

KOPAN COURSE 19

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Lecture 1, 28 November 1986

INTRODUCTION

Please listen to the teaching well by thinking at least of effortful bodhicitta, thinking, “I must achieve the state of enlightened mind for the sake of all the kind mother sentient beings who equal infinite space, therefore I am going to listen to the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment.” Also please purify the righteous conduct of listening to the teachings according to the practice of the lineage lamas.

It is said by Maitreya Buddha in the *Do.de Gyen*, “The disease is to be understood, the cause of disease is to be abandoned.”

You have come to Nepal, to the East, to opening your mind to seek some other means for happiness, something unmistakable. By recognizing that the past means of obtaining happiness has not been perfect, by recognizing that something is missing there, by opening the mind, you give yourself freedom instead of closing your own mind. You can see there is some other means that is unmistakable—that you can definitely attain, and you can achieve satisfaction, ultimate happiness, liberation, either concerning yourself or concerning others—how to make life meaningful and beneficial for other sentient beings.

So, the reason for coming here should be either the happiness for yourself or the happiness for others—to make the life beneficial, to obtain happiness for other sentient beings temporarily and ultimately.

I think it is extremely worthwhile, incredibly worthwhile, that at this time you have found the precious human body, which has so many possibilities, incredible advantages. The problem is that you do not recognize how precious it is. Especially after you heard the teachings that Buddha explained about the qualities of this precious human rebirth, the great meaningful things—the great benefit—you can do for other sentient beings, you can cause so much temporary happiness, as well as ultimate happiness, liberation, peerless happiness, enlightenment for sentient beings.

Whatever you wish for can be fulfilled while you have this precious human rebirth—with this body you can fulfill the wishes of all sentient beings. So I think it is great!

See, the more you understand the teachings, the more you meditate, the more you do the listening, reflecting meditation, the teachings explained by Buddha, the more joyfulness there is in your mind, in your heart. Instead of being depressed, instead closing up and interfering with the development of wisdom, you open the door to liberation. It is like you have been given a wish-granting gem, but you have not recognized it, not realized it, so because of that you have so many problems in life. You didn't know how to use it, and that has caused so much unhappiness and dissatisfaction. Basically, you did not know how to live life, how to make life meaningful. But, now you recognize that.

As you develop more and more wisdom by listening, reflecting, and meditating, with great joyfulness you can make the life more and more meaningful and beneficial for all sentient beings.

LAMA ZOPA AND THE BUDDHA ARE LABELED BY THE MIND

Then, before going over the subject, if there's something that I can answer, if you have some questions to discuss, a little bit.

Student: We are very glad that you are here.

Rinpoche: I don't know where I am. It is believed I am at Kopan.

Student: Is it an illusion?

Rinpoche: I think there is a part that is the illusion.

Student: Which part is real?

Rinpoche: What you have just labeled on this valid base, that's real. While you are thinking of me, on this throne, this particular valid base, aggregates, you are just labeling that Lama Zopa is there, that exists, in that case, in that sense its real. Okay? In that sense.

Student: What doesn't exist?

Rinpoche: What doesn't exist? I don't know. I think there might be something on the top of that which doesn't exist. On that which you have labeled, Lama Zopa, there must be something else. There must be something on top of that which you have merely labeled, so that part is interesting to check, to analyze whether it exists or not, particularly on these aggregates, from the head down to the feet. You have labeled Lama Zopa—not only that but there is something more than that, which you believe is more than that, what you have merely labeled. There should be Lama Zopa, something more than what was merely labeled, on this valid base. That is the thing that you should really check, whether it exists or not, that is the problem.

Even though that is the reality, it does not appear as Lama Zopa, as it is merely labeled on the aggregates. It appears as the opposite, contradictory to the evolution that is not merely labeled, that exists from its own side. So there's something more—you agree that Lama Zopa is a lama who is ordained, who has this name—the mind labeled on this base, the aggregates, you agree on, but in appearance, the Lama Zopa that is merely labeled on the aggregates, on that there is something that exists from its side, if you analyze, if you check, which cannot be found anywhere.

This cannot be found on Lama Zopa, which is completely empty, and cannot be found on any group or parts—it cannot be found, on that, or separate from the aggregates. Just merely believing in the words, on the basis of correct teaching, correct explanation, you need to experiment, you need to meditate, whether that is true or not. Then, with great support, with great foundation, much merit and purification, meaning purifying the obstacles, the mind becomes more aware, sharper, quicker to experience, to see more clearly, as the teachings says. Even when we read the scriptures of shunyata, through reading or whatever by meditation, they are very easy to feel.

Then, especially out of these experiences, there is great devotion, stable great faith arises in the teachings of Buddha, the teachings written by the lineage lamas, the great yogis of Tibet, as well as the Indians. Also, very deep, very stable faith arises in Buddha, those lineage lamas.

So then with this, it causes you more and more easier and quicker to achieve realizations, and all the rest of the realizations up to enlightenment.

Student: What is the nature of Buddhahood and if it is permanent, how is it related to emptiness?

Rinpoche: The nature of the Buddha, talking about the true types of natures—generally, the nature of the absolute is the absolute truth, and the nature of causative phenomena is the nature of conventional truth, or truth for the all obscured mind, ignorance.

The nature of the Buddha—when we call “Buddha,” in simple way of speaking—one whose consciousness is completely separate away, or pure from, the two obscurations, by having completed the remedy, the true path, the method wisdom, so in that way, that consciousness is omniscient mind, that way, that consciousness becomes omniscient mind.

Then, the Buddha has infinite compassion for all beings and perfect power to be able to guide without the slightest mistake—able to perfectly guide sentient beings to the peerless happiness of enlightenment, able to liberate them from true sufferings and the cause, karma and disturbing thoughts.

One who has these qualities of omniscient mind, infinite compassion, and perfect power—on that base we call “Buddha.” One who has these qualities, we call “Buddha.”

So you see, on the base of one who has these qualities, we merely label “Buddha.” So now you can see that Buddha is labeled by thought, on that valid base, your own mind merely labeled Buddha, so you can see, in this way, that Buddha came from the mind, and is under the control of the mind. You understand? So you can see there is no such Buddha that exists from its own side, without depending on the mind labeling. While you are thinking “Buddha,” while you are meditating on Buddha, it’s related to your mind—it’s from the mind that labels. It exists on that base; it exists on that valid base, the valid mind labeling.

So you see now, without the mind labeling Buddha on that valid base, there is no Buddha. Even if there is the base, if there is no mind that labels Buddha, there is no Buddha. You just concentrate on what I’m saying—there is no Buddha, at all, Buddha doesn’t exist at all, the slightest atom, on that base.

So your name? Garland? That name Garland is given by your father and mother. Your name Garland is given by the parents, labeled on your aggregates by your parents. Before your parents agreed, decided to label Garland on your base, on that particular base, no Garland existed.

Okay? Even though there was the body and mind aggregates, before your parents decided to label Garland, Garland didn’t exist at all. So, only after they decided, right after they labeled “Garland” on that base, Garland existed.

That is the Garland who is happy, who is suffering, who is sometimes high, sometimes down, the Garland who meditates, who eats, who works, who sits, who sleeps—the Garland who does all those activities—it is that Garland. There is no other Garland, except what the parents merely imputed on your aggregates. There is no other Garland who does all the activities, a Garland other than that doesn’t exist.

So now you can see very clearly that Garland, since it is name, has come from the mind.

So same thing with Buddha, what is called Buddha is name—it has come from the mind. Understand?

So now similarly, without the valid mind that labels, Garland doesn't exist. Similarly with Buddha. So now, there is no Garland that exists from its own side. You can see that very clearly.

That Garland exists from its own side, without depending on labeling is not its nature, not the reality. That is contradictory to the reality, to the way it exists. There is no Garland from its own side.

It is the same thing—there is no Buddha from its own side. That is the nature of the Buddha. That is the emptiness of the Buddha. That is the self nature of the Buddha, the ultimate nature of Buddha.

There is no Buddha existing from its own side—on that aggregate, on that base. That which is not merely labeled by the thought—because it exists in mere name, being merely imputed on the aggregates by the thought. That is the nature of Buddha, that is the emptiness of Buddha. Okay?

If you realize, if you understand the emptiness of Buddha, what does it mean—empty of what? You see the emptiness of the independent Buddha—if you understand the emptiness of Buddha, the Buddha that is merely labeled on that valid base, there is something existing from that, inherently existing on that—the Buddha that you merely imputed on the base, there's something inherently existing on that, a Buddha existing from its own side. So if you understand the meaning of empty, the Buddha that you merely imputed on the base, that on that base something appears to you as existing from its own side, a Buddha existing from its own side, if that comes in your heart when you think of the emptiness of Buddha, then you see the nature of Buddha very clearly—the emptiness of Buddha is one thing. Okay? Like that.

THE UNIVERSE YOU EXPERIENCE COMES FROM KARMA

Student: This question concerns energy. Energy is a word being used a lot in this course, mind energy, wisdom energy, but to Westerners energy has other meanings—wind energy, sun energy, the energy that is contained in a dam before electricity is made—are there any similarities between the energy in the physical world and the energy of the mind, or are they the same?

[Question repeated]

Rinpoche: All these things, all external development, came from mental energy. Even physical energy came from mental energy. That we can make physical things, like atomic bombs, that we can make machines having power, by putting things together, that which can produce particular powers that can perform particular functions—all this comes from mental energy, understanding, and effort. Understanding how things work, how the atoms work, how things work by compounding and then the mind putting effort into it. So you see, it came from mental energy.

Student: [inaudible]

Rinpoche: Which part did you not agree with?

Student: I think I understand what you said, that the intelligent energy, the mind energy can make machines, can make things that are useful, and I agree. But the energy in the universe seems to be separate, and that mind energy is just using something that existed already. We are told that mind has no form, is colorless, and all this, but energy in the physical universe can be measured,

not directly by itself perhaps, but the effect of energy on something else, heat on water for instance, so it seems rather different.

Rinpoche: I'm not saying they are the same thing, but I'm saying the evolution—you know how all those things came from the mind. I'm not saying they are the same energy, that they're one.

Student: The energy of the sun is created by the mind.

Rinpoche: Yes.

Student: Whose mind?

Rinpoche: Those who enjoy the sun! Especially those who lay down at the beach, waiting for the red color, so they create the sun's energy. Same thing. That sun is one of the enjoyments of beings living on the earth, so it came from karma—that is part of karma. That enjoyment of the sun came from good karma, which is thought, and thought came from the mind, from consciousness. So that virtuous thought is how the sun came from beings' minds.

Similarly, from this morning until night, in this twenty four hour day, from this morning to this night, undesirable objects bother and disturb you, and you believe and interpret that they are bad, and this brings unpleasant feelings. Then you interpret some objects as nice and good, and labeling them so, a pleasant feeling arises. Or an indifferent feeling arises. Various feelings arise in the twenty four hour day as you meet various objects. So all of these object come from karma. From all of those objects you get various feelings, and all of those are the results of past karma, the virtuous thought, the nonvirtuous thought.

For example, just to get an idea. When you are angry, even if the other person is not angry at you, you see that person as ugly. You see them differently. You are angry, they are an undesirable object. When you are angry, you see even objects that you liked before as undesirable. You want to destroy that undesirable object, you want to beat it, you want something bad to happen to that other person or his objects—his house, his beautiful apartment, to his car, or his belongings.

So you can see very clearly how this came from the mind, from your own thoughts. This is very easy to understand.

Now this is direct, this is the moment. Right now your mind become negative and the object appears negatively to you, and this is very near evolution, and in the sense of karma, what happens is very direct and immediate. As a result of negative thoughts, the environment becomes negative, and the appearance becomes undesirable—so you can see that this is an immediate karmic result. You see, you experience it there. But also there is a karmic result that you experience for a long time.

At the present time you experience it like this, and the results are like this, undesirable objects. In the long run, they are that which harm the places of beings and oneself. This comes from wrong conceptions, wrong ways of thinking, negative thoughts.

So in this life, during this life, even though there are many undesirable things that you experience in this life, if you are unsuccessful in many things, this is from the karma, from the wrong thoughts in the past, accumulated some days ago, some months or years ago, in the earlier lives, in the past lives, many, many past lives. So they are like this.

Similarly, when your mind changes to negative, the good object immediately becomes negative. Similarly, while place and people appear negative, immediately you can also change your perceiver, your thoughts, by applying the meditations from lam-rim, from the graduated path to enlightenment—remembering the meditations, patience, loving kindness, compassion, remembering the kindness of the enemy, the kindness of sentient beings, remembering the teachings. This transforms the mind from negative to positive, to virtuous thought. Immediately as you transform your mind, again you have a different environment. You see the person completely differently. Right after you change your mind, you see the person as very warm, kind-hearted, very kind.

Rather than becoming distant from that person, holding that person very far from your heart, even if before that person was very far from your heart, now you have transformed the mind in compassion, loving kindness, or patience, and the person is near to your heart—you feel that person within your heart, so precious, so kind. So it changes. You can see from positive to negative, from negative to positive. That shows how things depend on the mind. Day to day life, the environment, bad appearance, good appearance, disturbing, benefiting—it all comes from one's own mind, depends on one's own mind. So like that, using that as an example, you can extend it to the whole world, to the beings' place.

Student: Can you explain how this world's system came into being?

Rinpoche: It came from the collective karma of the beings, the human beings, creators, all those beings who use and enjoy this earth. It came from their collective karma.

That is the basic thing. Then, as explained before, it is similar. The basic thing is karma, the karma of the beings living on this earth—that's the main cause, the inner cause. Then, as it is mentioned in the teachings, physically, first of all in the beginning it was empty, space, and gradually the four elements started. The first thing was the water element, and the air element. It is mentioned in the teachings that this came from the other continents—how the air came from other continents. So the elements were the first thing. Then, it took twenty middle eons to complete the earth, to complete it from bottom to the top. The evolution of the beings is similar to the scientists—what I am saying, you see, is the same thing—before the animals existed, then the human beings came into existence later. That is similar. But for monkeys to become human beings, that I don't know.

That part I don't know, but otherwise it is the same. I think since science mainly talks about the body, and is mainly focused the mind on physical evolution, not the consciousness—but even the physical part of a monkey doesn't gradually change into a human being. Now are there any monkeys becoming human beings? Do tails get absorbed into the main body? And on some part of the body, do hairs fall down or absorb?

THE LABEL AND THE BASE

Student: What is the nature of the basis that the labeling consciousness puts the label on? If it doesn't inherently exist when there is no mind perceiving it, does that mean it comes into existence at the same moment as it is labeled? I'm asking about the nature of the basis that the label is put on. If it doesn't inherently exist when there's no mind aware of it, does that mean it only comes into existence at the same instant that it is labeled?

Rinpoche: After you label, then it exists.

Student: What is the nature of this basis that it is labeled on?

Rinpoche: That is you see ... Spaces? Basis? Sorry! What is the difference between a hamburger and steak?

Student: I assume you mean the basis. Is the basis there when I don't think of a hamburger or a steak?

Rinpoche: Is the basis there when you don't think?

Student: Yes. Does it exist?

Rinpoche: The base of the hamburger, and... When you don't think hamburger? In your hand now, or generally on this earth? On this earth, even if you don't think it exists, other people are eating now.

Student: If no one is eating hamburgers.

Rinpoche: You think this time no one is eating?

Student: Say five hundred years ago.

Rinpoche: No one is eating... then no one could see hamburger. When no one could see hamburger then hamburger didn't exist—at that time, there was no base.

Student: Say now. If no one was aware of a hamburger, no one was thinking about the hamburger, We all knew it existed but no one was aware of it, no one was thinking of it, is that basis ...

Rinpoche: No one is thinking of it? On this earth you mean?

Student: On this earth?

Rinpoche: No one is thinking now of hamburger, you mean?

Student: Does the basis exist?

Rinpoche: If no one is thinking hamburger, then hamburger doesn't exist—as well as the basis.

Student: So nothing exists?

Rinpoche: Yeah, if today if hamburger today doesn't exist on this earth, then nothing exists—it could be said.

Student: Where does the basis come from?

Rinpoche: The basis also came from mind. This is the same as the hamburger that you label on. Same thing, base also. You see, you think, making hamburger, then you understand. You visualize and you meditate that you are making a hamburger, a very good hamburger. So you can understand how the base also came from the mind. Don't you have to buy the base first from the shop? When you buy it from supermarket, hasn't it got a name? Do you ask...

Student: Yes. You ask for a dry hamburger mix or something...

Rinpoche: Hamburger sauce... When you go shopping at the supermarket, what do you see? In order to buy hamburger, in order to make hamburger, what do you see in the shop, the thing that is going to make hamburger? What is thing that you buy to make hamburger, in the shop...

Student: Meat. I'm only assuming, I've never made a hamburger.

Rinpoche: I think you won't get the job to make hamburgers. So you see when you come into the shop you buy the material, which you are going to make hamburger. So then, that is the base. You know how it is put together?

Student: Vague idea. You mix the meat with the onions, maybe with bread crumbs, perhaps you should ask an American.

Rinpoche: You're from where. England? Okay, do you know potato and mash? Potato and what is it with cheese? I don't know the name. The potato that's mashed then mixed with cheese, do you know that, do you get the visualization? Anyway, so whatever it's called, the potato that's ground, mashed, not solid. So anyway, you see, you have the base, the potato, then that is mixed with cheese, whatever, so that's the base. Whatever you see there, that is what's labeled, so what appears to you is what you have labeled. So then on top of all, everything is integrated like this, on top of it all, and you label something again. So it is similar.

Student: Maybe an invention is an example of what you are saying. If you think of a neutron bomb before it was invented, it didn't exist. It only came into existence when it was invented. Of course the parts of a neutron bomb did exist, but it was not a neutron bomb, it was only when it was in the mind that it started to exist. Same with hamburger.

Rinpoche: The scientists who found the idea, the atomic power, like Einstein—he found the idea of how you can create power by bringing together and integrating the atoms. Later, the other scientists put this into practice, they actualized it. Even though the later scientists had the idea of the atomic bomb, the name and everything, before they put everything together, it didn't exist, even though they had the idea, they had the names.

It's like this example. You could visualize that you are king of the whole world, and you are living in a golden palace, billions of palaces made with different jewels, billions of swimming pools, billions of cars, airplanes, children, friends, wives—you can visualize anything you wish. When you visualize, all the names are there, but it doesn't mean that they exist. Same, all the ideas are there, but until everything is integrated, until they put it together, the atomic bomb doesn't exist. Only after everything is put together, and it is functional, when the idea, the label, and the base exist, happen, then the atom bomb exists—so it has to depend on both.

