should be back when the sun rises, ready to sell the wood in the city or outside other people's houses.

In order to make the mind happy, when they get up so early in the cold, they sing, to cheat the mind. If they go quietly it is an intense suffering, so I think the reason they sing is to distract the mind—it helps a little bit to bear that hardship, I think. They go very high up in the mountains where it is so cold, wintertime, then they come back to sell the wood in the morning. Incredible, they work so

hard. I don't know how much money they get, bearing all those hardships—I don't know if they can get that much money according to the hardship they bear.

That is the work they do in the early morning. When I hear them going up, singing, at such a cold time, when I am sitting in the room and I hear them going up, bearing so much hardship—at the end there is not so much money—just to make some money to have a few days' food, a few days' comfort, that's all, nothing else. Just for this life, nothing to benefit all sentient beings, nothing like that. It helps, it encourages me when I think of them, how they work so hard for nothing, bearing so much hunger, thirst, heat and cold.

It makes me wonder: one has that much Dharma wisdom, understanding what is right and what is wrong practice, what is to be avoided, the incredible opportunity to achieve the ever-release from samsara, the omniscient mind, such an infallible teaching that one can practice. And one cannot bear any hardships for this—so lazy. Even a quarter of what they bear, we cannot bear to practice the holy Dharma, even though the path is infallible—so lazy.

When I think of them it is very helpful for my mind. It inspires me so much, how they practice completely wrong patience, all the time, all their life. Now they are suffering and in the future they will suffer. Now they are suffering, now it is difficult and in the future, they will go to the lower realms. Like this. But bearing the hardships for practicing Dharma, practicing patience with suffering to practice Dharma—now, at the moment, it is a little bit hard but the future result is great, only happiness, everlasting happiness. After having achieved the omniscient mind, the sublime happiness of omniscient mind, there is nothing to change, nothing to fall down. The result is great, leading each and every sentient being into omniscient mind. The result is incredibly great.

Then in the daytime, those villagers are so busy. In the morning before twelve o'clock they have so much hardship—they do much work, bearing many difficulties of mind and body; then also in the afternoon. Not so much in the West. I mean, there is still a little bit of hardship. Even though you have machines to work in the field, still you have to bear hardships, still there are a lot of other problems even though there are machines and many tools—but they don't have this, so there is much burning under the sun, working in the fields, in the rain. Then, even the rice that they grow, that they get from the fields, they don't eat so much in the family—they go to sell it. Their feet bear many hardships and cold; their feet get many cracks. They work so hard and when the families gather back at home, they are completely exhausted, and even at nighttime they work. They go up on the mountains at one or two o'clock, then they cut grass or something.

One or two of these villagers, even though on the outside they look like they have an ordinary life, actually are special beings. Even though from the outside they look like an ordinary person, it seems that there may be one or two transformations of buddhas—but mostly, for the rest, “my happiness” is the main goal in the depth of the heart. And then, not even happiness for future lives but happiness only for this life: “Oh, if I can be happy!” All the work done with the body, speech and mind is just to accomplish that. All the hardships they bear is to achieve only the happiness for their own life, this life. The motive is non-virtue, the action is non-virtue.

The human body, which is so difficult to find again, which is so easy to decay or to change, which you received one time, is finished by doing only meaningless actions, only meaningless work. The life is spent just in suffering, bearing hardships for meaningless work. Not bearing hardships for meaningful work but for meaningless work. Just on and on like this, life finishes in suffering, doing

meaningless work. “Now when the work is finished, I don’t need to bear hardships, I don’t need to bear any difficulties, now I will be happy, satisfied.” Their life finishes just in suffering. The precious human life, which is extremely difficult to find again, the one that one has now, which can easily decay, which one has only for a short time, is finished just in suffering, torturing and punishing oneself, bearing hardships, creating non-virtuous actions. Then while one is doing unceasing work, the same again and again, unceasing worldly work that never gets finished, again and again—while one is doing this, death comes.

Then, even though the person was born as a human being, it’s like he lived life as if he didn’t have a human mind. He was born as a human being but lived as if he didn’t have a human mind; then he left with an empty life. Every day, the conduct of body, speech and mind is like that, so it is very difficult to go to the realm of the happy transmigratory beings. Where one goes is to the lower realms with empty hands. With empty life, with empty hands, having been unable to make the life meaningful, without having done any meaningful work, the fruits of which the person can enjoy and experience in a future life, that he can take with him and enjoy in a future life—nothing.

The point of what I’m saying is wrong practice. All the suffering they bear for the works of this life, just to obtain the happiness of this life, is wrong patience, for nothing. Knowing that, seeing how others bear hardships for nothing, knowing and seeing that, we should be encouraged, we should develop patience with suffering to practice the holy Dharma. And we should realize how we are fortunate. Then also in this way, the more we see this, the more it makes the mind happy.

The next verse is showing the conclusion, which was explained above, in short.

Therefore, I should disregard harms  
Caused to me and not be affected by suffering.  
Even when the wise are suffering  
Their minds remain very lucid and undefiled.

The meaning is: therefore you should stabilize your mind. Then whenever you receive harm you should bear it and make yourself not be disturbed by suffering.

This is one way of saying it. Also, one can interpret it in this way: those who are skillful, those who are wise, meditating on the Mahayana path, even when they receive suffering they are able to bear it, able to practice patience. They keep their mind calm, in great tranquility. They don’t let the great tranquility be disturbed by anger. Like the water that is very calm and peaceful, if you stir it with a stick the sand comes up and it becomes very dirty and unclear. Like that, those learned ones, those who learn and meditate on the Mahayana path keep their minds in great tranquility; they don’t disturb it with anger.

So like that, Shantideva is saying, relating to us, we also should become skillful like those practitioners, like those bodhisattvas. We should be skillful, learned, and meditate on the Mahayana path, and even when we meet suffering feelings, we should be able to bear them and keep the mind in great tranquility, not disturbing it with anger.

I think I stop here.

The next verse, the next verse shows the benefits of attempting to remove the unsubdued mind.

I thought maybe tonight we could do some meditation.

Normally one first makes three prostrations, then sits down and then does the practice of mandala offering and refuge. You can visualize Manjushri and do three prostrations and then sit down and contemplate, saying the prayer, thinking of the meaning, taking refuge and generating bodhicitta. Then you make the mandala offering to Manjushri. After the short mandala offering, we make requests to purify the hindrances from guru devotion—the wrong view towards the guru—to the subtle dual view, which means the very last obstacle to achieving omniscient mind. In particular we request to purify the wrong view of the ignorance clinging to the “I” and to existence as truly existent. We request that these be purified and to generate the realizations from guru devotion up to enlightenment, particularly the realization of shunyata, the wisdom realizing the meaning of selflessness of all existence, the emptiness-only of all existence. White light purifies, then think a replica of Manjushri absorbs into you and into all sentient beings, feel oneness, and think that oneself and all sentient beings have generated the realization, whatever realization Manjushri has, the wisdom of seeing the emptiness of all existence is generated, received.

Then you do breathing meditation. Breathing out and purifying, breathing in, while you are visualizing Manjushri, breathing in the wisdom light. While you are breathing in you can think the wisdom of Manjushri in the form of white light or yellow light, whatever, comes from Manjushri as you breathe in and absorbs into the heart. This you can do two or three times. Then slowly, as the knowledge light enters your mind with the breath, you can follow your mind with it at the same time. As it enters the mind as wisdom light, watch the mind. The mind watches the mind. Look at the nature. Look at the mind, without letting the mind wander. You should plan very strongly from the beginning not to follow the thoughts, if any thoughts arise. You should have strong determination. Then you cut off all the thoughts, doubts, expectations of the future, “I am going to suffer,” “I am going to be happy,” all of these thoughts, all the past things, without thinking about them. Without thinking those thoughts, ignoring them, not letting them arise, just look at the nature of the mind. Like you are looking at yourself, like that, the mind looking at the mind, watching it. Whatever appears, the nature of the mind is empty of form, empty of resistance, empty of form. It is clear, not obscured by foggy. It is clear, calm, not obscured by mental foggy. It is clear, like a mirror. Any object that has form can appear in that, be reflected in that. Anything can appear—the reflection of an object, clear, like reflection in a mirror. More or less like this.

Even if you don't see completely like that, whatever comes, more or less like this, whatever comes, you do one-pointed meditation. Abide the mind, place the mind on this. And then, while you are in this state, a part of the mind, one side of the mind looks at the “I,” how the “I” appears to you.

I think I will stop here. Otherwise you won't get time to do the meditation.

[Dedication prayers]

Lecture 28: December 5<sup>th</sup> am

[Preliminary prayers]



Please listen to the teaching, generating at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve omniscient mind for the sake of all the kind mother sentient beings; therefore, I’m going to listen to the commentary of the *Bodhicharyavatara*.”

The next stanza is about the benefits of attempting to renounce the unsubdued mind.

Even when the wise are suffering  
Their minds remain very lucid and undefiled.  
For when war is being waged against the disturbing conceptions,  
Much harm is caused at the times of battle.

The explanation of the first two lines was done yesterday. The last two lines and then the next one:

The victorious warriors are those  
Who, having disregarded all suffering,  
Vanquish the foes of hatred and so forth:  
Common warriors slay only corpses.

What the verse shows are the benefits of attempting to renounce the unsubdued mind. One practices the remedy, waging war on the unsubdued mind—such as anger, those that are to be subdued, to be renounced, to be ceased—even though there are many difficulties in doing that. If it is regarded as brave by the worldly people to bear the suffering of receiving injuries with weapons, swords cutting the body, killing the enemy then, of course, if this person can be called brave, the practitioner who bears all the hardships of body and mind to overwhelm and destroy the enemy, the unsubdued mind, such as anger, the one who becomes victorious over the unsubdued mind is really brave. If one doesn’t call this brave then the connotation of “brave” is lost. If this person is not a worthwhile base to recognize and label as brave, then the meaning of bravery is something else. If one who is able to do this hard work, who has the great will to do this hard work, is not the meaning of brave, then “brave” does not exist. Among the hard works there’s no harder work than this. There is no hard work that is more worthwhile than destroying the enemy, the unsubdued mind of anger, the inner enemy. The outside enemy is destroyed by weapons but the inner enemy, the unsubdued mind, cannot be destroyed by materials. The inner enemy, who gives great harm to you and others in all the three times, in the past, the present and the future, is the unsubdued mind. And this enemy has to be subdued by the remedy mind. The remedy mind has to destroy it. The remedy has to be one’s own mind, such as patience and the loving compassionate thought of bodhicitta. The remedy, the path that is one’s own mind, has to destroy the inner enemy, the unsubdued mind, which is also one’s own mind. So the work to gain victory over the delusions is the hardest work, this is the most brave, this is what is really brave.

Also, as it is said in the *Bodhicharyavatara* by the great bodhisattva Shantideva, I don’t remember exactly the stanza: Once the inner enemy, the unsubdued mind is destroyed, all the enemies are destroyed by the way. Once the inner enemy, the unsubdued mind, is destroyed, when that doesn’t exist any more, there is no more outside enemy to be found. That is because the outside enemy happened due to the existence of the inner enemy, the unsubdued mind. The reason one has so many outside enemies is because one has so many inner enemies. One can understand that by checking one’s own life and also by looking at other people’s lives—the way some people are living their lives, and their personalities. The more impatience there is in the mind, the more the person finds outside enemies. Even in a new place, where there wasn’t any enemy before, soon somebody

turns out to be an enemy. He finds an enemy. Like this, one can understand by watching the way of living life, one's own and others'.

So then, while this inner enemy is not destroyed, not subdued, no matter how much you are able to kill human beings, the outer enemy who hates oneself, the violent one who attacks oneself, the tigers, the vicious animals, no matter how many one kills there is no way to finish the outer enemy. There is no way, there is no time that the outside enemies will be completely finished. "This is the way to end the outside enemy; after killing all these, from now on there won't be one single enemy left." There is no such thing, no such time, as long as the inner enemy, the unsubdued mind, is not destroyed.

Like the example that is used in the *Bodhicaryavatara* by Shantideva, without exactly saying the lines of the verse: If you think how the thorns of this earth hurt you and by thinking like this you want to destroy the thorns, to have no more thorns existing on this earth to hurt you, and if you want to cover all the thorns that grow on this earth with leather, there wouldn't be enough leather to cover all the bushes that have thorns on the earth. But if you have shoes of leather under your feet, with this small piece of leather under the shoes, you can cover it all. With that small piece you can cover all the thorn bushes that grow on this earth. It can stop all thorns from hurting you.

This example is used to show that once the inner enemy is subdued all the outside enemies are destroyed. Even the danger of the elements, non-living beings, dangers for your life and also enemies harming you, like vicious animals, snakes, tigers, human beings, things like that—all the outside enemies get destroyed at the same time.

This is very practical, without needing to have weapons at all, without needing to use even a needle to hurt others. Without hurting other sentient beings at all, there is no need to hurt sentient beings in the slightest, just use the medicine of one's mind meditating on the remedy of the path, subduing the one enemy, the inner enemy, making it completely non-existent. By this, all the outside enemies become non-existent for oneself. After this, no matter how much one tries to find, one cannot find even one outer enemy at all. So it is very practical work, this way of making the enemy non-existent by developing the mind, the good heart. If one practices in this way, destroying the enemy, the more one practices, the more one is able to make the unsubdued mind smaller, the more one is able to benefit other sentient beings. Like this, there are advantages and benefits of attempting to remove the unsubdued mind. There are great advantages like this.

In fact, there is not one sentient being that we have not killed before. Not one sentient being. Even we who are living together here, numberless times we have killed each other, numberless times we were each other's enemy, cutting off each other's heads. If all the heads were piled up, there wouldn't be any space left. If one had clairvoyance like arhats, like Buddha has clairvoyance, that psychic power, then by thinking back to all the relationships that we had with each other, it's kind of amazing, it gives great fear in the mind. Actually, it is similar—all sentient beings have been one's own mother and there's not one sentient being that we didn't have the experience of killing. We killed them numberless times. As regards stories from life to life, past stories, it has been like this, even though we can't remember the past life or the relationships we had with others. Even though one cannot remember this at the moment, it has been like this. Still the outside enemy is not finished. There's not one sentient being that we didn't have the experience of killing, that we have not killed numberless times—but still it's nothing—making war, killing a billion people on this earth, that's nothing. That is nothing, destroying the outside enemy. Trying to make the outside enemy

non-existent, that is nothing. We have done that many times but still the outside enemy is not finished. That is because we still find more and more outside enemies. The whole thing is, the whole mistake is that the one enemy that dwells in one's heart is not destroyed because one is unable to be victorious over the inner enemy.

Those beings such as arhats, high bodhisattvas and buddhas do not have outside enemies. They cannot find outside enemies, they do not have such objects because inside there is no unsubdued mind arising, anger and such minds do not arise. There is no object of delusion, no object of anger, no object of attachment, like this. Relating to oneself, relating to others, from one's own experience one can understand this. When one strongly does the practice of a good heart, at these times there are much fewer enemies, and at times when one doesn't do the practice of the good heart one finds more enemies. Like this one can understand even from one's own life experience how the outside enemy is dependent on the inner enemy. One who has a very vicious, cruel mind, very impatient, so selfish, has so many enemies. One whose mind is normally very patient, with great thoughts of loving kindness and compassion, according to that there are fewer enemies. From this one can understand.

Then it says, killing those outside enemies is like killing a corpse, because whether you kill them or not, sooner or later they are going to die. It's not that if you don't kill them they will exist on this earth forever, harming you. It's not like that. Whether you kill them or not, sooner or later they are going to die anyway. Gradually those outside enemies, those who are not killed by you, who are left there, moving around on this earth; those who harm you, even if you don't do anything to them, are samsaric beings who die without choice under the control of unsubdued mind and karma. So your killing them is like killing a corpse. What the worldly people recognize as brave is not really brave, that's what Shantideva is saying.

The next stanza explains the benefits of meditating on suffering.

Furthermore, suffering has good qualities:  
Through being disheartened with it, arrogance is dispelled,  
Compassion arises for those in cyclic existence,  
Evil is shunned and joy is found in virtue.

Meditating on suffering is very important, an extremely important point of practice. The qualities of thinking of suffering, the true cause of suffering, true suffering make us understand, for example, the twelve links. We understand that this is the true cause of suffering, the seven results which arise from the true cause of suffering, the unsubdued mind and karma. Understanding this, meditating on this, hearing this, you discover that you yourself are under the control of suffering.

And then also you feel upset and feel repentance that you experience the samsaric sufferings being under the control of the unsubdued mind and karma. That stops the arrogance and pride in having a better caste, more power and education, having too much arrogance. Realizing your own sufferings of samsara, how you are under the control of unsubdued mind and karma stops those unsubdued minds of pride and arrogance, those inflamed minds, flaming minds—inflation? Inflated; I think arrogance is enough, arrogance.

Then, also, realizing your own suffering, realizing how you are experiencing the sufferings of samsara and having repentance, when you see how others are under the control of suffering,

compassion arises in the mind, wishing those other sentient beings to be without suffering. “How wonderful it would be if those other sentient beings could be free from these sufferings.”

Also, thinking of the sufferings, meditating on the sufferings helps to check the cause from where they came. One sees that suffering is the result of non-virtue. In that way, as one does not wish suffering, one is able to be careful with non-virtuous actions, wishing to protect oneself from the non-virtuous actions. Also if the person wishes happiness and checks the cause, then he sees that happiness is the result of virtue and in that way he is happy to practice virtue, the mind is happy to practice virtue.

So one thing is that meditating on suffering dispels the unsubdued minds of pride and arrogance, also attachment, anger and ignorance—all these unsubdued minds are dispelled by meditating on suffering, by discovering one’s own suffering. By discovering true suffering, one seeks the true cause of suffering; then one realizes that the cessation of the true cause of suffering is the ultimate happiness. So then, when one knows that “this is my goal, this is what I should achieve in order to be free forever from suffering,” this persuades the person, the practitioner, to seek the path to the cessation of the true cause of suffering, to nirvana. In that way one follows the path as remedy and through that one accomplishes the cessation of the true cause of suffering. So like this, how beneficial it is to meditate on suffering, the discovery of the suffering of one’s own samsara.

Then also it helps to generate compassion when you see others are also suffering in samsara. In short, it helps to renounce non-virtue and practice virtue. In that way this life is happy and one goes from happiness to happiness; from one life to another life one goes from happiness to happiness. Like this, one goes to the highest happiness, omniscient mind.

The next stanza: meditating on patience, definitely reflecting the Dharma, the holy Dharma. In particular, anger itself and the person who is angry, both, how they are not a self-entity. They do not have self-control. The reason he doesn’t have self-control is because he is under the control of others. This is why there is no reason to get angry, why it is not worthwhile to get angry with the unsubdued-minded person—I’m not sure if it’s correct or not—with the person who has delusions.

As I do not become angry  
With great sources of sufferings such as jaundice,  
Then why be angry with animate creatures?  
They too are provoked by conditions.

If the question arises whether it is worthwhile or not to get angry, because the enemy gave me harm, if selfish attitude that takes the side of anger says this, then is it worthwhile to get angry? It is not worthwhile; one cannot get angry for the reason that the other enemy harmed you. If that were a reason that makes it worthwhile to get angry, then why don’t you get angry with disease—with bile, wind disease, phlegm disease—when they are not balanced, if one of those is too strong? Such diseases are the originators of great sufferings and produce many problems, so why don’t you get angry with those? It is the same thing, those diseases also give harm. Also, when the four elements are not balanced, the disease comes. Therefore the unbalanced four elements are the originator of great sufferings, of the various diseases, so why don’t you get angry with those elements for the same reason, that they give harm to you?

If you don't get angry with those diseases, the originators of great suffering, those unbalanced elements, then why should you get angry at living beings? They both give harm, so if you don't get angry with them, it is the same thing, so then why do you get angry with living beings?

The answer comes: bile disease and those unbalanced elements happen by conditions, without self-control, so therefore I don't get angry with them. Then to that answer, the same reason is put: then there is no reason to get angry with living beings. The harm those living beings who have unsubdued minds give you is also persuaded by the condition of unsubdued mind. It is done without self-control. For the same reason, it is exactly the same.

Although they are not wished for,  
These sicknesses arise;  
And likewise, although they are not wished for,  
These disturbing conceptions forcibly arise.

Without wish, when the conditions are gathered, the disease arises. Like that, also anger; without the wish in the mind of the person to have the anger, without wishing for anger to arise, from the conditions, the cause of the unhappy mind, from that delusion, the unsubdued mind of anger arises. So therefore if you want to get angry, then you should get angry with the unsubdued mind. If you do get angry, if you want to get angry, then it's worthwhile to get angry to the unsubdued mind—there is no reason to get angry with the person himself.

I stop here.

[Dedication prayers]

Lecture 29: December 5<sup>th</sup> pm

Instead of sitting, I thought to do maybe a little bit of walking meditation. Not just paying attention to your feet, not just the awareness of your feet moving and stepping over the ground, not just that. Instead of doing meditation in dependence on sitting we do meditation in dependence on walking. Meditating on being empty, relating to what you are doing, being in a group, like a session, helping the mind to pay attention without distraction. It is easier to do this meditation related to action, to what you are doing.

Actually the best thing would be to do this meditation from morning until night, without need of separating it. Just whatever you do individually, whatever you do, according to that, relating to that, meditating in dependence. This is a special technique that is very useful even for somebody who has recognized the object to be refuted, who has seen emptiness. Also, especially for those who have no idea what "the refuting object" is or what it is that one should realize as empty, the "I" that doesn't exist. It is very helpful to recognize what it is that doesn't exist and what you should realize as empty. It is very beneficial for that. Otherwise there is no way—you are blocked from seeing the emptiness-only of the "I" in order to eliminate the ignorance of truly existence, the root of samsara.

The best is from morning to night, whatever one does, to practice awareness of dependence. How the self is merely labeled, the subject, aggregates, the objects of the six senses—whatever you hear,

whatever you feel, whatever you taste—with everything practicing awareness of how all this depends on being merely labeled.

If one individually practices awareness like that it is excellent. Not just the awareness—“Now I’m making pee-pee, now I am eating, now I’m making kaka,” or “Now I’m angry”—but doing nothing. You are aware, but you do nothing about it. If you don’t use the remedy to control or to cut the unsubdued mind, then that awareness doesn’t have much meaning. The awareness that “I am killing a goat,” the awareness that “I am killing lice”—you can be aware of that while you are killing, while you are stealing; you know, the awareness of how to steal, being a very skillful thief who comes to the bank through the roof—to be a skillful thief who is clever in the ways to steal, who has much awareness of that, but doesn’t stop stealing. Doesn’t stop the negative mind, doesn’t stop the attachment clinging to the possessions, doesn’t stop these. Just only the awareness, “Now I am stealing,” is not enough. That awareness has no purpose, it doesn’t help.