NOT BELIEVING IN INHERENT EXISTENCE BRINGS PEACE

Now the main thing we have to be aware, talking about this, the conclusion, when we think about the atomic bomb, is that it exists in mere name, merely imputed by the mind. So the atomic bomb, that which appears to exist from its own side, without depending on the base, and thought labeling, that which appears to us, the independent bomb—that is empty, that is empty, that is a hallucination.

Similarly, in all existence in everyday life, always we have these three: the “I” or the self, the action, and the object. In everyday life, nothing exists in the slightest from its own side, except merely imputed on this basis by thought. Nothing of this exists in the slightest from its own side, so therefore, the conclusion is that there is nothing to cling to, there’s nothing to grasp, there’s nothing to be attached to, there’s no reason to get angry, no reason to feel jealous, no reason to feel pride, there’s no basis for the pride—feeling pride in your educational qualities that do not exist from their own side over somebody who has a lower education.

If you think of the evolution, if you are aware of the evolution, that all these things exist in mere name, being merely imputed by the thought on the base—just thinking that, just practicing awareness of this evolution, the way things exist, naturally, as a result, by the power of practicing the awareness of dependent arising, how things are dependent arising, depending on base and thought, the thought merely imputing on the base, that is okay. So practicing awareness of this with effort, you need to think that they do not exist from their own side—this answer comes in the depth of one’s own heart, the understanding awareness that they do not exist—the subject, action, and object that appear to exist from their own side. This appearance is a complete hallucination; they are empty.

So in this way there is much relaxation in the mind, much tranquility, much calmness. Things doesn’t bother you, the people or the environment—they do not disturb the mind, they cannot disturb the mind. There is no space in the mind—one not find any reason for anger to arise, for the dissatisfactory mind’s attachment that creates disharmony in the relationships, which brings lot of problems, dissatisfaction in one’s own life—there is no reason for them to arise. Instead of seeing reasons, the opposite—they don’t arise.

Then as well, they constantly stop the ignorance, clinging to the subject, object, and actions, clinging to the appearance that subject, object, and action exist from their own side—while they are completely empty and there’s not the slightest atom that exists. So in this way you have not yet received the ultimate liberation, you are completely free from this, and it is impossible for the cause of the cause of sufferings, the disturbing thoughts that produce karma, to arise. Even if you have ceased the cause of suffering completely, it is impossible for them to arise again. Even if that did not happen, that ultimate liberation, even if you have not achieved this yet, practicing awareness of this is like liberation, compared to one who is suffering, compared to one who does not practice awareness of dependent arising in everyday life—in the nature of things, the subject, action, and object. You completely believe in the hallucination side, that part of the world, that side, and completely grasp onto that, and then life becomes miserable with anger, with attachment, with pride and jealousy, full of doubts. So many things are so confused and one is unable to benefit others—not only are you miserable and confused, but it interferes in your benefit for others.

For example, if you are so depressed you cannot do things, you even cannot talk—it is difficult to talk to others, to help others. Compared to those, the person who constantly practice awareness, especially of dependent arising, the nature of things, it becomes the best protection for life, the best protection from the sufferings of the life. So in this way you gives yourself so much freedom.

When the mind is calm, like this, it’s very easy to achieve concentration, less distraction—and if you do concentration very easily, then there is quick success of the realizations. So in this way, in day-to-day life, with the practice of awareness, the virtuous thought of the awareness of dependent arising, in this way you don’t create the karma to take rebirth again, the karma that throws you into samsara in future lives. You do not take the aggregates caused by karma and

disturbing thoughts, the container of all problems, the base, the originator, the base from which the problems arise. So in this way it stops. Then you are able to quickly realize emptiness. The emptiness of the “I,” the aggregates—then by developing the wisdom of emptiness, in this way you are able to stop the continuation of the aggregates, samsara—which means cycle or cycling—these suffering aggregates under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts, joining from one life to another life, always like this—life to life, so this gets stopped. By ceasing these, there is no circling of the suffering of rebirth and death. Once you cease rebirth, there is no death, there is no suffering of death, as well as all the problems between rebirth and death—they get completely ceased—old age and sickness, and so many other problems. So this is the essential, the very basic, most important meditation if you really wish to be free from the problems and the cause. If you do not wish to die.

Just to tell my experience, what I think in the West. Everything is there, except what you cannot find is, what they have not done, what they have not actualized, is what is left to stop after death. They have actualized many other things, but the most important thing is missing, they have not tried to stop experiencing death. That is what I normally think when I go to the markets, the department stores, and see those machines, those things.

In order to stop death, to never experience death, you have to never experience rebirth—to make rebirth never happen. To do that you have to realize the cause. As long as you are ignorant of the cause of rebirth and death, the true cause of suffering, which is a mental factor that exists within your own mind—not outside, separately from your own mind. It does not exist as something else apart from your own mind. As long as you are ignorant of the nature of mind, how things depend on the mind, suffering and happiness, that the main creator is the mind, and as long as you point out the main creator of happiness and unhappiness as an outside object, an eternal thing, then even if you know all the teachings of the Buddhadharma, all the teachings of sutra and tantra, even if you have studied well all the five treatises and all the tantra teachings extensively, even intellectually, even if you know all the words, as long as you believe the creator is not yourself, the creator of suffering is not yourself, but somebody else or some outside object, then I think the problems are still the same, even though you have all the intellectual understandings of the teachings.

I think I'll stop here.

[Dedication]

Please dedicate the merits having listened to the teachings that have been explained. May the ultimate good heart, the originator of all happiness, bodhicitta, renouncing oneself and cherishing other sentient beings and the wisdom realizing emptiness, absolute truth, which cuts off all the obscurations, all the causes of suffering, all the obscurations and those that are the foundation to achieve the peerless happiness, that this mental continuum become omniscient mind, to be able to perfectly guide all sentient beings. May these two be generated within my mind without delay this second, as well as in the mind of all other sentient beings, who don't have these realizations. And in those who have these realizations, may they be developed.

[Dedication]

Thank you very much.

[End of first teaching]

LECTURE 2, 29 NOVEMBER

THE “NO” OF THE HEART SUTRA DESTROYS WHAT DOESN’T EXIST

Try to follow, try to keep the mind in the words, the meaning, or at least the words. So there are many words that say, “There is no nose, there is no tongue, there is no eye, there is no ear, there is no food, no cakes...” so there are many “no’s,” points that say “no this, no that.” It seems you own nothing, it seems you don’t have anything, it seems that you do not exist and that you own nothing. It may sound like there are no possessions, no actions of possessing, no possessor and no self. But the “no” is not referring to the things that exist. The “no” applies to that which is not merely labeled, which appears to our mind or senses, which exists from its own side. So applying the “no” to the hallucination, to that which exists, is wrong—that way you are following the extreme of nihilism, you are not meditating the middle way.

So the way to meditate is this. It is not the thing that which exists in mere name, “no” is not applied on that, but applied on what appears as contradictory to that, that it exists from its own side—the I, the action, the object, all the things, samsara and nirvana. In other words, you apply the no on the hallucination that you believe in now, which you do not recognize, that which is empty. Then those who are familiar, who recognize the refuting object, the truly existent, that which appears, truly existence of the refuting object which is on the things, which is on the I, which is on the five sense objects, that which is merely labeled on the base. So somebody who recognizes that, there is no danger, there is no mistake. It is like a person who can see the target, who recognizes the target, the enemy, then he can shoot exactly and destroy the enemy. The meditator of shunyata can destroy the enemy, ignorance, by destroying the object of ignorance, that which is a hallucination, the truly existent object.

On the basis, what you need is the explanation of the two truths, so I suggested that the other geshe explained that to you. So, now, samsara, nirvana, the I, the action, the subject—all exist in mere name. If is birth, it can start, stop, continue, it can rise, it can cease, these experiences happen because it exists as merely labeled. Because it exists, you are able to experience suffering and happiness. You can cease suffering and develop happiness. There is somebody who is experiencing something; there is the object and there is the action of experiencing. With this understanding you see the continuation of the consciousness never ceases; the base does not completely stop. There is no such thing as the whole consciousness entirely, completely stopping. So therefore, as long as there is a continuation of the valid base, there is always “I,” there is always a “self” that exists on that, without choice. As long as there is the continuation of consciousness, the base, even though the consciousness is not associated with the body, there’s times when the consciousness is alone, and the self exists. However, there is no such time when the consciousness, the whole thing, gets completely stopped, even though the virtuous thought arises for some time and then stops, and then attachment arises for some time and then stops—sometimes so strongly arising it becomes visible—as do anger and other things. But this does not mean the “I” stops, the self stops, or ceases—it does not mean that.

Even if the gross consciousness stops, the subtle consciousness continues all the time. So the subtle consciousness never stops. If the subtle consciousness ceased, the “I” could be stopped, and there would be no base, no aggregates, there would be no base at all. Therefore, if the subtle consciousness stopped, if that was possible, then the “I” that existed on that as being merely imputed would also get stopped. Now for example, similarly, when somebody calls you, you say, “Are you calling me?” or when you speak about yourself, the “I,” you are pointing to the aggregates. Then you say, “Are you calling me?” “I,” by pointing to the aggregates—at that time when the subtle consciousness ceases, to get an idea, there is nothing to point to. Now we can

point to the aggregates, then we can say “I,” “I didn’t do” or “I did it” if it is something good, then, “I did it,” or if it is something bad, “I didn’t do it.”

At the moment we have something to point at, so we point to the base. We point where there is the base—in terms of the table, we point there, we see the base at this place, we point to the base and then we say, “That is a table.” We see the base first and then we point out and say, “That is the table.” We label. So at that time there is no base. If there were no base, consciousness, and so on, that on which you label “I” would be a permanent phenomenon. If it were not the consciousness it would be a substantial thing or an uncausative phenomenon, such as space. So it would be like labeling the “I” on the uncausative phenomenon of space. In that case, the “I” would become permanent, because the base is permanent, an uncausative phenomenon, and space is permanent, so then “I” becomes permanent. In this way, since the base does not have a base consciousness, there is no such thing as saying, “I experience happiness.” Now we say, “I am happy,” “I am suffering,” “I am worried,” “I am excited,” or depressed. According to the experience of the consciousness we label, we talk all day long, we talk about our lives, we talk about the experience of life, from birth until death, as long as we can remember, we talk about life, happy and unhappy, good and bad, like this. So all this is to do with relating to the experience of the cause. So now there is something to refer to.

When the cause, when even the subtle consciousness completely stops, if we still accept that the “I” exists, then it would be something labeled on the uncausative phenomena of space. And then in that case, the “I” would become permanent because the base is permanent—either that or the “I” becomes like a million dollars in our hand which is now empty. That completely does not exist; even in mere name it does not exist. So like that, even if you label, “I have a million dollars in my hand,” even if you say this, it does not exist because there is no base, there is no valid base on which you label a million dollars right now in your hand. So similarly, even if we believe that there is an I, if the base consciousness is completely stopped, actually, in reality what happens is that the “I” becomes non-existent, the “I” ceases, and there is no possessor, there is no attainer of that time. After the consciousness has ceased, there is no attainer, or no subject experiencing happiness—the one who possesses liberation, who experiences liberation, who has achieved liberation becomes non-existent.

So the subtle consciousness never stops even though the gross consciousness stops. Even though all the gross consciousness completely stops, there is still a subtle consciousness that continues. That which is called primordial consciousness or subtle consciousness did not have a beginning and does not have an end, so therefore the “I,” the self, did not have a beginning.

Even though when you have fears, sometimes through meditation, in a meditative state or something, you feel they are getting lost or that they appear as if they don’t exist. That strong experience only proves that there is no inherent existence, that the inherent existence that appears to you on the “I” or from the “I,” that the one that is merely labeled on the base is completely empty. It only proves that the inherently existing “I” is empty. Your meditational experience is proving that. It is not experiencing that the “I” has become non-existent, even in mere name. By understanding that this “I” and the aggregates, samsara and nirvana, this existence, exists, and that the way it exists is in mere name, on the basis of knowing this one can relate to the heart sutra and the words, “no.”

On the present “I” that appears to you, that you cling and grasp onto with the sense objects, the aggregates, the one that appears right this minute, like shooting the arrow on the target, you use all these things. Even if you cannot differentiate the merely labeled “I” and the object at the moment, you cannot differentiate that which exists and that which does not exist—the merely

labeled “I” and the truly existent “I,” even if one cannot differentiate or analyze one’s own present appearance—the “I” and so forth and the objects—you see that things are mixed, what does not exist and what does exist, you got mixed up, you cannot differentiate what appears, it has become one, so what is that one? That is only true existence. So you see, if something exists it has to exist from its own side, independent, not merely labeled. This is how things appear and how you believe, due to habituation to ignorance. In other words, being addicted to ignorance—like addicted to drugs, but addicted to ignorance. That is the biggest suffering. Even people who believe, “I don’t have suffering, so I don’t have to practice Dharma.” The person believes that suffering means to be starving or not having money or something like that, or that suffering is only the poverty of materials. Many people think like that, not knowing the evolution of suffering, the evolution of problems.

So how things appear is appearance and reality are mixed. Their appearance is truly existent but in reality they are empty of true existence. Being merely imputed by thought on the base, existing in mere name, those two, appearance and reality. What should appear, what you should recognize, what you should realize, what you should see, is contradictory—the present appearance and the reality. Then this way, there is a chance, then we start liberation from here, then it is definite that we will achieve liberation. It starts from here—by realizing emptiness and the false appearance. As long as we see that the appearances, which are false, hallucinations, and reality as one, as nothing else but true existence, that is a problem. This is the base of the delusions, of all anger, attachment, jealousy, and disturbing thoughts.

So, I did not mean to talk long. So you look at your own appearance of how the “I” appears, how the aggregates appear, how the sense objects appear, how the senses appear, and apply the “no” right on these things. This is the way to meditate on the *Essence of Wisdom*. If fear rises in the heart when you meditate, that is a good sign. That is a good sign, it means you are shaking the inner enemy, hurting the originator, the creator of your sufferings, of all the sufferings that one experience, all the problems, the aggregates caused by karma and delusions. Fear means harming the ignorance. Like the arrow, your meditation on shunyata is not shot in the wrong way, it is shot at the right point, on the target, the ignorance.

Slowly read, so then everybody please meditate.

[Ven Wangmo reads the Heart Sutra]

THE REFUGE PRAYER

Those who are familiar and can visualize it, do the elaborate merit field related to tantra, *Lama Chopa*, the Guru Puja merit field, then do it the sutra way. Instead of Lama Tsongkhapa, there is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the Jewel Tradition All Encompassment. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is the embodiment of all the gurus, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and then there are all the lineage lamas, the indirect gurus and the direct gurus, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, like that. Strong nectar beams emit from them. Those who are familiar with the elaborate visualization, according to the name that comes in the long requesting prayer called the requesting prayer, *Opening the Supreme Path*, written by Lama Tsongkhapa—a few verses from that, making it short. I am going to recite this. Strong nectar beams are emitted and purify all the obscurations, particularly the self-cherishing thought, the greatest obstacle to achieving enlightenment, and then the root of samsara, ignorance. All the obscurations that exist within your own mind and in the minds of all sentient beings are completely purified. After each verse a replica of the lineage lamas absorb into you and into all sentient beings, generating the whole path to enlightenment, the profound extensive path of their holy minds, and you and all sentient beings receive it.

[Recitation, mandala offering, refuge]

Taking refuge and generating bodhicitta. “I go for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma, the supreme merit field, the Sangha until I achieve enlightenment.”

“I go for refuge to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha”—that is taking refuge in the causal refuge, that shows causal refuge—“until I achieve enlightenment” includes the resultant refuge. To free all the sentient beings from all the obscurations, all the sufferings, and lead them to the state of omniscient mind, it means that you have to become a buddha. For you to become a buddha, you have to generate the actual refuge of Dharma within your own mind, and in that way you also become Sangha by having attained the actual refuge of Dharma, the true path, and cessation of suffering. So you become a buddha. By generating the actual refuge of Dharma within your mind, the true path, and true cessation of suffering, you becomes the Sangha and then through this development, you becomes a buddha. Then you can perfectly guide all sentient beings. For this to happen, you need to rely upon the Dharma and Sangha—the separate beings, the Buddha, Sangha, and the Dharma, which are in the minds of others. The Dharma is in the mind of the Sangha, which is in the holy mind of the buddhas. Rely upon these three. Without relying upon these three, without guidance, without receiving the refuge, the guidance of these three, there no way to perfectly succeed in this. Without relying upon and practicing causal refuge, relying upon a separate buddha, separate from one’s own mind, you cannot succeed. Without the refuge relying upon the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in their holy minds, you cannot accomplish the resultant refuge. You cannot perfectly guide all sentient beings. Therefore, you can see how extremely important refuge is, the practice of the two, result refuge and the causal refuge.

So the next two lines, “The merits that I have accumulated by making charity and so forth”—here in the place of charity, then say, “listening to teachings.” From your side you say, “My merit accumulated by listening to the teachings and so forth.” This means all the rest of the merits that I have accumulated. So in other words you can dedicate all the past and present and future merits altogether, “Due to all this, may I achieve enlightenment in order to benefit all the migratory beings.”

MATERIAL WEALTH, DHARMA POVERTY

This time the teachings didn’t happen like other courses, in the past, doing more. And after coming back there were some other activities that came up, the World Fellowship, and so on. Anyway you have many other qualified lamas and geshe here, so therefore no time is wasted. Your life is not wasted. Even though it is difficult to believe in some of the teachings, life is not wasted. Even if you think, “I’m not sure about certain things,” that’s only temporary, because there’s a block—like the blue sky is covered with a fog, it’s temporarily like that. But if that meets some condition, the wind or something, then it will go away.

These mental obstacles and obscurations do the same—if you practice they will cease, by accumulating merit and dedicating the merit for the development of the mind to be able to understand the teachings and have the realizations and achieve enlightenment, to generate the whole path to enlightenment. Then if you practice skillfully it will come, if you create the cause, the merit, and purify the obstacles, if you practice those methods and continuously examine them, not just putting it off because you don’t understand or because you don’t feel it, or because you don’t have faith. This is like finding actual gold and instead of examining it and

thinking, “Oh I don’t feel it. I don’t understand, I don’t feel that this is real gold,” using one’s own feeling as proof.

Instead of trying to avoid something because it is difficult to understand, you examine it and understand it. For example, just a very simple way, if it were so easy to understand the teachings, so easy to generate realizations, just by reading the scriptures, if that whole realization just came through meditation on the sensations, just watching the sensations, awareness, or just simply letting the mind go blank or something—if by that you could become free from all the samsara, all the sufferings, and achieved liberation from all the sufferings and all the cause of sufferings, then there should be many people with mental peace on this earth. If loving kindness, compassion and patience were so easy to realize, without effort, without needing of study, listen, reflect and meditate, then in the same way as there are many wealthy people on this earth, there should be many people with mental peace—like the meditators who have bodhicitta and emptiness in their minds, seeing everything as illusory, like those who are well-trained and accomplished in thought transformation, and in turning all undesirable and miserable conditions into happiness. There should be great peace, with nothing disturbing it. There would be so many people on this earth like that. But this is not so in reality. There are many who are wealthy from the outside, with material wealth, but without inner wealth, Dharma wealth, the wealth of realizations, understanding karma, the exact cause of happiness, and the cause of suffering. It is easy to find materially wealthy people, because there are so many, but people with Dharma, spiritual wealth are very few.

There are many who have the poverty of Dharma, without Dharma wisdom, and many who have material wealth. There are so many, uncountable numbers—the world is full of people like this. But those who have Dharma wealth and great peace in the mind are very few. The reason there are so few of them is that it’s difficult.

If you make it easy, you can easily achieve great peace, the attainment of the path. If you make it difficult, not having extensive understanding, not skillfully practicing, not correctly practicing, then it’s difficult. That’s how inner peace becomes difficult. It basically depends upon whether you make it easy or difficult.

THE BUDDHA DOES NOT WASH AWAY NEGATIVE KARMA WITH WATER

I thought to go over this text about emptiness, putting the blame on ignorance. This text argues about the ignorance that believes in the “I” in a completely wrong way and the wisdom of shunyata, the wisdom realizing emptiness.

Before that, we will discuss how all of samsara is in the nature of suffering. If you do not understand this then the wish to achieve liberation, to be liberated from all of samsara, doesn’t arise very strongly. If the renunciation of samsara becomes just words, then wishing to achieve liberation becomes just words. Then you don’t see, you don’t feel from the depth of the heart how important it is to meditate on emptiness, to generate the wisdom of emptiness. You may find it interesting, something to talk about, but it is not really inside the heart—something that you must realize, that makes you feel, “I can’t wait even a minute, can’t wait even an hour, without having these realizations that cut the root of samsara.”

It becomes something to talk about or some other philosophy to study, or to teach to others or to write books about. It becomes something to show that you have understanding of something, and it becomes a very limited goal. One of my teachers, and also Lama Yeshe’s teacher, Geshe Sopa Rinpoche, gave different explanations of the basics of the twelve links, the evolution of

samsara. So I thought that with these understandings you could meditate. This will be beneficial for the mind.

Please generate the motivation of bodhicitta with least the effortful bodhicitta thinking, “At any rate I *must* achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all kind mother sentient beings who equal infinite space. Therefore I’m going to listen to the profound holy teachings.” Then also the righteous conduct of listening to the teachings according to the lineage lamas traditional practice, of the lineage lamas.

The purpose for which Shakyamuni Buddha descended on this earth was *only* to liberate sentient beings from samsaric suffering and to lead them to liberation, to the state of omniscient mind. Only that, for only that purpose, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha descended on this earth. There’s no other reason. The way that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha liberates sentient beings from samsara, from the whole suffering of the samsara, and leads them to liberation, leads them to the state of omniscient mind, is as it is explained in the sutra teachings.

“The mighty ones do not wash away the negative karma with water,” refers to the true cause of the sufferings, the disturbing thoughts and karma. The resultant sufferings cannot be washed away by water. The way that Buddha guides sentient beings is not like that. These things cannot be washed away by water, so that is not the way Buddha guides or liberates sentient beings.

Also, he doesn’t eliminate the sufferings of migratory beings with his hands, which is like taking the thorn out of the body with the hand. You can’t take away the suffering without sentient beings, from their side, attempting to practice the path that was revealed by the Buddha. Taking it out like a thorn in the flesh is not possible. If the Buddha could eliminate anger, ignorance, attachment, the six root delusions, the twenty secondary delusions by wiping it away or taking it in his hands, there would be no need for effort from the side of sentient beings. You could just wait for the Buddha. Without ever practicing patience, you just wait for the Buddha to take out the anger. If it were as easy as that, if liberation were only up to the Buddha, all the sentient beings would have been enlightened already because Buddha has compassion for every suffering being. He has a hundred thousand times more compassion and loving kindness for us sentient beings than we have for ourselves.

If liberation was not dependent upon you and your own effort, but upon some other creator—I find similarity in Christianity. Even though there is talk about a creator God from one side, on the other side there is much emphasis on the practice of morality. Only looking at one side, everything is created by God, but if you look at the whole thing there is an emphasis on abandoning the ten nonvirtues and practicing the ten virtues for the people who want happiness or want to go to heaven.

So that is talking about karma. Even though the word “karma” in Sanskrit is not used, or the words “action and result,” I see that there is much emphasis on karma. But it might be difficult to find it clearly and extensively explained. But otherwise there is much talk. So now you can see that it’s now only up to God, or up to Buddha. We need effort from the side of sentient beings, and we have to follow the unmistakable method, which is abandoning the cause of suffering and creating the cause of happiness—abandoning of ten nonvirtues, and practicing the ten virtues.

Somebody who understands Buddhism looks at the Christian teachings as very interesting, and very meaningful. If you can see them with the understanding of Buddhism, they become clear. Maybe it can be said that Christianity can be explained better. More logically. So there is no taking the suffering away by the hand. Also, Buddha cannot transplant realizations—like

transplanting the brain or the heart into somebody else. Sentient beings become liberated from samsara by revealing the reality, the truth, which means emptiness.

So Buddha revealed the teachings of emptiness, the truth, the absolute truth, and then we sentient beings, by listening, reflecting, and doing meditation practice, get liberated from samsara. So all the 84,000 teachings taught by Buddha are the means to subdue the minds of us sentient beings. All the sutra, all the tantra, all the extensive teachings, every word that Buddha said is to subdue our own minds. All these teachings are means to subdue the minds of the sentient beings who are the objects to be subdued. All of the 84,000 teachings taught by Buddha are the means to realize emptiness and to develop and to achieve omniscient mind, to lead the sentient beings into the state of omniscient mind.

So I think I'll stop here.

Please dedicate all the merits that were accumulated in the past, present, and future by listening to the teachings—all the three times' merits accumulated by other sentient beings. May the sentient beings who have not generated bodhicitta, renouncing oneself, cherishing other sentient beings, and the wisdom realizing emptiness generate it immediately, and for those who have generated it, may it continue to be developed.

[Prayers]

LECTURE 3, 30 NOVEMBER

WORLD PEACE COMES FROM INNER PEACE

Yeah, if you have some questions? Maybe before the discourse starts. Okay. Yeah?

Student: [inaudible]

Rinpoche: Function of the brain? To sleep! To sleep well. What? What's good? You ask the physiologist. You mean the physical part? I don't know about the physical part, the details, the physical function, but it's certainly it is a very important part of the body that is the vehicle for the mind, a very important place. So much is dependent on this base. Whatever affects the physical, the blood circulation, the brain affects the mind, and affects the capability of thinking. Otherwise the physical part, I don't know, I have no idea but it seems important. For those who have a physical body, it seems an important part or base, a quite sensitive or quite precious part, because it affects the capability of the mind very much.

Student: Would you like to tell us something about the Buddhist Conference in Katmandu?

Rinpoche: Yeah, I don't know.

Student: You don't know. That's interesting because we don't get any news here on the aims, the topics? Or is it sort of secret? Or is it a board meeting? Or a political...

Rinpoche: I think nothing deeper than what we're doing here. How much discussion was done down there, there is nothing deeper than what you're doing here. This is what it seems. Just a minute....

Student: [inaudible]

Rinpoche: Just a minute. I never finish my answers. Yeah, I think it's good, very good I think to meet the different paths and different Buddhists—different outside looking, different dress—but it doesn't seem that there is so much time for teaching the methods for bringing peace. From the very high lama from Tibet, the Panchen Lama, there was a very, very, very short message. Very short. Just dedicating and expressing his wishes very strongly from the depth of the heart that he will pray that the actions of the Triple Gem to cover all the three realms. So in that way there will be peace, pacifying sufferings, and having happiness. This is a very essential method of bringing happiness in the minds of sentient beings. That's what I heard and I don't know what Rinpoche said in the Chinese language. That's very short.

Maybe there was more emphasis on the fact that we should have peace but not so much on the method, especially relating to the mind. We should have peace, which is what everybody wants, which even the animals, who could not come for the meeting, also want to say. By looking at their physical body you can see that they need peace. Even if they don't have the words.

So everybody can say that there's need for peace, but to take the responsibility of peace upon each person, to feel that—that part is the most important one. Important and maybe difficult in our day to day life, in the world, with the world. That has come from change. There's no way to bring peace within our mind and within the minds of others, without changing—without stopping our own harmful and negative thoughts toward oneself, toward others, for the temporal and ultimate happiness of self and of others. Without this change of mind, there's no way to bring peace—without attempting to change the part of the mind that is the creator of the suffering. Without practicing the unmistakable methods that eliminates this, that brings us and others in danger, and the whole world in the danger. Without changing that and without knowing the methods and changing others' bad thoughts from where the problem rises. So without that, without dealing with the mind, without understanding the methods, and then putting the correct understanding, the methods into practice—as long as there's no practice, there's no peace. There's no resultant peace in the mind without the practice. Even the understanding alone is not enough.

Without teaching the methods, without knowing the methods of practicing patience, loving kindness, and compassion to all beings, without equalizing this partial mind, the partial action that benefits somebody that you like and harms somebody that you don't like, and not helping them, without the impartial attitude toward every being the equal action to benefit everyone, without accomplishing this within yourself, there is no way that you can be a good example for others to bring peace in the world, to stop the dangers in the world.

There are so many meetings on this earth for peace, claiming the need for peace, and the methods of bringing peace, temporary peace, ultimate peace, is known to those who have the opportunity to hear Dharma, those who meditate, those who try to transform the mind in the path. Only those people are really involved in the listening, reflecting, and meditating on the method. Really, here is the actual method to bring peace into yourself and into the minds of other sentient beings—not only human beings, but every sentient being who wants happiness, whose mind is obscured, who has suffering.

I'm not praising, I'm not making it up, that's the truth that I see. The actual method is discussed. So to establish peace within your life and mind, to develop that, you have to develop the mind, to develop the good heart. The virtuous thought that brings peace has to be developed. So actually, we are here for one month, hearing teachings especially on bodhicitta, meditating and

hearing the teachings, renouncing and realizing that the self-cherishing thought is the source of all the problems and that is something to be abandoned forever, *forever*. Then, realizing that cherishing others is the source of all happiness and that it is something to be practiced, since that is the source of all the happiness for us and for all sentient beings. That is something to be practiced all the time. The miserable life, the happy life, the depressed life, or the excited life—even if you have an exciting life or whatever happiness...

You need to not only understand mind training, but especially to try to transform the mind from the painful selfish mind into cherishing others. Bodhicitta is the source of all the peace and happiness for you and for all sentient beings, and by having this you can offer and cause all the happiness—temporal, ultimate, every happiness that they're wishing for.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE THREE PRINCIPAL ASPECTS OF THE PATH

So this essential method, and also all your past, present, and future happiness, everything comes from bodhicitta, from the ultimate good heart, bodhicitta. All the three times' happiness for yourself comes from your own good karma. Good karma is accumulated by practicing the teachings. This comes from the Buddha. Every good karma, every virtuous action that you generate, that arises, is the action of the Buddha. The Buddha came from a bodhisattva, and bodhisattvas come from bodhicitta. Then, also, by meditating on the renunciation of samsara, by meditating on the true cause of suffering, karma and disturbing thoughts, by studying that, recognizing those, and how all the sufferings arise from that.

By hearing the teachings as explained by the Buddha, you understand the evolution of suffering, the unmistakable cause of suffering. So in this way you know what liberation means, what you need to achieve and what you're missing now—that your mind is empty. You seek the right method, and this way, there's great freedom. You can study the realizations and the experience and the correct understanding of the teachings, the method that definitely leads to liberation, which in qualified masters. It's up to you whether you study and practice this right method, the teachings that reveal the unmistakable path to the liberation, that have not ceased, that have not degenerated. If you study and practice, there is liberation, and if you don't put effort into this, if you don't open the mind, don't study, don't practice, then there's no liberation.

By hearing the teachings of Buddha, you recognize the cause of the sufferings and their shortcomings, and this way you are able to control the mind. By renouncing the dissatisfactory mind, the clinging, grasping mind, all of this life's up and downs—so much of the problem arises from desire. The painful, unbridled, clinging mind, which finds it very difficult to separate away from the object. By renouncing this, the door for peace is opened—by conquering this. Then same thing, hearing the teachings on emptiness, meditating on this, each time you meditate on the unmistakable teachings of shunyata, this plants a seed, makes preparation to generate the wisdom realizing emptiness. So each time you make the preparation to cut the root of all of samsara, to cut the root of all suffering. Each time you are preparing, becoming nearer and nearer to eliminating the root of all suffering, ignorance.

These three things I think, these three meditations—renunciation, bodhicitta, and shunyata—are the basics. If you know well first of all how the problems come from ignorance, how all the problems arise from ignorance, how the self-cherishing thought is so harmful in everyday life, how desire, clinging, grasping so much to this life and to samsara are greatly harmful, if you know the shortcomings of these things, as much as you recognize this and meditate on the shortcomings, that much you are able to abandon and conquer these disturbing thoughts by

practicing the three principles of the path to enlightenment—shunyata, then bodhicitta, then renunciation of samsara.

This is without talking about tantra, just basic things. Even by having the understanding of the teachings, if you don't practice, but if you at least understand the words, there's great freedom. Now it's up to you—once you have the understanding it's up to you, whether you have faith, whether you want to believe it or not, whether you want to practice it or not. Even with the understanding, even if there's no realization, even if you don't practice, even if you just have an understanding of the words, the correct understanding of the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment, it benefits so much. Even talking about the words, even just explaining the words to other suffering sentient beings—it changes even the very root of the problems in other's minds. It completely changes, it can be completely eliminated.

So that's how you can benefit, that's how you can bring peace to the minds of others. Even if you have not studied all the five treatises—the Madhyamaka, the Abhidharmakosha, the Abhisamayalamkara, the Pramanavarttika—the teachings that develop intelligence, wisdom, and the Vinaya, even if you did not study these extensive teachings as well as tantra, even by knowing some basic, just very essential teachings of the three principal aspects of the path to enlightenment, you can see, you one can explain the root of the problems, first. So once you have recognized the root of the problems, others have the wish to get rid of them, to eliminate them. So that's how to lead others into the practice of the method to eliminate the root of the sufferings.

So what I'm saying, the whole thing is, I think this one month meditation course, one day or fifteen days, doing meditation, listening to teachings, hearing the lamas, the geshe here—these are teachings that you hear from somebody who is living in the practice. Somebody who has lived their whole life in the practice—what those geshe teach, they themselves live in practice. Not just speaking words from the text. These are unmistakable teaching that are very rare to hear. So I think this is the real donation for the world peace. This is the very deep, great donation, what we are doing here. You go very deeply into the root of the problems, and then you also hear the correct methods and then try to practice to eliminate them. So through this change of mind, you can bring peace; it is possible to bring peace within yourself through your own change of mind, changing from bad thoughts. This gives you the possibility, and gives you incredible freedom to can lead others to temporal happiness and ultimate happiness, to liberation, and enlightenment.

Not only to stop fighting, not only helping, causing, and benefiting others to stop fighting, but to finish every stain of the mind, all the obscurations, to completely liberate them from all the causes of suffering. It is easy to lead them to peerless happiness in that way. So I think, in other words, this one month here, knowing the methods to practice patience, how to generate the thought of loving kindness, compassion, these things, if one person from here practices that, there is less harm to the rest of the world, the rest of the people, sentient beings, there is less harm from this one person, because of his change of mind.

So now, the rest of the world becomes less dangerous. Now, here, there are sixty or seventy people, okay, everybody here, everybody practices patience, loving kindness, compassion toward all beings, and now the rest of the world, the rest of the sentient beings have much less danger, and there is much less harm. Here, this many people change their minds, develop their minds so the rest of the sentient beings receive much less harm from these sixty or seventy people. So that itself is peace, starting from your own family, starting from there, starting from here.

You can see now how what you are doing here is unbelievable, you can see how important it is, how unbelievably important it is, now.

All sentient beings' happiness and peace depends on each of us. You can see how in this way it depends on each of us. So now you can see how incredibly important it is to develop and study the teachings, the methods—to develop the mind up to enlightenment, this omniscient mind, okay? To practice the teachings on the path that you hear, now you can see how incredibly important it is. How much one person benefits the rest of the world, and how these sixty or seventy people—with this attitude, if there is patience in the mind, the result in the actions is that there is no harm to others. If you have loving kindness, compassion in the heart, the result is to benefit—it is not only unbearable to give harm, but the result will come that is the action to benefit others.

So not only do you stop giving harm to others, but with this attitude, you benefit, help everyone, every suffering being. So how important it is to develop the mind to practice Dharma, which means changing the attitude from the bad thoughts into the good heart. The more you develop this the more you are able to benefit. The more good heart, wisdom, method, the more your capabilities increase, so then without a partial mind, you develop your capabilities. You are able to fulfill the wishes of every suffering being. So this is what he asked about world peace.

Student: Full answer.

Rinpoche: I hope so!

QUESTION AND ANSWER: DREAMS, LOVE AND DHARMAKAYA

Student: Why do we dream?

Rinpoche: Good dreams, bad dreams, that which makes you happy or unhappy, basically this came from your own karmic mental factors. The results that are fearful dreams or very pleasant things—similarly there are good days and bad days—they all come from karma. A dream arises because of something you did in the past that left an imprint on the consciousness—some dreams are the projection of this, the imprints manifested in appearance.

Also, it could be the sign of harm, receiving harm, like before a person starts to get sick maybe they may have dreams that are signs of spirit harms. Some dreams could be basically karma, the prediction or signs of the guru or deity that you practice—some dreams are related to your own meditation practice. If you have taken vows and then do the opposite of that vow, if you have degenerated bodhicitta or the tantric samayas, some dreams may come that night. If there is some other negative karma that you have accumulated during the day, in the night the dream may show that the mind is polluted, that life is going to be very difficult, or things like that. There may be dreams of a future rebirth.

Then again, if you want to do something good, strong purification or accumulate much merit, there may be good dreams, and when you wake up the mind may be very happy. With the other one when you wake up the mind is very depressed. Also there may be dreams that show untimely death, due to negative karma.

Student: Lama Zopa, how can one tell the difference between what is just mental garbage and what is a significant sign in a dream? How does one know?