So the purpose of that awareness is to give you the opportunity, the freedom to be able to use the method. If you have a method to control or to stop creating negative karma or to stop the unsubdued mind from arising, then you use it. Awareness helps that, it gives you the opportunity to use the meditations, the methods, the advice or the teachings—whatever one has read or whatever one has received from the guru. It gives you the opportunity to use that, so that you can be victorious over the delusions.

Otherwise you can be also be aware, “Oh, I’m hanging myself up now with rope.” You know you are doing that.

I think if it is done in a group instead of just individually, maybe it will help for everybody to pay more attention, to get some practice done. In this short time we are hoping to get some experience of what is the essence of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s teaching, the very essence of the sutra and tantra teachings—dependence, emptiness; to have some understanding of the essential method to liberate, to free oneself from samsara and to liberate others.

I think we shall meet maybe at three o’clock—I haven’t decided yet, but maybe at three o’clock or little bit before that.

So, visualize the omniscient one, Guru Manjushri, the radiating one, looking at oneself with smiling compassionate eyes, while making three prostrations.

[Namo Manjushriye...]

Those who know how to offer mandala, how to visualize and meditate offering the mandala, visualize those things. But for those who can’t, then offer your own body, speech and mind and all your possessions, the surroundings and all the three times’ merits, filling all of space. You are offering to Guru Manjushri.

[Mandala offering]

Please request from the depth of the heart to Guru Manjushri, “I take refuge in Guru Manjushri, who is the embodiment of all the three times’ objects of refuge. To you I prostrate. Please change my mind with empowerment. Please pacify immediately all the wrong conceptions, from the wrong

view towards the guru up to the subtle dual view, the very last obstacle to omniscient mind. Please grant blessings to generate immediately seeing the guru in essence Buddha, the guru devotion; from there up to the unified state, enlightenment, in my mind and in the mind of all sentient beings.”

Making this request from the depth of the heart, strong white light beams emit from Manjushri and enters one’s body and mind and the body and mind of all sentient beings who are around you; purifying all the obstacles to the graduated path to enlightenment, particularly the ignorance of true existence, holding the “I” as truly existent, even though you are empty of true existence, and particularly these wrong conceptions are purified in my own mind and in the minds of all other sentient beings.

Then a replica of Manjushri absorbs into you and all sentient beings. Feel the oneness, and think, “All the realizations from guru devotion up to omniscient mind are generated in my mind, particularly the wisdom realizing emptiness only; in my mind and in the mind of all sentient beings.”

[...*idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami...*]

Now please generate the motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the omniscient mind for the sake of all my kind mother sentient beings. Therefore, I am going to meditate on all existence as illusory, as dependent. I am going to meditate on it as dependent, as illusory, as a dream.”

I am not going to talk, to introduce, to explain the refuting object, that what we should realize as empty. It is easier after doing some meditation, having some experience with the “I”. First meditate how the “I” is dependent, merely labeled or at least how it is dependent. Even if you don’t understand at the moment “merely labeled,” at least labeled, existing by depending on a base and thought and the name that is labeled on it. So by making some experiment yourself, by having some taste, on that basis, that small experience, if we talk, it makes more sense.

[Walking meditation]

I think it is better to be silent, better to keep silence. But if it causes life danger then I think you can break the silence. Suddenly if some shock comes, break the silence. Anyway, I am joking. And we don’t need to go in a line, like the army or police. We are not doing that. What we are going to do is mainly practicing awareness in a group. From here, from when you stand up, until death time, but particularly we should put effort during this time, like a session. Then we go and come back, continuously practicing awareness.

The main awareness is on the base, on the aggregates: the body, speech and mind, the aggregates. Each single action, whatever it does. When you stand up, you think, “Now the body stands up.” You think like this, as you are supposed to stand up, you think, “What I am doing? Oh I am standing up. Why I am standing up? The only reason, no other reason at all except the labeling base, the body is standing up. That’s all, nothing else.” Then when you are putting on clothes, think, “What am I doing? I am putting on clothes. The labeling base, the aggregates are putting on clothes. So because of that reason I am wearing clothes.” As you are walking, “Why am I walking? Because the labeling base, the aggregates, the body is walking. Nothing else besides that. No other reason. No other reason except that the body is doing the action of walking.”

So then the experience that comes in the mind after putting the reason, “Because my body, the labeling base, the aggregates of body is walking, nothing else, no other reason that I am walking,” what comes in the mind when you give that reason, what you feel with the “I,” that you continue. At that time, when you put the reason—the aggregates, no other reason except that the aggregates are doing the action of walking—then when you concentrate on that, the “I,” the self does not appear as so heavy or strong. It doesn’t appear truly existent so strongly as before. It becomes weaker, thinner. The “I” becomes a little bit invisible.

So then if you are touching a plant, each moment whatever you are doing, practice the awareness of the base, the aggregates. Then according to that you question, “What I am doing?” So then, concentrate, “There is no other reason except the labeling base, the body or the mind is doing this.” So meditate like this. After you put the reason that the labeling base is doing the action, you concentrate on that, on the experience of the “I.” How you feel about the “I,” concentrate on that. At the same time you watch the “I.”

The main awareness is on the aggregates. So, “What am I doing? There is no other reason except this.” So like this, whatever action the “I” does is dependent on the action of the aggregates. Be aware of that. Then whenever your mind is distracted from that awareness of dependence, that the “I” is merely labeled according to the actions of the aggregates, when your mind is distracted from that, you bring the mind back. Again you look at the “I,” how it appears to you—on the aggregates, how the “I” appears to you.

Without saying, “Oh, this “I” is merely labeled,” without going over the intellectual reasons, without pushing the intellectual reason, just how the “I” appears on the aggregates, this you watch.

Then again you do the same thing, using the reason of the aggregates, “What I am doing, why? Because the aggregates are doing this.” Then again at the same time you watch how the “I” appears. If the mind is distracted you bring the mind back and watch how the “I” appears on the aggregates.

Like this, checking if you find any difference: when you don’t put a reason, there is the normal “I” that appears to you on the aggregates; and after you put the reason, the action of the aggregates, how the “I” appears to oneself at that time.

The point of doing this is to find more and more clearly and stronger how the “I” appears. When you don’t check, with the normal “I,” and then the other time when you check with the reason, then you find more and more clearly the difference in the appearance of the “I,” the way you cling to the “I.” Not even so much in the appearance but mainly in the way of clinging to the “I,” you find more and more difference. Finding more difference means there is some progress in the mind toward recognizing the refuting object, the truly existent “I.” It also means that you make progression to quickly see the absolute nature of the “I.”

I hope it’s not too cold.

The main thing is, as you stand up, be aware.

If you have something to wear, some sweaters, please put them on. Maybe we’ll be unable to come back.



[End of discourse]

Lecture 30: December 6<sup>th</sup> pm

[Preliminary prayers]

I am not sure what to say tonight. Maybe I talk about darkness, since it is nighttime. Tonight we cannot fall asleep, all night talking and listening, then tomorrow morning when the sun rises we can go to bed.

Please generate at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve omniscient mind for the sake of all kind mother sentient beings, therefore I am going to listen to the teachings.

As Chandrakirti, a disciple of Nagarjuna explained in the Madhyamaka teaching—to translate it verse by verse, to put it together in my mind takes time, quoting the verses exactly, but I will mention the meaning: the swan that has two well developed wings is able to cross the ocean flapping with the power of the wind; like that, the capable being who is like the swan, having the realization of the two truths—absolute truth and all-obscuring truth—in the recent translation of the *Bodhicaryavatara* it is translated as the deceptive truth, that is also okay, more exact, absolute truth and deceptive truth, like the two wings—by the power of accumulating virtue, which is like the power of the wind, the merit accumulated is like the wind, accumulated by the understanding of these two truths, one is able to cross the ocean of suffering of samsara, able to reach the state of omniscient mind. So like this, how important it is to realize the two truths.

Even with the example, one can understand. The swan cannot fly with one wing, same thing: without depending on the cooperative practice of method and wisdom, the two truths, one cannot reach omniscient mind by crossing the suffering of samsara, which is like the ocean. Without missing one of the two practices—not like one practices wisdom but not method, or if one practices method one does not practice wisdom—one should practice method and wisdom together.

Then, in order to understand and realize the two truths correctly, one should follow the true teaching, the infallible teaching taught by Buddha, which reveals the infallible right view, the absolute truth, the reality of existence as it in fact exists, exactly showing the way that things exist. In that way, understanding these teachings, one has the opportunity to discover the reality of existence. Without the slightest mistake one can clearly see the reality of existence—that it is empty, that it does not exist as it appears to the all-obscuring mind, the ignorance of true existence. The all-obscuring mind, the deceptive mind—things don’t exist the way they appear to this, they are empty of that. One can discover that things exist by being dependent on being merely labeled by the valid mind on mere appearance, mere perception. One can see it clearly, the way all existence exists.

So there are teachings with definite meaning and teachings with interpretive meaning. Definite meaning means that it is exactly as the teaching reveals it—that it is exactly that in fact, in reality. And also it is explained in the Madhyamaka teaching that those who are outside this path, the path that is passed down through Nagarjuna, have no method to achieve everlasting peace. Those who are degenerated from the two truths, the all-obscuring truth and the absolute truth, without understanding of these two truths or with wrong understanding, cannot accomplish liberation.

Lama Atisha re-established the Buddhadharmā in Tibet and it was from him that the title *graduated path to enlightenment* came—this is the path that condenses all the teachings of the three vehicles shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha; and all the teachings are set up as a graduated practice in order for one person to achieve enlightenment. Even though Buddha showed so many profound extensive teachings, such as the teachings of the three vehicles, Lama Atisha made it so easy to practice all this; he showed all these different paths, which are revealed by the teachings of the three vehicles, as a graduated path for one person to reach omniscient mind. However, Lama Atisha also advised this: by depending on the advice that is passed from Nagarjuna to his disciple Chandrakirti one can realize the absolute nature; in relation to the advice that was not passed down by Nagarjuna and Chandrakirti, there is no possibility to realize shunyata, the absolute nature.

It is the same thing with the lineage of the Kagyu lamas, Marpa and Mila. Milarepa also explained, “Absolutely there is no meditator, there is no meditation, there are no bhūmis, there is no path to proceed on, there is no result, rupakaya or dharmakaya.” I think he also mentioned, “Absolutely there is not even the name *samsara*. Under the control of the absolute truth all these things do not exist; under the control of the all-obscuring truth there is samsara and there is the sorrowless state, there is everything that exists. This was taught by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.” This is what Milarepa said in the hymn—the advice or the hymn on shunyata. This is the same thing that Nagarjuna and Chandrakirti explained.

If one wishes to find the infallible right view, one should study the true teachings of Buddha, which reveal that, and the commentaries on that by the great pandits such as Nagarjuna. There are six different texts by Nagarjuna, commentaries that reveal the emptiness-only with many logical reasons and examples.

One great pandit, Buddhapalita, also wrote a teaching explaining shunyata. Then there is the *Madhyamaka*, written by Chandrakirti, Nagarjuna’s disciple. Then there are also others, *The Commentary Clarifying the Words*, another text written by Chandrakirti, explaining shunyata. Then also Lama Tsong Khapa’s teachings, *The Great Commentary on the Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, in which there is a very elaborate explanation of the two truths. Then there are also other teachings, other commentaries written by Lama Tsong Khapa such as *The Essence of the Definite and Interpretative Meaning Well-Expounded*. This scripture is regarded as one of the most important and detailed commentaries on the different explanations of shunyata of the four schools.

By listening, reflecting and meditating on these infallible teachings; reflecting on what one has listened in order to get a clear, correct understanding; cutting the doubts by checking it and studying it; and then training the mind in what one has discovered, whatever one understood through meditation; practitioners have found the infallible right view and oneself can also immediately find the infallible right view. Also, at the same time one can accumulate extensive merit. Together: at the same time as one studies, reflects, listens and meditates, one also accumulates extensive merits, purifying the hindrances and obstacles to immediately realizing shunyata.

It’s useful to have some idea of the gross refuted object of the other schools. It makes it clearer. If one has a little bit of understanding of the refuted object of each of the schools, it helps one very much to recognize the subtle right view, the subtle refuted object, according to the fourth school, the fourth philosophy. Among this fourth philosophy there are two types, one is called *Rang Gyupa* and one is called *Thal Gyupa*. I think in Sanskrit it is *Svatantrika* and *Prasangika*; for people who are

familiar with the Sanskrit terms or who heard before this helps. For those who are not familiar it doesn't matter what is mentioned, even if it is completely wrong, it doesn't matter, it can just as well be named something else; it can be called rock and roll.

Anyway, within the fourth school there are two divisions, the last one is Prasangika, *Thal Gyupa*, the first one is called *Rang Gyupa*. Each word has its own definition, commentary and meaning. However, at this point it is not so important to explain and also it would take much time. The main point to talk or think about is the view of the refuted object.

As long as we don't recognize or understand the subtle refuted object of the Prasangika, there is no way to understand or realize *shunyata*, emptiness only. One cannot find the infallible right view, which is the Prasangika view. That is what we should realize. This wisdom that realizes the Prasangika's right view eliminates the root of samsara, the ignorance of true existence. It cuts off the ignorance of true existence, the root of samsara. The right view is very subtle. And the reason it is very subtle is because its refuted object is very subtle. In order to realize the Prasangika's infallible right view, which is very subtle, one has to recognize the refuted object of the Prasangika, which is also very subtle. So to get a clear idea of that, comprehension of that, it helps very much to recognize and understand those previous philosophies, to recognize their gross refuted objects. This helps very much to get the complete understanding and recognition of the Prasangika's refuted object, that which we should realize as empty.

I think maybe I stop here. [Tea is brought in.] Then, I think maybe better to have tea in order to realize the Prasangika view, to recognize the subtle refuted object as empty, the right view, which is very subtle. [Laughter]

I think it would be very good if we can do again like we did yesterday, but a little bit earlier. I was a little bit scared that the next morning everyone might be at the hospital, keeping the doctor busy, especially those who don't have many things to cover the body. I thought to come back halfway, without sitting. I think if you can do this more in the group, it is very useful. But not only walking, also doing different things; the more the aggregates are doing the different actions, the more it gives one the opportunity to get a definite understanding that the "I" is merely labeled on the aggregates and that the action of the "I" is merely labeled on the actions of the aggregates. So, I think not only walking, but also if you do more actions with the aggregates. I think for the non-virtuous actions it is better to not have various things; the less one can create these the more benefit there is for ourselves. So not these actions but this one: we are meditating on how the "I" is a dependent arising in order to realize the emptiness-only of the "I," to realize the non-truly-existent "I," the emptiness only of the "I," in order to realize the remedy of the ignorance of true existence.

So not only in the case of walking but also in the case of feelings, you can relate it to the senses, the aggregates. What the sense of the eye sees, according to this, "I see this and that." "I smell this and that," according to the sense of nose. According to the sense of body we label "I feel cold," "I feel warm." "Now I am terrified." I'm joking—terrified is the mind, not the sense of body. Like this we can practice awareness. So it doesn't have to be limited to only walking. At one time you are only walking but you can relate it to all the functions and experiences of the five senses. That is how it normally is, that is life according to the experience of the five senses. According to that, "I see that," "I didn't see that," "I taste this," "I did this and that," we label on this all the time. That is the way one lives life, how one does actions, how the "I" does the actions, how the "I" lives life. Whether it

is a suffering life or a happy life, labeling on that, according to the experience of the aggregates, each time when it does a different function, a different experience, then, “I did this and that,” like this.

But the confusion is that one is not aware of dependent arising; not aware that it is empty of existing from its own side. On the mere appearance of the aggregates—your aggregates, other’s aggregates—the valid thought merely labels “I,” “she,” “we” and “they;” merely labeled. Even though that is the way things exist, “I” and others exist—depending on the mere appearance of the base and the valid thought merely labeling, it comes into existence, it arises. But we are not aware of dependent arising, that it is empty of not depending on the mere appearance of the base and the valid thought merely labeling.

The best thing is to practice this awareness, this should be life. Actually, how we should live life—the best thing to do would be to not separate ourselves from the practice of the right view and bodhicitta, absolute bodhicitta and all-obscuring bodhicitta; the two bodhicittas. To not let the life be separated away from these two practices, that is the best life, the best practitioner. Day and night, all the time, from morning until night being aware, practicing awareness like this; sitting, walking, eating, sleeping, these four main actions, whatever action one does in one’s daily life, always mindful, awareness: “I” and all the actions of “I” are merely labeled on the aggregates and the actions of the aggregates. Practice awareness like this, especially in breaktime or when one is active. Then the other thing is bodhicitta, the ultimate good heart. Everything, every action of body, speech and mind, whatever one does, always starts with it. If you sit down, you sit down with bodhicitta; when you eat, you eat with bodhicitta; if you go to bed, you go to bed with bodhicitta; if you go, you go with bodhicitta; when you get angry, you get angry with bodhicitta. That one I didn’t find in the teaching [Rinpoche laughs]

Anyway, I think I stop here.

Like this. If you want to practice, we talked about so many practices, this is it; this is the most important practice in everyday life. If you are practicing the Mahayana teachings then this should be it. If one wishes to follow the Mahayana path, this is it. When you meditate, meditate with bodhicitta, like this. When you talk, talk with bodhicitta, when you write, write with bodhicitta—like this all the time. That is one practice, then the other one: continually practicing awareness, especially when you are active, that the “I” is a dependent arising, like a reflection, like a dream, illusory.

See all this as illusory, as a dream, as a magician’s transformation. Like when the magician has transformed something by the power of mantra, turned material into a snake or a beautiful girl—look at it like this. That is the way to relate to the truly existent “I.” The truly existent “I” that appears to us now is like those, like they don’t exist. This “I” doesn’t exist here on these aggregates. Like the view of that beautiful girl—in fact it is empty there, in fact it is empty on the place where you see it. Like this, the truly existent “I” is empty on these aggregates. What appears to oneself is empty on these aggregates; it is a dependent arising on the mere appearance of the aggregates merely labeled by valid thought. Like this, it is a dependent arising.

If one can live the life like this, with those two practices, that is the best. Fantastic! Whether one does retreat, whether one lives in a monastery, whether lives in a center, whether one doesn’t live in a center, even if one is working in the city, even if one works in the bars, like this, that person’s practice is very rich. Not a simple practice but a very rich practice, meditating on emptiness and bodhicitta; every day creating the cause to reach the rupakaya and dharmakaya.

Lecture 31 December 7<sup>th</sup> am

[Preliminary prayers]

Please generate at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all my mothers, sentient beings; therefore, I am going to listen to the commentary on the *Bodhicaryavatara*.”

I don't remember if I read the twenty-third stanza:

Although they are not wished for,  
These sicknesses arise;  
And likewise although they are not wished for,  
These disturbing conceptions forcibly arise.

The next stanza, what it shows is that anger is not generated willingly. You can understand it in two ways. In the case of the person who has anger, that anger is not generated in his mind by having the wish to get angry. He doesn't get angry with the wish. In other words saying, “Oh, tomorrow at twelve o'clock I'm going to get angry.” You make a list in a notebook, like you make a list when you go shopping, you write down everything that you are going to buy or everything that you are going to do tomorrow, what work, people to see—whatever you are planning to do tomorrow you write down, so that you don't forget. Maybe except death. Even if death happens tomorrow, it doesn't come on the shopping list. The best thing would be to write down this thing first and then the others.

I just remembered, the thought just came, while I was talking like this, writing down death, that I heard that each incarnation of His Holiness Karmapa, just before he passed away, used to write down on a piece of paper in which place, in which family he would be reincarnated. Before he passed away he wrote this down and then he put it in a box, which was kept kind of secret until he passed away. So actually the reincarnation was recognized by himself, his past life, without need to go and ask some other lama or to request a prediction through an oracle.

I heard the same thing about my incomparably kind guru, His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche. There are two volumes of his biography—the first volume about his early life is already available but the biography of his later life is not yet printed.

Before he passed away His Holiness himself completely wrote this, before he passed away, before he took the aspect of sickness. I think the holy body collected water; I don't know what this is called. He personally wrote everything about his death—that he was going to be in meditation for such and such a number of days and that one shouldn't leave the holy body for longer than that, it should be taken out. Also he advised the servant, the manager, what to do, which lamas to invite, the whole thing, the reincarnation, everything. I heard that all this he wrote down in the biography.

When it was about time to pass away he told the servant, the manager, “If you don't believe me then look at my biography.” The manager, whose name I can't remember, the principal servant who took care of him, confessed to Rinpoche whatever mistakes he did from his side, requesting His Holiness

that he should live long. The elder tutor of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness Ling Rinpoche, also requested to His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche to live long. However, His Holiness did not accept to live long.

Just before His Holiness Karmapa left for the West, I heard that he packed up all the precious statues, all the precious things in the same box with this letter telling about the reincarnation.

So if one can plan like this, if one knows one is going to die in one week or tomorrow, then if you want to you can die somewhere in the bushes alone, where there are no other beings disturbing—in a cave or in the rocky mountains, where there are no friends and relatives disturbing you and crying. You can die in a place where there's a guru or a high lama, somewhere where one can meditate without much outside distraction. One can make secret plans instead of dying in a car or dying in an airplane or in a hospital. There, whether you are dead or not, right after the breath stops, when they don't see the breath is functioning any more, when the limbs are cold, you are immediately taken out, whether the person is dead or not, even if the person is not dead.

One time in India there was a very old Tibetan man in one of the hospitals who had quite a lot of experience. He was there while there was somebody whose breath stopped by wind disease. The person was not dead, only the breath stopped. This old Tibetan man couldn't speak the Indian language and next to him was this person whose breath stopped, who couldn't breathe any more. The doctors came and they decided he was dead. So he was taken out and the old man knew that man didn't die, that he just had wind disease and that he just needed something to wake up from the wind disease.

The man was taken out and the people—the doctor and nurses—decided that he was dead. The old man knew the person wasn't dead but he couldn't speak the Indian language. So he tried to wave his hand to the doctor, "Please put him down." But they didn't know what he was talking about, they thought that the Tibetan man was scared because the other person was dead; that's what they understood. Then the brother of the old man came and he could speak the Indian language, and the doctor told him that his brother seemed to be very scared because the other person died. Then the old man told his brother that the man was not dead, that his breath only stopped by wind disease but that they decided to take him out; that he had been trying to tell them so much to leave the body there but because he couldn't speak the language he couldn't do anything.

The method is so simple—even the smoke of incense, food, flour or even burning tsampa makes you wake up from wind disease. In Tibet they also burn lama pills, precious pills or relics, a high bodhisattva's pill or a high lama's hairs, and spirit harms go away and the person is relieved. Even high lamas' robes—they don't have machines to protect from spirit harms but immediately one recovers. It is something that is not a machine, something that comes from the mind. I think it involves quite complicated things to explain. The effect of telling these things to somebody who has no idea, to a hospital or a doctor, it is like telling them that milk comes from the horns. For their mind it is like that, even though it works. They can't imagine, their minds can't figure it out.

In Tibet, one mother had a child, and they believed that the child was dead. Then there was a monk who stopped on his way, and he mixed tsampa with butter and made it hot and then completely covered the head with a thick layer of dough of tsampa. Then the child revived, it came back, the breath started functioning, because it had wind disease. So when the same thing happened again, when the child become unconscious again, then the mother did that again and it came back. She did

this several times, making hot tsampa dough, covering the head. Then one time, hours and hours passed, and normally it came back, but the last time it didn't come back soon. She prayed for the child to come back, I think it must have been the whole day covered with tsampa. But it didn't come back. Normally it comes back quite quickly but that day it did not. I think she did this many times and she waited for a long time but that time the child actually was dead, actually dead, not just by wind disease. That's why it couldn't come back soon, why it didn't start to breathe again soon like before.

There are many outer and inner and secret signs of death, distant and close signs of death, but the most definite sign of death is the breath running through the nose. There are ways to check and from this one can also tell problems, in the family, if one is going to be sick, and hindrances. Also one can tell about death, after how many years and how many months one is going to die. There is a normal way of running and then when it doesn't run in the normal way, when it changes, it means different things. It is explained in the tantric teachings—I don't remember exactly—in many scriptures and commentaries, also by Lama Tsong Khapa in the detailed explanations on transference of consciousness, about all the signs, and about the practice of transference of consciousness. This talk just came from that joke about putting the death on the list.

Normally at the beginning of the new month the breath runs three days mainly through the right side, then the next three days from the left—it changes around at dawn time. If you check, if you pay attention, you notice exactly that at the beginning of the new month it is stronger from the left side, and then after three days it's stronger from the right side and weaker from the left side. But around death time it doesn't flow like this, the way it is supposed to, around the dawn time, it is the normal way. But this is just conversation.

So then the next stanza:

Without thinking “I shall be angry”  
People become angry with no resistance;  
And without thinking, “I shall produce myself,”  
Likewise anger itself is produced.

Is the enemy who motivated to give harm—who had the thought to give harm, who wished to give harm—different from the unsubdued mind, different from the disease? They are not the same. The question comes by thinking how it's worthwhile to harm the enemy back. The person who gave such harm is bad, is different from sickness and unsubdued mind because unsubdued mind itself, anger itself, sickness itself doesn't motivate, “I will come, I will harm to the person, I will arise.” The other motivates to harm the enemy so it is different from the unsubdued mind, disease. That question arises.

Even the cause of anger, the unhappy mind, doesn't motivate you to generate anger, doesn't plan to get angry but, because the cause is perfected, the conditions come together with the unhappy mind, and because of that in sentient beings, without choice, not voluntarily, not willingly, anger arises, without choice. The anger and unsubdued mind itself doesn't motivate to arise. The person himself doesn't motivate to get angry. But anger uncontrollably arises. The person himself doesn't have control at all.

The verse shows that all the shortcomings have arisen from the condition so there is no control, there is no freedom. The person doesn't have freedom.

All the shortcomings, however much delusion there is, not only the unsubdued mind itself but all shortcomings such as the suffering of rebirth, old age, sickness and death, and all the other problems, the various kinds of evil and negative karmas that are motivated by the unsubdued mind—all these negative karmas arise under the power of the conditions. All the shortcomings of the unsubdued mind and all the evil actions came from the power of conditions. The ten non-virtuous actions, such as taking others' lives, are all motivated by the unsubdued mind—all these come by the power of conditions. So therefore the person himself doesn't have control at all, doesn't have freedom at all.

Complaining is nonsense, childish, foolish, crazy, like getting angry at a waterfall, criticizing, "This water is coming down—why doesn't it go up? Why doesn't it run up? Instead of falling down, why doesn't it run up? This waterfall, climbing up the mountain: why doesn't it fall up?" If one gets angry, if one criticizes the water, if one is angry that the water falls down, criticizing the waterfall for running down all the time, it is nonsense, childish, foolish and also crazy. It is the same thing if the person gets angry with another person, with other sentient beings, complaining, criticizing this and that, "What she is doing, such and such undesirable, what I dislike, actions this and that," then getting angry. If somebody does this, it is like being worried and angry with a waterfall and recognizing how childish that person is, how foolish and crazy. This is the same thing, in fact, when we get angry with others, who have no freedom at all over the unsubdued mind, no freedom at all. So it is exactly the same thing—foolish, childish, crazy, nonsense.

By thinking of all these reasons mentioned above, how there is no worth in getting angry, we should stop the anger toward others by thinking of the example. When we think of our enemies—is it worthwhile to get angry? Is it worthwhile to criticize him? Then you should think of the example of the waterfall, of somebody who criticizes the earth that it is not sky, how bad it is. Immediately we would regard such a person as crazy: "This person has something wrong with his mind." We don't regard him as a normal person. If somebody is angry that the earth is not the sky, immediately we say that there is something wrong with his mind, that he is crazy, and we don't consider him a reliable person that we can trust. We can rely on other people who do not say that; those who say this nonsense we leave out.

This is factual information and reasons; it is just a matter of understanding, just a matter of being aware, it is not particularly based on having faith. It is just a matter of being aware that all these reasons are true. What Shantideva is saying is that the person himself has no freedom. That he is overwhelmed by the unsubdued mind. These reasons explained above are true. It is like this in fact—there is nothing that one can negate, saying it's wrong. These reasons talk about life: how the other person who gets angry has no freedom and how one should think of that person who gets angry at you as so pitiful, as an object of compassion, such a pitiful sentient being, not having freedom, overwhelmed by the unsubdued mind. It is just a matter of being aware of the nature of the unsubdued mind, the nature of the person. So if you think of these reasons with the enemy, you will see no worth in getting angry, you will see yourself as completely childish, thinking that it is nonsense that we get angry and criticize others. Exactly like this example.

Otherwise, when our mind is not aware of what Shantideva explained here in the chapter on patience, these reasons: nature and the unsubdued mind of the person—it looks like criticizing a



waterfall and being angry that the earth is not sky, which is childish. If you don't remember these, then when you meet somebody who is angry at you, who dislikes you, who regards you as the enemy, that seems to be something greatly worthwhile to get angry about, to complain about, and a good reason to treat him badly. It seems like that to our mind.

The next verse shows the causal conditions of these unsubdued minds, all the shortcomings of unsubdued mind, all the various evil actions motivated by unsubdued mind—how they don't have self control. Before, we mentioned that however many shortcomings there are, the shortcomings of the unsubdued mind and all the evil actions, they do not have self control because they depend on the power of conditions. So now, even the causes and conditions of those do not have self control.

I think I haven't read the stanza that shows how all the shortcomings come from conditions, so therefore don't have self control:

All mistakes that are  
And all the various kinds of evil  
Arise through the force of conditions:  
They do not govern themselves.

They do not govern themselves means they do not have self control or freedom. Then the next verse shows that even the causes and conditions of those do not have self control:

These conditions that are assembled together  
Have no intention to produce anything,  
And neither does their product  
Have the intention to be produced.

Therefore the unsubdued mind, such as anger and so on, the sufferings—the Tibetan to English, you can't go straight, it always has to be reversed, you know, upside down, so sometimes when I start talking according to a Tibetan sentence I get into problems later on, I get stuck. It has to be upside down. So even the gathering of the conditions of the unsubdued mind such as anger, the suffering, even if they don't have any intention, they do not think, "Oh, I will experience suffering." They don't have the intention, the motive, "I will generate suffering."

Also the suffering itself that comes from the gathering of conditions does not have the intention, "Oh, I will generate suffering". That suffering does not think, "Oh, I will come out." For example, a headache doesn't have this intention, "Oh, I will disturb this person while he is meditating. Oh, I will disturb him, I will keep him on the toilet, I will let him meditate in the toilet." Anyway, I am joking. So therefore, reasoning that the enemy intended to give harm, the thought intended to give harm, generating anger, is not worthwhile. Reasoning against the enemy that he intended to give harm, using this as a reason for you to get angry is not worthwhile.

I think I stop here.

Lecture 31: December 7<sup>th</sup> am

<Tape garbled at beginning>

...it is not necessary only at that time but, if you meditate also at other times on a similar type of meditation, either with the four analyses or with more reasons, or in a similar short way, putting the question [what am I doing?] and then giving the answer “I am doing this...” Then again asking the question, “What is the reason for that?” and then, when you give the reason, when you think of what the aggregates are doing, when you put that reason and nothing else besides that, the label, “I am walking, I am sitting,” and so forth, there is nothing else than that. When we think that the “I” is merely labeled and that it’s a dependent arising—how the “I” appears to you that time, how you think of the “I” at that time—I’m not saying the intellectual way of thinking, but the experience that comes that time with the “I.” Another way of saying is instinctively or naturally, how you change, how you hold the “I” at that time, and later when your mind is distracted from those analyses, from those meditations, suddenly when you think of the “I”... did you find some difference?

Student: When you trying to look at your mind and realize how it’s labeling everything... [inaudible]

Rinpoche: Body seems something else?

Student: ... doesn’t feel related, mind seems something else... you are centered here...

Rinpoche: You are centered there? From the body—yeah, that is very good. Then?

Student: [inaudible]

Rinpoche: You feel there’s something there, you’re not sure what it is but something there, clinging to the body....

Student: [inaudible]

Rinpoche: Itself is nature of clinging? Self is clinging or what? Object?

Student: [inaudible] I is here, not the body... I don’t know how to explain it...

Rinpoche: When you question if the body is the “I?” At that time you don’t see that the leg is the “I” but you feel the “I” in the heart? I think that’s good, a good example. I think what you look at is supposed to be one person’s experience. For example, as these two gentlemen explained, more or less, both should be experienced by one person. That was the purpose of the meditation, that is the way to start.

[Inaudible discussions with other students.]

What’s your name? Bill? Thousand-dollar bill? Did Bill get some experience?

Bill: When I hold my breath down...

Rinpoche: When you keep your breath down, you are down there? Good. What you said before was good.

Student: On the walk I thought we all see and feel ourselves and the world differently and none of us is wrong or right. That’s my attitude.

Rinpoche: What did you see?

Student: Me? Who knows? What I was looking for I knew was there but I just couldn’t work out what it was. I was looking for emptiness, but I couldn’t...I was grasping on to too many things to see it...

Rinpoche: Are you happy to be grasping at many things?

Student: Trying to hang on to it...trying to find myself.

Rinpoche: Did you find yourself?

Student: I may have, but it might be wrong or it might be right.

Rinpoche: So what is your idea of self?

Student: I don’t think it matters if I were not here. I’m just another brick in the wall.

Rinpoche: I’m not questioning if you are part of the bricks in the wall.

Student: If I wasn't sitting here you would probably be talking to this man here.

Rinpoche: Did you ever think, "What is yourself?"

Student: I feel I'm the same as everything else, like the flowers, the sun—I'm just part of it.

Rinpoche: So you are part of everything?

Student: That's what I think. But I don't know.

Rinpoche: Are you part of kaka?

Student: [something very funny about having made so much kaka—much laughter]. I don't smell, I hope...

Rinpoche: Are you part of our anger? I'm joking.

Rinpoche: Actually the ignorance doesn't think the body is "I." The intuitive way the ignorance is clinging to the "I" isn't as oneness with the body—that is not the way you think. If you check whether it is oneness with our five aggregates, one doesn't think. Even my experience, my ignorance doesn't think that the aggregates, the labeling base—the aggregates themselves—are the "I."

But it might look suddenly, in some ways—in regards clinging, in regards appearance, when we look at outside objects such as a book—it looks like the aggregates of the book are oneness with the name "book." What is the label looks like it is oneness with it, in appearance, like kind of oneness. When we think of wood, "wood" looks like oneness with the labeling base; when we think "pillar" it looks like oneness, in some ways. In some ways, when we pay attention to our view of the pillar it looks like oneness, suddenly it looks like oneness—the pillar and the base, the group of the parts looks like oneness, kind of mixed.

The incomparably kind guru His Holiness Ling Rinpoche, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's senior tutor used to say this, "The label and the labeling base appearing as if they are oneness is the refuting object." So the way the labeling base and the label as oneness appears to our view is the refuting object, that is what doesn't exist. Suddenly when your eye turns to the pillar and when you pay attention to your view, how the pillar appears, it looks as if it is mixed, oneness, unable to discriminate what is the labeling base and what is the label, "pillar," and the group of parts. Between the shape that functions to hold up the beam, that labeling base, and the label "pillar," we are unable to discriminate, to see them separately. They appear as if they are mixed. Like this, as Rinpoche explained.

I think it depends how well your mind is trained in discriminating your views. I think it depends on that. In a gross way, when you check, it is like that. But with mind training, meditation on emptiness-only, for those who have recognized the refuting object, whose mind is more trained in emptiness-only and recognizes the refuting object, what it is exactly, recognizing the way that the refuting object appears in one's view, such as a pillar, I think a little bit different from that. It is more subtle than that—the refuting object and how it appears is more subtle than that—not even oneness, not even as if it is mixed. On the pillar there is a pillar that exists from its own side. On the vase there is a vase that exists from its own side. On the blue color there is a blue color that exists from its own side. On the aggregates of the pillar, on the group of the parts, there is a pillar that exists from its own side.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama also used to say, when I asked about like a table: suddenly, it looks like the base is suddenly the table, sort of. The table is not separate from the labeling base, not separate from that, not different from that; it looks like that labeling base, the aggregates of the table, as if that itself is the label, the table—not the legs and so forth. Also, His Holiness did not say oneness. One is unable to discriminate the labeling base and the label; they are mixed. There is a slightly

different way, but also what His Holiness the Dalai Lama said, “When you see a table, when you look at the table it looks like from *inside* that there is the table, from inside of the labeling base. Inside there is a table.” I don’t think it can be pointed out in a particular place here and there, but however, His Holiness said that, and that is also true. As if it is inside that, the table is inside of the atoms, the particles, inside the labeling base. However, this is a wrong view, a hallucination, the refuting object.

What Bill said, you see, the “I” becomes weaker, and that is what is supposed to happen. When you think of the reason that “I am doing this or that,” there is no other reason except the aggregates doing this and that, nothing else. The effect that comes is that the “I” that you cling to is not as strong as before, it becomes very weak. Depending on how much your mind is trained, it becomes very weak. Then at the same time, the most important thing is that you relate more to the truly existent “I.” There’s a real “I,” a real self, here, existing above the heart; feeling that there is an “I” here, something kind of very worthwhile to cling to. The one that we think of here, itself is the refuting object; the “I” that doesn’t exist at all, that we cannot find, that we should realize as empty is that. That is the refuting object.

For example if you search inside—around the heart, here, the skin, the bones—if you try to point it out, asking the doctors to do surgery and then checking, the “I” that you believe in, to which you cling, which appears above the heart somewhere here in the chest—if you try to find it, it cannot be found. However, this you should relate to the emotional “I.” Relating to this, you should put the question, “Why do ‘I’ exist?” Not just the general “I,” not the “I” in the world, but what you feel here, that one, you should do the meditation relating to that. Then when you put that reason, it becomes weaker. It feels weaker; we should feel it is thinner. The experience of the effect should be increased.

When your mind is distracted from that concentration, holding that experience with that reason, then think again back to the normal “I.” Think of “I.” Think “I.” Again check how it appears. Then you see it as more clear, because it was weaker before. So because of the previous one, now when you think of the normal “I,” how the “I” appears to you, when you think of the “I”, then you see it stronger. Without any intellectualizing you see it stronger—you see the appearance of the truly existent “I” is stronger, for your mind it is stronger. By the power, by the effect of it having been weaker before, the next time when you check how the “I” appears normally, the truly existent “I,” it becomes much more vivid and stronger than before.

In this way you become more and more aware, recognizing clearer and clearer the truly existent “I.” And in that way, through this development, it becomes very easy. More and more clearly you recognize the refuting object without mistakes, the exact non-existent “I” that should be realized as empty, which is empty.

I think it is late.

[Dedication prayers]

Lecture 32: December 7<sup>th</sup> pm

[Preliminary prayers]

[Short mandala]

Please make requests from the depth of the heart to Guru Manjushri, “Please pacify immediately all the wrong conceptions, from the wrong views towards the guru up to the subtle dual view, the very last obstacle, in my mind and in the minds of all sentient beings.”

Visualize strong light beams emitted and purified, entering one’s body and mind and that of all sentient beings. Particularly all the hindrances, our wrong conception, the ignorance of truly existence are purified, completely purified, become non-existent within the mind of oneself and others.

Then request, “Please grant me blessings by your power to generate immediately all the right realizations from guru devotion, from seeing that the essence of the guru is buddha, up to the unified state of Vajradhara; particularly the wisdom seeing the meaning of selflessness, the absolute nature of the ‘I,’ in my mind and in the minds of all sentient beings—parents, enemies, friends and all the rest of the sentient beings.” After this request a replica of Manjushri absorbs into oneself and all sentient beings. Feel the oneness, and having received all the realizations, particularly of shunyata.

[... *idam guru...*]

We are going to do the practice of awareness, the meditation on emptiness, the dependent arising of the “I” and the aggregates. Actually practice awareness of dependent arising, making the mind aware of that, training the mind in how these things are dependent arising. Then in that way practice awareness of how they are empty of independence, self existence and true existence.

Begin the meditation with the motivation of bodhicitta, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all mother sentient beings who have been kind to me in all the three times. The essence of the path, the essential remedy to eliminate the root of the whole samsara, the ignorance of true existence, is the right view; so in order to liberate others from samsara, one must reveal the infallible teachings of the right view, the absolute truth, and in order to reveal that, to make others have realizations of this and eliminate ignorance, the root of samsara in their minds, oneself should have the realization of shunyata. To reveal the teachings to others one has to experience them. Also, the essential method, the path for oneself to be liberated from samsara for the sake of others is to realize the emptiness only of the ‘I.’ Therefore, I am going to meditate on dependent arising, the method to realize the infallible right view.”

I think I won’t repeat again because I’ve mentioned it so many times. If I repeat again it must be boring, it must be bothering you. I don’t think I have to repeat it again.

I think we should make the day longer. Do you think you’ll be cold?

While you are questioning yourself, “What I’m doing? What I’m doing?” When you put the reason, the aggregates, at that time the important thing is to watch the “I.” How the “I” appears, how the mind is clinging to the “I.” Then when the mind wanders from that, from the awareness of that, when the mind is distracted, then get back to that. Again watch the “I,” how it appears on these aggregates and how one thinks—be aware of that. Then again put the same questions related to that, the five senses, as I mentioned before, according to the function, what one hears and what one sees,

what one feels. As one is walking on the road, how one feels, with the shoes if one is comfortable or not. Anyway, the contact—how it feels, soft, rough, or cool, what I am experiencing, why I feel this, the only reason, the body, the sense of the body is feeling this and that. Then, if possible, not only that, not only meditating on the dependent arising of the “I,” also the aggregates, the mind, the objects of the six senses, how they are dependent arising, if one can.

If I don't finish soon again the sun is gone.

Lecture 33: December 8<sup>th</sup> am

[Preliminary prayers]

When you recite the prayers, recite them in Tibetan but understand the meaning of what you are saying.

The last words, if you're wondering what I'm saying: it goes with the visualization. For me it is just a visualization but when other lamas do this, it is real, as it is said in the words. Just giving you the rough idea of what these verses mean—this is what is explained by the lineage lamas of lamrim, who have generated the graduated path to enlightenment. There are ways of listening to the Dharma and there are ways of explaining Dharma, without pride, without any expectation of happiness for this life, without any worldly concern or concern for offerings, respect, reputation, things like that—without any thought of worldly dharmas. That is the most important thing. If the teaching is given with the thought of the worldly dharmas, it becomes poison—the action is mixed with poison. Even though the spoken subject is Dharma, the teaching taught by Buddha, if the action of the teacher, the expounder, is mixed with poison, it doesn't become true Dharma, it becomes worldly dharma, it doesn't become holy Dharma. That is the most important thing.

Then, the thought of explaining Dharma with the wisdom of shunyata and the thought of bodhicitta; the teaching that one reveals, the action itself, is to be beneficial for others and pure. One of the precepts of thought-training is the precept of not mixing the practice of thought-training with poisonous food. That means explaining Dharma and any action, not only the thought-training, but any action, as not possessed by the self-cherishing thought and the ignorance of true existence.

In this way, one should give teachings possessed by the wisdom of shunyata and the thought of bodhicitta—how much the person is able to generate the strong thought of bodhicitta and how much there is strong meditation...

<end of tape>

... understanding of shunyata, depending on that, that much it is not mixed with the poison of the ignorance of true existence and the self-cherishing thought.

The same thing with the dedication; if dedication is done with ignorance of true existence, it becomes like food mixed with poison. So when one dedicates the merits, at that time one should do the practice as purely as possible, without it being mixed with poison or the thought of self-cherishing, without it being possessed by this, dedicating for the sake of self as sincerely as one can, not for the sake of self-happiness. Not with the thought, “This merit is for me, this merit is for my

happiness.” Making this as weak as possible, as small as possible, and making the thought that the merit is for others as strong as possible. It should be like this in the mind. Sincere—as one says the prayers with the mouth, the mind should be harmonious with what one says with the words—for the sake of sentient beings, dedicating oneself to achieving omniscient mind for the sake of others.

You should train the mind even when you make offerings—water-offerings, flower-offerings, incense, light, whatever. Not only when you dedicate the merits but even from the beginning, when you motivate to accumulate some virtue. Even at that time, instead of thinking, “I want happiness, therefore I am going to accumulate merits, this is for me, this merit is for me,” then for example while filling each bowl with water or whatever it is, making the offering, you should think that each of these merits is not for me, it is for all sentient beings. When you start to offer you think like this, you train the mind this way, instead of thinking, “This is for my long life.”

Actually I don’t think the *Injis* think so much of the motive of having long life, of being healthy. When we accumulate merits I don’t think we think so much about this life, as many Tibetans do. In Buddhist countries, many people have faith but the dedication is done somehow—due to lack of understanding, even though the person has the understanding of Dharma, somehow the practice is often done with the motive of happiness for the self. Also the dedication is done for oneself to be happy—to have a long life, to be wealthy, healthy—then a little bit better one is for the future life, to have a good rebirth, to be reborn as a deva or human being. That’s a little bit better one. I don’t think the *Injis* think like that when they accumulate merit. When we don’t accumulate merit, then that’s it! That’s all! But once we do it I don’t think it’s a problem. *Injis* don’t do it so much for this life, as with the Tibetans or other Buddhists, or people that believe they are Buddhist.