Rinpoche: There are many things in the past that you have done but cannot remember. So some dreams are related with the disturbing thoughts of anger, attachment, jealousy, and pride. If the actions are involved with one of these, then you get a dream associated with that. So the imprint of something you did in the past comes back in the dream. You can understand the good signs from the teachings, which talk about dreams, and the bad signs that show one's mind is obscured, and the obscurations were purified.

Student: We heard incessant talk of suffering and death, and yet we have heard very little about love. What is love to a Buddhist and why does it play such a small role in Dharma?

Rinpoche: What? Love? If you are talking about loving kindness, that's the basic thing. To whom do you feel more loving kindness? Enemies, strangers, or friends?

Student: Naturally for my gross sense—a friend.

Rinpoche: That is very clear. It is very difficult to rise loving kindness to the stranger, especially enemies, isn't it? Isn't it?

Student: Can you repeat, I didn't quite catch what you said?

Rinpoche: Very difficult to repeat the second one.

Student: In the gross sense—yes.

Rinpoche: So loving kindness, so what is it? You feel loving kindness only for the friend, not the stranger or enemy. Why don't you feel loving kindness to the stranger and friend, while they are all the same in that they both want happiness, and they do not want suffering. They all don't want harm from you, they all want help from you. They all three wish to have loving kindness and compassion from their side—they want you to like them. While it is like this, why is it that you feel loving kindness toward the friend, and not the stranger, or the enemy?

Student: You are asking me. I feel that the reason I feel love for my friend, rather than for an enemy, is that they are able to give me cherishment so am able to give them cherishment—love is a sort of a simultaneously two way thing.

Rinpoche: Love is business; it is big trading.

Student: Love is the capacity for mutual cherishment.

Rinpoche: Now, I ask you one question—that person who praises you yesterday and the same person who harms you today, what you do with that? Yesterday the person showed love to you, okay, today he hates you, okay, so what do you do? Do you have any questions?

Student: [inaudible]? How to visualize yourself in dharmakaya.

Rinpoche: That is as explained in the tantra teachings, the way of looking at it. The deity, the three complete pure results that you are going to achieve in the future. You visualize yourself now as one, and while you *see yourself as the deity*, in the aspect of the deity, yourself as the deity, in essence the aspect of the buddha, pure, stopping the ordinary appearance and the conception of oneself and others as ordinary. By stopping the ordinary appearance, the *conception of the place is transformed*, and realizing the mandala and visualizing all sentient beings as the deity, purifying all sentient

beings and bringing them to enlightenment. Even with *the activities* that you do toward other sentient beings, you are still visualizing them as the deity. The movement and actions that you are doing for sentient beings is with the divine pride of the deity benefiting sentient beings.

So the three pure results, then the pure sense objects—pure enjoyment. Enjoyment in the form of offering. That is not just transforming the pure aspect, but with the divine pride—you have to hold the divine pride that I am the future guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the resultant Chakrasamvara, or the deity that you are practicing. Instead of thinking that I'm separate from the Buddha or an ordinary person like this, generate the divine pride by stopping the impure appearance and the conception that I am the deity. The whole pure result, the divine pride, is to transform, is the embodiment of dharmakaya—so that is the way, that is the very essence—to think dharmakaya is not just changing the shape, the most important one, the details cannot be explained in public without having received the initiation, especially the highest tantra initiation. Yes please.

Student: [inaudible]

Rinpoche: Next year, next year.

Student: Next year, we need them this year—I only have maybe four minutes or four hours to live and I do need that teaching, but I wish that you will address the field of relationship, if you would, for us beginners that are Buddhist practitioners and are serious about continuing our life not in cleric robes as monks and nuns but as people that are highly intentioned and still want to be of the world and of the senses.

Rinpoche: Your reasons are very strong. So I guess I have to speak a few words, I'm planning, yes, I'm planning, I don't give up.

Student: Rinpoche, can you give us a method to not have impure dreams, and especially for men not to lose semen during the night.

Rinpoche: Mainly this depends on the mind—the main method is the strong renunciation of the object of attachment. Then it comes less in the dreams. What kind of dream comes depends on that—as there is that much renunciation of those objects of attachment, the dream also does not happen, it becomes less. Also you dream because in the daytime you have strong renunciation—so also in the dream you have renunciation—even if you see the object you have renunciation. So like that—in that way the problem does not happen. I think the mind is the main key, but generally to stop the sperm and semen from coming, there are different methods, with mantra and blessed things to keep them in the body. There are different mantras and different ingredients or blessed strings to tie around the waist—there are different things like that, to protect you.

Student: Lama Zopa, if I say mantras just before I go to sleep, then I dream of things, especially in the past, that I try to kind of forget about—why does that happen, usually unpleasant things? You know, maybe things you were not too happy about.

Rinpoche: You mean things that happen in the past, some undesirable things coming, those things coming back in the dream?

Student: Yes, something that I would rather forget.

Rinpoche: That comes because of the imprints.

Student: Is it good or bad?

Rinpoche: It does not matter. The dream is the appearance of the illusory mind, so you shouldn't care so much. Just think of the appearance of the illusory mind, just think of that—even if bad dreams happen you should meditate like that—just think that they don't exist, expect that they appear to the illusive mind, okay. Yes, and then?

Student: This is kind of a confusing question, it is in three parts. The first one is, can world peace be achieved on this earth as we know it, in the conventional sense. The second part of that question....

Rinpoche: What do you mean by conventional sense?

Student: Conventional in terms of conventional reality and ultimate reality, what we perceive things, we perceive trees, we perceive books and things like that. And the second part of the question is: if world peace is achieved, will all suffering be eliminated, including those that we perceive now as beneficial. By that I mean like looking at nature and seeing how nature recycles itself, by using death to make things grow again. And then the third part is, how would the world be different?

Rinpoche: World peace is something that appears to ignorance, all-obscuring ignorance, so that is truth for the all-obscuring mind. Conventional truth world peace itself and the reality of that, the emptiness of that—it is empty from its own side, not the object of ignorance, but the object of absolute wisdom, so that, so it exists as it appears to absolute reason, and that's absolute truth.

Student: Would the world as we know it right now, just when we look out, the same kind of animal, would all that be eliminated because...

Rinpoche: If the beings are free, yes, free from the root suffering, yes, then, will the world change, I see—I will put this way, when everyone becomes enlightened there is no animal realm, there is no preta realm, there are no naraks—when all the mental stains are purified and we complete all the realizations by practicing the remedies, the complete path, at time since there is no mental obscuration, there is no suffering realm, and the appearance that came from that, you understand. The appearance of the negative mind, the suffering realm, the undesirable place, the undesirable body—all these things do not happen, because there is no creator, and when the mind completely becomes pure, omniscient, having finished all the stains, completed all the realizations, there is no samsara, there is no human samsara, no deva samsara, and all this get ceased—all this existence that came from ignorance, the place, the body, all this true suffering, gets completely ceased, and then what exists is only a pure appearance, the appearance of the transcendent, completely pure, whole mind of Buddha—all appearance of that.

So anyway, when one become Buddha that is how it is. To his senses, when objects contact the senses, there is no impurity, but it does not mean that the Buddha does not see what we see. The Buddha sees what we see, the Buddha sees our appearance—we are at Kopan and these sheets are bamboo—the appearance that we have now, this Buddha sees. When their senses make contact with the object, there is no impurity, there is only pure appearance, the nature of great bliss.

The Buddha sees naraks, the Buddha sees the six realms—that is what sentient beings themselves see. The Buddha sees those things that exist to the valid mind. In other words, after he becomes enlightened, the present Buddha does not experience suffering, but he sees our suffering. What appears to us, okay, like that, then, yes?

QUESTION AND ANSWER: NO KARIN EXISTING FROM HER OWN SIDE

Student: In the *Heart Sutra* we read every day that when there is emptiness there are no karmic imprints and in emptiness there is also no wisdom, and how I should understand the basic subtle consciousness—I thought when it leaves the body after death, the karmic imprints go together with the subtle energy. Now I heard of the emptiness which is also this consciousness without karmic imprints and without wisdom, and I thought that in this subtle energy there is wisdom, there is the nature of Buddhahood. And now there is nothing!

Rinpoche: It's not saying that, how do you say? In the consciousness there is emptiness....

Student: In the basic subtle consciousness, it is empty. And we heard in the *Heart Sutra*, in emptiness, there are no karmic imprints, and also in emptiness there is no wisdom.

Rinpoche: I think that is a matter of just understanding the words. When you are talking about, “In emptiness there is no this and that,” that word and absolutely, from its own side, all this is the same meaning. Just a simple example, maybe better to, ah yes, what is your name?

Student: Karin.

Rinpoche: Karin, okay, I am sorry I think I might have forgotten. Karin, maybe this way is easier to understand, is there Karin that exists, unlabeled or not merely labeled by the thought? Is there Karin that is not merely labeled by the thought? Is there?

Karin: Not labeled? Well. I exist only by labeling, yes!

Rinpoche: Not merely labeled, is there Karin existing not merely labeled by the thought? Is there?

Karin: No.

Rinpoche: So, not merely labeled Karin, the Karin that exists from its own side, so that does not exist, isn't it? Isn't it?

So existing means existing from its own side. Karin existing from Karin's side. Absolutely existing, from its own side, in emptiness there is no Karin existing from her own side, Karin existing from her own side is empty. So you remember what empty means, okay. You should take the meaning, not the word e-m-p-t-y, you think of the meaning, empty means Karin existing from her side. Karin existing from here, independent Karin, not merely labeled Karin. So when you hear “empty” this is what you should remember in the heart, the meaning—empty of what? Empty of what? And not merely-labeled Karin, independent, Karin existing from her side, okay.

In emptiness there is no Karin which means that there is no Karin absolutely existing—the same meaning, same meaning—so absolutely, emptiness, if something exists, if Karin exists, then there would be a Karin not labeled by anybody, not depending on the aggregates okay, and then in that case, by analyzing that Karin comes the conclusion that Karin does not exist. I think it is just a matter of words. Consciousness is empty, form is empty, “I” is empty—perhaps you might be

thinking like this, but I think more, this mug is empty, after I drink whatever is inside the mug, it is empty of tea, okay. The mug is empty, the mug is empty of tea—that is ordinary emptiness. Here when we talk about shunyata, what the *Heart Sutra* says, form is empty, the mug is empty, they are not the same. This does not mean what people normally mean when they use the word or what they understand by it. The other way, the normal way—the *mug* is empty of some other existence. Now here, in the *Heart Sutra*, in shunyata, the mug is empty, form is empty, and the empty does not mean that the mug does not exist—there is no mug on this table. It does not mean that when you point to this mug it is empty—this mug is non-existing, which means there is no mug on this table—not in that way!

This mug is not empty, this mug that is merely labeled by the thought on this base, is not empty. But now similarly, the mug that the person labels on this mug, okay—therefore this mug doesn't exist at all, from its own side, not merely labeled, okay. This mug is empty of independence, okay, empty of being an independent mug. “This mug is empty” means this mug you have labeled on this base. “Empty” means it is empty of existing from its own side, from the mug's side, not merely labeled, so the mug is empty, the truly existing mug, the inherently existing mug, the independent mug, which you cannot find anywhere, is completely empty.

First, now, after seeing the base, you label mug, you point out that this is mug, okay—but not being aware that you are merely labeling “mug” on this, because of previous habits you are addicted to the ignorance of true existence, habituated to it, have so much clinging to the appearance of true existence, believing in that—so even though you have labeled it, you're not aware that this is a label on this base, so immediately after you label it, it appears, you see the mug, but the aspect of mug exists completely from its own side—you see the mug, but you see it as completely existing from its own side. The whole mug is completely covered by true existence, completely pervaded by inherent existence. Like, this table that is covered by this cloth, but not exactly the same, the whole mug, every single part is pervaded by the mug that merely labeled on this base—every single part is completely covered by true existence, absolute existence, true existence, independence—so it is the thing when you have realized emptiness. You have to realize the true existence that you see on the merely-labeled mug. You have to realize that every single part of the mug is empty. The mug being empty does not mean that the mug is empty of something that does not exist—the mug is empty of true existence. Do you have the idea?

Student: I think I got, and what I don't understand is...

Rinpoche: So now, you understand the mug is empty, and we are not saying that even though there is tea, the mug is empty of tea, we are not saying that. Consciousness is empty of truly-existing consciousness but this does not mean the same thing as there being no tea in the mug—consciousness does not carry the karmic imprints—it does not mean that, you understand? You see the purse is empty, okay, the money purse, the purse is empty so you can't get biscuits—the purse is empty—as the *Essence of Wisdom* says, “form is empty,” which does not mean the same as what we mean when saying the purse is empty. Even if there is money inside, the purse is empty. According to the *Essence of Wisdom*, even if there is a million dollars in the purse, the purse is still empty. Purse empty, bank empty...

Student: We seem to be in the most incredible game, this game is a very, very serious game, and I will call it the game of the great escape—where people fall out, escape, and come back and help other people escape, and this process is going on, this is the enlightenment process. What I want to know is what is this game all about? Why do we have this game in the first place? Is it just for continual amusement, which goes on from beginningless time to endless time—in which case, it's good for us to be left in samsara because we keep the game going. Is there a deeper reason,

and I am asking for a reason beyond, just trying to get us to win the game, to bail out of samsara and enlightenment. What is it all about?

Rinpoche: This game becomes more serious the more we understand the suffering of samsara. The less we understand samsaric suffering, the less we feel this, we do not see so much importance in it—so to really see, to really feel how this is important, and to get the inspiration to listen and reflect and do meditation practice, this comes from realizing the evolution of suffering. By meditating on the suffering, by realizing the evolution of suffering, true cause, true suffering, then you get, as I explained yesterday when I talked about loving kindness—there are all these different levels of suffering and the cause, so then you really get the wish to eliminate the cause. When you have that wish, when you have strong renunciation to abandon the cause, there is no other solution, except to realize emptiness. To cut the root of samsara, ignorance, even bodhicitta or any other realization or path besides the realization of shunyata can eradicate the root of samsara, the root of all suffering.

When you have the strong wish to abandon the cause of suffering, you find out what the method and the path to eliminate this is, and that is only the wisdom realizing emptiness—then it becomes very serious, then it's real, very serious—there is other means, without listening, reflecting, and meditation, without realizing, there is no other way to cut the root of suffering. Then in this way, stronger aversion arises, and you discover the shortcomings of true suffering, you have strong renunciation and the stronger wish to realize emptiness—you have that wish constantly, day and night. Like for example, somebody who has a job that gives them a million dollars—to be able to get that job you need a degree, so there is so much benefit—so day and night, constantly, you have this idea so strong from the heart—to get the degree, and you can't wait, you cannot wait, every hour, every minute you want to get it immediately. You have this strong wish, stronger renunciation for suffering, true suffering, and more understanding, more extensive, deeper, strong renunciation. Then you become like somebody who has a serious disease and is going to die any moment, somebody who has cancer, and the doctors have told you there is medicine to cure it. You cannot wait to get this medicine, you cannot stand to wait even for an hour. This is very important medicine, and you understand that because it can stop this sickness, this heart problem. This is nothing compared to the true cause of true suffering that does not have beginning, that you are constantly experiencing—this wisdom realizing emptiness, incredible, unbelievably serious medicine.

I thought you may have some other questions, more in other practices, yes?

Student: Sorry, this is not on a practice, but we have been talking about attachment and grasping with friends and material objects throughout the course, yet it seems that some of us have strong attachment to the Dharma and to the guru—is this strong attachment good or bad? And will it hinder practice or create negative karma?

Rinpoche: Eh?

Student: Strong attachment to Dharma and guru, will this create hindrances to our practice, or negative karma?

Rinpoche: The motivation is very important. Therefore, each time we begin meditation, each time we read a book, each time we listen to the teaching, it is very important to transform the motivation, you understand, that's all—that includes all the gurus.

Student: This question concerns the purpose of beauty. This is a quote I heard this morning, “Aren’t you ashamed to lose your soul by regarding the creatures instead of the creator, if all the beauty on the earth prevents us from seeing the invisible, and those they must perish.” This question, I want to know if the purpose of beauty—for instance why, when somebody asked him, “What is it all about?” why did Buddha hold up a flower instead of his hand or this thermos bottle or something. Is there a good reason for appreciating beauty or is it just our fault and we should not be attached and should ignore it and not be distracted at all by beauty, or is there a good reason for being able to appreciate beauty, beautiful things?

Rinpoche: If you are attached to beauty then you use the beauty in the wrong way, but if you don’t have attachment, if you use it without negative thoughts, then it might be beneficial, understand.

Student: Which kind of negative thoughts?

Rinpoche: If beauty is used with a dissatisfied mind, attachment, then it is not used in a beneficial way, a skillful way, you understand. If it is used another way, with wisdom, loving kindness, and compassion, then it becomes very beneficial, like that, okay. Yes?

THE BENEFITS OF REFUGE

Student: Would you please explain to me how and when to do my daily refuge to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha?

Rinpoche: The prayer can be done anytime. There is benefit, there is great benefit, great purification, accumulating merit, purifying the obscurations that interfere with the development of the mind and the temporary, ultimate happiness for self, for other sentient beings—even if the prayer is said at certain times, morning, evening, afternoon. Even if the prayer of refuge is said just one or two times a day, the main thing about refuge is not only the prayer, but the refuge practice in the mind.

I think this question is very good. When you meditate on bodhicitta, when you wish to have compassion, loving kindness, when you wish to have the realization of bodhicitta and you meditate to have the realization, this is taking refuge, this is already taking refuge in Dharma with the correct meditation technique of the seven techniques of Mahayana cause and effect—the kindness of the mother and repaying that, loving kindness, compassion, generating the thought, taking responsibility to do all the works of sentient beings by oneself alone, and to achieve enlightenment oneself as the means to that—whenever you have the wish to have this realization and you practice and meditate to transform your mind into this, this is taking refuge in the Dharma and bodhicitta. When you meditate on the renunciation of samsara, transforming your mind into that, trying to control your dissatisfactory mind, that is taking refuge in the Dharma. When you meditate on the meaning of the life, this precious human life, and the great meaning you can achieve with it, and how difficult it is to achieve this again, it is so short, it can be lost any moment, and then by thinking of karma and future rebirths, suffering rebirths and happy rebirths.

You stop the selfish mind by realizing the shortcomings, and all the problems that arise for you and for other people. And then see all the benefits and peace of living in the practice, living in the vow not to kill. All others are also like this example.