So we should train the mind, even when we do prostration, even when we offer one bowl of water, we should think, “This merit is not for me. I am offering this merit to all sentient beings.” Thinking this you get more merit, more merit is created by doing the action like this, but this way you don’t cling to the merit. From the beginning it is already dedicated for others, so it is very pure.

Then also think like this, “If I offer this one bowl of water, all sentient beings receive one extra merit, cause of happiness. If I do not offer this one bowl of water, then there are less causes of happiness for other sentient beings. If I make this one prostration to Buddha, they get that much merit, that many causes of happiness. If I don’t do even one prostration, they don’t get this merit.” So you see it inspires and also it destroys laziness and clinging to one’s own comfort.

When you think the merit is others’, not yours, you can’t stand not accumulating it. If you do that, they get one more cause for happiness; if you don’t do it, they don’t get it—so it makes a big difference. Sentient beings are not one; they are an uncountable number, so it is unbearable to be lazy, not profiting sentient beings. This is very effective for the mind, particularly against the self-cherishing thought, “I want to achieve enlightenment therefore I want merit. I want to achieve enlightenment because I want to be happy.” The conception “I want to be happy” is in the very inside of the heart, so since enlightenment is the highest: “I want to be happy so I want enlightenment, therefore I want to accumulate merits.” Like the fruit—even though it looks nice outside, the color is good, inside it is rotten, full of worms. Like that, inside the words “to reach enlightenment for the sake of others,” it is kind of rotten. Inside there is the worm of the self-cherishing thought. In the depth of the heart the merit that is accumulated is for the happiness of the self. So as much as possible, don’t do this.

Often His Holiness the Dalai Lama uses expressions when His Holiness gives teachings. I don't think this example fits the Injis but it fits the Tibetans very well. Injis don't have these habits—a very few Italians have it but they are not here [Rinpoche laughs, general laughter]. His Holiness often used to say this, “While one is keeping the work for oneself inside the stomach, the work for others is like lifting up the eyebrows.” The work for others is like lifting up the eyebrows, the work for oneself is kept very inside of the stomach.

I think this is very interesting. What His Holiness is saying is that even when they practice, there is a kind of habit like with some Tibetans, even when one does sadhanas or prayers, puja, it always starts, “I am going to achieve enlightenment quicker and quicker for the sake of all the mother sentient beings.” However, the very first motive for doing the sadhana, the prayers, from the beginning up to the end, from the very beginning motive up to the end, the dedication, even though the person is trying to do some virtuous action, when the person says, “For the sake of all mother sentient beings,” they lift the eyebrows; either big open eyes or half open eyes—lifting up the eyebrows when the person comes to that word. However, from the very beginning the motive up to the dedication, the whole thing, is the works for the self, the happiness of the self. That is the main aim of doing the sadhana, the meditation. “If I don't do this I will go to hell. So I won't be happy, that's all, I will lose my happiness.” So you see, the happiness of the self is kept inside, nothing else is more important than that. It is the most important thing. So that is kept on the very inside, like you keep jewels. The house has many locks, but inside the box one keeps the most precious, most valuable thing—very, very deep inside. Like that, very, very deep inside, the most important thing that is the happiness for self. So that is what His Holiness is saying. The work for others is not inside the heart, it is only on the eyebrows, the work for others is only on the eyebrows. His Holiness gives advice about how to be sincere—when His Holiness gives advice for everyday life it is the practice of the good heart.

Anyway, what I am saying is that at the beginning when you want to accumulate merit, even from the beginning you don't think, “The merit is mine,” but “The merit is others',” or “That is others' merit.” This is very good, it becomes a remedy to destroy the self-cherishing thought—just to motivate like this from the beginning. Dedicate like this, completely against the self-cherishing thought.

Also, recite mantra or make prostrations with this thought, “This merit is others',” even when you are reciting mantra or making prostrations. When you recite mantra it is very good to think from the beginning, of course with motivation of bodhicitta, that all the merit of reciting the mantra is others', not mine. Remember this again and again, especially during retreat where you have to recite so many hundred thousands of mantras. It is very good to train the mind again and again. Even though you do other visualizations, particular visualizations, remember this occasionally: the merit that is created by reciting the mantras is for all sentient beings. Starting with the parents, the enemy and then all the rest of sentient beings—it's theirs. When you accumulate virtue with such an attitude like this, the mind is very happy, very happy to do it, very sincere and pure.

Then if possible, be aware that it is merely labeled, starting with that. If you have some understanding—look at the virtue itself, the object to whom you offer, either sentient beings or the merit field, and remember the unification of emptiness and dependent arising, appearance and emptiness. Remember the virtue and the merit field. If you have some understanding, some idea, some experience, then remember these objects. Although there are you, the virtue, the action and the object to whom you offer, even though for your mind they appear as truly existent, in fact they are empty of it. So remember that unification. “I, the virtue, the action, the object, the other sentient



beings, or the merit field, the Triple Gem are empty of true existence. As they appear to my mind now, in fact they are empty of it.”

They are empty of it. But not ordinary completely non-existent; they exist under the control of name on the labeling base: “I”, the action, the merit field, the Triple Gem or sentient beings. Whether it is a beggar, or an offering to the pores of the gurus or the Triple Gem, they exist under the control of name on the labeling base, by depending on the labeling base. They exist by depending on the labeling base. On the labeling base of the “I,” the action, or the merit field, the thought puts the label; merely putting the label on that, it exists. Be aware of the dependence: the labeling base and the valid thought or the all-obscuring mind labeling that. So remember the meaning of *dependent* like this, according to the Prasangika explanation of *dependent*—*Thal Gyupa*, the Middle Way—these philosophers’ explanation and definition of dependent.

So at the beginning, what I started to say was this: Asking the suras, the asuras and the different types of spirits—there are different names, different types—asking them to be here to listen to the teaching. The idea is to give the teaching to all sentient beings, not only to the people who are around here. Ask them to be here, to descend here. For example, Indra, the king of the sura realms, the Thirty-three Realm, who works for the side of Dharma—ask him to descend here in order to listen to Dharma, to listen to the teachings of Buddha that cause the pacification of all the sufferings and gain all happiness. Then advise them to listen to the teachings with respect—through this you can accomplish a great purpose and receive extensive qualities, like an ocean. The teachings are such a precious treasure, a wish-granting treasure, and by listening to these teachings of Buddha one can accomplish any wish.

Then say, “There is nothing more interesting than this, nothing else, nothing more interesting, nothing. There is nothing even a little bit more interesting than this. Therefore, listen to the teachings with subdued senses, with subdued body and mind; listen to the teachings of Buddha, the Victorious One, in a subdued and respectful manner, not with the manner of the unsubdued mind.”

Then say this, “The teachings of the Buddha are the originator of all that is auspicious, of all the good things. For human beings, nagas, devas—the teaching of Buddha, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s teachings, are the originator of all auspicious things, of all good things. Therefore, keep this in mind, keep this in the heart, and listen to the teachings. This pacifies all unsubdued mind; it pacifies disease and the sickness of the unsubdued mind. This is the nectar that removes all diseases of the unsubdued mind; this is the nectar that comes from Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy mouth. Reflect well on the meaning of the teachings, pay attention.” The advice is like this.

These are the words in the verses that I often say at the end, before the teaching. That is what it contains, here I briefly mentioned as it is said in Tibetan—what the teachings offer, what profit, this is what it contains.

What the nagas, devas, and spirits wish for is happiness, and what they don’t wish for is suffering, so you should listen to the teachings that come down from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s holy mouth. This will remove all your undesired suffering and fulfill all your wishes for happiness. The conclusion is that you should listen, and how to listen? Listen with respectful manner and subdued body and mind, not with the manner of unsubdued mind and body—laying down, with disrespectful manners that are explained in the teachings. There are explanations of how to keep the body, all the mistakes of the body, stretching the legs toward the altar without any particular reason of disease,

with carelessness or with lack of understanding karma—these are mentioned in the lamrim teachings at the very beginning.

Milarepa, the great yogis, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, arhats and high bodhisattvas, when they give teachings, as you remember from the biography of Milarepa, all the devas come around and stay in space. The dakinis make flower rain from space during the teachings while the disciples are listening. They make flower rain. Also when His Holiness the Dalai Lama gives teachings, we don't see them but actually they are there, like when Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gave teachings—devas, nagas, protectors, all kind of non-human beings come to listen to the teachings.

So these four schools, I think they existed during Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's time, but not so much—it happened later. They were not that well known, not exactly publicized. They became more and more well known afterwards. After Guru Shakyamuni Buddha did the action of passing away, I think about 116, during one of the kings' reigns, I think Ashoka's—there is another name that goes with it, but I don't remember. So during Ashoka's time there was much disharmony in the community of the Sangha and many divisions. First came two divisions and then there were many divisions inside of that. They were all Buddhists, inner beings, all with refuge in the mind; however, without talking in much detail, there was a little difference in regards to the view. There was a small difference maybe in the *Vinaya*, the traditional practices.

Then there is one division that accepts the “I” as a self entity, and that the “I” is able to exist alone. There are eighteen different schools. There were more and more divisions and then they became eighteen different schools. I think that all had this doctrine, they all accepted this intellectually. Not only intuitively, conceptually, but this doctrine was their philosophy, their intellectual acceptance. Their philosophy is actually saying this: the “I” is able to exist alone, without depending on the continuity of the aggregates. The Tibetan term is *kang.sak rang.gya tru gyi*. The “I,” the person, the “self,” is able to exist alone. *Rang-gya* means alone. All these eighteen divisions are Theravada; one of them is called *Nema Puva*.

So now we are going to talk about the different levels of refuted objects—gross, then more and more subtle. First very gross, then a little more subtle, then a little more subtle than this—like this. For the *Nema Puva*, the refuted object of this school is that the “I” is permanent, not changing by causes and conditions, not changing by the force of causes and conditions, permanent. “I” is permanent and only one, without depending on parts, such as the aggregates, and also the particles of time, talking about the continuity of the self depending on the particles of time, depending each other: today's “I” is dependent on yesterday's “I” and also dependent on tomorrow; one can also think in that way. Then also the aggregates, parts: the table depending on the parts, the aggregates. However, the “I” is only one, without depending on parts. Then third one, “I” has self control, which means not depending on causes and conditions. So basically “I” being only one, without depending on the parts, the aggregates; having self control, without depending on causes and conditions—this is their refuted object.

So this school *Nema Puva* doesn't accept that the “I” is permanent, because it changes each second by the force of causes and conditions. And the “I” is not accepted as only one, because it is dependent on particles; it is not something that exists alone without depending on the particles. They don't accept that the “I” is only one. They don't accept that the “I” has self-control because they accept that the “I” exists under the control of cause and conditions. So the person, the self, the

“I,” that is permanent, only one, having self-control, is the refuted object according to this school, this Theravada school called *Nema Puma Dewa*.

I think I stop here.

Already I have mentioned the refuted object, the “I” that doesn’t exist, many times, and also the object of the senses. However, today our main awareness is this. I thought first to finish introducing the refuted object, so that you get some idea, in case somebody didn’t get an idea yet, although it was repeated many times. But, however, today’s practice of awareness is this. For some people it is very easy to recognize the refuted object with the “I.” Somehow it is easy to recognize the refuted object on the “I,” the true existence that is perceived on the “I”—when we look at the “I,” the hallucination between the object observed and the watcher, the hallucination on the “I,” the true existence. It is kind of the same with everything: if you are going to point it out you do not find it, there is nothing to point out. This is a table. If you are going to point out where the table is, if you point there, this is not the table and this is not the table—wherever you point it out, wherever you touch it, there is no table there—just that is not the table.

It is similar with the “I.” You cannot point out the “I.” Some people, some meditators, say that it is very easy to recognize the refuted object of the “I” because it is very soft. It is kind of foggy, kind of soft. So therefore it is easy to recognize the refuted object and easy to realize the shunyata of the “I,” easier than with any other object.

However, I think that recognizing the refuted object is not sure. I think sometimes it is easier with the outside objects to recognize the refuted object then, when you recognize the refuted object above the outside object, the true existence on the outside object, which appears to your mind, right after you recognize that, with the “I” is it very easy. It takes just a minute to realize the emptiness of the “I” if you are skillful.

Such as with the color blue—there is a blue color that exists on the blue color. On the blue color there is a blue color. On the blue cloth there is a blue cloth that exists from its own side. So you look at colors. On the flower there is a flower that exists from its own side. Like that you think, you think well. You look at it; you actually look at it on the object. You look at the object while holding on to these words and then you make the experiment whether you see it in that way or not. You look at it—green or blue; was it green or blue? And you hold on to the words. The words are important, the advice of the well-experienced lama is very important. So you hold on to that word and then you check, and you make experiment with your view, you put these words in your view and see whether you see it in that way or not. Then, when you experiment with your view, whether you see in that way or not—definitely you see it in that way. On that green cloth there is a green cloth that exists from its own side.

You check; you meditate. You look at it, opening the eyes, you look at that and then you think. On that object you put the words that you heard, the advice introducing the refuted object. Then you examine it and then right after you recognize, “Oh that’s true, exactly true.” Then you see everything in that way. Once you have recognized the refuted object in one object, that which exists from its own side, everything appears in that way, then it is as if you are in a completely new place.

It is the same thing with the “I.” On the “I” there is an “I” that exists from its own side and everything appears in that way, everything appears as if it exists from its own side. But our mind is

not aware. Like you read prayers but your mind doesn't pay attention, the mind pays attention to some very beautiful interesting music. The mind that pays attention is with that but still you are reading the prayer. Reciting mantra or reading prayers but not being aware of the meaning, the awareness is in the music. Like that, the appearance has been there since we were born, since beginningless past lives appearances have happened in that way, never changed, always truly existent but only now, only this time we recognize it. You are aware. Then it is completely new, like a completely new place.

Then right after that, immediately, right after that you think of the "I." Then you see the "I" in that way, exactly like that, the "I" as if it exists from its own side. Clearly you see it, very clearly. Then at that time, if one knows the four analyses, how to meditate, that is the one that one should search for, this "I." I will clarify this a little more afterwards, but this "I" that exists from its own side, which is not merely labeled, this "I" is what you search for. This is the one that you should search first, on the base, on the aggregates.

However, even if you don't use the four analyses, then as soon as you recognize it, "Oh, I see, this is it. What is actually empty does not exist. Oh, it is this one." Then you have the understanding, the definite understanding, "Even though it is appearing like this, it is empty; in fact this is empty." Like the way you see a mirage, the water—the person who came from that place and then goes back to that place has the definite understanding, even though there is the appearance of water, he actually understands that that place is empty of water. So like this, the "I" appears as if it exists from its own side but at the same time there is definite understanding inside: in fact it is empty. This is it, what doesn't exist. Then even if you don't use so much logic, right on top of that, while you are concentrating on that, on top of that, with the definite understanding that it is empty, it *cannot* exist; without control, without choice, because it is empty; with the understanding that in fact it is empty, with that understanding, one-pointedly looking at it, somehow there's no choice, it becomes empty. The object of ignorance, the truly existent "I" becomes empty.

I think I stop here.

So today our awareness is this—not only of the "I" but also the aggregates, how you see them, how they appear. How the object of the senses appear. You remember the words that I mentioned and put them on your view, how it appears to you—whether you see something, whether you feel something, if you see it in that way or not. Like this, whatever appears, food, yourself, everything, cooks, earth, space, anything—examine how it appears by remembering the words, the teachings, and then think, "I am dreaming. This appearance is not different from the dream." Think, "This is a dream." Continuously think, "I am dreaming."

Sometimes, think about how things appear, remembering the teachings. Other times think, "I am dreaming, this is a dream," the subject, object, the experience—a dream, "This is a dream." Think that, feel that, like you are recognizing a dream as a dream. Practice awareness of this. Think.

Lecture 34: December 8<sup>th</sup> pm

Please generate at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, "At any rate, I must achieve omniscient mind for the sake of all mother sentient beings; therefore I am going to listen to the holy teachings."

From the eighteen Theravada divisions, the refuted object of the *Nema Puwa* is this: permanent, only one, having self control. So for them, realizing that the “I” is impermanent, existing by the force of causes and conditions, depending on parts and empty of self-control—for them this is the right view.

Then the four great schools, of which the first two are also Theravada schools, the Sautrantika and Vaibhasika—their refuted object of the “I” is this: The *Nema Puwa* accept the “I” as impermanent, empty of permanence, empty of only one, empty of having self control; dependent on parts, dependent on causes and conditions. But they accept this one—the term is *kang.sak rang.gye teu tse.dang trupa*—they accept that the “I,” the self, the person is able to exist alone. The “I,” the self, *rang.gye trupa*: the “I” is able to exist alone. The “I” is able to exist by itself, alone.

Like the child that is dependent on the father and mother—first it was only able to lead the life, to survive by depending on the support of the father and mother, someone who is taking care. Especially during the baby-time it cannot take care of itself, it cannot lead its life by itself, it has to depend on somebody. But then after some time when it is grown up, the child can manage his means of living by himself. Before when he was a baby he couldn’t do this, he needed to be taken care of by somebody. Sometimes we use this term, *rang.gya, self alone*. We use this term even for ordinary things in some cases, like “he can travel by himself, without need of a guide.”

Anyway, the *Nema Puwa* still accept that the person, the “I” exists, that it has self-entity, that it is able to exist alone. *Khang.sak*, the being, person, the “I,”—*rang* is self, the person, the “I.” *Gya* is alone, *tug* is able. The “I” is able to exist alone, by itself, as a self entity.

So those from the four schools, these two Theravada schools... before mentioning that I will clarify; what the *Nema Puwa* accepts—that the “I,” the self, the person exists by itself, alone, without depending on the group of aggregates, the continuity of the aggregates. For the *cheta mewa* and *do depa*, these two philosophies, the Theravada schools, this becomes the refuted object. These philosophers don’t accept that there is a self-entity on the “I,” they don’t accept that the “I” is able to exist by itself, without depending on the group of aggregates, the continuity of aggregates. The *cheta mewa*, and *do depa*, these two philosophers of the Theravada schools, don’t accept this. What the *Nema Puwa* accept—that the “I,” the self, is able to exist by itself, without depending on the group of aggregates—is the refuted object of the *cheta mewa* and *do depa*.

If I put it this way it’s easy to understand. Even if someone realizes that the “I” is impermanent, empty of permanence, empty of only one; not one, depending on parts, empty of self-control, depending on causes and conditions—even if one realizes this it does not mean that one has realized the absolute nature of the “I.” It doesn’t mean that one has found the infallible right view. So even if one realizes that the “I” is empty of self-existence, *rang.gya tuk pa*, that this “I” is empty of being able to exist by itself, empty of self-entity, even if one realizes that the “I” is dependent on the group of the aggregates and continuity of the aggregates, still that doesn’t mean one has realized the infallible right view, the remedy that eliminates the simultaneously born ignorance of true existence, the root of samsara. It is still not that, even if one discovers that the “I” is empty of self-entity, empty of being able to exist by itself, without depending on the group of the aggregates and the continuity of the aggregates, any of these things.

According to these Theravada philosophers, realizing that the “I” is empty of self-identity, depending upon the group of the aggregates, the continuity of the aggregates, is having realized the absolute nature; but according to the Prasangika School, the Middle Way School, it is not the right view.

There are four schools, and of the last two schools, the next one is the *Cittamatra*, the Mind Only School. These are Mahayana schools, of Mahayana philosophy. The Mind Only School’s refuted object is kind of easy to understand. It is kind of easy to relate somehow to this one, especially for Westerners, [Rinpoche laughs] it is kind of easy to accept the meaning, the view of the Mind Only school. There is nothing that exists from the side of the object. Only from the object, there is nothing that exists without depending on experiencing the impression, the potential that is left or stored on the consciousness. Without experiencing that, nothing can exist from the side of the object.

Like the example—when you project, when you show a movie, if the potential that is in the negative, the figures, colors, whatever it is, whatever was taken, is empty, if there’s nothing printed there, no figures or colors, when it is used in the machine you can’t see anything there because there’s nothing inside the negative. You can’t see any objects or any figures there. So that is dependent on the figures, the power of the elements that are on that negative. Depending on how good that is, you can see different things—together with the machine it is able to manifest there like that. That figure that you see there on the wall is dependent on, came from the power of the elements left on the negative.

It is the same thing with the dream. The dreams that you see due to attachment—traveling, having parties, physical contact, enjoying with girlfriends, boyfriends, fighting with the enemy—those are impressions left from past lives, impressions left from this life, impressions left even today according to anger, attachment, whatever it is, according to the actions that are done today, the conversations you had today, what was done in the past—the impression that was stored on the consciousness. Because of that you have those dreams of fighting with enemies, having contact with friends. In the daytime when there is very strong attachment to somebody, at nighttime, the dreams come. Also, virtuous actions that were done, not only negative actions but virtuous actions that were done also come in the dream. The dreams depend on the projection or hallucination of the mind. According to the impression that was left on the consciousness, you see those dreams or those objects—those people or friends, like that—or if it is virtue, spiritual, then you see statues, lamas, receiving teachings. However, without depending on the impression that was left on the consciousness, there is no dream. What you see in the dream doesn’t exist; those appearances do not happen without depending on the hallucinated mind.

It’s similar. The mind-only doctrine, the view of those philosophers, is that nothing exists—living beings, non-living beings—nothing exists from the side of the object, without depending on the impression or the potential left on the consciousness. Without depending on that, there’s no object that exists by itself.

Another example—without the consciousness taking place on the fertilized egg, without developing, there’s no baby that comes out. Without depending on the development of the fertilized egg and the consciousness joining the fertilized egg, and its development, there wouldn’t be an outside baby—suddenly there is a baby outside, not born from the mother’s womb. Suddenly there’s this small baby on her lap, without depending on the development of the fertilized egg inside.

Similarly, the impression that is left by the karmic formation, without craving and grasping making it ready to experience, there wouldn't be any body for the consciousness to migrate into. There wouldn't be the next aggregates. The next aggregates cannot exist without depending on the impression that is left by karmic formation and craving and grasping making that potential ready. Without depending on this the result of aggregates cannot come into existence.

“Mind only” has great meaning. Mind-only means everything—all your experiences, happiness and suffering of this and previous lives, all the objects of the senses, everything you see in your view, your particular objects of enjoyment, anything you see, all objects, whatever quality you see, bad or good—everything comes from your mind. It comes only from mind. Without depending on the creator of your mind, nothing exists from its own side. Nothing exists from the side of the object without the creator, your mind. What you see, what you enjoy, without depending on the creator, your mind, there is nothing that exists from its own side. So whatever quality you see is according to the quality of your mind—to the development of your mind. How you see the object is up to the way your mind labels it. It comes from your mind, it is a production of your mind, and that is according to the level of your mind.