When you do this meditation, transforming the mind into this path, when you do these practices, we are taking refuge in the Dharma of the lower capable being’s path. When you transform the

mind into the renunciation of all of samsara by meditating on the evolution of the true cause and true suffering, this whole evolution, practicing the means to achieve liberation from samsara, the three higher trainings, the higher training of moral conduct, concentration, and wisdom, you are taking the refuge in the Dharma, the graduated path of the middle capable being. Then you transform your mind into bodhicitta, the six perfections, and during those times, with the aim to achieve enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings, you are taking refuge in the Dharma, the graduated path of the higher capable being. Then the same thing with tantra.

You are just caught up in some words of refuge, something there, already you have taken refuge but you are caught up in the words. It is just the words. You have done the inner meaning, the inner practice. So it's like that.

Now when you practice, when you do listening, reflecting, and meditation practice on the path, on this graduated path to enlightenment, since you rely upon these teachings, this teaching has to be revealed by somebody, and it was revealed by the Buddha. So naturally you rely upon the Buddha, you are dependent on Buddha, who revealed the path. Naturally, when refuge is taken, the mind relies upon the Buddha. When you put the advice, the Buddha's teachings, into practice, you rely upon Buddha, so already that is taking refuge in Buddha. That's the refuge. So even though you don't say the words, blah, blah, blah, blah. This "*Lama sangye, lama cho*, Guru is Buddha, guru is Dharma," whether you say them or not, mentally, it's always there. So it's like that.

Sangha are the attainers of the Dharma. The absolute Sangha is the attainer of the true path and the true cessation of suffering, the lam-rim path. The absolute Sangha has the attainment of the actual refuge, the true path and true cessation of suffering, the truth for the all-obscuring mind. The conventional truth Sangha is the one who is living in the practice, particularly living in the precepts of morality. There are lay Sangha like Milarepa, or Marpa, or many other great yogis who are lay and there are many who are in the form of celibate, who have the actual refuge in Dharma attainment, who are living in morality. So they are like this.

Like them, like these holy beings, great yogis, who have complete control over the body and mind, and over the elements. Like the sky, they have so many unimaginable realizations. Inconceivable bliss, and incredible peace in the body and mind. By also wishing to be like that you are taking refuge. Whenever you get wish to be like that, and then you try to follow to that, that is taking refuge in the Sangha. So that's how the Sangha guide you, this is how the Dharma guides you—by practicing this path, the graduated path to enlightenment, and relying upon this Dharma, by realizing wisdom or shunyata, you are protected—you cut the root of samsara so you are protected from that, and from all the sufferings. Generating renunciation frees you from samsara, and allows you to have liberation. Having bodhicitta protects you, and relying on this Dharma protects you from the selfish attitude from which all the lack of success, all the undesirable things arise, and also from the obscurations, all the gross and subtle obscurations, and cause you to be able to achieve omniscient mind. This is how Dharma guides us, if we rely upon the lam-rim, and the realization of bodhicitta and shunyata, okay? It is similar with tantra. Practicing tantra protects you from the impure conception, from the impure appearance, and in this way you are able to—generally, this is very basic, there are many other details—but you are able to quickly achieve enlightenment, having all the qualities and realizations, having ceased all the mistakes and obscurations, the peerless happiness in this life, within sixteen lifetimes, within three lifetimes, even within a few years in this life. This is the advantage, and these are the benefits—how taking refuge in the Dharma, in tantra, protects you. So like that.

Yeah, so I think I stop here. It's like this—the person is already in the car, but the person doesn't want to say, "I'm in the car." You know what I mean? The person's already in the car, going to the desirable place but somehow doesn't want to hear that "I am in the car." It's like that.

Thank you.

LECTURE 4, 2 DECEMBER

THE HEART SUTRA

"There is no eye, no ear."

This emptiness is by truly existent form, so the way to understand it is this. There's no form, no truly existent form and truly existent feeling, truly existent recognition. So this is the way to meditate, this is the way it is to be understood.

"Therefore, Shariputra, in emptiness there's no form."

What you do is similar to the previous subject—form is empty, so you look at the form and it appears truly existent, and itself is the emptiness of the form, the form that appears as truly existent to you—that itself is empty, and that emptiness is the absolute nature of the form. So again it is the same thing here—in emptiness there's no form, so when you hear "emptiness," it is truly existent form. You have to remember that. So again look at the feeling—remember, look at the feeling, the mind looks at the feeling, at what appears, at the feeling that appears, the truly existent feeling, and that is what is empty. So in emptiness, there is no feeling, no truly existent feeling. No recognition.

"In emptiness, no recognition, no volitions...no mind."

This could mean also expressing the experience. So while you're concentrating on the emptiness, while you're concentrating on the emptiness of form, while you're realizing or concentrating on the emptiness of form, the form does not appear. While you are concentrating on the emptiness of feeling, through that wisdom, feeling does not appear—during that time. While you are concentrating on the emptiness of recognition, due to that wisdom, the recognition does not appear. Only the emptiness appears, only the emptiness. So here it could be expressing the experience of the meditator, his mind. So while you are concentrating one-pointedly on the emptiness of the "I," at that time, to that mind, it looks like the "I" is not there, the "I" doesn't exist. That is the experience. So I think this meaning could be expressing the experience. Like that.

"There are no forms"

For this, whichever merit field you are familiar with, please do the visualizations—the nectar rays emitting, purifying all the obscurations, particularly the ignorance of the grasping at true existence. And also the self-cherishing thought. As the replica absorbs into you, generate the whole extensive path, especially bodhicitta, the whole profound path from the beginning up to enlightenment, especially the wisdom realizing emptiness, okay. With you own mind and in the mind of all sentient beings.

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING

[Prayers, mandala etc.]

Please listen to the teaching well by thinking at least of effortful bodhicitta, thinking, “I must achieve the state of enlightened mind for the sake of all the kind mother sentient beings who equal infinite space, therefore I am going to listen to the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment.” Also please purify the righteous conduct of listening to the teachings according to the traditional practice of the lineage lamas.

It is said by Maitreya Buddha in the *Do-de Den*, “The disease is to be understood, the cause of disease is to be abandoned. Abiding in that happiness is to be achieved, and the medicine is to be taken.” So that’s the example. Like that then, the suffering, cause, and cessation of that, and likewise the path, are to be understood and to be abandoned, to be realized. So, if you do not realize the suffering as I mentioned before, during the answer on loving kindness, such as the three types of suffering, if you don’t have the wish to free, when you don’t have aversion to suffering—it is similar to not recognizing the disease that you have—in this case, there’s no aversion to be free from it. Similar. And also, if you do not recognize the sicknesses, you wouldn’t seek the cause of the disease. There would be no reason for that person who has the disease but doesn’t recognize the disease to check the cause of the disease—there’s nothing to cause him to check, to find out. Normally, if you have some pain or if you feel uncertainty or if you don’t want to have the disease, if are not sure whether you have it or not, when some pain starts, some strange feeling or something happens, then you go to check—you have x-rays, or a blood check, at the doctor’s.

Similarly, if you do not realize suffering, you will not see the cause of the suffering. You will not question it and you will not try to find out what is the cause of suffering, okay? Then if you do not try to understand the cause, if you don’t question what the cause is, you wouldn’t know that karma and disturbing thoughts are the cause, that the cessation of that is the ultimate liberation, that it is the ultimate happiness. You don’t come to this point.

As you don’t know liberation, which is the cessation of the true cause of suffering, true suffering, you wouldn’t question, wouldn’t seek the path to achieve liberation. So now you can see how important the understanding of the four noble truths is. So that’s why when Guru Shakyamuni Buddha turned the first Dharma wheel at Sarnath, he didn’t show the path out of suffering of samsara immediately, “This is the path.” Now you can understand, without talking of the suffering, if you show the path at the very beginning, it doesn’t make much sense. Even though to you it has greater meaning, it doesn’t make much sense for the listener, the disciple, the sentient beings—it doesn’t become important for them. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha taught true suffering first—how samsara is in the nature of suffering—and the shortcomings of karma and disturbing thoughts. After explaining true suffering, when they had come to the point to find out the cause, whether it has cause or not, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha revealed the true cause of suffering, karma and disturbing thoughts, in order to abandon them. Ceasing karma and disturbing thoughts, the true cause of suffering, you will not experience true suffering.

When they got the wish to achieve this, in order to actualize this, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha taught the true cessation of suffering. As they come to the point, whether the true cause of suffering can be abandoned or not, whether the cessation of suffering can be achieved or not, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha revealed the method by which it is possible. He revealed the true path. So therefore, the conclusion—if you do not realize true suffering, the true cause of suffering, then there is no way renounce it, no way to have the strong wish to achieve the cessation of suffering and the true path. If the renunciation of suffering becomes just a word,

not in the heart, the wish to achieve the cessation of suffering also just becomes words. You don't feel it from the depths of the heart. Also, if you do not recognize the first two truths, true suffering and the true cause of suffering, correctly, perfectly, then you do not recognize what liberation is. There is no way to understand the ultimate liberation that you have to achieve. If you don't understand true suffering and the true cause of suffering correctly, your connotation and his idea of liberation will be something else. The liberation that you are wishing for will be something else—there is danger.

Also, as you don't know what the actual liberation is that you are supposed to achieve, if you recognize liberation as something temporary, not experiencing the suffering of the suffering, not the cessation of all suffering, the pervasive compounding suffering under the control of karma and delusion, as temporarily not experiencing this suffering of suffering, or the suffering of change, if that is liberation for you, if that is what you recognize, then also there's the danger that you will not seek the whole path. It interferes with his following the complete path, the true path, which leads him to the cessation of all suffering.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha taught in the sutra that suffering should be realized. Abandon the all-arising. "All-arising" means karma and disturbing thoughts. The reasons it's called "all-arising" is because all the three types of sufferings arise from karma and disturbing thoughts. By the result, I think, the name is given as "all-arising," referring to karma and disturbing thoughts. Abandon the all-arising, actualize cessation, meditate on the path. "Meditate on the path" means transform the mind into the path. Buddha taught this extensively in the sutras.

The suffering of rebirth, old age, sickness, and death, and the person who has leprosy, infection—those are the suffering of sufferings. By getting close to the fire there is a kind of pleasure. When there is hunger, eating food is pleasure, when there is thirst, drinking is pleasure. When you are tired of sitting for a long time, standing is pleasure. When you are cold, wearing clothes is pleasure. All these types of samsaric pleasure are the suffering of change. And then there is the pervasive compounding suffering—all these are true sufferings. Karma and disturbing thoughts are the all-arising truth that oneself to circle in samsara. The cause and result of samsara, the two truths. Then liberation from samsara. Then there is the result of being liberated from samsara, the cessation of suffering, or the sorrowless state. The method that causes one to achieve that is the true path. Like this, the general teaching.

THE TWELVE LINKS

Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha taught the twelve links to show how each samsaric being, each person, particularly each human being goes from one life to another under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts—how you circle in samsara, continuously without break. And how, by ceasing karma and disturbing thoughts, you get liberated from samsara. To show details of these two, how you circle in the samsara, the evolution of samsara, and how you can be liberated from samsara, the continuous circle. To show these two, Buddha taught the twelve dependent arisings, the evolution and the reverse.

In the sutra of the *Salba Jhangpa*, probably *Sutra of a Green Plant*, Shakyamuni Buddha held a rice plant in the hand and said any bhikshu—meaning virtuous beggar, those who "beg" for virtue, for nirvana, the sorrowless state, the Tibetan name, *gelong*, means begging for virtue—whoever among them who saw dependent arising would see the Dharma. I think this means the absolute truth, the emptiness of the "I," suchness. Who sees the Dharma will see the Buddha—which means, I think, that the one who realizes absolute truth will see the Buddha, which means that he will achieve the dharmakaya within himself. With the omniscient mind, his own mind, having

finished even the slightest obscuration, he is able to see all the three times' existence directly, which is the dharmakaya of transcendental wisdom. Then the absolute nature of that, which is completely free, separated away from even the subtle obscurations, is the svabhavakaya, the holy body of self-nature. "One who sees the Dharma will see the Buddha." I think this doesn't mean so much seeing Buddha with the eye, but more everything within the person himself.

The dependent arising is explained in two ways—outer and inner. Outer dependent arising is like the stem that arises from the seed that is planted in the field and has all the conditions—minerals and water and heat—to make it grow. The twelve links are explained using external dependent arising as the example.

Inner dependent arising is from ignorance, compounding action, consciousness, name and form, sense basis, contact, feeling, craving and grasping, becoming and rebirth, old age and death. Inner dependent arising is explained by relating it to the outer dependent arising. From the sutra text called *Sala Jhangpa*, ignorance is the cultivator, the farmer. Action, karma, is like the field, and the consciousness is like seed. Craving and grasping are like water, making the seed wet. Name and form are like actualizing the stem from the seed. The very first, the ignorance grasping the "I" as truly existent, motivates the action. That is the very first thing. So that is the farmer, the cultivator. From the field, various crops arise, bad and good. So similarly, from karma, the various results of samsara, bad and good arise, in other words, suffering and happiness, samsaric rebirth. So the karma is like the field. This is the same as what is mentioned in the *Abhidharmakosha*, that all the various worlds come from karma. One day I think I was asked about the sun—somebody wanted to know about the sun and the evolution of the world. I didn't get to finish that because somebody else put a question between that. There's an extensive explanation on that in the *Abhidhamakosha*, I think in the second chapter, the extensive explanation on the evolution of the world.

I'm saying that that is on the paper in the text, not on my mind.

The very first, ignorance, motivates karma, the action. I'll finish the first. So the consciousness, until the result is ripened, holds the potential or the seed, the result, the various happy and suffering samsaric rebirths. Like this, until the stem grows from the seed, the seed holds the potential of the stem, or the flower, the fruit, everything. Therefore consciousness is like the seed.

Then with heat and water, by getting that dry seed wet, it ripens. Immediately it produces the stem. So like that, craving and grasping ripen the seed of the karma in the consciousness and cause the future rebirth to arise. So craving and grasping are like water, heat, and minerals.

When the seed becomes ready to actualize the future rebirth, that is becoming. Then, taking birth by the consciousness joining in the mother's womb—if it is a birth from the womb, then it is like that. Taking rebirth is by joining the consciousness to the next life. That is like the result, the stem, the plant arising.

Ignorance is like the farmer, the consciousness is the seed in the field of karma. It is planted in the consciousness, which holds the seed of the various happy and unhappy samsaric rebirths, and then plants them in the field of karma. Our body, the craving and grasping are like manure, heat, and water, to ripen that seed that is held by the consciousness—the human rebirth, the happy body, the happy rebirth is actualized, like the stem.

EVERYTHING COMES FROM THE MIND

What is actualized for us now is the happy samsaric rebirth. So you can see now in this way from the head down to the feet, this body or these aggregates, the association of the body and mind, this completely came from one's own karma, motivated by ignorance, karma and action—it is not God, it is not the thought of the God, it is not action of other separate beings. The action, the karma, which means thought, this karma is a thought that came from the principal consciousness. That is the definition of karma, that is the characteristic of karma—a thought that came from the consciousness.

So that thought, that karma, is only your own thought, not somebody else's thought. So now you can see this whole body, whether it is male or female, this completely came from your own thought, your own mind. Using mind as a general term for knowing phenomena. So now the evolution is very clear, from the head down to the feet, whether you have three arms, two arms, seven arms, or a bald head, a long face, a square face, whether you are skinny or fat—that basically came from the not knowing the nature of the "I." So you can see how all of this suffering came from ignorance, your own ignorance.

So now, similarly, as you understand this samsaric body, this birth, these aggregates, this body is one part, but the aggregates means the whole thing. This completely came from your own thought, the karma that is your own thought. So now, this one is the body of the happy transmigratory being, this human body doesn't experience the heaviest sufferings, like the narak beings experience. It has so much opportunity to experience happiness—temporary and, if you develop your mind, ultimate happiness. So compared to the liberation from samsara, this is what you should not have—you should not have taken this, but compared to the naraks, pretas, and animals, this one that you have taken is better. So this one, happy, the good samsaric rebirth, the body, came from your own karma, which was motivated by ignorance, but it was a virtue, a positive one.

Similarly, today, from this morning until tonight, all the good sense objects, all the desirable ones, the beautiful flowers and forms, the clean place, the good sound, taste, contact, smells—all these good and desirable objects, and this body, all of this came from karma, from one's own thought. The seed was planted on the consciousness, and that is why you enjoy all these good things today.

Now, today, from this morning until night, all the dirty places, toilets, filled with garbage, muddy, ugly forms, undesirable forms, uninteresting things, hearing criticism, bad words, uninteresting sounds, bad smells, tastes, undesirable contact—all these came from you own karma. The good ones came from you own good karma and virtuous thoughts, and the undesirable things, the undesirable objects of the five senses came from you own nonvirtuous thoughts. Motivated by ignorance.

So I will check whether this is from good karma or bad karma. For the eye it looks okay, but for the tongue I don't know [drinks tea]. Not bad. I must thank my past lives.

Same thing, if it were not to do with the mind, in other words, if it were not to do with karma, there wouldn't be food that some people hate the taste of and see as undesirable, and others like so much. There is one object but people have different experiences, different feelings—happy, suffering, different. Those who get the suffering feeling, who find things to be undesirable, ugly, you can see now that this is due to the mind—the result of his own karma. This came from the field of his own karma and nonvirtue, okay? From the unsubdued mind of evil, anger, or dissatisfaction. Out of the three types of poisons, it is one of those, okay? Basically, it is from ignorance, not knowing the absolute nature.

So those who see that same object, who enjoy it and receive happiness from it are experiencing a result that came from the field of good karma. If it were not to do with the different perceivers, if it were not to do with the perceiver's mind, that object should appear the same to everyone. However, there is no such object that did not come from mind. Without depending on mind, there is no existence, there is no causative phenomena—there is no existence that exists without depending on mind. There is no phenomena that did not come from mind. That's why in some teachings it says that all the existence is only the nature of the mind. It doesn't mean that they are saying that all existence *is* mind, but that it came from the mind. They are not saying all phenomena are only mind, only mind. It does not mean that they are mind but it means, in other words, relating to yourself, your own samsara, your own enlightenment, even when you achieve enlightenment, your own enlightenment, all the pure appearance at that time, the mandala, everything, all the pure appearances of the six senses, and while we are in samsara, all the impure appearances, various good and bad things, happiness, suffering—all these things came from only your own mind. They came *only* from your own mind—"only" cuts off a creator, being created by somebody else, by a separate being.