So why “only,” “Mind-only” School”? Your life, your samsara, your enlightenment, your world and your objects of the senses are not created by somebody else. They are created by you, by your mind. By saying “only” it cuts off the wrong idea, the wrong conception of the evolution—saying my happiness, my suffering, my life is created by somebody else, by a separate being, someone else, a universal consciousness or something. A separate being created it, it is not created by my mind, not depending on my mind, on my karma. It is created by somebody else, by a separate being. That's the trouble. So I have no choice, I have to suffer. I have no choice. This is it.

You see, it was created by you, yourself, and that is okay; but being created by a separate being is a problem, a wrong conception. On the basis of that idea, if you want to eliminate the root of suffering then when you come to that point it becomes difficult, because the root of suffering is not in your mind. So then you have no freedom, then it is up to the person who made us suffer. So if you want to liberate yourself from suffering, when it comes to this point it becomes difficult on the basis of this idea that your suffering, your life is created by someone else, a separate being or a universal principle of consciousness manifested in all, things, mountains, people, like this. Actually here we come to the part of the chapter of patience where we left off; the verse where we stopped now is at this point, where it discusses a universal principle, a universal consciousness that manifests in all things.

So “only” cuts off all these things, because that is not the factual evolution, and when you come to the point to eliminate suffering, to really make yourself free forever from all suffering, then there is not much freedom. It is illogical. If you check, if you put questions, it becomes more and more false—there is no logical reason, you see more and more faults. It is not our experience. If you examine your everyday life experience you can see that it is dependent upon your mind, dependent upon how much you are able to control the mind, and keep the mind in good quality or in bad quality. Depending on that, happiness and suffering changes. When you use the meditation techniques you can understand this—how it is in our hands, not in somebody else's hands. When you meditate on shunyata, dependent arising, impermanence and death, and when you meditate on patience, you understand. We can see it from this and from our everyday life experience—by watching your experience you understand the problems and the cause, the unsubdued mind; by

watching life experience you understand that happiness and suffering are produced by the mind, dependent on the individual's mind.

So whether you get free forever from samsara or not depends on yourself, on whether you give freedom to yourself or not; it's not dependent on somebody else. As long as you don't give freedom to yourself to be free from suffering, then there is no end to the suffering. It's completely dependent on yourself, how you take care of your own life, how much you give freedom to yourself, to practice Dharma.

So however, for the Mind-only School, all existence coming only from the mind cuts off things like your own suffering and happiness as being created by someone else, by a separate being. Things come from only the mind. For the Mind-only School, "only" has that meaning. What it stops is that one.

But we cannot criticize the viewpoint that God created the world, that God created things. We cannot say that this is wrong, because there are people who cannot accept or understand karma. They cannot comprehend that things are created by oneself, that they came from your own mind. So for one who cannot understand that, for one whom this method does not fit, it's better to say that it is created by somebody else, "Your suffering is created by God, so therefore you should be good. If you aren't good, God will punish you. God will do this and that." Like small children, "If you don't study well then mother or teacher will beat you or won't give you presents or money." So like that they teach children to listen and because of the fear of that, they study well, because otherwise they don't get chocolate or presents.

Like that, it becomes a temporal help for these people, "You should be good, not tell lies, not harm to others, take other's lives, you should not steal, because if you do this God will punish you." This is very good for those people who cannot understand other ways. Even though there is no mistake in the explanation of karma—although it is presented according to the factual evolution, it is right, there is nothing wrong with it, Buddha cannot find any mistake there—by saying God will punish or somebody else will punish them, it temporarily benefits the person to live a good life, to not harm others, to help others. Because of fear of God; God will punish, so that helps the person himself, and stops bad actions toward others, even though there is no such thing as a God that will punish him. His karma punishes him—his mind, the negative mind will punish him. Even though that is the factual evolution, saying God or something else benefits, even though it is wrong, even though there is no such thing, it benefits his happiness. If it stops him from harming others, if it causes him to be good to others, that itself becomes the cause for happiness. So we cannot say that this is absolutely wrong for everybody.

So the refuted object of the mind-only philosophers is that things exist by themselves without depending on experiencing the impressions that are left or stored on the consciousness. That is the refuted object: the "I," the self, the person existing by itself, without depending on the impression left on the consciousness being experienced. But even if you realize that the "I" is empty of existing by itself without depending on impressions left on the consciousness, even though you know the "I" is empty of this, dependent on the consciousness, dependent on the mind, that all the existence came only from the mind, even if you know this dependence, still according to the Prasangika it does not mean that you have realized the right view. Realizing this cannot actually cut off the simultaneously born ignorance, the root of samsara.



So now there are two schools left. The Middle Way School has two divisions.

I think I stop here.

[Dedications]

Lama Yeshe Lecture and Q&A: December 9<sup>th</sup> am

Good morning and I am sorry, I'm late. I'm criminal. I am too much in samsara and you are having a good time in Dharma.

I thought you have received a lot of information from many geshe-las, so you're very fortunate. So today if there are any questions, maybe because of the gap between Eastern and Western culture, I try to mediate for you as much as I can; but I can't promise anything. So please, if there are any questions, you are welcome. Maybe somebody should organize.

Q: (To tell something about the five precepts)

Lama: I can only do quickly; detailed is extremely difficult. First of all, five precepts are to keep the mind in a peaceful atmosphere. Let's say many Western people like to have good meditation, but many times they don't create the foundation for good meditation.

Let's say somebody is putting me a knife like this, saying: "You meditate, you meditate, you meditate." But how can I meditate while somebody is putting a knife in me or something like this? I can't, because there's no fundamental support; we need support for the mind.

The ordination is making a peaceful foundation, making the foundation of liberation, then also, by the way, not so much expectation, not so much looking. In the Western world we are constantly looking: "Where can I get happiness? I can't find happiness in America, I can't find happiness in Germany, I can't find happiness in Italy, I can't find in England. Oh! It must be that in the Western world there is no happiness, so I go to the East." You know? [Lama laughs, general laughter] the East. And then you see the primitive life: "Oh, I can't take this life." So it's trouble. It looks good, Dharma, people live in simplicity, it looks good but you can't take it, isn't it? Many times it is like this. So the complication comes from not understanding and not having the foundation for peace within oneself.

That's why I think to some extent it's very important to have like this: "I shouldn't do this way I'm going into extreme, I shouldn't do. In this way I am going enough, so let's go." One should have some experience; it comes through one's experience, and that is why ordination, precepts are very important. Especially Lord Buddha's precepts are extremely logical. Because as long as one has no control, as long as your mind leads you to dissatisfaction, to anger, hatred, you need some way to control, you need to find the best way to control. Otherwise you can't discriminate which way leads to miserable, which way to happiness. It is because we don't have this kind of thing that the world becomes so impure, so much aggression, so negative. That's why it's very useful to some extent. I'm not saying you become extremely religious, extremely pure, something like that. That's not what I'm saying; it's not necessarily that kind of idea. But you can judge what your problem is. So through understanding of your own negativity, of your ego, you know that some control is needed. That's why I think it's very useful. Especially, the idea of taking precepts is as long as you have this

complication you need to keep precepts. When you reach arhatship, beyond ego—I'm sure you know this terminology—then you don't need to keep precepts. You're free.

Western people understand well this way. Let's say for example intoxication. As long as you have energy inside that makes you uncontrolled by taking whatever it is, you need control. But if inside you don't have this magnetic energy which makes you become intoxicated, then the outside doesn't matter. It doesn't matter how much you take because you're free, isn't it? Does that make sense or not?

OK! That's the main point; if you have inside that kind of problem you need control. Otherwise you can drink maybe ten gallons of wine or alcohol if you are clean-clear, then where is the problem? Isn't it? No problem. Maybe only you have to make pee-pee all the time but that's no big deal. OK. So that's why it's very logical.

First of all there is the motivation. Before each action that we do first comes the thought, what we call motivation. This we often don't know; sometimes you have the intention consciously, sometimes unconsciously. Let's say suddenly you are in Boudhnath. "Why am I at Boudhnath? I never thought I would go to Boudhnath, now I am at Boudhnath." You see, many times it is like that. All of us, we have been like that, at a place suddenly, with no reason, "Now I am here". But Buddhism has no surprise. The thought process has long history, consciously and unconsciously, so what leads you to Boudhnath isn't something that accidentally happened. You think that it happened accidentally, "What led me here?" There's a long history, an energy in us. OK? That is the problem of the consciousness, not the nose or the blood or the bone.

So that's why it is a simple thing. Each precept is a different thing, five precepts vow, and the way you break is a different thing. For example, with intoxication; it is not so that when you drink you break the precept. Western people understood it like that many times: "Oh Lama, I broke", crying. So I say: "How did you break?" "Because I went to a party and I drank." Then I ask: "Were you intoxicated?" "No, I just drank." So I say, "You didn't break, you didn't break." I will make an example. Being at a party and drinking a glass of wine, doesn't necessarily break your five precepts. But that doesn't mean monks and nuns also drink [laughter]. It's just different; for the lay people, they can drink; for a monk, maybe if they have control they can do, but its not good vibration, is it? Worldly people expect monks not to drink. Maybe Westerners say: "Please drink", maybe a different culture, maybe. It's true, it depends on many factors.

For that reason I am really concerned. Many students have problem, they don't understand how, with what motivation, what action, what result, so each time they cry because they think they break. They don't break. For example, drinking a little bit of wine doesn't necessarily break the five precepts. Breaking is a matter of attitude. There should be a sort of negative force in the mind: desire or anger or super-ignorance, something like that. This way leads to an action that breaks the ordination. Western people can see that the action is not right, but they have to watch, to have more consideration of what is behind the action, what kind of mind. That is the nucleus. So, one has to see.

Now with killing, one has to have the wish to kill, but this have to be a negative mind again in order to break. If it's positive mind like great compassion, then you don't break the vow. And killing, motivation negative mind, then also there is the method, the way to kill, directly or indirectly one can also order to army or friend to kill. But if you don't have the motivation to kill, then you don't

break. For example: when I walk from my house to here, I'm sure I've killed a couple of sentient beings, I believe so. But it is no break. It doesn't have this connotation of a break. I don't have the will if I am just coming like this [Lama laughs, general laughter]. Well, maybe some negative energy just to have this body, you understand, but no breaking, not this connotation. Then indirectly killing can be many things. I don't think I need to explain, you understand.

Also looking peaceful, that is a quality. If one is always acting with aggression, but wanting peace, it doesn't work. Like nowadays the Soviet Union keeping peace, America keeping peace [Lama laughs]. It is a kind of different connotation, isn't it? Well, it's complicated, isn't it? I can't criticize. There is also some political evidence, that in order to keep peace, one should make more weapons [laughter]; there is something like that. We cannot say it's totally wrong; it is so complicated. Samsara is too complicated, isn't it? So better I stop talking about these things! From Buddha's point of view, if one wants to generate peace, one has to act as much as possible according to this. All right. Anyway, most times in the world people kill out of anger or desire; sometimes also with jealousy, maybe.

Then stealing: the motivation is desire, also jealousy maybe, I don't know. People are so rich in the West, also in the East, actually the same thing, samsara; then the poor people are so jealous of rich people, they just think, "I don't care these people are so rich," that kind of feeling, motivation is not desire really but anger, jealousy.

Stealing is also by manipulating, like I can say: "Oh, this is too nice, can I borrow it from you, can you lend it to me for one year?" [Laughter] But inside in my mind, I wish to have it. One year you leave it with me but I develop attachment, attachment; so after one year I hope you have forgotten this one now [laughter]. According to vinaya, this is stealing. When the time comes that now you know he has forgotten, at that time you fully break. "Now it's mine"; at that time it is the full break of vow.

Actually complicated, we have so many details. Also killing does not mean necessarily with a knife. Telepathic meditation can kill other people. Like transference of consciousness of other people, so that means you are killing. That is also something that is explained in the vinaya; not something which is just Tibetan style. There's a long history of this.

Then sexual misconduct: if you are married you have obligation to each other—we are couple, we work together, we help each other, we are dedicated to each other. So in certain things you make obligation; then if you act in a distrustful manner, that is sexual misconduct. We consider as such. But if you are free, if there is no obligation to each other, human beings meeting each other and this thing happening, sexual contact, then it is not sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is misacting, a wrong acting. But sexual contact is not necessarily bad. Because our parents have done that thing we did grow, isn't it? We all grow from our parents; without their unity, it is impossible that we exist. All right.

Nowadays in the Western world, marriage is a great problem. At least five times we have to marry in one lifetime [Lama laughs, general laughter]. I am not sure, maybe exaggerating. OK? Anyway so complicated, isn't it? Human relationship is so complicated. In third world countries, it doesn't matter, but in rich countries somehow it goes complicated. I think all your couple problems come from the dissatisfied mind, looking for something else. In that way problems come. Anyway, one has to understand one's lifestyle, one's own experience, one's confusion through such actions. That's good enough. So, considering this, one has to decide.

Then, what? Telling lies, that's right [Lama laughs]. I don't like to talk about telling lies because all my life I've got to tell lies [Lama laughs, general laughter]. Since I left Kopan, how many times I've been telling lies? [Lama whistles and laughs, general laughter]

Now, telling lies is the attitude that I want to cover something. I want to change the other people's concepts, change other people's minds, to cover something, isn't it? That is the motivation. My perfect example is that Western people come to this Tibetan monk, asking, "Are you enlightened?" [Laughter]. "Lama Yeshe? Are you an enlightened one?" And I say... [silence, pulling an all-knowing face]. You see? I don't need to say any words [laughter]. That's my way to tell a lie [Lama laughs].

That's why telling lies is so easy. Telling lies can be without telling words, by like this... [Lama laughs, general laughter] or this.... or this.... You know what I mean, you know. Or by wearing glasses; possible that you show some kind of artificial action, to cover you see. Well, I'm not sure. I should be careful, sometimes I am uncontrolled.

For example, many times ladies cover these things, lipstick. It's possible that it is done with a motivation that is all right; it depends on the motivation. I think if you have the motivation to show a different reality to the world - I don't put it down. If you are showing an artificial action, imitation, and you want a certain reaction from other people. So be careful [laughter], to put some red here becomes telling lie. It's easy, isn't it? Possible.

It's complicated, telling lies is so complicated. But it only comes from the motivation, wanting to change other people's minds. Actually it's painful, because for example I have already enough confusion, enough ego problems, enough ignorance, enough desire, enough anger, then if somebody is putting me more ignorant, do you think that's fair? It's not fair. That's why; with telling lies you cheat other people, you are showing a false reality by covering some other reality. It's simple, isn't it?

Also, it's not easy to tell lies in control. I think it's very difficult to tell a lie in control. Somehow you know, the karma; because you repeated telling lies so much, every time it comes again.

Let's say I meet her, blah, blah, blah, suddenly something comes out you didn't even want to talk. You don't want to tell lies but somehow, but somehow telling lies is some kind of instinct. Telling a lie is easy, especially when we talk too much, isn't it, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. People who keep silence maybe they control easily. But when you talk twenty-four hours blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, it is not easy. All right. So it is simple. That is why silence is very useful. If you stay in silence then when other people talk you are kind of shocked. That time you are shocked, kind of: "What are you doing?" Before you never noticed that it is useless talking; that conversation doesn't do any good job, doesn't bring any happiness.

So telling lies is that way. But it can also be telling a lie with words is positive. Let's say Hitler manifests, he comes here and asks, "Are there some Jewish people in this tent?" I say, "I don't think so." [Lama laughs, general laughter] You understand—I'm joking. I don't want to cover something, it is only for the sake of other people. This is not telling a lie. From the Buddhist point of view it has to be negative, basically attachment; telling lie for your own reputation, your own wealth, or your friends, or your neighbors, or your sister or your brother or your wife or your country. Normally we are telling lies that way, with selfish attitude. But with great compassion if you change words, that's not telling a lie. I mean according to the words it is telling a lie—if somebody says: "You are telling a

lie, Lama, there are so many Jews here”—but from the Buddhist point of view it is not the words. Telling lie has to do with a false concept; the attitude brings you to act in such a way. You understand; all right.

Then what? Then intoxicated, isn't it? It is so simple. Since we're looking for a clean-clear mind, when we are acting opposite it is not good isn't it? And intoxicated can be any kind, drinking, drugs, any kind which makes you become unconscious, drinking, drugs, unconscious, anything.

Q. How about smoking cigarettes?

Lama: Does smoking cigarettes make you unconscious? I don't think so [laughter]. Of course it depends: if you put some heavy drug inside and smoking [laughter]. Do you? Then, I think so.

So basically that's good enough. Shakyamuni Buddha gave these vows, which are extremely useful because many times religious people become hypocritical; we talk so much what Buddha talked, we have intellectual words, but we are not acting. So no result, no sweets, we are not getting any sweets. We know so much here (Lama hits his head) but no action, so the sweet cake disappears. But if you take even one precept, you just taste and the inside transformation begins to come, which is not possible without action.

But of course, again, we cannot force. As much as you can, try, that's the way isn't it. There's no push, press, saying, "I want to become a perfect Buddhist, I want to discover peace." If you use too much squeezing, it doesn't work. One should be skillful: "As much as I can I keep. If I break, I confess, I try to understand". That's good enough. Breaking is also the nature. If you ask yourself "Why did I break?" and if you know why, I think there is some realization. My understanding is that one knows. "With an uncontrolled berserk mind breaking, such and such things are making me miserable." If one understands this through one's own action, I think it is a realization; realization of karma. You say, "I don't have any realization, but I have some realization of karma," isn't it? Not some intellectual Buddhist thing but through your own action, through your break, you understand. I think that is great, especially because realization of karma nowadays is very difficult. The concept of karma is burnt out, I think. [Laughter] But we live in karma, it doesn't matter if we accept or do not accept.

So that's why it's very useful, as much as you can you try the precepts, very useful. But of course there is no pushing. It depends completely on the individual, on one's need. If one doesn't feel the need one shouldn't take. I mean, actually we all know. We have inner experience in our life; if we are aware, if we recollect our own life experience, we know. Our relationship with people, we know. You have to analyze your life, how it has been, what makes you confused, what makes you dissatisfied, what makes you joyous, relaxed, peace. One has to understand.

Yes. Better than me talking, I blah, blah, blah, I don't know what I'm talking about, so let's do question and answer.

Q. What process do you go through if you break one of the vows?

Lama: If you break one of the vows, let's say telling lies. The best way you can do is strong meditation: "Today I did this and this, telling lies, useless, there is no point, if I tell lie to other people I make them experience more confusion. It's not fair, so tomorrow I do strong meditation, for me and for the others." That's good enough. This also I want to emphasize because some people think if they tell a lie, "Oh, I broke, oh now I broke my vow, I have to go to hell" [laughter]. One

understands that way, that telling lies is some concrete, self-existent negativity. From the Buddhist point of view this is wrong. Telling lies is energy and if you act against it, that is another energy. Otherwise it is ego.

Let me tell you. Some religious people in the world have this super-belief—that negative is self-existent negative and positive is self-existent positive. So if you break a vow you go to hell. You cannot change, you understand, “I can’t purify. I have to go to hell.” Why? “Because Buddha says so, because God says so.” Not like that. It’s energy, how much energy involved you know, mental energy, physical energy, you know how is that. You put such different energy. The other way is ego, and then there is no result.

That’s why the Prajnaparamita emphasizes so much bodhisattva; one should understand that the entire negative ego is also non-self-existent, that it is impermanent, transitory nature; the path to liberation is also transitory, non-self-existent character, non-duality character. Because this is my observation, people hold such an incredible religious fanatic view. I mean it can be Buddhism, it can be Muslim, can be Hinduism, can be Christian; I am not criticizing religion, but a poor quality of wisdom individual is holding nonsense, extreme religious view, which has nothing to do with Buddha or Dharma or I don’t know, Krishna or whatever it is. So one should be sort of Middle Way: “Yes, I did negative, also I did positive; I can go extreme positive, or extreme negative. I can go anything, this is my free will. But of course I have to deal with my previous negative karma; uncontrolled mind coming so I have to deal with that.”

I think it is very important somehow to have a neutral feeling, otherwise religion becomes some kind of heavy blanket, cover completely, you become more deluded. Then sometimes religious people more deluded than non-religious people. This I feel sometimes because of misunderstanding.

For example, let’s say for one year you keep five precepts. After one year you discover that it is too complicated, so maybe you let go. But you check, and you can see some value. I think that’s good enough. Keeping even one year pure, not harming others. Basically that’s what it is. Basically ordination is not to harm other people and not to harm also oneself. The Buddhist idea is that one should not harm oneself too, besides others. Everything is important; when you tell lies, of course you harm others; stealing of course is harming others; with sexual misconduct also harming others, making the relationship of another couple bad; intoxication becomes harming, because when you become unconscious you can do anything, isn’t it? You can steal, unconsciously you have grasping mind for other people’s material and pleasure; you can do anything. The point of what Buddha said is that it is better if you do not drink and become intoxicated, because this leads you to break everything. The one action of drinking leads you to sexual misconduct. It’s true, many drinking men do that. And also many times a monk breaks vow if sometimes the situation comes that he drinks, and he becomes berserk. And then, by sexual misconduct, has to tell wife, tells lies, so he is stealing other people’s wife. So, breaking one leads to breaking five.

I think somehow Buddha’s path is middle way. Reasonable understanding of how much this negative energy is involved and that that leads to vanish another energy. This is good enough. Even it’s equal then it cannot explode, like America and the Soviet Union, if there is balance of power, remember.

Also, purification is maybe, if you see a person who gives purity you just go, make prostration, you say, “I did this and this, please purify me and I’ll never do again.” Somehow we also have that idea

of each month monks and nuns to purify. Each month, two times, we have the purification, we call *sojong*. There are many different ways to make purification, but I think best way is to meditate, to make yourself clean-clear. That is the real purification. Not project a confused situation. Yes. Thank you. You're welcome. Then?

Q. (If the vow of not killing means that one must become vegetarian.)

Lama: No, not necessarily. This is a very important question, people always ask this. Not killing means with intention. But for example when I eat rice every day, that would also mean I am killing. I think some people are very extreme. "I am Buddhist religious people; I don't want to kill anybody." That's ego. [Laughter] How can you survive without killing? This much vegetable contains so many insects. Sorry, not possible.

Of course, if this is vegetable, it is better than eating meat. It's better, but I mean, one should not be extreme. "I eat vegetables therefore I don't kill anything, I am so pure." Ego. Big ego. Big ego is problem. Rice; if you eat rice, of course you people know that if we have this much rice, if you eat this much rice, how much it involves; people who work the ground, put water, all these things, that much insects you kill. My mama used to say, "There is very much killing involved in eating rice." I would say "Why?" And Mama says: "When you put rice you have to kill so many insects." It's true. And Western world you can see more. First of all the ground doesn't have much water. Then they put maybe this much water, up to this level, where so many insects live. So how many get killed? Then those poor Nepalese have to go in without shoes, each day, how much suffering, incredible suffering. So concerning this I think it is difficult not to be involved in taking other's life. That's why the Christian way is simpler: if you don't kill a human being, that's good enough. [Lama laughs, general laughter] But Buddhism is so complicated.

Buddha Shakyamuni also said in the vinaya, that a monk who takes water should use a strainer as much as possible, in order to protect from killing insects, but you can't. Some insects are like atoms; so incredible small, invisible by sense perception. That is the scientific explanation; so that's why it's difficult. But of course it's better not to kill; not directly, not to have the motivation to kill and not to order other people, that's good enough. And if you buy meat from the market, then one person who buys does not increase the killing, and one person not buying does not stop it. So it's no use to bother too much, I think. Also for some people because of habit of eating it is better not to stop eating meat, because of the health.

Q. (Is homosexuality sexual misconduct?)

Lama: No, not necessarily. You mean, man go with man, female go with female [laughter]? No; but if making disunity, yes. For example, if there is wife and husband, a couple, I think it has some effect. But if it's a free man and a free woman, it doesn't matter. But if one has too much grasping mind, a conflict result comes. Also, society's view sometimes considers it as not good action. I don't know. My own view, man stay with man, female stay with female, I don't consider it good or bad. This is my opinion. It's just no big deal, no big deal, that's all.

Q. In a big city in Germany, they squat houses. A rich man possesses houses and only keeps for speculation, and young people move into them when they are empty.

Lama: Oh, I see, I think I have to meditate more, I can't say. [Lama laughs, general laughter] Let's say it depends on the conditions. If he is tremendously rich, and those German people are young and poor, or who are miserable if they don't get a place to sleep, then maybe it is a good joke, it's like playing a game. Anyway, life is a game; the entire German life is some kind of game. So he still

has a big house, a comfortable life, maybe psychologically a little bit sick [laughter]. No big deal, I think.

But I don't know about the karma, I think it's not sure with those things. Sometimes it's true. Let's make an example, an obvious example. Let's say in Germany 50% of the people belong to the entire German poverty, has not even a room, no house to put their body, and experience much misery. Well, maybe as you say, that is better. These people are physically miserable and mentally miserable. The other people, this rich man he is only this miserable here, he still has plenty in his life. But I don't know, be careful—better to control [laughter]. Of course, if I am an individual person in Germany, world, I don't need to do that one. I have opportunity given by society, I can make good business. I can work, earn good money. So why bother, let him have, he is enjoying his life. I take care of my bread and butter. I think so.

Some young people are weak, I am sorry to have to say. They're so weak themselves and they're uneducated, they can't get a job, some way maybe their karma. But you open, you have the opportunity. I think I am not afraid, if I live in Germany, I take care of my own life. Isn't it? Human beings can do anything. We can become Buddha, we can make big samsara, we have big liberation, so I think individually, I don't care if a rich man has so much; I don't care. I take care of my own. I work. I think so. Germany is so lucky. I understand through my German students, if you work six months, you can do so much. What's wrong with these people, they don't have job? They have education, but no job.

Students: They come to the big city to study but they don't have job.

Lama: Really? Oh I see, then it's understandable. I think it depends, it's so complicated. I can't tell you, it depends on the situation. Samsara is so complicated. It definitely depends on the situation.

Q. (Inaudible)

Lama: It depends. If one is not strong enough, one needs a strong impact, a strong dedication, somebody who really has some energy of the ordination. Anyway, better to check. But if you are super-controlled, if your level is higher, you don't need to take. I cannot judge, it's completely up to the individual; I cannot judge a human being. According to Buddhism, I cannot judge, who can do and who cannot do. Buddhism believes that all human beings have a completely different level, so therefore I cannot judge. You judge, that's better.

And also Buddhism believes that some people are born beyond ego, some human beings are already beyond ego as a baby. They are born as bodhisattvas. So they are our prostration object, our refuge object already. And my observation of the Western world, of different nationalities, is quite interesting: some people can do so easily, and for some it is so difficult.

Q. (Is it possible to take drugs for better concentration, just the right dose.)

Lama: Sure, possible. If you make some kind of wisdom-tranquility-peaceful drug [Lama laughs, general laughter] It depends. No, I want you to understand: in Tibetan Buddhism, especially in tantra, we believe we can manipulate our entire nervous system energy, heart chakra, navel chakra, all chakras, and we can change, producing another aspect of energy. Possible, I think possible. But it is not good to lose awareness, you understand? If the mind is sort of penetrating and concentrated, awareness is there. If it helps to eliminate distraction it is all right.

Tibetan Buddhism believes human beings have pleasure centers. And if we put our entire nervous system energy into the shushuma, the central channels, then we always feel blissful. OK? So it is



possible. What you make, then we keep it for meditation, then we keep it pure [lama laughs]. What do you make? Scientifically it's true. Yes, one of our American student's husband discovered a pain killer within our nervous system. So I believe we can discover pleasure chemical within our system. Why don't you research that one? [Laughter] True. Possible. We do have, that's why tantra has much emphasis on the kundalini energy. Much concentration on the different chakras, and the point is to raise kundalini blissful energy.

Then any questions? I think what is important is that I don't want you people to be uncomfortable or create difficulty. So anything you are uncomfortable with, you just ask. I want you to go clean-clear from here. Otherwise you go home: "This monk hypnotized and brain-washed us". We don't like to create this kind of problem.

Q. If one has taken refuge, to what extent can one follow other religions?

Lama: Sure, of course. This is an interesting question. Now this is an essential question, let me repeat it to you. The question is, if you take refuge in Buddha, can you take refuge in Jesus Christ, Krishna and Mohammed? Does that break the refuge commitment? Well, philosophically this kind of question is a garbage question. [Lama laughs, general laughter] Doesn't have solid meaning, but of course it's common so therefore I like to answer.

So I think this way: First of all, who is Buddha? The question is who is Buddha? *This* is Buddha? This is Buddha? Can you say Jesus is not Buddha? Jesus is not bodhisattva? Can you say Krishna is not bodhisattva? Can you say Mohammed is not bodhisattva? Can you say or not? Can you say me is not bodhisattva? [Lama laughs, general laughter] That's big joke isn't it? Big joke, yes, big joke [Lama laughs, general laughter]. This is a good question, actually.

Also with Tibetan people—now I make a cultural shock for Tibetan people, ok? Anyone who is Tibetan is going to be shocked. Primitive, uneducated Tibetan people also think: "I take refuge in Lama Tsong Khapa. I don't like Avalokiteshvara." [Laughter] "I don't like the Indian great pandits, this I don't like, the Indian saints I don't like. I only like the Tibetan meditators." You know what I mean? I talk about Tibetan people's way of thinking, psychologically. There are some people like that. That's why you see even Tibetan people, some not take refuge in Lama Tsong Khapa but take refuge in Padmasambhava, and if you ask them "why you take?" you don't get a good answer. "I am Gelugpa so therefore I take refuge in Lama Tsong Khapa". That is ridiculous. That's not good enough. Then I'm going to say, "Why are you Gelugpa? What makes you Gelugpa? Because you think you are?" No. You think you are Nyingmapa you become Nyingmapa. You think you are Kagyupa, you become Kagyupa. No. It is the inside quality, isn't it?

I think that most people who think they are Buddhist, are not. Most people who think they are Gelugpa, they are not; most people who think they are Nyingmapa, are not; most people who think they are Christian, they are not; who think they are Hindu, they are not; who think they are Muslim, they are not Muslims. That is my scientific research—unfortunately. But the quality, it is a matter of quality.

I tell you something. Any time, any culture, you investigate; if they make a Buddha, if the Chinese make a Buddha, it has a Chinese face. They cannot make a Tibetan face, they can only make a Chinese face. Then the same thing with the Japanese; they make a Japanese-faced Buddha, they can't make Indian-faced Buddha. You saw? No way. That shows human limitation, human experience. Same thing with my students who hope to become painters - Westerners, they make Buddha, if you

check up, they make westernized Buddha. They copy exactly this drawing but you can see completely different. So you see when you check up, the quality comes from you. You cannot say this is a Buddha, I understand. Not like that. Buddha is come from you.

For example, my own experience: I have also many different Tibetan teachers in my life. Somehow it comes from me, some of them I just see the figure, don't have words, just seeing them touches my heart, and some of the teachers, even if they say so many words, somehow they cannot reach my heart. This is my life, isn't it? It has something to do with my karmic relationship with my teachers. Some of them, I just feel, if he is not bodhisattva then there is no bodhisattva in the world. You know, somehow inside, if he is no Lama Tsong Khapa, then there is no Lama Tsong Khapa. Somehow, this is my small feeling, sometimes. I feel that so I feel closeness.

Therefore, whatever you are, Western culture, Tibetan culture, Indian culture, Chinese culture or Japanese culture, as long as you are taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, you take refuge in all universal beings who are beyond ego, no longer ego, having realization of shunyata. It doesn't matter whether he is beggar or rich, dark, brown or white, doesn't matter looking like monkey, it doesn't matter. It's true. When I saw many Indian saints like Tilopa, Naropa, they look like [Lama laughs, general laughter] poor beggars, isn't it? They are awful looking. I bet you, if you saw Milarepa here, you would just go like this. You see, that's the point. The persons who are really higher beings, doesn't not depend on the color, the external appearance, it's absolutely internal realizations.

So therefore my opinion is, if you really become Buddhist, truly you are Buddhist, you have to take refuge in the ten directions universal tathagatas, bodhisattvas. Then what happens? You going to take refuge to African bodhisattva, who is in really hungry aspect, bones showing here—you take refuge or not? You are not going to take refuge. It's awful, such people's suffering. Although a bodhisattva sometimes is suffering too; maybe externally they look like suffering, internally maybe he is blissful.

For example, we have a *chowkidar*, housekeeper here, you saw him, the old man. You saw him? Each time I come back from the West, I look at his face. He is really blissful. I could not believe this old man is always happy. I have been with him for ten years. He is a good example. He has a simple life, dhal, rice, dhal, rice, "Are you healthy?" "Oh, ya". Sometimes I try to make him angry, "Oh, you are not good, you blah, blah, blah, blah". "Oh, you don't worry, you just do puja". He said, "You do puja, four hours you do puja, you don't worry". [Laughter] Really, I like him so much, an incredible man, this man. I want you to watch this man. You irritate him, he is never getting angry. Somehow mind peace. I make him meditate, "You never worry, I don't worry." That is a good example; such a simple life, these people, such a happy feeling.

I am not doing my business: taking refuge. Oh no, I like to make another example: Lama Zopa's uncle, he considers he is Nyingmapa. He told Lama Zopa: "Gelugpa taking refuge and Nyingmapa taking refuge is different." This is a good example, historical. I am not making up something artificial, you ask again Lama Zopa, okay? Then he told Lama Zopa it is different because we have this prayer in Nyingmapa, the Gelugpa don't say. That is his argument. I translate for you: *ma* means mother, *nam.kar* means space, embracing all mother sentient beings, space, and taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. These are the words contained in the Nyingmapa refuge. Then he saw some Gelugpa refuge prayer and this doesn't say this. So his conviction is there is a big difference.

But Gelugpa also has the preliminary, Jorcho, “*dag.dang dro.wa nam.kye ta.dang*” – *dag.dang* means myself, *dro.wa* all sentient beings. “I and all mother sentient beings taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma, Sangha...” Same thing as Nyingmapa taking refuge, in my opinion; but unlearned, just words, I don’t believe that way. I refute that way. That kind of taking refuge is so narrow, you understand.

Gelugpa should take refuge in all buddhas, all Nyingmapa yogis and yoginis, all Kagyupa yogis and yoginis, all Japanese yogis and yoginis, all Chinese yogis and yoginis, all German yogis and yoginis. [Lama laughs] You should do. That’s the way it is. Narrow mind, culture is so narrow, so narrow so they can’t see. That’s why religion becomes fanatic. Does this help you? That’s a good example, isn’t it, incredible clean-clear.

So when you take refuge, you have to take refuge in all the ten directions buddhas and bodhisattvas, without discrimination. All right.

So now, my opinion is even if you are Buddhist, but if you see Krishna is bodhisattva, good enough. If you see Jesus is a bodhisattva, good enough. It’s a quality, isn’t it? A quality. So my opinion is, let’s say all of us, we take refuge to him, to this great Australian man. My belief, now I will tell you. But not because of Roger: by only understanding the bodhisattva quality within him. I don’t care Roger he is hungry ghost, I don’t care, [Lama laughs] as long as I understand the quality of the bodhisattva, by his quality of bodhisattva. What do you think of that one? No good? No, it is true. I think this way. I don’t care whether he is higher or lower, I tell you. If he is a hungry ghost, I don’t care. His hungry ghost quality I never take. But his quality of universal compassion, great love, concerning more other people than himself. By understanding this quality I prostrate to him, I take refuge.

What do you think? That brings conflict to you? I don’t need to give him even one rupee [Lama laughs]. That is not the main point. You understand, taking refuge is not giving one rupee to him. Taking refuge in him is being so grateful to discover universal wisdom and compassion, and being free from the fanatic wrong conception.

That’s enough. That is my point of view, that is my answer to that question. You are taking refuge to Buddha, Dharma, Sangha and you are taking refuge in Krishna—it is possible? I say it is possible. Okay. Any argument?

Q. (In other teachings they don’t talk about reincarnation.)

Lama: Right, that’s philosophical only. Who cares philosophical? So many words, dualistic, all words are dualistic, isn’t it. All words are contradicting each other. Like a supermarket contradicting, this is that, therefore it’s worse, therefore you pay more [Lama laughs]. I think I don’t worry so much. I understand what you are saying. There is some kind of controversial philosophical argument, sometimes, I don’t know, those things maybe just a waste of time. We are very busy; twentieth century life is very busy.

Q. (Karma and reincarnation are very essential.)

Lama: Yes, Karma is very essential. Karma is action and reaction, that way, interdependent relation. So you act and you have got some result. I think to understand is very important, but reincarnation, whether you believe or not, maybe not necessary. If you are a good meditator, you discover. Don’t be forced, “I have to believe in reincarnation.” No. I don’t think so. By meditation you discover certain thought patterns which have nothing to do with experience of this life, coming from other lives, maybe monkey life you know.

My opinion is understanding karma is very essential thing but one should not push, “I have to believe in reincarnation; therefore, I should practice”. No, not necessary; slowly, slowly. Intellectually you may understand but to totally realize it takes time until certain understanding comes. Don’t push, okay? Anyway, it is a graduated path towards enlightenment. It is a graduated process of transformation. Transformation you cannot make intellectually come, you understand? The way you are, let go.

Q. (About bodhisattvas sometimes obviously having human feelings)

Lama: Well, I believe that if one has inside some magnetic bodhisattva energy, somehow you can easily see outside bodhisattva. But if you don’t have some energy inside within oneself you should never expect; my opinion is I never expect an external human bodhisattva to exist. So first of all to see another human being as bodhisattva is a big thing, one has to generate some kind of energy within oneself in order to be able to project bodhisattva on others. That means if one doesn’t have a magnetic good quality within oneself one can never see an outside bodhisattva. If I am an angry person, I always see other persons as angry, you know? I can’t see a peaceful situation. Okay. So this is the first one.

Second one is, Shakyamuni Buddha himself came on this earth with an already enlightened bodhisattva quality, but he shows us according to our normalization perception. Therefore, we should not expect that a bodhisattva comes with great light, like sunshine. You should not expect. For that reason a bodhisattva never comes with radiating light. It is a human thing. You understand. So, being a highly realized bodhisattva but comes with earthly qualities, as human being. Therefore if you do become a bodhisattva, you come in the ordinary aspect of a human being, in this earth. To benefit all mother sentient beings, in order to communicate. That is good enough?

Q. But then we have our faults.

Lama: Well, you can always see some white, some black. You cannot avoid. So therefore, if you can see some white bodhisattva energy, that’s good enough. You are satisfied. You feel you are lucky that I’m able to see such only person in this world who has a little bit of white bodhisattva energy. I am the most grateful man.

Q. (about seeing faults)

Lama: You can check, yes. My opinion is you can never push that my lama has no faults. I think wrong. You should expect my great lama, he can be bodhisattva or he can be ordinary man, but better than me. I’m grateful. Good enough for me. Better than me, I’m so grateful; enough for my taking refuge. I am so grateful, something like my lama on this earth existing. I can rely, I can trust, it is getting something within me. I am so grateful. That is good enough. But one should never get the idea “My lama, I never can see faulty things”. One should not think that way.

Q. So we should see him as person along the path, at a higher level than us.

Lama: Absolutely. Good enough.

Q. But this is Sutrayana. When it comes to the Vajrayana, what then?

Lama: Then you become Mahayana siddha. Mahayana is doctrine, Mahayanist is the being. Then you can see better quality. For example I am philosophical Mahayanist I am not Mahayana siddha. So therefore I cannot see higher being. Communicating? Mahayana philosopher, but you cannot say they are Mahayana siddha. Most Tibetan people are Mahayana philosophers but you cannot say those are Mahayanists. Same thing with the Nepalese culture, philosophically they are Hindu. They

are not. They just talk philosophically. Me too; I talk philosophically about bodhisattva but I am not a bodhisattva.

Your question is very important. Many times when we talk about Mahayana and Hinayana we talk about only philosophy. But as a matter of fact to be Mahayana, Hinayana, it comes gradually, gradually. First renunciation: beginning with “I am tired of this world, tired of being involved with ego. I have to make a little bit clean-clear myself in order to bring myself a little bit together.” This is like Hinayana. From there: “Well, I am a little bit happy but I am so selfish: only myself, me, me, me, me. I wish somehow I dedicate a little bit”. So it has to do with internal transformation, not just words. Actually most Tibetan culture is like me, not even Hinayana, forget about Mahayanist. Understand? All right. Then? Something else?

Q. What is the action of taking refuge?

Lama: Taking refuge is an inside thing. Completely inside, a personal experience in the true sense. Okay. Therefore you don't have to take from a lama. But taking from a lama is sort of helping how to take refuge in Buddhadharma. And especially that ceremony makes a strong impact, “Instead of taking refuge in ice-cream and chocolate, I am taking refuge in the qualities of Buddha, who has great compassion, universal love and wisdom, free from any ego conflict.” This is the way to make a strong situation, to make a strong impact, determination. That situation helps those persons who have no determination. All right? I mean taking refuge is a completely personal experience.

Q. Which meditations are the best to do when we go back to the West?

Lama: Okay, one get up early, do a hundred prostrations. [Lama laughs, general laughter] You have to have these thangkas with you [Lama laughs] My goodness, yes. I tell you one thing, we are so conditioned, our mind is so conditioned. Many times new students have difficulties, cultural shock. Here it is all so easy, with Dharma brothers and sister. We all help each other to participate, to organize. We don't have any kind of obligations, paper this, going there, so life is set up easy; when you go back to society, so many obligations.

So one should not think my conditions for taking refuge should be shrine room, Buddha statue, many Buddha statues, bodhisattva history giving impression to you. One should not expect. Most time in the West the advertising, the impact is jealousy, lust [Lama laughs]. Well that is Western life.

The best way in Western life is a little bit of meditation in the morning. Getting up and then somehow in the morning a short meditation is good enough in Western world. Ten minutes just sit down; better a short time, not too much prayers and words, just contemplate, mindfulness, and dedicate: “Today I dedicate my action as much as possible for others”. That's good enough. If you are too much excited or angry, you just do breathing meditation, to get balanced, to balance the energy. Many times when we have anxiety we breathe too much in, no out [laughter], then *lung*. Tibetans call it *lung* [Lama laughs]. Then there comes air here, too much gas, producing too much acid. Then you just relax, this also touch, touch here or touch here. Just relax. Touch mother earth, breathing becomes normal.

Q. Ten minutes?

Lama: Yes, ten minutes. Only breathing, just simple, don't think “I am meditating,” don't think, just breathing. Somehow this manipulates, the mind becomes balanced and neutralized. Then you contemplate. Okay? So simple, very simple. You can teach other people also. The nine-point analysis breathing is very useful. Especially if it's blocked, if you do this analysis it becomes open, this is my

experience. Breathing; it helps for me. Then, good enough; it's not necessary to have a public place to do prostrations or these things. Just be normal. In the train or in the subway, like this, people think you are sleeping, but you can meditate [laughter]. I think so—much better than reading newspaper.

Q. [Inaudible]

Lama: Try to adjust to every situation with different meditation. Different situation, different environment, you do different. Use your skill. I cannot say like this. But in every situation you have to be skillful. If the situation is everything hatred, then you do much meditation on compassion. Everything desire, then what do you do? What does lam-rim say? Do you have some idea? Most of the time you overestimate, so you look at it as a skeleton. You take it out. It is a skeleton, so it disappears. That's why Buddhism is so simple. Buddha taught for every situation how you deal with it. So that's what you do.

Don't fix: "I am Buddhist, therefore blah, blah, blah". It's not like that. Situations change. If time and space change concepts also change, delusions change, precepts also change. Buddha said in the vinaya rules for example that monks supposedly cannot eat in the evening, but in some place you can eat. Why? Because there is no kind of limitation. I think perhaps Western world monk can eat in the evening because the West is so wealthy that eating is not such a big deal. In the third world maybe sometimes it is a big deal, so you stop. That is why it's a concept.

Let's say if all international world's men and women learned to become completely free, no sort of ownership [Lama laughs] to each other, at that point maybe the precept is going to change. You see, completely different view. Feeling between female and man have different energy, I think so. For example in the Western world it has completely different energy from here in India and Nepal.

Q. Mind-only philosophy. As I understand, our experiences are merely the result of karmic imprints, like the negative of the slide. When I follow this to the logical conclusion, there is no way to experience new things. Invention could not have taken place, and also enlightenment is not possible, because I have not experienced it before.

Lama: Oh, I see. Well, when you eat ice-cream, each experience of eating ice-cream is different taste, and habit produces one stronger reaction. So therefore, you can experience new things but it has a similar kind of nature, similarity of karmic connection. For example, let's say you are looking for universal compassion; any living being in this earth having the same quality. No strong desire or hatred. Equal universal compassion you wish to achieve in order to eliminate dualistic concept. This is the idea. You can achieve, why? You already have, to some extent. For some people a little bit equal, space, compassion, love. Sometimes one strong love coming, but no, no, no; "I should be equal," you talk to yourself. "You are ridiculous; you think this is a friend, because yesterday he gave you ice-cream. That's why you are ridiculous. You know that is not the point. You should be equal," talking this way. This small experience can be brought to equalize even good friendship, somehow connected with universal compassion. You see, you have some experience, which develops in this way. Each time you experience compassion it becomes bigger and bigger and bigger, so a new experience comes. Communicating or not?