When you travel, if when you go by vehicle, by airplane, or by bus, or whether you go by car through the country, through the valleys in a train, when you look at the views, you see good things, bad things, all kinds of objects of the senses—beautiful mountains, ugly mountains, beautiful trees, ugly trees—you see so many things as you are passing through. As you're going by car, you pass through the mountains and valleys, many things, and you see so many various good and bad things. So all those appearances that you are looking at it are your own view, your own appearance, your own. Perhaps it can be a simple projection like the one that happens when the machine with light projects through the negative onto the wall. Whatever seed the consciousness carries in the field of karma, while you are travelling, it projects or gets actualized. Like the stem coming out of the seed. You are looking at your own view, your own appearance, all the time, which came from your own mind. Your mental appearance is not something coming from over there, but comes from your mind. It comes from your own karma.

You're looking, wherever you're looking at it, you're looking at your own mental appearance, the appearance of karma. It's very useful while you are practicing awareness of this, while you are traveling, while you are looking at the views, while you are walking—practice this awareness. You look at things with awareness and think that this came from the field of karma, okay? Be aware, this one, ugly, came from this. Negative karma, nonvirtuous karma. The unsubdued mind, okay?

Then see a good one, very nice, beautiful, and think, "This appearance that I like, that I enjoy, came from my good karma, from positive virtuous karma." This is very useful, very useful. How your mind creates things is very interesting. You can say that your appearance is the creation of your own mind, created by your own mind. Your appearance is the creation of your own mind, by your own karma. So you relate the appearance to the mind—it is something that you always you relate, it comes from mind and it is something that you relate to the mind. The appearance is not something that arises without depending on your mind at all—something bad and good that exists without depending on your mind, coming from its own side, it's not that. Even when you hear "appearance" it's something to do with the mind.

If the appearance came from the object, like the mountain and those things, it wouldn't matter. If there's no perceiver of this mountain, if there's no perceiver of Kopan, then there's no Kopan; the object Kopan doesn't exist if there's no perceiver. If there's no knower of Kopan, if there's

no valid mind knowing Kopan, if there's no valid mind, Kopan doesn't exist. So it's up to the mind.

If there's a perceiver, if there's a knower, then it exists. The knower and sensor, generally speaking. Whether any existence exists or not is dependent on whether there's a knower or not. Here's somebody praising you, here's somebody criticizing you, praising how good you are, how fantastic, how you are lovely, kind, all that, knowledgeable, a good meditator, able to sit still for a long time, able to sleep for a long time—and at the same time there is somebody who talks about how you are ignorant, how you are stupid, the opposite—you are not meditating—your body is sitting in meditation but your mind is wandering—somebody saying all the opposite. So anyway, there is somebody who beats you, somebody who puts weapons on you, and somebody who puts perfumes, nice dresses, creams, massage.

The conclusion: both appearances—the desirable and the undesirable—both which appear to you, harming and helping, both came from your own karma, and are a projection or creation of your own mind, okay? They came from your own karma. The other one came from good karma, and this one came from bad karma. It completely came from your own mind.

RELATE EVERYTHING BACK TO YOUR KARMA

The conclusion is that there is nothing to blame in relation to that person, however much he criticizes, harms, or even if he kills you, there's nothing to blame. The blame is only upon oneself, on ignorance, following ignorance, following the disturbing thoughts, and because of that creating karma. You don't find the slightest thing to complain about to others. From birth until the death, all these appearances, bad and good, while you have this human body, all these appearances that you have from birth until the moment of death, until the appearance stops one day, for the duration of this time, all these appearances, bad and good, "I was happy, I enjoyed," and unhappiness—all of them completely came from one's own mind. Karma.

Now the very important thing, if you continuously want happiness and do not want suffering, if you don't want any more problems, you have to eliminate ignorance and realize shunyata. This is referring to the root ignorance from which the disturbing thoughts and karma arise. In order to be capable of realizing wisdom, emptiness, and eliminating ignorance, you need to control and stop creating negative karma, polluting or obscuring the mind. You have to stop creating negative karma, obscuring the mind. Out of anger, attachment, and ignorance, okay. Being under the control of ignorance, anger, and attachment. Therefore you have to practice the lam-rim, the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment, to control anger, ignorance, and attachment. In that way you don't create the negative karma obscuring the mind. So I think I will stop here.

This is a very good meditation. Very important. A very essential and very basic thing. This way you know how important it is to develop your mind, to practice Dharma. This is the first thing in life, the most important thing to do, all the time—while you're eating, while you're walking, while you're talking, while you're out doing business, while you're working for our family, in the office, all the time, even sleeping. As much as possible.

I find it very interesting, if you look at the flowers in the garden that you enjoy outside, inside—when you look at these beautiful objects, when you go in a beautiful park, what you see is your own karmic appearance.

For example, this flower has such a shape like this—now it's closed up, inside there are some very small things, certain particular leaves. Yeah, this one is like this, here, look. Do you see this

one? And this one. Oh, sorry. This one has a particular shape like this, this many petals, and this one has particular leaves like this. Particular figures. You see some flowers with unbelievable designs, so tiny but with so many things inside, so many designs, so very artistic—you come there, and then there's something. Their leaves have incredible, unbelievable figures.

As you are seeing these things, you're looking at the view that came from your own mind, your karma. So it's very interesting, very interesting. It's more clear why it is like this, so beautiful, like this. All this comes from the perceiver—the person to whom it appears beautiful—it came from the perceiver's karma. The mind can do such things! The mind can actualize such a thing, karma can actualize such a thing. You get astonished or you get very surprised at what the mind can do, it's unbelievable.

This inspires you, it gives you encouragement instead of making you feel hopeless. Instead of feeling, "I'm incurable, I'm hopeless, I can't do anything, I'm nothing," it gives you encouragement, how the mind can be developed. You can have greater enjoyment than this, if you develop the mind. This came from past lives, good karma, virtuous thoughts. This is my idea, I think like this—now you see beautiful things, objects like this, and these enjoyments came from the mind, from your own karma, and were created by you. This shows that your own mind can be developed. In other words, in a deeper way of thinking, this is still impure enjoyment, although it is more pure. By developing the mind more, making the mind pure, you can have pure enjoyment. This also proves that by developing the mind, you can be free from all the suffering realms, all of samsara. From all problems. You can achieve liberation. I think you can understand this by these good objects that came from the good mind.

You can achieve liberation from the whole true nature of suffering, the true cause of suffering—you can achieve the highest enjoyment. Like Buddha's enjoyment. There is nothing impure in the object of Buddha's senses. For the Buddha's senses, nothing is impure. There's no impurity. That's the completion, when the mind is completed, when the pure mind is completely developed, completed. There is no impurity to the senses at all. So I think this is proven by these examples.

Thank you.

LECTURE 5, 3 DECEMBER

HEART SUTRA

"There is no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind. There are no forms, no sounds, no smells ..."

This would be helpful if there's somebody with a very strong smell sitting next to you; this would be very helpful for meditation on the *Heart Sutra*. Or somebody who just came from Kathmandu who is burned by the sun. With sweat.

"... no taste, no tangibles."

The present experience, contact, whether it's rough or whether it's soft, contact with the dress, or sitting on the ground or with a cushion, hard or soft, tangible, something hard existing from its own side, something soft existing from its own side.

“...no tangibles, no phenomenano attainment .”

Which means no truly existent attainment. No truly existent suffering, no truly existent origin, no truly existent cessation, no truly existent path, no truly existent wisdom knowledge, okay? No truly existent attainment and no truly existent non-attainment. No truly existent non-attainment because both attainment and non- attainment both are merely labeled on the base by thought.

“Therefore Shariputra...”

[Rinpoche gives the usual motivation.]

MEDITATE THAT EVERYTHING COMES FROM KARMA AND IGNORANCE

What I explained last night is very important, not leaving that explanation of the twelve links, which describes your own life or the evolution of the samsara, up to the mere understanding of words. It is important, after having the understanding of the words, to recognize, actually understand the meaning of the words, the Buddha’s teachings, and look at your own life. Look at it like the teaching. Be aware, always be aware, recognize your own everyday life, all the appearances—including this body, this present samsaric rebirth and its cause. In this way, with this recognition, it’s like always meditating even if you are not sitting with crossed legs, with the eyes closed, the eyes completely closed, like a turtle sleeping or completely opened, like a big fish. What is it called, this huge eye?

So in this way, while you are eating, or while you are walking, just be aware of yourself meditating on lam-rim. This becomes a meditation on lam-rim. According to the tradition, when you receive the commentary of the lam-rim, those tantra teachings, the commentary of the path of that particular deity, whatever is received, the next morning they try to remember the commentary, and meditate on it. This is mainly to actualize it, and also this is one way to not forget.

It’s very good, these few days, to practice awareness of this with the understanding of the twelve links that was explained last night. From morning until night, during the teaching, in the breaktime, from morning until night, be constantly aware that everything that is appearing to you, like this body, *completely* came from your karma, the virtuous thought.

All this that I see here—people, birds, animals, trees, mountains—all these things came only from karma, from your own karma motivated by your own ignorance. All these things, including your body, the six sense objects, from morning until night, came from your own mind, came from only your own mind, okay? While you are sitting if you remember something, your enemy, some undesirable object, or while you are walking around you see bad objects that you don’t like, try to recognize that they came from your own mind. From the nonvirtuous action, okay. From the nonvirtuous action, done out of anger, done out of ignorance not knowing Dharma, or out of the dissatisfactory mind, attachment, or the unsubdued mind. All the good things came from the good thought, the virtuous thought, including this body of the happy transmigratory being, this human body.

So whatever you are looking at is the appearance of your own karma, the result of your own karma. The consciousness that carries the seed, that carries the potential, many good pictures or many bad, many undesirable things. So like this. Now, actualizing, okay? The film upon which all the figures were ever recorded or taken, with electricity and machines together, is actualized, it projects, and then you are able to see.

Similarly, what you are seeing now is the imprint that karma left on the consciousness, now actualized. All of the objects that you are experiencing, all these are appearances of karma, okay? So it's very important, especially these days, to practice awareness. Especially in the breaktime, when you are enjoying and using the objects of senses. With that, practice awareness. All this came from your own mind, the origin is ignorance. Then, second, from karma, which means the thought that came from the consciousness, the principal.

You meditate like this while you're eating food, while you're drinking tea, while you're walking, while you're listening to sound, birds, music, or whatever. Then also while you are feeling cold or hot, the object of the sense of the body. So constantly practice—especially these days, it is very important to practice awareness. In this way then you're able to conquer the inner enemy, the disturbing thoughts. It doesn't give the disturbing thoughts a chance when you practice awareness like this—this came from your own mind, karma, was created by you. It doesn't give any opportunity to the disturbing thoughts to conquer you, to overwhelm you. So instead of letting the disturbing thoughts overwhelm you, you overwhelm the disturbing thoughts.

Also, in this way there's no opportunity for the delusions to arise, so it does not create karma again. Creating negative karma and again having to experience the same problem as was explained before—this circle does not happen.

In this life, even one day, knowing that somebody badly treating you is the appearance of your own karma, created by yourself, you don't find the slightest reason to get angry. If you do get angry it's your own mistake, "He's telling me this and that. He's not respecting me. He's abusing me, this and that." In this way you understand that what is happening came from my own karma, my own thought. Even if you think of the reasons, "He's doing this and that to me," it does not become a reason to get angry. It causes you to abandon anger, to think, "I want happiness so therefore I should abandon getting angry, jealous, creating negative karma and harming others." So it all encourages you. Even if you get angry easily, you realize, "It's my own problem. My own mistake." In other words, "I have created such karma, caused this karma, which produced this appearance, so I get angry at my own appearance. I get angry at my own creation." You made it up, you made your own world—the objects of anger—you made your own reasons to get angry. You made your own, you created it, following the side of the anger, disturbing thoughts—you made your own objects of anger.

So in other words, you get angry at your own world, at your own creation, at the appearance that is created by yourself. So now you can see it's completely ridiculous. It is similar with the one I'm so strongly attached to, grasping at, like pulling the heart and having pain inside the heart. It is extremely painful, so difficult to be away from that object, to separate from that object. The one to whom I cling so much again is my own appearance, the appearance of my own karma. If it's food, then even human beings who live, who have greater enjoyment, when they look at this food they see it as undesirable. Compared to the enjoyment of those who have more good karma, like devas and worldly gods, this is like kaka.

It is the same with the person's body, when you compare it with somebody else it is very ugly. When another person looks they see this object as very ugly. Even though this object appears to oneself as beautiful, at the same time the other person sees it as very ugly. When one sees another object, compared to that, one sees this as ugly. Even from these examples you can see that these appearance came from the mind. The perceiver's mind, karma. Whether this object appears nice or ugly depends on the individual perceiver's karma. It is not so much to do with the object. It is to do with the perceiver, with the perceiver's karma.

A DOLLAR IS A PIECE OF PAPER BEFORE THE LABEL IS APPLIED

So again, same thing. What appears in my view, what I think is nice and beautiful, what I find to be desirable, even though it appears to be nothing to do with the mind, it appears to exist from its own side without depending on one's own mind, this is completely a hallucination. Completely a hallucination. That thing, that nice beautiful object existing from its own side is empty, completely empty, because if you did not label this object that appears to you as "beautiful" it depends on how you label this object. If you did not label, "This is nice," it wouldn't appear to you as nice. If you didn't label on this base, while you see this body, if you did not label this as beautiful, "Oh, how beautiful it is!" if you did not label it, it would not appear beautiful.

Another example—somebody who doesn't know that this is an American dollar, before he is introduced, "This is an American dollar," appears to him as a piece of paper with a print, a president, a figure of a person, that's all. The person might think it's some kind of money. But until he is introduced and he believes and he himself labels, "This is a dollar," there's no appearance of the dollar for him. That's very clear. You understand? There's no appearance of the dollar. Until he is introduced and until he believes that that is a dollar. Now, somebody tells him, "Oh, this is an American dollar, okay." Then he says, "Oh, I see. This is an American dollar." He sees the base but he hasn't got the label, "It's an American dollar." Okay? So there's no appearance of the American dollar at that time. If he has labeled "money, it's some kind of money," he has the appearance of some kind of money. One of the countries' money, okay. But not as the appearance of an American dollar.

So after he's introduced, then he says, "Oh, I see, this is an American dollar," then he labels on that. He labels, "American dollar." Immediately after that he gets the appearance of an American dollar to him. The appearance of American dollar comes after he labels it. Do you understand?

Now again, from this evolution, you can see how the appearance came from the mind. You can see very clearly, it came from that person's mind. This is one way of thinking, how the appearance came from the mind. Besides the twelve links, this comes from karma.

That's why, "I" and all the objects, all of samsara and nirvana—all exist like this. That's how all these things exist in mere name. Like the way the dollar exists on this piece of paper, in mere name. So, now similarly, this is a hundred dollars, but what is it? A piece of paper with a straight line and two circles after it. Before the person sees just a figure drawn, and then when he's introduced, "This means one hundred," immediately he believes and labels it, "Oh, one hundred," and he has the appearance of one hundred. So there's no appearance of one hundred before he believes that this is one hundred. Similar when you don't know this figure is "A," it is just a figure. When you are taught that this means A, when you are introduced and as soon as you have labeled it, believed, "This is A," as you are introduced, after that you have the appearance of "A." Before that, even if you see the figure there is no appearance of "A" to that person.

Same thing, somebody came to Kopan, somebody walked up to Kopan but didn't know the name "Kopan." They didn't know what it is called. Then later in Kathmandu or in the West, this person meets somebody, and discusses where he traveled, and what he did in Nepal. He says there was a mountain, and a monastery like this. He describes the Injies meditating in the bamboo and in the shed, and somebody says, "Oh, that is Kopan!" Then the person who did not know that this was Kopan has the appearance of Kopan.

LETTING GO OF CLINGING TO APPEARANCES IS FREEDOM

Again same thing—the first thing is the appearance of karma, your own creation, the appearance of your own mind, completely grasping as if the object completely exists from its own side, without depending on the creator, your own mind. Having much worry and fear of losing what is your own appearance. The conclusion is that therefore there's nothing to cling to. It is your own mind's creation, the appearance of your own karma, so therefore there's nothing to grasp to, nothing to cling to.

So in this way, even today, practicing awareness, these two things, the objects are what appear in your own view, or your own karma, okay? They came from your own mind, and so even today this helps you not to get angry, not to harm the other person, not to create negative karma. You don't disturb the other person, you don't let the other person create negative karma by getting angry and harming you. By practicing awareness like this, recognizing your own karmic appearance, the strong dissatisfactory mind, ignorance grasping, doesn't arise. This does not obscure the mind in the development of loving kindness, in the development of the good heart, and it doesn't develop the selfish mind. There are many other problems that arise from this grasping at that object—fear, worry, anger due to how the person acts toward to you, and jealous mind—many other problems arise. So all this gets stopped. It doesn't happen. So there's much peace, much relaxation, tranquility in the mind, and much clearness, to meditate. When you meditate, there is much clarity, like clear weather—and there are that many fewer obstacles, less distracting thoughts. More freedom. So there is a great advantage in day-to-day life in terms of happiness and great freedom.

By continuing like this, by practicing awareness, and by controlling the disturbing thoughts, the result is good karma. As you abandon negative karma, you do not experience all those suffering results from life to life, you do not experience the continuation of samsara. In this way, as you stop creating the cause of samsara, you are quicker to achieve liberation, and quicker to achieve enlightenment. Even while you are in samsara, from life to life, more and more, you are able to go from happiness to happiness, to a happier and happier existence, life to life.

The second thing—as I gave all those other examples of what this person does to you, how he speaks to you, look at you, the way he think of you, the way he speaks to you, the way he behaves toward you, you interpret it as negative, so you label “negative” and “bad.” “What he is doing to me is bad.” After you label “bad,” you have the appearance of bad. Not a merely labeled “bad,” but the appearance of bad that completely exists from its own side. Not the bad that is merely labeled by you on that base.

So same thing— you grasp at the friend or the other objects. So both are bad and good. The way the other one thinks of you, the way he speaks to you, the way he looks at you, you interpret as good. So you have labeled “good,” and then you appear as good. You grasp, you cling to this one, angry.

So the conclusion is that this is completely childish. You purposely create bad, you have purposely created the bad appearance, you purposely create the object of desire, the appearance labeled “good,” then you suffer with this creation, getting angry. You suffer by grasping at this object. It doesn't give freedom. This is completely opposite to the reality that they exist from their own side. Which is, again, completely empty. You do not give liberation to yourself— freedom from the cause of suffering, from the problem of sufferings. You continuously cycle in samsara, experiencing all the problems. So again by the second reason, think, “Therefore there's

nothing to get angry about. I recognize that what I think of when I get angry is merely imputed by my thoughts. What I am doing is very childish nonsense. There is no point in getting angry.” Then again thinking the same thing, “There is no point *at all* in grasping at this object.”