Other example, negative, the same: the habit is so strong, so each time you get angry you produce stronger anger next time. But each time anger is a different anger, character and cause are different, but it produces bigger and bigger each time—so the same thing, in a positive or in a negative way. Because it is a habit they become bigger, bigger, bigger, bigger. That's why normally we say, "This

time I lie, a little bit telling lie. But I should be aware. This small lying, it is nothing, a joke, playing, but then develops bigger telling lies, bigger telling lies, bigger telling lies.” Therefore, even with a small negative thing it is sometimes better to be aware.

It is simple, so reasonable. Buddhism believes, you and me, we are not highly realized but somehow we have small compassion, small love, isn't it? This we can develop. Fundamentally we have some existent already. We are not working with nothing isn't it? Sure. That's why from the Buddhist point of view we never criticize Hitler. Who knows, maybe he is a great bodhisattva? You never know. Who is the president in America that created Vietnam war? Nixon. Who knows Nixon, we cannot criticize Nixon, he has bad quality, negative karma, I cannot say. So many people started saying, “I want peace”. Many thousands in America wanted peace. If he wouldn't have demonstrated all these negative actions, there might already be a third war. After this so many American people went into the peace movement. Isn't it? Good karma or not? I think good karma; lucky, because human beings learned.

Q. How important is ritual, for example to take precepts in the morning?

Lama: Yes, I think those rituals are very important. For example to take precepts in the morning makes a very strong imprint, I feel, very strong. If you act, something happens. If you don't act, nothing happens. I really feel. For example I like prostrations so much. When I do prostration I feel something happens within me, something helping me. It looks like ritual but very powerful. It is very powerful. You touch the earth; we have so much ego, and prostration is giving me space to do something. So I think very worthwhile, if you can do. You can see the result right now. If you act one morning strong, keeping yourself in the situation, you feel the result right now. Many people say “Well, I meditate but I cannot see much result”. Maybe, I say, you are not acting. Then they go, “I meditate.” Meditation means what? If my meditation means I go like this [laughter] I am not meditating. I am just squeezing myself. But internal experience takes time. So only if you act you get, which is skillful. I think very useful.

Example, let's say yesterday I did something incredible berserk, I got confused, I don't understand almost relatively who I am. I tell myself, “You can't go on like that. First of all you are confused, secondly you are dissatisfied and full of anxiety, emotions.” Tomorrow, PAM! Morning get up early, take precepts, meditate, and do much prostrations. Evening I bet you are clean-clear. Somehow it works that way. We need to create the foundation, to create atmosphere peace and tranquility, so those kinds of rituals are useful. But maybe heavy prostrations, or simple blah, blah, blah, maybe those rituals not necessary. But meditation, those things are important; control, peace that is important. It doesn't matter where you go, but control over body, speech and mind I think is essential.

Q. I have a picture with all big lamas on it.

Lama: Good dear, very good, [laughter] only big lamas?

Q. All the high lamas.

Lama: Then you get good vibration from them or not? Sorry, before your question I give you question [Lama laughs]

Q. I am wondering why there is not one woman on the picture. [Lama laughs, general laughter]

Lama: There is. Here, twenty-one green ladies here. In Kopan every month we pray.

Q. Why not living?

Lama: Yes, in Tibet for example, there are many. I heard, Dorje Pagmo, she is a great yogini; all Sera collage monks go to see her. She is Kagyupa, but all Gelugpa people go to do prostration for her.

She is a miracle lady. When I was a young boy I asked her how is this, my uncle is so strict, and he doesn't allow me anything to go somewhere. I ask her to do a miracle. Today maybe she became this much, tomorrow she became this much. Her body is an incredible miracle. When she died, only this much left only, she is super—super lady. Incarnation also come. Anyway, from tantra point of view there is no distinction, male and female are equal. No distinction, but according to vinaya there is some distinction.

I think also women have to understand, men also have problem, but women have to understand, by monthly period women's mind becomes banana. [Lama laughs, general laughter] It is scientific, because the body has stress. Men also have problems but different problems, isn't it? Maybe men's problems sometimes easier but depends also on the men. But sometimes this monthly losing energy makes it very difficult to concentrate. When you have monthly period, can you concentrate well or not? Well?

Student: No, not very good.

You see, that is the point. [Lama laughs] This is in the ordinary sense. But you watch Tara. She puts this foot here: blocked. She controlled losing the energy. So women can do. They can learn this position. This foot is put here, controlled. I hope you can learn, you can learn sure. I think that is the beauty of a human being, of the human mind: inner skill, inner intelligence to control the body.

The mind tells the body. I make example: when I watch Western women the way they walk, the way they look; somebody is acting this way, they think "Oh, the way she walks is good," so you imitate. You imitate sometimes? Do you? With clothes, desire, the way we are acting. This one this way, or this way, or no, all these things are imitations. The mind tells: I should do this way so it is a good image; like this mind controls the internal energy too. My point is the mind can direct the energy. You can control. I am sure Dorje Pagmo nun controlled her monthly periods. So you have to learn.

Q. (Why are gelong vows not given to women?)

Lama: Because gelongma vows are particularly made for females, according to the female mind. Gelong vows are psychologically conditioned for man. But female can do. They can receive gelongma, but the lineage is broken, that is why. Anyway that is not the point. My opinion is that the gelongma female higher ordination broke, is not because female is not worthwhile, that is not why it broke. It is just that the lineage dropped out at a certain point. Actually monks and nuns receive a much higher ordination now; the bodhisattva ordination is a hundred percent higher and more sensitive. And tantric vows are much more sensitive, super sensitive, much higher than even bodhisattva vows and vinaya.

Q. What are dakinis?

Lama: Dakini is a female who practices Tantrayana and has some kind of realization. But there are many levels of dakinis.

Q. What does the phrase in Guru Puja mean: "the dakas and dakinis within the body of the master?"

Lama: Because inside all men dakinis existing, within oneself. Inside I don't miss female because I have so much female energy within me. So I don't miss you. [Lama laughs, general laughter] I am joking. That's right. You also have male energy in you. That is also why Dorje Chang is holding a female, because of the unity of the highest male and female quality existing within oneself. Not the physical joining of male and female; it is symbolic of the inner unity.

And also, this is my observation, in places where there are females, even ordinary like us, there is some energy. If there are men it has some particular energy and men and women together have



particular energy too. Some places, our centers, there are many females having babies without the father; I feel they are missing something. Children not healthy, female not healthy, just hassle the children. There is something about being together, some kind of unity. Even in a relative way I feel it has some effect for the life.

Q: Is it then fair to say that one has to work towards a balance between the male and female?

Lama: I think so; somehow it has to be balanced. I think that could be at many levels. If you have discovered enough inside, then you can balance inside, but if you not discover inside, maybe somehow externally you can have some kind of compromise.

Q: (It seems almost impossible to achieve enlightenment unless you become a nun or a monk. How can people use relationships to further themselves along the path to enlightenment?).

Lama: I think possible. I think we cannot judge. We cannot say in order to become enlightened you have to become monk or nun. This is not true. In relationship that can be done. It depends on the relationship. Some females give you energy, isn't it? I talk about the female aspect because you and me are men, isn't it? [Lama laughs] Some females give you energy instead of taking energy away. That must be a dakini, must be high. Those females who have developed bodhicitta and who have understanding of inner energy, how to manipulate, how to give it, then I think it is possible to help on the path towards enlightenment.

We can never judge. For example Marpa, he is a lay man, he leads a normal life. But he is completely Buddha. He has consort, his wife; and Milarepa also didn't become monk. I think he is great, we all took refuge, we believe he is Buddha; same thing with Tilopa, Naropa. They are not monks. Those are super examples. Also in the Tibetan tradition there are many high lamas, Nyingmapa, Kagyupa, Gelugpa too, some are lay aspect. So you can only judge yourself, I can only judge myself. I think so clear, definitely it is possible. But it is very rare that man and woman are coming together not for physical relationship, that main idea is to help to direct the energy in a higher way, another way. To grow each other, that is the way. Normally it is the samsara mind, grasping for each other, expecting only samsaric happiness in return. Today is happy, the next day is not happy because I am not getting my chocolate from him or her.

So that is the lower communication. We are not communicating from here, not from here, not from here, only from the lower chakra we communicate. Isn't it? I think that's the point. Understood this way it is poor quality. For example women now in the West, last year when I was in California and a woman made an advertisement on TV, sort of the way they use women no good, that woman are not only for sex. Something like that. You know what I mean, American stuff, you know [Lama laughs]. It is true. That is the way it is. People projecting, so woman feels: "That is not right. We are not for men's sex. We are human beings". I don't know any more I am confused too. [Lama laughs] In a way it is true, man should not look at woman only for physical usage. Woman is also a full powerful human being, recognized as Buddha. So in a way it is true, the idea that man's attitude of looking at women is like an animal, sort of to use. So nowadays men getting difficulty, like that, that is good. I think so. In the West it is so complicated. Instead of men's pleasure women become men's difficulty now [Lama laughs, general laughter].

Maybe that is enough today. I am keeping you so long. Thank you so much. So maybe we do a little bit of dedication: to benefit others, to bring peace in this earth to all mother sentient beings.

[Dedications]

Lecture 35: December 9<sup>th</sup> pm (Lama Zopa Rinpoche)

Before taking refuge, the refuge ordination, if one likes to take precepts—one precept, two precepts, five precepts—one should motivate like this, “In this samsara, wherever I go, it is a place of only suffering. In this samsara, whatever enjoyment I experience, whatever I have, it is an enjoyment of only suffering. In this samsara, whatever companion or friend accompanies me, it is only a friend of suffering. However much I try, however much I have, however much I follow desire, there is no end. I never get satisfaction, however much I follow desire, samsaric happiness and perfection, however much I work for that. Why? It never gives me satisfaction, the result is only dissatisfaction. So for this reason, all these things—praise, enjoyments, friends—all these perfections are perfections of suffering. This samsara, these contaminated aggregates of attachment, are only in the nature of suffering. As long as I am caught in this, there is no difference from living in the fireplace, living in the very center of the fire. Being caught in samsara is like oneness with the fire, only in the nature of suffering. So for the benefit of all mother sentient beings, I must achieve ever-release from samsara, the omniscient mind for the benefit of all kind mother sentient beings. The ultimate goal is omniscient mind; therefore, by taking refuge, completely relying on Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, I am going to take refuge ordination.”

There is a refuge ordination, a certain ceremony, but actually, since there is a wish to meditate, to train the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment, since you want to practice bodhicitta, since you wish to practice patience, to realize shunyata, the absolute nature of the self, wanting to escape from ignorance, having that wish—that is the real refuge. You already have refuge in the mind. It is a matter of words; just being scared of the word “refuge,” some kind of being uptight with the word. But having this wish to meditate on lamrim is the actual refuge in the Dharma; having the wish to train the mind in lamrim, bodhicitta, shunyata, having the wish to realize this, to practice the remedy of the self-cherishing thought, of the ignorance of true existence, the root of samsara—that itself is taking refuge. Meditating on that, taking refuge to protect yourself from the self-cherishing thought, from the harms of the ignorance of true existence, the root of samsara, taking refuge to escape from that, meditating on shunyata to escape from that—that itself is taking refuge. Meditating itself, having the wish to realize the true nature is already taking refuge. Practicing these two bodhicitta is itself taking refuge. Actually, it is like this.

Then, meditating on impermanence and death to cut off the clinging to these aggregates and to this life is taking refuge in Dharma—refuge from that danger, those shortcomings, the suffering of attachment, of clinging too much to the happiness of this life and all the problems that come from that. Meditating on impermanence and death protects from that. The Dharma guides you from those dangers, from that attachment clinging to the happiness of this life, that confused mind. Meditating on bodhicitta, practicing against the self-cherishing thought—those Mahayana teachings, that Dharma, guides you from the problems of the self-cherishing thought. Also, meditating on shunyata, your understanding of shunyata guides you from the dangers of the root of samsara, the ignorance of true existence. That is taking refuge, even if you don’t take refuge through a ceremony. Like this, according to the pratimoksha, the ceremony, with repetition of the words—even if one doesn’t do that, with an uptight way of thinking, some kind of uptightness with the word “refuge,” somehow scared—the person already has the wish to meditate, already there is refuge in the mind. That is the most important thing. That is the real refuge.

The point of taking the refuge ceremony, the ordination—on the basis of that living in the vows, practicing the three advice of avoidance and three advice of practice. For example, by taking refuge in Dharma, what one should avoid as much as possible is harming others. That is what one should try to make a project for life; by taking refuge in Dharma, if you want to receive guidance from Dharma, avoid harming others. Even though it happens uncontrollably, with repentance take the decision to make it less in the future, to try to live in the vows, to make this the project for life, practice.

One creates extra merits by living in the vow. By not living in the vows one doesn't receive this extra profit. If one does not take the commitment in front of a holy object, even if one doesn't do the actions, without having taken the vow one doesn't receive the merit of keeping the vow that a person gets who has taken the vow. Even if normally one doesn't steal or doesn't tell lies, by living in the vows there is continuous merit, day and night—all the time you accumulate merit. That is a great advantage. All the time you are accumulating merit—when you are eating, sleeping, even when you are unconscious, the merit of living in the vows, of not stealing, not taking others' lives—you are accumulating merits all the time.

For the vows of taking refuge in Dharma, one should avoid harming others. Killing is the most harmful one. Not unconsciously killing—the heaviest karma is killing with the intention to kill. Willingly killing; the complete action of killing starts with the motive of killing. It doesn't just happen by not seeing something you stepped on, or when you drive a car, killing insects. Heavy karma is with the intention, the motive to kill, with one of the poisonous minds to make it a complete action of killing; there are four limbs.

So I think it is very good, since one accumulates merit all the time, even in one's sleep, it is very beneficial to take at least one precept, not to kill—even for those who are not planning to take any other of the precepts. I am sure, this morning Lama must have explained in a very effective way. I think it's so important. Otherwise there is nothing to practice in life. There is nothing left to practice, if one cannot do this at least, then there is nothing left. To not harm others; at least one can do this.

Generally it is possible to take only refuge ordination, but I think it is very good if you take this one. So from your side, those who made plans to take only the refuge ordination, you just decide in your mind.

With the motive wanting to benefit all sentient beings by taking refuge in the Triple Gem, whatever you decide to take, take refuge in order to achieve omniscient mind, final release from samsara for the benefit of the sentient beings. Then by thinking of the founder of the teachings, Shakyamuni Buddha, please do three prostrations.

Lama Lundrup spoke already about taking refuge. Taking refuge in Buddha implies not following a wrong guide who misleads you: instead of leading you to omniscient mind, the cessation of suffering, leading you to the lower realms, samsara. So in that way, your wish does not get fulfilled. You want to go up, to escape from danger, but at the same time if you try to go down—both cannot be done. You reach nowhere. If one is going down, at the same time one cannot go up. If one goes on a path where there's danger, one cannot go on the path that makes one free from danger. Like this example, it doesn't benefit.

By taking refuge in Dharma, one should avoid harming other sentient beings. By taking refuge in Sangha, one should avoid the wrong guide. Taking refuge in Buddha, one should avoid the wrong founder. With Sangha what we should avoid is the wrong guide who misleads. There is no need for more explanation.

The three practices of avoiding and the three advice of practice—there is no need to mention this again since it was already mentioned.

Then the general ones—following the holy beings, listening to the holy Dharma, reflecting on Dharma—as much as possible following the holy Dharma. And as much as possible trying to get some control over the five senses. When we don't control the senses it can even cause danger to life. So like this, as much as possible taking the precepts, as much as possible generating love and compassion for others; making offerings to the Triple Gem as much as one can. This is the general practice.

If one degenerates these four root vows—from taking another's life up to not telling lies—one can take the ordination again. Then for killing creatures, one can confess in front of a monk or a holy object. One can confess. I think that's all.

Then, please dedicate the merits of having taken the ordination to be able to complete the paramita of moral conduct, keeping it purely.

Then, please dedicate the merits to be able to do extensive works for all sentient beings and the teachings, as Buddha Shakyamuni did, and to be able to achieve enlightenment as quickly as possible and to be able to lead every sentient being to the state of omniscient mind, as quickly as possible.

[Discussion about Dharma names]

Here, generally, there are other purposes, signifying renunciation, renouncing even the lay name. The main thing is to remember the practice. Here the lama gives a name to remember to practice the development of the good heart. Normally in Pratimoksha ordination the name has to be given according to the abbot's name, starting with the abbot's name. Here the name is mainly to remember the dharma practice, remembering the good heart. If you already have one name and take another, it costs more—it's more expensive. [Rinpoche laughs]

[End of refuge ceremony]

Lecture 36: December 9<sup>th</sup> pm

Please generate at least the effortful motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, At any rate I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all mother sentient beings; therefore I am going to listen to the holy teachings.

So there are four main schools, the four major Buddhist schools.

Regarding mind-only—there is just one more thing to clarify. There are a lot of misunderstandings in regards to this. It is not saying that all three realms are only mind, that all existence is only mind.

It is not saying they are mind. There are a lot of misunderstandings like this. I think one of the reasons is not having received teachings from a qualified teacher, a teacher who studied under another qualified teacher, who has the perfect infallible understanding of the teachings and the commentaries on the root text. What it is saying is that it comes from mind. It is not saying it is the mind, but it comes from the mind. It came from only mind.

As I mentioned yesterday, it negates or cuts off saying your life, each sentient being's happiness and suffering, is created by a separate being, a universal consciousness or Mahadeva; it cuts off that, which doesn't fit with your experience, which is not the evolution, which you can see is contradictory to your own everyday life experience: that is not created by a separate being, it is dependent on your mind. One can understand it by watching, by examining.

It does not say that all three realms are mind—it means that it came from the mind, just that much. So there are words like that that you have to get the commentary to understand, that you have to study with a qualified teacher to understand without mistake. But for somebody who just reads a book without studying it with a qualified teacher who has complete infallible understanding of what it means, it is very easy to get wrong understanding.

However, the last school, the Middle Way school, *Umāpa*, has two divisions. One is called *Rang gyūpa* and the other one is called *Tang gyūpa*. For those who listen to teachings from Tibetan lamas, who have the wish to study, somehow they have interest in Tibetan language anyway. For people who don't understand Sanskrit anyway, they wouldn't use Sanskrit. But now calling it Coca-Cola would make more sense. So I think it is more useful to use Tibetan terms. If one cannot translate it, then it is better to use the Tibetan term. Anyway people need to learn—those who have great interest in extensive deep studies have to learn these words anyway. So I think it's more useful to use the Tibetan word itself; then there are fewer mistakes in explaining the meaning. That is the most important thing, the correct meaning. Then, by the way, the students also collect the Dharma terms, and in that way it's easier, in the future it is helpful when they expand their studies.

What the *Rang gyūpa* accept is this: in any existence, there is inherent existence, there is existence from its own side but also it is dependent. These philosophers accept both. Any existence has inherent existence, existence from its own side but also it is dependent on appearing to the undeceptive mind, or the non-defective mind, and the undeceptive mind labeling that. So they accept both. There is inherent existence from its own side, but also it is dependent on the undeceptive mind labeling it. Both.

So these philosophers, the *Rang gyūpa*, they cannot figure it out without accepting that there is some existence from the side of the object. Without accepting that, they cannot see how things can exist, even though they are dependent on an undeceptive mind labeling. There should be some existence from the side of the object. Without that things become completely non-existent.

For example, if we relate it to our experience, somebody who did not experience *shūnyata*, who has not got the clear, right understanding, who cannot see the unification of emptiness and dependent arising, who hasn't seen this, who doesn't know this—even though one might imitate what Lama Tsong Khapa said in the teachings about the unification of emptiness and dependent arising, this and that—in that case when you meditate, when we practice *tonglen*, taking others' suffering and dedicating our body and three times' merits and perfections to others, when we are practicing this, with the awareness that what is dedicated and taken is actually empty, when we do this, even when

we make material charity to others, meditating with awareness of emptiness, then for our mind, when we do this practice with awareness of emptiness, it looks like for our mind it becomes completely non-existent. Non-existent—there is nothing taken and nothing given; completely non-existent. There is no labeling base. So it becomes non-existent for our mind.

So what we are meditating on becomes kind of nonsense; what we are taking and giving becomes nonsense, something that does not exist. You feel like that. I think that comes from not actually having recognized the refuted object. Not having the understanding in the very inside of the mind: this is it; something clear inside the heart, that you can see it very clearly—the unification of emptiness and dependent arising, this is the way it is.

Something that you have discovered on one object, “I,” the unification, how the “I” is empty and dependent arising is unified on the aggregates. If you have the experience on one object, then you can do the same with everything. You can copy from that. You can do it with the things that you offer to others and take from others. Then it also becomes very clear that there is something you give others and there is something that you take from others. But at the same time you don’t cling to the fact that they are truly existent. Although there is the appearance of true existence, suffering, body, material possessions, three times merits, there is no thought of clinging. It is weaker. Like this.

So there is something that you offer and there is something that you take. When you don’t know exactly what it means, when you don’t have the experience, even though there is some intellectual understanding, if you don’t have the experience in the mind, clearly from the mind, seeing the unification of emptiness and dependent arising on the object, then it is difficult. Then, even though the words are okay, when you really practice confusion arises. When you look at it as empty, it becomes completely non-existent. You fall down the other way. When you try to think that it exists, you feel the exaggeration of self-existence, that it truly exists.

So when you try to do your practice with the awareness of emptiness, it is better not to look at emptiness, because then you get completely lost. Then there is nothing to give and nothing to receive, because you don’t know how to look at the unification of these things. So then it seems either completely non-existent or, when you don’t look at them that way, when you think they are existent, then truly existent. So like this, I am just trying to give some example of the *Rang gyupa* idea. This is what can happen you meditate and you don’t have the exact understanding of how to look at unification on the object, the unification of emptiness and dependent arising.

So *Rang gyupa* is like when we meditate and don’t have this exact understanding. When we can’t meditate exactly on the unified emptiness and dependent arising, with *tonglen* meditation, those things, it looks like there should be some existence from its own side, otherwise it doesn’t exist at all. Even intellectually for us, our mind, this kind of idea happens. Even though intellectually we do accept that it has to depend on the mind: “Without the mind how can it exist, how does the name come, the mind has to label?” So you do say this, you do believe in this, you can’t reject this, it is true. But then there is the belief: “Then there should be some existence from its own side, otherwise how can it exist?” This comes.

So *Uma Rang gyupa* posits that there should be some existence from its own side, and also that it is dependent on an undeceptive mind labeling that, a mind that is not hallucinating with drugs, like *datura*, or disease. A mind that is hallucinating is not a normal mind. A mind affected by elements, by disease, or drugs is a deceptive mind. Like a hallucinating mind, seeing a white snow-mountain as

yellow or a rope as a snake, or affected by the power of mantras, by the magician. In this way the mind can become defective. Those objects do not exist because another valid mind can see that it does not exist and can identify it as a mistake. They find mistakes in the snake or the yellow snow mountain.

An undeceptive mind is a mind that is unaffected, not hallucinating by diseases or by the power of mantras or drugs that produce hallucinations, which worldly people or ordinary beings can recognize as a hallucination. Not necessarily meditators, just ordinary beings can discover it is a hallucination.

So *Uma Rang gyupa's* refuted object is that things exist by themselves alone, things exist only from the side of the object, without depending on an undeceptive mind labeling it. So they accept both: things exist inherently, from their own side, and they also depend on the undeceptive mind labeling them. So the refuted object is the object that exists only from its own side—any existence, such as the “I,”—existing only from its own side without depending on the undeceptive mind labeling it. That is the refuted object. This point of view is the subtle refuted object according to this *Uma Rang gyupa* philosophy.

So now according to Prasangika, even if you realize that “I” is empty of existing only from its own side without depending on an undeceptive mind labeling it on the aggregates, realize that the “I” is empty of that, this does not mean that one has realized the absolute nature of the “I.” According to Prasangika it still doesn't mean that one has realized the absolute nature of the “I.” So now you can understand the *Tang gyuma*, the Prasangika philosophers. For this school there is no slightest existence from its own side, not the slightest atom of existing from its own side, from the object's side—completely empty, completely. Not even an atom existing from its own side. On any object, on the “I” and any object there's not the slightest, even an atom existing from its own side, completely empty. So therefore: merely labeled, on the labeling base.

The aggregates itself are merely labeled—not the slightest atom exists from its own side. The aggregates are merely labeled by thought, valid thought, the all-obscuring ignorance of true existence. So on the merely labeled aggregates, the “I” that exists on that, there is also not the slightest atom that exists from its own side. Even though for us, now, on these aggregates it appears as if it exists from its own side, in fact it's completely empty—there is not the slightest atom of true existence on that. It is completely empty of existence from its own side, completely empty.

The “I” itself is merely labeled on the merely labeled aggregates by valid thought, ignorance, all-obscuring thought, the ignorance of true existence. Like I mentioned, each time the aggregates are doing some action, it is labeled, “I am going to do this, I am going to do that.”

So “merely labeled”: what “merely” means is that besides that being labeled, merely labeled, there's not the slightest existence from the side of the “I,” from the side of the object. It is completely empty of that. So, how does it exist? On the merely labeled aggregates the thought, the name, the sound is left there by merely labeling; left on the aggregates by merely labeling. That is the way the “I” exists.

So what *Uma Rang gyupa*, the previous philosophers, accept is that the “I” exists from its own side, but also by the undeceptive mind labeling that. That is how it exists. According to the Prasangika school, the last school, *Tang gyuma*, that is the refuted object. This previous one becomes the refuted object for the philosophers of the *Tang gyuma*. Otherwise there is the problem of existence from its

own side. That is why the previous philosopher, *Uma Rang gyupa*, is blocked from really finding the right view according to the Prasangika. This prevents them from seeing the emptiness of existence from its own side. The “I” being empty of existing from its own side—this is the right view. So what blocks the *Uma Rang gyupa* from realizing is that they believe that it does exist from its own side. That is the problem. What is left now is dependent on the mind labeling, and that is okay. But the extra thing, what is left as hindrance to realizing the infallible right view of the Prasangika is believing that there is existence from the side of the object. So what *Uma Rang gyupa* accepts is itself the refuted object of the *Uma Tang gyuma*, the Prasangika. That itself becomes the refuted object.

The meaning of merely labeled, not just labeled but *merely* labeled, is that the way that things exist, the way that things are completely empty, such as the “I” and aggregates, are completely empty of existing from their own side. Why is the “I” empty of existing from its own side? It exists on the aggregates, the labeling base—the thought and sound merely label on that.

So now, just to clarify, I mentioned the other day some different advice about the refuted object, what His Holiness Ling Rinpoche and His Holiness the Dalai Lama said before. Until you recognize the refuted object—the appearance of true existence, how things appear as existing from their own side—on one object, you cannot discriminate, it is complete oneness. If you check, you cannot discriminate between what is the table and what is truly existent. It is oneness; you cannot separate the table and the truly existent table, or the labeling base and the label. “Table” is kind of oneness, unable to discriminate. It is completely oneness. We cannot discriminate between the true existence and the object; the thing that exists under the control of name, and true existence. There is a pillar that exists, but between the mind and that object there is some hallucination. Like between the perception by the hallucinating mind and the rope, there is a hallucination of a snake.

Like that, at the moment, when we do not recognize the refuted object on one object, it completely becomes oneness. The merely labeled “I” and the appearance of true existence are kind of completely oneness—one cannot distinguish them. So when we do the four-point analysis meditation, searching for the refuted object, the “I,” in order to realize that it is empty, since we cannot discriminate and recognize the refuted object, the truly existent “I,” it is better to use the meditator, yourself, as the object. It is better to use that as the object, to seek for yourself on your aggregates. The refuted object, the “I” is the subject himself. “I” searching the “I”—this is the best. In this way, even though you don’t recognize the truly existent “I,” it is okay. It becomes correct meditation; there is a great result from doing analytical meditation with the four analyses like this.

Another way of saying it is this—the example is not exact but you may get an idea. If there is supposed to be some gold in this garbage can, if you cannot find it now, you take the whole basket home, the whole garbage can, because there is not enough time to check it there at the other people’s place. Then you take your time; spend hours to find the gold. However, the gold exists, and this true existence does not exist. What I am saying is not exact, but because you don’t know where it is exactly, it is easier to take the whole thing to your house.

Like that, since you do not know the truly existent “I,” since you cannot recognize it, discriminate, then it is better to use them together—the “I,” yourself—use it to seek it on the aggregates. This helps you to recognize the refuted object; it helps you to realize the emptiness of the “I.” That is the best thing that can be done until you recognize the refuted object. Rather than searching for just the merely labeled “I,” where it is. Searching for the merely labeled “I”—where is it—might help somebody who has never done the meditation, somebody who has a very closed mind. It might give



some understanding, searching for the merely labeled “I.” But it does not hit straight on the truly existent “I,” that to which the ignorance of true existence clings.

However, according to Prasangika, how the “I” appears as truly existent, it is the same as the name. The baby called Vajra was born and then parents called him “Vajra.” The parents thought for a long time and then they decided on the name “Vajra.” At the first second when the name Vajra is given, there’s no conception clinging to that as truly existent. Then, after the name is labeled, in the second second it gradually gets stronger and stronger and stronger—there’s no longer the awareness that it’s merely labeled on the aggregates. That awareness is forgotten. Then gradually, as the seconds, minutes go, there’s a labeling base and there’s this thought of Vajra, they meet together, and the person is labeled “Vajra.” Then it’s forgotten, and as the seconds and minutes go, the appearance of Vajra existing from its own side gets stronger and stronger; even though it’s merely labeled it appears to exist from its own side. This appearance of true existence becomes stronger and stronger and stronger like this. It is the same thing with the “I.”

This is the Prasangika’s refuted object. Another way of saying—when we walk, “I’m going to Katmandu, I’m going to Boudha, I’m going to the shops to buy coffee,” when we think of this, when we walk, it looks like the “I” is on the body. But when we think of past and future lives or rebirth in the lower or upper realms, our past lives as human beings or devas, it looks like the “I” is on the consciousness, not on the body. When we travel, “I go to the West, I go to India, to Bodhgaya,” it looks like the “I” is on the body. Also while you are walking it looks like the “I” is on the body. And it looks like there is a real “I” on the consciousness, which travels from one life to another life. That is the object to be refuted, that’s the object that doesn’t exist. The real “I” that looks sometimes like it is on the body and sometimes on the consciousness doesn’t exist—that real “I” is the refuted object.

When you fall down from the precipice, when you are in danger of falling down, at that time you don’t think, “My body is falling down,” or “My mind is falling down.” At that time there is a real “I.” At the time of great fear there is a real “I” that is neither body nor mind—just “I,” completely “I.” There is a real one, with great fear of falling down, fear that it is going to be hurt. There is something, neither mind nor body, but a real “I.” It is not merely labeled, but purely existing from its own side.

That “I” is what is called the refuted object, that emotional “I”. This “I” is like blowing a balloon: when there is no air inside it is flat, you don’t feel very much—normally you don’t feel so much, for those who don’t have much experience of shunyata, the refuted object, the recognition, you feel it only at certain times—in great fear or when there are conditions that make you so happy. Then like blowing up a balloon, at those times it becomes very vivid. Even though the appearance of the truly existing “I” is always there, it is invisible. You haven’t recognized the refuted object yet, so it is kind of invisible. But at those times it becomes very strong.

That’s why there is a practice in tantra called *Slaying the Ego*. This is a particular practice to quickly realize shunyata, to quickly recognize the refuted object. They go in the forest, alone, very far from the monastery, many miles away in the forest where there are spirits, noises, strange things happening. They go to particular places with water where there is only one tree, places where spirits gather, or graveyards. The person has to be alone, without friends. Then you have to practice, meditate on shunyata and also mainly exchanging oneself for others, making charity of the body to others, to the spirits. Then if there is great fear you are able to recognize the refuted object, the “I”

that doesn't exist. So like this you are quickly able to realize the absolute nature of the "I." That is a particular tantric practice, *Slaying the Ego*.

This kind of emotional "I" is like this. The ignorance of truly existent "I" does not hold the body or the mind—only the "I," the pure "I," which is neither mind nor body but an "I" that purely exists from its own side; this "I" that falls down and is going to be hurt, which is completely empty, which doesn't exist at all. It is completely empty and this is what we should recognize. It is like this now; if you recognize the refuted object, it is like this now, the same as those times when the emotional "I" arises, in great fear, or if one is so excited—it is similar. But the thing is that we haven't recognized the refuted object, so it becomes kind of oneness, invisible. However, this is it what we should realize as empty on these aggregates.

After we realize this is empty, when it becomes empty for your mind, completely lost, for the lower intelligent ones and even for the bodhisattvas, fear arises because that "I," the self, the meditator itself, is completely lost. This happens, and then fear starts to arise from the very depth of the heart, even for the lower intelligent bodhisattvas. It is like an untrained child riding on a horse.

The higher intelligent bodhisattvas, when they realize shunyata, are extremely happy, like having found a wish-granting jewel, extremely happy. Tears come out, maybe hairs rise up. For them it is like having found a wish-granting jewel and they are extremely happy. This is the case for a higher bodhisattva with much logic, with much extensive, deep understanding of shunyata.

When you realize the truly existent "I" is empty, the reason that you feel you, the meditator, is lost, doesn't exist, is because that experience shows that "I," the meditator, doesn't exist from the side of the object. It shows that. It is a sign that it doesn't exist from its own side—the self, the meditator, is completely lost. Not only the truly existent "I" but also the meditator, the self. The "I" is lost. It shows that the "I" doesn't exist from the side of the object. After this, what you see is the "I" after it is a merely labeled "I" on the aggregates. That is the way you see it. Then you have recognized the unification of emptiness and dependent arising—that is exactly what you have recognized. Even though the "I" appears as truly existent, without clinging you recognize that it is empty of true existence. Appearance and emptiness, dependent arising and emptiness, like this.

At that time you have finished examining shunyata as Lama Tsong Khapa explained it. After you have this experience you should not leave it like this, because it might degenerate. Once you have this experience you should practice *samatha*, one-pointed meditation and, even if you cannot perfectly practice *samatha*, you should make sessions, meditate on this emptiness and again search, analyzing; then again when you reach emptiness, practice one-pointed meditation. Practice the remedies such as awareness and remembrance against the scattering thought caused by attachment and scattering thoughts that are not caused by attachment, and the sinking thought. Try to meditate single pointedly on the emptiness of the "I" by practicing remembrance and awareness, not letting yourself be disturbed by sinking or scattering thoughts. Then you should read the teachings about *samatha*, one-pointed meditation, and the methods and remedies, such as the eight remedies. In this way, doing meditation on the right view, you can accomplish the highest insight.

When one has this specific experience, according to Lama Tsong Khapa one has then entered the path that pleases all the Buddhas. One is able to enter the path that pleases all the Buddhas with this body, this human body that one has found just one time. Then, also train the mind in bodhicitta and

practicing the tantric path, take initiations, try to take the greatest essence, to reach the unified state of Vajradhara, to be able to do extensive works as quickly as possible for all sentient beings.

I stop here.

I didn't get the four-point analysis done. I did plan to do what Thubten Pemo did the other night—that was it but she didn't finish completely. But if somebody wants to meditate it can be copied. Not everything; only that part. It was put together because I did the Mahamudra course in Vajrapani but then the shunyata subject didn't get done. I was supposed to teach the shunyata subject there but spent most of the time on guru meditation; only on the last day, a few minutes on shunyata. I was supposed to send the copy to them for the retreat but it didn't reach there on time. Also in France, I did a little bit, but mostly on guru practice. I didn't get done much on shunyata. Not like this course.

Actually, what I planned at the beginning of the course was to talk on patience, the chapter on patience, then practicing awareness, concentration and perseverance. Then what else? There were a few chapters that came out beneficial. I didn't plan to give it the normal way, according to the lamrim outline, as I did in previous courses. I thought to let the geshe speak mostly on that. I did speak some lamrim, without going straight into the chapter on patience. In the beginning we talked about exchanging oneself with others, which is very, very important mind-training in bodhicitta, one of the two ways—one way is exchanging oneself with others—then shunyata, then patience. So actually the most important thing to fulfill one's ultimate and temporal wishes, to solve everyday life problems, is shunyata and bodhicitta. In other courses I hardly spoke about that, I think. There were words on shunyata, a little bit but hardly, not as it happened in this course. Usually only half of the subject—then the course finishes halfway through the subject.

I spoke about the two most important subjects from the beginning so even the people who didn't stay, who left, I am satisfied, I have rejoicefulness—they didn't leave with a completely empty mind. These very important two subjects planted seeds in the mind—they left with something. Even though they didn't hear much on the chapter of patience or other precious things, I am satisfied. If you think how many people on this earth, even though they have taken human bodies, haven't heard even the word bodhicitta, compared to that, we are happy. Also, experiencing everyday life's problems, how to deal with it—this is also mentioned. Somebody might think I didn't mention any practical things; unless you were not here, or didn't pay attention—I did speak on everyday life, many things, how to think of it, how to deal with problems.

Also shunyata meditation, the walking meditation—if I ask: please do this from morning until night, then it is difficult to do, the mind gets too distracted. But if you do it in a group, walking like this, everybody pays attention, like a session. Like parents sending a child in a group of other children to study by giving candies, food, money. Anyway.

Before there was only the thought of this life, and now there is more care for future lives, to make preparation for the happiness of future lives. Before there was not so much thought to cherish others, not so much thought of loving kindness for others. When you saw creatures they were like rocks, pieces of wood or leaves—not so much feeling. Now there is much taking care of their life. So if some changes happened like this, that is the benefit of the course. Before there was no wish to be free from samsara; now there is a wish to be free from samsara, the wish to achieve omniscient mind for the sake of all sentient beings. Before there was not even a dream of that, not even a thought like that. Now there is a wish generated in the mind. However, there is this benefit from

having taken the Kopan November meditation course on this Kopan hill, cold in the morning, shaking.

So the conclusion is that.

If you can do meditation, a little bit every day, in the morning, ten minutes, fifteen minutes, one hour, two hours, whatever you have time for, it's very excellent. You can follow *The Essence of Nectar*, it is like a pocket lam.rim, very good, straight. So today you do this, guru devotion or perfect human rebirth, you start and what is left over you do tomorrow morning, 15 or 20 minutes, whatever, you read. You do Guru Buddha Shakyamuni's visualization, and if you know you do mandala offering, the seven-limb practice and requests, then you read this book, you think about it, put yourself in the subject—anyway, I am not going to talk about these things. Again it gets long.

So like bodhicitta—there is you and there are sentient beings to think about; the kindness of sentient beings, and you, how they are kind to you; two things. Again two things—guru and you; you are one and the guru is one, two things. Also at nighttime, if you have time to meditate, if you like to do it. And when you have finished up to shunyata, then you go back, you start again, until you have clear understanding of the whole thing.

Then if you have a sort of experience of the lower capable being—that death is uncertain in this month, this week, it can happen—if you have that much uncertainty from the heart, and if you feel the waste, just one or two hours you feel that it is a great waste, if you have some experience like this of the perfect human rebirth, feeling this life is not so important, but the future life is very important, then you train your mind more in the graduated path of the middle capable being, the shortcomings of samsara, the twelve links. At the same time you develop bodhicitta so that renunciation helps you to quickly generate compassion, and that helps you to quickly generate bodhicitta. You see, even if you don't meditate on the lower realms, the most important thing is that you feel the suffering of human beings on this earth is unbearable. If you feel that is like the naraks, then that is enough—you don't have to meditate on the lower realms. This is the most important thing. If you have renunciation for this, then compassion is very easy, then bodhicitta is very easy. If you don't have renunciation, knowing how the human realm is in the nature of suffering, if you don't feel this strongly, then it is difficult to generate compassion.

Then in the evening time do a little bit of shunyata meditation to plant the seed, shunyata and bodhicitta. If you think, "Oh, it is so difficult, I cannot understand, so difficult, this and that," yes, it is difficult, but I would say it depends on a skillful teacher, skillful advice, skillful explanation, and on the disciple accumulating merit. If the disciple has accumulated much merit, and has the perseverance to meditate from past times, having accumulated many causes and impressions of shunyata from past times, then with a teacher, with a skillful explanation from a teacher who is experienced, together I think it is very easy, so easy, to realize shunyata. But if by thinking, "Oh, this is so difficult, too difficult for me, I'll never realize shunyata, I don't understand," if you leave it as difficult, then nothing happens, then you won't make it, then you won't have realization. "I am hopeless," sort of. I don't think that is right.

The most important thing is that when you have problems in daily life, use your meditation, the teachings you have received, the notes you have done. Remember that this is the real time to practice, the real time to defeat the delusions. That is the most important thing. Even if you don't do

meditation sessions at all, when there is a problem if you can deal with it, that is the most important one.

Then tomorrow morning in puja, please dedicate the merits. Each teaching of Buddha that we heard here in the course, that we were able to plant impressions in the mind to achieve omniscient mind. Each merit that we accumulated by motivation, by hearing teachings, by making offerings, by prostrations, by meditation, everything that happened by understanding Dharma is by the kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. If His Holiness wasn't living now, if he didn't come to India, then we would be like before—completely ignorant mind, no different from a pig. Nothing else, only this life—nothing to think about but only this life, nothing beyond this life, completely ignorant, just like a pig, just thinking of one day's food, one day's comfort. So ignorant, so dark, suffering and confused continuously, not knowing, not having any understanding of what causes happiness and what causes suffering. Not having met Dharma so no freedom to practice Dharma. So, having so much freedom to practice Dharma comes because we have met the teaching, and that is due to the kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Otherwise, without him the lamas wouldn't have gone to the West and couldn't give the teachings.

So when we dedicate to fulfill all the wishes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, if all His Holiness Dalai Lama's wishes are fulfilled then all our wishes are fulfilled, because his wishes are only for sentient beings to achieve omniscient mind and for whatever happiness they wish to be fulfilled. So even if you don't know how to pray, if you just pray that His Holiness the Dalai Lama's wishes may be fulfilled, that's enough. That contains everything, that contains all sentient beings, that contains yourself—the fulfillment of all your own temporal and ultimate wishes. So dedicate for his long life and to fulfill all his wishes.

Then also Lama Yeshe—without his kindness there wouldn't be this course anyway, this place, everything. Then also the Dalai Lama's tutors, to fulfill all their wishes and to have long life, then His Holiness Karmapa and His Holiness the Dalai Lama's junior tutor to reincarnate soon and to be able to work even wider, even more than in past lives for sentient beings.

Then also that we have the freedom to accumulate much merit, to be able to plant many seeds during this course, the graduated path to omniscient mind, is also dependent on the kindness of the cooks and the people who worked very hard, the people who did the shopping and all the rest of the sentient beings, even the shopkeepers from whom we get food, who make the food available and easy to buy down there. All the rest of the sentient beings, all the creatures—to all of them we should dedicate our merits—to all those who gave us the opportunity to follow the graduated path to enlightenment. Remembering their kindness from the heart—the kindness of those hard workers, and of all the rest of the sentient beings from whom we received the food. Please dedicate the merit for all the rest of the sentient beings, the parents, to have happiness, whatever they wish—to only have happiness, ultimate happiness, and for the lower realms to completely become empty. Wherever there are bodhisattvas, that their wishes may be fulfilled. Also including those who helped in the course—each other, the Dharma friends—also pray, dedicate merits to them.

The dedication from the *Bodhicharyavatara* might be done tomorrow, so you might dedicate according to that. This is an excellent, very wide dedication.

I would like to say from the heart that although this course is not like previous courses and the discipline is maybe not like previous courses, not tight, I am very happy, because the most important

subject has been heard by the people who came here. So I am satisfied and very happy with the impression that was planted. That is the most important thing. The new people who came for the first time don't know—but the people who have come other times, to other courses, they know, the more subjects they have received. The old students know. Even though the new people who came for the first time don't understand what they have received, it doesn't matter—the seeds of what is worthwhile in life are planted in the mind. It doesn't matter whether the person understands or not, feeling what the person feels is right, most significant; even if the person doesn't recognize it, it doesn't matter. It's like the patient who gets the best medicine. Even though he doesn't recognize what he gets, that medicine heals the disease. Although he doesn't recognize that was done by the medicine, the most important thing is that it is the right medicine and that he recovers soon. That is the most important thing.

Also to those who have taken the Mahayana ordination, with much hardship, cold and hunger, I would like to say thanks. Also to those who attended sessions, who put much effort, who tried, with much patience with my talk, with my mumbling, to listen with much patience. If you found mistakes you can leave it; if you found correct things, practical things, you can take it, practice it, apply it. So from the heart, I would like to say many thanks. Also I will pray for you from life to life to be guided by Lama Tsong Khapa. So anyway, please dedicate tomorrow morning, during puja time.

[Dedication prayers]

**End of Entire Teaching**