Especially with the second meditation, how things came from your own mind, bad and good and all these things, how these came from one’s own mind by labeling—this way, this meditation, this practice of awareness becomes a meditation on shunyata. To realize this bad object, this good object that does not exist from its own side, that what is false is recognized as false, and what is empty is realized to be empty.

Because of the ignorance, and because of the compounding action, there is consciousness, and because of consciousness, name and form. Because of name and form, then sense basis. Because of sense basis, then contact. Because of that, feeling arises. Because of that, craving and grasping arises. Because of that, becoming, and because of that, rebirth. Because of that, old age and death arises. So that is the evolution, the dependent-arising evolution from the side of the all-arising disturbing thoughts.

Old age and death arise from birth. That came from becoming. Becoming came from grasping, that from craving, and that from feeling, contact, and the sense bases. That came from the compounding action, and that came from ignorance. So that is dependent arising in reverse, from the side of the all-arising, disturbing thoughts.

Again there are two the dependent arising evolutions—one is from the side of cessation. By ceasing ignorance, compounding action is ceased. Then consciousness, then name and form, then by ceasing that, feeling, then craving, then grasping, then becoming. By ceasing that, rebirth; and then by the old age and death depends on ceasing rebirth. So like this, it goes back to the cause, ceasing the karma, compounding actions, depends upon ceasing ignorance. That dependent arising in reverse from the side of cessation.

Now the story—besides Buddha explaining the four noble truths, which is easy for sentient beings to understand, there was also the twelve dependent arisings. These tell how each particular sentient being is circling in samsara, and how one can achieve liberation. This is clearly explained by Buddha with examples—even with drawings—to have a clear, easy understanding.

THE BUDDHA SUBDUES CHUNGAWA’S ATTACHMENT

So the story of the Wheel of Life, how one circles in the samsara, is explained from the sutra text called *Gyalwa Namche*. Among Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s disciples, the Hearer-Listener, the one who has supreme wisdom, was Sharipu. There are two disciples here, one on the right side, one on the left side, standing. This probably might be the right side one, I’m not one hundred percent sure. Sharipu was the one who has this greatest wisdom. Then the one with the highest, greatest psychic power was Maudgyalayana, I think. If Sharipu was on the right side, then the left side should be Maudgyalayana.

So from time to time they go to the six realms individually with their psychic power. Then they come back to the southern continent, here, and explain what they saw to the remaining disciples of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—how the narak beings are suffering, how each of those realm beings are suffering. I think they are like newsmen, the ones who go with the videos, and then come back to show. But they go without machines, with their psychic power.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's younger [half-]brother was Chungawa [Nanda]. He had extreme dislike for celibacy, so Sharipu and Maudgalyana took him with their psychic powers to the other realms and showed him the sufferings of the naraks, the shortcomings of the desire. Then he accepted, and entered into Dharma.

One day Guru Shakyamuni Buddha sees his younger brother, Chungawa, that it's time to subdue him. The younger brother never comes to the monastery, so one day as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha sees it's the right time to subdue his mind, he went to his house for alms. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha went with his disciples, his servant, Kungawo. Before this happened, Chungawa had mentioned that he had difficulty—he could not separate from his wife for even one minute. Then Guru Shakyamuni and Kungawo went to his home for alms, and before Chungawa was able to put food in his bowl, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha turned around to the road, and walked away. Chungawa was caught by his power and followed him, expecting that he might turn back any moment to receive food. He followed him continuously with the food in his hand, and tried again and again to offer it. Gradually they reached the monastery, and Guru Shakyamuni asked the servant Kungawo to shave his hair. So he did, but he stopped in the middle somewhere. Then he started again and when he was done Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advised him to be the caretaker of the monastery.

While everybody went out for alms, Chungawa tried to escape the monastery and go home and meet his wife. He went to close the door, but when he closed one side, the other side opened, and when he closed that side, the other side opened—on and on like that, due to Guru Shakyamuni's psychic power. He was unable to close both doors, and spent much time on and on, trying to close them.

Anyway he escaped, and as he was coming down he decided to take a small road through a field so he wouldn't meet Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and his disciples. He decided to walk over the small road, and then he saw Guru Shakyamuni Buddha coming down that small road. He hid under some banana leaves, but when Guru Shakyamuni came by, all the leaves came up by his psychic power. Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha asked Maudgalyana to take him to show him the shortcomings of desire.

I think I got mixed up with some other stories.

Anyway, he was taken to the deva realm. There was a beautiful palace and many beautiful goddesses, but no men. So he asked why, and the goddesses said that in the human realm there is Chungawa, but if he practices moral conduct he will be born here as a male. Maudgalyana showed him one beautiful goddess who asked him, "Your wife is more beautiful? Or is this one more beautiful?" At that time he saw that his wife was like a monkey. Compared to the goddess's face, his wife's face was like a monkey's face. He was also shown the narak sufferings and then the devas' realms, a result of the practice of morality. All the things like that. Then by realizing the shortcomings of desire, he truly then he got renunciation of samsara, and then followed the path. This is a story of how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has incredible psychic powers and skillful means to subdue to guide sentient beings.

THE DRAWING OF THE WHEEL OF LIFE

So, while Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's was surrounded by all the disciples, all these stories were explained—how Sharipu and Maudgalyana saw all these sufferings of the other realms, other beings. Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha called his servant Kungawo, and said that there would not be those, like the bhikshu Sharipu and Maudgalyana, with incredible psychic powers and

wisdom, all the time. Therefore, they should make their words into a drawing. So Guru Shakyamuni Buddha permitted them outside the monastery, outside the door, to draw the Wheel of Life. The wheel of the five migratory beings, the narak migratory beings, animal migratory beings, preta migratory beings, deva migratory beings, and human being migratory beings.

At the end, they also drew the sentient beings of the naraks, animal beings, and the preta migratory beings—the three evil-gone realms down below and then the deva and human beings on the top. By telling them to draw the three lower realms down below, he indirectly advised them to draw the human and deva on the top. In the human continent, in the human realm, he told them to draw the four continents, the eastern, of the humans with a taller body. Then, the western continent, enjoying the cow. I think, according to their karma, the eastern has the karma of having such a tall body, then, like compared to the East, they have taller bodies in the West. They are very tall, and in much more numbers, due to karma. In some countries the majority of the number of the younger bodies is short.

On this western continent their particular karma is that of having unceasing milk from the cow. However much they enjoy, they drink, it does not stop. The northern continent is that of uninteresting sounds. The southern continent is where we live. They drew those different continents of human beings, and then in the center they drew attachment and anger and ignorance. Then the Buddha's holy body, showing the white circle, the white mandala, the circle of the sorrowless state.

Then what's this called? The can on the well that goes up and down? [*Students: A bucket.*] Those sentient beings who take rebirth are like that, going up and down. They also drew death and mind transference. And also rebirth. They also drew the twelve dependent arisings in reverse. Then, all of this held by impermanence. So Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advises one to draw like this.

And I think I stop here.

Please dedicate the merit of having listened to the teaching, of meditating, explaining, all the three time merits accumulated by oneself and all other sentient beings. May the bodhicitta, the ultimate good heart renouncing oneself and cherishing others, and the wisdom realizing emptiness, be generated in one's mind and in the minds of all sentient beings. For those who have these realizations may they be developed, okay?

Okay, thank you so much.

LECTURE 6, 4 DECEMBER

THE WHEEL OF LIFE SHOWS YOU SHOULD OBSERVE YOUR KARMA

[*The Heart Sutra* and motivation.]

For that purpose, listen to the teaching, the commentary on the graduated path to enlightenment, in order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all the kind mother sentient beings.

Also the Buddha said to write down in the Wheel of Life drawing these two stanzas,

Attempt and abandon
Enter in the teaching of the Buddha
Like the elephant sank in the mud, in the quagmire
Renounce the Lord of Death.

In other words, not practicing Dharma, not seeking, not attempting, not living in the path to achieve liberation, is like an elephant who sank in the quagmire. So, “Destroy the Lord of Death” implies also the previous one, living life with the dissatisfactory mind, attachment. One who is extremely careful and practices this Dharma subduing the mind will abandon the rebirth of the samsara and his suffering will be the last suffering. His suffering will be the last.

This simply means, relating to the four noble truths—true path and cessation of suffering. “Abandon” means the true cause of suffering and the true suffering. So in that way, enter into the teaching of Buddha. I think the last two verses, “Like elephant sinking in the quagmire,” “Destroy the Lord of Death,” by following attachment, being in samsara in this way, you continuously circle in samsara, and clinging ties you to samsara. So you continuously experience the suffering of the cycle of death and rebirth. You are always under the control of Yama, the possessor of death. You never get freedom from this, never get liberated from this. If you are extremely careful of karma, you can change that.

By having a definite understanding that karma will definitely bring a similar result, even if it’s a small negative karma, it will definitely bring or experience its own result. Also, it’s expandable—for so many lifetimes one has to experience the result of even a small negative karma. It is much more expandable than planting one seed of a bodhi tree. One seed this size grows so many thousands and thousands of branches and leaves and seeds and becomes a huge, huge tree. A tree that can cover five hundred horse carriages, like we see in certain places in India where people stand in the shade with their vehicles. This is much more than the external example—how from one tiny seed an incredible result comes. This is much more with the inner evolution—one small negative karma and the result that you have to experience—how many times, how much.

You do not experience the result without having created the cause, and what you have created never gets lost. So by having a definite understanding in this, through the continuing strong practice of purification and accumulating merit, by reflecting, listening, and meditation on karma, by practicing the Vinaya teachings, the Dharma subduing the mind—by living in the five precepts, the eight precepts, the thirty-six, then the two hundred and fifty-three, by practicing moral conduct, subduing the mind, according to sutra, according to the lesser vehicle, you will abandon the rebirths in samsara and end the suffering. You will make it possible to have an end to your suffering.

This can contain bodhisattva and tantric vows but I think here particularly, the pratimoksha vows. The lay vows, the celibacy vows—I think particularly this is what he’s talking about here.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advised that they make the drawing outside the monastery, and for those who cannot understand any of the Wheel of Life, he asked one monk to explain it, like the tourist guide who come to holy places. Like that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advised one monk on the meaning of the Wheel of Life.

So in this sutra teaching it is said that at the monastery when the brahmins, the lay people, the benefactors come, a bhikshu should show them the Wheel of Life. In another sutra text there is a story about Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in the holy place Nyenu.

AN IRRELIGIOUS KING IS SUBDUED BY A PAINTING OF THE BUDDHA

When I went to Lhasa this time, outside of Sera Je monastery there is a monk who looks after the monks' discipline, and he explained some of the stories to us. They had very good paintings of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's life-story on the outside wall of the monastery. Where there's a courtyard, around the wall then there is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's bodhisattva life-story and about a hundred bodhisattvas' life-story. So like this, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advised the people, the monks who live in the monastery and who come to the monastery to subdue their mind.

Similarly, when Buddha was in India, the irreligious king Utiyana from the outlying country Dardok sent a very precious present to the religious king Suchen Nyingpo. I think probably at that time he was the king of central India. The irreligious king, Utiyana, sent very precious, priceless jewel armor. The religious king, Suchen Nyingpo, could not find any present that compared to that or was more precious. So he consulted with the ministers and one of the ministers suggested that the religious king, Suchen Nyingpo, send a painting of the Buddha as a present. So he went to request Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said that they could make a painting of the Buddha. However, the magnificence of his holy body was so unbearable that they could not succeed.

So Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advised them to stretch out a white cloth on the ground and he would stand over it and make a shadow. Then he told them, "You, the knowledgeable ones, put various colors on this shadow." After the king finished the painting of the Buddha's holy body, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advised them to write below it refuge, basic moral conduct, and the twelve dependent arisings according to the forward evolution and also the reverse, and on top the two stanzas that I read in the beginning. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advised all these things.

After the king finished the painting he sent it to the outlying irreligious kind. When the irreligious king heard the Buddha's holy name, and as soon as he saw the painting of the Buddha, he experienced unimaginable devotion. As soon as he stretched out the painting of the twelve links on the wall, and as soon as he heard Buddha's holy name and saw the holy body of the Buddha, unimaginable devotion arose in his mind. And then he took refuge in Buddha. He meditated day and night on the twelve dependent arisings, according to the evolution, and the reverse. In that way quickly he was able to directly realize absolute truth, and he achieved the result of an arhat.

So this is explained in this sutra text *Lung Namche*.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE WHEEL OF LIFE

So now, in the center of the Wheel of Life, attachment is drawn in the form of a pigeon. Anger is drawn in the form of a snake. Ignorance is drawn in the form of a pig. That's the correct way, as it's explained in the sutra teaching, to draw it. The tails of both the pigeon and the snake are being eaten by the pig. So it has to be drawn that way. Both of their tails are in the mouth of the pig. Just by looking at the painting, you might think it's strange that the pig doesn't eat the snake and the pigeons. The reason their tails are in the mouth of the pig is because the pig signifies ignorance. The pigeon and snake signify anger and attachment and so this signifies that they came from ignorance, that they are under the control of ignorance. In order for sentient beings to realize this, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advised that it be painted in this way. But this, this

snake is coming from the pig's mouth and biting the chicken or the snake the peacock, so that drawing is not correct. That way of drawing is not correct.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha advised that outside of that should be painted the sentient beings who take birth and then go to death, like the rope and bucket that is used to bring water from the well. So in the center are the three animals that signify the cause, the three poisonous minds. On the right is the white path, signifying the path to the happy migratory beings. That also signifies the intermediate beings who are on their way to the happier realms, that is, birth as a human or a deva. On the left side, in the south, is the black path signifying the path to the suffering evil migratory beings, and the intermediate stage beings who are going to the realms of the preta, narak, and animals. Normally the white path goes up, and the black path goes down. Also, white and black means that by having created the cause of virtue, one is born as a happy migratory being. The white one shows the path of virtue. Creating the cause of nonvirtue leads to a rebirth as a lower, suffering being, and is the path of nonvirtue, and the black path signifies that. These intermediate beings go to the realm of the happy transmigrations because they have created the cause of virtue, and they go to the realm of the suffering transmigrations because they have created the cause of nonvirtue.

The conclusion is that the three animals in the center show the cause, the three poisonous minds. The right side being white and the left side being black shows the virtuous and nonvirtuous actions. From the four noble truths, this shows the all-arising cause of karma and disturbing thoughts. Now the result, true suffering. The five parts of life are drawn in order to explain that the cause arises out of motivation, disturbing thoughts, the three poisonous minds, and then the beings accumulate various virtues and nonvirtues, and because of this is reborn as one of the five types of migratory being, and continuously, without any break, experiences the three types of suffering. The five types of samsaric being above are the devas and humans, and below, narak, preta, and animal. The sutra text explains it like this. In order to show the suffering of suffering, it shows the result of taking rebirth in samsara, where one experiences the suffering of suffering. The three lower realms of narak, preta, and animal are drawn, and the beings in these three have the greatest suffering of suffering. This does not mean that humans and devas do not experience the suffering of suffering, but these three kinds of beings experience it to a greater degree. So this is why the three lower realms are drawn below. In order to show the suffering of change, the human realm, the desire god realm, and the asura realms are drawn. In order to show pervasive compounding suffering, the seventeen categories of form realm are drawn. I think they are drawn in some of the paintings of the Wheel of Life.

In the form realm and the formless realm, the gods are not free from pervasive compounding suffering. They are born in the form realm because they are bored of pleasure and have renunciation of the sense pleasures, objects, and contact. They cling to the inner pleasures, which are derived from concentration. This is what causes someone to be born in the form realm.

When you renounce that, and wish for nothingness, an indifferent feeling, this causes you to be born in the formless realms, which has stages like "Infinite Consciousness," "Infinite Space," "Nothingness," and the "Tip of Samsara." There are four categories in the formless realms. If you like so much to meditate on nothingness, comprehending nothing, nothing appearing to the mind, blank, it causes rebirth in the animal realm or the formless realm. It makes you lose your intelligence.

In the formless realm there is no suffering of suffering or suffering of change, but they are still not free from the third kind of suffering, pervasive compounding suffering, being under the control of karma and delusion. Even if they have renunciation of both of the other two

sufferings, they don't have renunciation of the last suffering, the fundamental suffering of karma and disturbing thoughts. They don't have renunciation for all of samsara—even after they reach such a high realm, they lack this renunciation of pervasive compounding suffering, and the wisdom realizing the absolute truth. So even if they reach a high realm where they don't experience bodily suffering, when their karma to be in that realm finishes, according to whatever karma is stronger again they are born in the desire realm in the lower realms, and again take rebirth as a suffering transmigratory being. As long as you are not free, as long as you are not liberated from pervasive compounding suffering, you have to continuously circle in samsara and experience various sufferings, without end.

When there was a degeneration of the Buddhadharma in Tibet, Lama Atisha was the one who was invited by the King of Tibet, and re-established the Buddhadharma in Tibet, and eliminated, destroyed all the wrong conceptions—some recognized the sutras and the tantras as being hot and cold, not as a practice for one person to achieve enlightenment. Nowadays, if you want to practice Dharma then without confusion, according to the level of your mind, without mistake, Atisha's teaching is so beneficial, so easy to practice without confusion, well set up. The essence of the whole Buddhadharma, sutra and tantra, are so well set up to guide one person's mind gradually to enlightenment. This lam-rim teaching on this graduated path to enlightenment came about by Lama Atisha's kindness.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE TWELVE LINKS IN THE WHEEL OF LIFE

Lama Atisha taught Dromtönpa that *ignorance* is like the blind mother, so the blind mother is drawn there, walking with a stick. That shows ignorance. This is not the ignorance of karma, the action, result, and cause of happiness and suffering, but this is the ignorance that is the root of that ignorance. This is not knowing the absolute nature of the "I." This is the root of samsara.

The second one, *compounding action*, like the clay-maker, you can see in the Wheel of Life painting. The second one is person very busy making many clay pots. He compounds all the atoms and makes them into different shapes. "Compounding" means compounding the cause of samsara—whether it is virtue or nonvirtue when it leaves a seed on the consciousness.

There are four schools, and the last one, the Madhyamaka school, has two. The first one is the Sautrantika school. Down to that they believe that where the seed is left is the consciousness but the Prasangika school believes that the seed is left by the action, by the karma, on the "I." One is the base, one is the label—the "I" that is labeled on the consciousness. The action is virtue or nonvirtue, and is done out of the basis of ignorance, not knowing the absolute nature of the "I," the reality of the "I." By meeting one object the anger arises, and by meeting another object, attachment arises. Then with another object ignorance arises. So like this.

Action is accumulated through virtue and nonvirtue. This virtue and nonvirtue leaves its potential, its seed on the consciousness. The reason why *du che le* is compounding, compounding action—what it compounds is the cause of samsara. It leaves the seed of samsara. Like the camera machine clicks and records the figure on the negative. The action creates the seed of samsara, the potential of future life's samsara. The aggregates are caused by karma and disturbing thoughts. So the label is given on that, and the compounding action is similar to a writing pen.

This is a rough idea, a rough definition. In the philosophy, debating subject, it is more precise than in the lam-rim teaching. Every single word, every single part does not contradict without missing the complete meaning of it.

The compounding action is motivated by that particular migratory being's first dependent arising, ignorance, okay? That throws the future life's aggregates into samsara. So that is the definition of compounding action.

Now the next one, the *consciousness* is like the monkey. You may see the monkey going, jumping from one tree to another tree, in the drawing. There are two ways of counting the consciousness. Some other lamas count consciousness as part of the result. According to the Sera Je college, our college, we count consciousness as part of the cause, not as the result. This is the consciousness upon which the compounding action, the second link, leaves the potential or the seed. There are five consciousnesses, but this is the sixth consciousness, the consciousness of the mind. The consciousness of the mind is the one that carries the potential, the seed, the impression left by karma. This morning whatever you did left an imprint, so because of the continuation of consciousness you can remember it now. Similarly, the consciousness on which the karma left the impression, a potential, from one life to another life is continuous—so that's why there's the remembrance of past lives. Even though it's not known to most common people, even though it is not the common experience of the majority of people, some people, due to karma or due to the development of the mind, can remember their past lives.

Consciousness carries the impression, the seed that's left by karma, so as it continues to another life there are different experiences in life, happiness and suffering. Some have much success, but others, even though all the time they only wish for success, experience so much unsuccess, so much failure. They experience various lives, and there are so many problems that they have to experience. This is due to the past life's karma, because there is the continuation of consciousness from the past life to this life, and the imprint, the seed that was left on the consciousness is now actually being experienced or actualized.

Then, the consciousness upon which the karma, the compounding action left the impression, and also which continues from one life to another life, okay?

Then, *name and form*. Name and form is life entering the boat, so it may have two meanings. The consciousness took place on the fertilized egg, which had form, so this principal consciousness has five surrounding thoughts, compounding aggregates. The aggregates of feeling are "name," and they are called "name" because you cannot see them with the physical eye. What you can see with the physical eye, through machines, is only the physical part, the atoms—you cannot see this part through machines. You cannot see the consciousness and you cannot see the aggregates of feeling, the aggregates of recognition, the compounding aggregates with machines.

According to the function of the different thoughts, on that basis you have merely labeled recognition, compounding aggregates, feelings, this and that. This is according to the function of the different thoughts. That's why it's called "name." With the physical eye, you cannot see them, and you have to understand these different thoughts by name, by different names. By these different names, you have to understand the function of the different thoughts. Name and form.

Those mental factors, the knowing phenomena, use the form as a vehicle, so it's like person entering a boat. This could be one meaning. Or, it could be that "name and form" both are the boat, the aggregates are the boat, and the "I" that is labeled on that is the person entering the boat. It might have that meaning also. This is just my own guess.

The *sense bases* are like the country, the empty house. From this one migratory being's twelve links, after name and form are actualized, and before having contact, there is the sense base.

After they have actualized the sense base and before feeling, the object, the consciousness, and the sense base meet, for *contact*. From this come the set of twelve links, okay?

Lama Atisha says, “The *feeling* is like an arrow shot in the eye.” From contact, three types of feeling arise. Craving is like drinking wine. Wine means all the different kinds of alcohol. The craving and attachment that make this seed powerful was left on the consciousness by the compounding action. From *this* come a set of twelve links, according to one migratory being’s particular rebirth. From the set of the twelve links of that particular migratory being, okay?

Then *craving* and attachment make the seed that was left on the consciousness by the compounding action from this set of twelve links powerful. This is craving. This is like grasping that is defined, much stronger—stronger attachment, it can be said. In the drawing for grasping, they use the image of plucking fruit from a tree.

In the case of the wine on the table, drinking it is very easy, but to get the fruit from a tree, you need more effort. So the *grasping* makes the actual determination. Craving is desiring, wishing—but I think grasping is actually makes the determination. First of all there’s craving—wanting to get that beautiful object in the shop, and then later on that desire becomes very strong and we actually decide to get it. The stronger craving actually makes the determination, so it is grasping.

Wine is taking and fruit is also taking, both are taking, but I think grasping, or picking up fruit from a tree, needs more effort, needs strong determination. So I think it might be implying the grasping that is this way—a strong determination to get. These two makes the seed that was left on the consciousness by karma greater, more powerful. Then that which becomes powerful, that which is ready to experience and actualize the future birth is called becoming.

So in the Wheel of Life, the painting, there is a pregnant woman. Then *birth*—you can see in the Wheel of Life the child coming out. Birth caused by that set of twelve links’ karma and disturbing thoughts. So you can see now in this way—your birth is *not* with freedom, it is under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts. It is a suffering birth, okay? The cause of your birth is impure, karma and disturbing thoughts, so the result is also impure and the nature of suffering.

Then *old age*. You don’t have the wish *at all* to become old, and this shows that you are under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts. If you were not under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts you wouldn’t have to become old. Especially since you don’t have the wish, without choice, uncontrollably happening, going through this process, degeneration—that shows that you are under the control of karma and delusion, you are not free from this cause, you are not free from this. The sign is these things that happen. Sickesses, problems, disease outside, inside, mental and physical sicknesses—as the ordination says. These are the signs, the proof, and the logic, and the reason you have these is because you are under the control of karma and delusions.

So now, *death*. Death is separating the consciousness from the body. In relation to migratory beings, samsaric migratory beings have bodies like ours, and the consciousness separates from the body under the control of karma and delusion. Even though you don’t wish to die, you try every means—the more skillful doctor, the best medicine, all the machines—but there is no choice. This shows being under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts. This means you don’t want to experience all these problems, such as death and rebirth, and all the problems between them that you experience. If you don’t want them, you have to stop karma and disturbing thoughts.

You do this by practicing the path of method and wisdom, especially the wisdom realizing emptiness, and doing listening, reflecting, and meditation practice on emptiness. Impermanence and death is drawn in the aspect of the very terrifying Yama, the Lord of Death. It is said in the sutra teaching that wherever, in this samsara, you abide, there is no place that you don't get attacked by death.

His Holiness Song Rinpoche, one of our own gurus from whom we received many initiations, many teachings, in the last few years in the West—sutras, tantras—said that one geshe went to Kham or somewhere and on the way stopped at one family's house. The mother was picking up lice from the clothes. What's the small one? The small one is lice, but what's the name of the big one?

[Students: Fleas!]

Fleas are the jumping one. Big white one? The tiny one, white one? Both are lice? So the mother was picking out the lice from her clothes and then told her children, "Please put this somewhere that it does not die." She gave the lice to the son and said, "Son, please put this some place where he doesn't die." So the geshe heard this and the geshe said, "Oh, Ama-la, if there's some place where you cannot die, please take me also there!"

In the past times when there was fighting in India between the Shakyas and another clan, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha tried to hide [his fellow Shakyas]. He hid them in his begging bowl, becoming very small. But all the Shakyas died. Even those on the planet all died, and even those who were fighting. So when karma ripens, when the time happens, nothing can stop it. The only way to escape from suffering is by ceasing the cause, karma and disturbing thoughts. Even though today we generate the path, there is no question, "Today, what should I do?" For example, today I cannot generate the whole path, remove the root of ignorance, the seed of ignorance grasping things as truly existent, karma and disturbing thoughts, by generating the whole path, the remedy, today—so what can I do today? In day to day life, this hour, what I can do? I need to be free from samsara, what I can do? Right now, what I can do is according to the ability of my mind. That is again what I explained yesterday and the day before yesterday—to practice awareness and to not give the opportunity for the delusions and the disturbing thoughts to arise. In this way you do not create the cause, the karma, that compounds and creates the cause of samsara. This way you do not create the cause of samsara.

OBSERVE YOUR KARMA EACH MOMENT

By practicing awareness and wisdom, practicing awareness in the absolute nature, emptiness, dependent arising, the subject, object, and action, okay, by practicing that, that everything comes from the mind—all your sense objects, all the appearances—all these things that you enjoy and that your five senses enjoy—all this comes from your own mind, your own karma. Then practicing patience, loving kindness, and compassion continuously. Even if you don't remove the previous karma, the cause of samsara that one has already collected, you don't create the extra cause of samsara—by practicing like this in everyday life, every moment.

If you question, "Oh today I cannot generate the whole path, the aryan path, the wisdom directly perceiving shunyata, all those paths that remove the cause of samsara, the ignorance grasping at things as truly existent, and even the seed of that—also I want to be free from samsara, so what can I do now? Moment to moment?"

So then the method and wisdom that you hear of from the lam-rim teaching, starting with guru devotion, and perfect human rebirth, the eight freedoms and the ten richnesses—the whole thing is method and wisdom that has understood, that you put into practice, remembering, to control the disturbing thoughts. When there's the danger of them arising, practice method and wisdom, as explained from the lam-rim, continuously. So week by week, month by month, year by year—how skillful you are, the mind gets developed. Either in this life or in the next life, sooner or later, you are able to achieve the aryan path, and able to remove the cause, the seed, of ignorance grasping at true existence. This happens.

So like this you are able to achieve liberation, you are able to achieve omniscient mind. These are actually self-supporting—you can make yourself liberated from samsara. Even if that does not happen in this life, the first thing, the most dangerous thing, which can happen right now, at any moment, is birth in the lower realms. Before you achieve liberation from samsara, that can happen in any moment—birth in the lower realm, the preta, animal, or narak. So as soon as the appearance of this life stops, the danger that can appear is the appearance of the lower realms. So therefore, if you can make yourself self-supporting, and if before death you make preparations, there is no need to be born in the lower realms, no danger. If you can make this before death comes, purifying all the past negative karmas, practicing those particular methods of purification, very powerful various methods, creating the cause, accumulating merit, living in the vows—one very essential thing to receive the body of the happy transmigratory being is taking vows, living in moral conduct. Then training the mind in the lam-rim, the graduated path to enlightenment—in the actual mind training of the graduated path to enlightenment with the support of continuing strong purification and accumulating merit.

At least if you can make yourself not fear when death comes, that is the sign of having practiced Dharma. Stopping the appearance of this life can happen at any moment, and the appearance of the lower realms can happen at any moment—the appearance of ice, the appearance of fires, nothing else, this can happen at any moment. So therefore, without letting yourself, without cheating yourself, really examining well, really thinking carefully such things as karma, what you have heard from the teachings, those new subjects.

You always carry medicines when you travel, even though you are not sure whether you will get sick. If you get sick, immediately you can stop the problem. So similarly, in case there is a future life, what are you going to do? There's only two ways. As long as you are in samsara, there's only two ways: the suffering realm and the happy migratory realm. So that is according to karma. So by checking karma, the karma gives the answer, and you can understand from that answer. By doing the practices, what does it harm?

Just to finish this, in samsara, wherever you are, wherever you are born, there is no way to be free from impermanence and death. So to show that the whole of the Wheel of Life is put into the mouth of the Lord of Death and in the claws.

Whales open their mouth for days and birds come and stay inside their jaws. I heard that on these special days, the fifteenth day, they close their mouth. They close the mouth, they close the jaw. So the water becomes red and bloody—this is very good to meditate—visualize impermanence and death as a mouth, and you're inside the mouth. As long as you are in samsara you are in the mouth of the Lord of Death. Or inside the mouth of whales. As long as you're in samsara, it's like this. The jaw can close down at any moment. Just meditate, practice awareness of this. Then a part of mind says, "So therefore I should not be lazy. I shouldn't be lazy. I shouldn't distract myself, I shouldn't cheat myself." Tell this to yourself.

The practices that don't get done, like that, "I must do." Like that. That is the answer. Otherwise just meditating impermanence and death, without an answer about what to do with life, just thinking, meditating on impermanence and death only causes fear to arise, without solution, and this doesn't have meaning. This way it has meaning. You use the fear to eliminate the cause of the fear, to be liberated from the cause of the fear, to be completely free from all the fear in this way. These two claws very tightly holding could be the true cause of suffering, and disturbing thoughts and karma. You are not free because of pervasive compounding suffering. You are not free, as long as you are in the samsara, not free from the karma and disturbing thoughts. So completely, like the cat with the two claws completely grabs the mouse, and doesn't let to go away. Like that, you are completely trapped or under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts. The cessation of that is what you should attain, what you should achieve. Okay, thank you.

LECTURE 7, 5 DECEMBER

THE CAUSES AND RESULTS WITHIN THE TWELVE LINKS

[*The Heart Sutra* and motivation.]

The listening subject is the four noble truths. Here's the Wheel of Life so this side—the left side of the Wheel of Life, and here is a buddha standing. On the right hand there is a white circle showing this. That shows liberation, the cessation of suffering. Because of your own mind, not somebody else's mind or disturbing thoughts, and the three poisonous minds, so you take birth in samsara, experiencing either the realm of the suffering transmigratory beings or the happy transmigratory being, experiencing the three types of suffering: the suffering of suffering, the suffering of changes, and pervasive compounding suffering. That evolution happens as is shown in the details around the drawing of the twelve links, which I briefly went over yesterday.

To mention now a little bit about the twelve links—some more details. There are two actions and three disturbing thoughts, the cause, the compounding action and becoming, these two actions, disturbing thoughts, ignorance, and craving and grasping: so three disturbing thoughts and two actions, or cause. Then seven results.

There are no twelve links that finish within one life. There might be twelve links that finish within one life according to the Cittamatin school, however not in the Madhyamaka school. The first school believed the twelve links finishes within a one life, and they have a different way of explaining. But in the Madhyamaka school, there are no twelve links that finish within one life. Within two lives is quickest. Relating to the present, the twelve links of the present human body, these twelve links must be the cause created just before this life. Some could have been created many hundreds, many thousands of lifetimes ago. Some could be done by past life's human beings, just before this life. Some of you here whose past life was human being or maybe even Tibetan. Eating yak cheese or drinking yak milk.

Or you could have been an animal or a deva. You could have been an elephant. You could have been an ant or a butterfly. Anyway, the cause you created three lifetimes ago or four lifetimes ago, hundreds, many thousands, millions, billions of lifetimes ago—these could be the causes of this present human rebirth. However many lifetimes it took to experience, however many lifetimes it took between the ignorance and the compounding action, leaving the seed on the consciousness of the future-life samsara, on this present human body. From that of twelve links, there was craving and grasping, so between that was ignorance, compounding action, before craving and grasping arose to make that seed ready. Between that it could take many billions—

many, many unimaginable, inconceivable—numbers that do not fit our ordinary minds, numbers that do not fit our knowledge. It could take uncountable numbers of eons or billions or thousands or one lifetime. Just before this life, whatever the life was, at the time of death, just before dying, the craving and grasping from this human, the body, these twelve links craving and grasping were arisen and that made already powerful seed which was planted on the consciousness, by the compounding action which is motivated by ignorance, of these twelve links, this human rebirth's twelve links.

The seed that was left by the compounding action on the consciousness, to become ready to actualize this human birth, the present one, is called “becoming.” According to the seven results, in this life, the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg—the seven results up to the death, old age and death. Now what's left from these seven results is death.

If you can control the time when you are going to die, if you can control craving and grasping, the arising of those disturbing thoughts by remembering the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment, the renunciation of samsara, the shortcomings of samsara, the teachings of renunciation, shunyata, bodhicitta, on the basis of great loving kindness and great compassion—if you can control craving and grasping it gives you a chance to be born in the pure realms of the buddhas, like the pure realm of Tara, Amitabha, and other deities, where there's the opportunity to practice tantra and the rest of the path that you haven't completed in this life. In that life you can complete the whole path, taking the special body and being in the pure realm. There is no suffering body. Entering birth from a lotus, things like that, maybe the consciousness taking on the condition of life, I'm not sure. You have a special spiritual body, not a suffering body that has pain, old age, which experiences suffering rebirth, old age, sickness, death. Not a body that made of bone, flesh, skin, like this, not like that. Not like this terrifying or ugly body.

In that life you become enlightened by receiving teachings from the deity—that aspect of the Buddha. In that way you are able to quickly do the extensive works for all sentient beings, without the slightest mistake. So even if you wish to be born again in a human realm, where there's all the teachings, even if you wish to receive a perfect human rebirth, in a family who has already met the teaching of the Buddha and who has refuge in their mind, who are practicing great devotion, to the guru, the Triple Gems, who do not interfere with one's practice of Dharma, to develop your own mind and to benefit for sentient beings. Even if you wish to receive a perfect human body, to continue to practice Dharma, the very crucial time is before death—when you can control the craving and grasping that causes you to be born in the lower realms.

By remembering the teachings that you heard during your own lifetime, the Dharma books that you have read, the meditation that you have done, retreat or teachings, listening, reflecting, meditation practice that which you have done during the lifetime, by remembering those at the death-time, you control the links of craving and grasping from the set of the twelve links, which lead to the animal, preta, or narak's rebirth.

PUTTING THE TEACHINGS INTO PRACTICE

In this course I think you have received much more than in other courses, in terms of teachings. In other courses I spend much time in the reincarnations, three or four days in the reincarnations, and discuss for several days, with a lot of discussion, and after seven days, there are always some such sufferings just after that. There are thoughts about bodhicitta but we don't reach the complete technique, we finish in the general samsaric suffering, and then the course ends. Most time is spent on the perfect human rebirth, its usefulness, difficulty, and

impermanence and death. And the lower realms especially, especially the naraks, the heaviest one. All the thought training, the commitments and advice—if I were teaching myself they would never come, they would never have five powers.

Actually you have received much more this time in regards to practice. If you want to practice, you have received all the essential practice to do in the life, all the basic, most important ones. But to really feel those things, to really practice, you need those basic ones very strongly. If those basic ones are not sure, even though those other thought-training practices are so practical, so beneficial, the best psychologist, unbelievable even when death comes, you can guide yourself in this most crucial time, even if there's nobody there explaining Dharma, what to think, what to do, and you can use death as purification to benefit all sentient beings, to accumulate extensive merit. But if there is no feeling of karma, refuge, those things in the mind, no wish to practice those basic things, even though those later ones are so practical, an incredible practice, unbelievable practice, you may not feel much inspiration to practice, to take it like a patient taking medicine, a patient who really feels his sickness to be a serious disease, and feels a strong need of medicine.

Without the basics, no matter how much the rest of the subjects are put to you, those basic meditations, perfect human rebirth, its usefulness, its difficulty, those basic things that persuade the mind to take the essence, and later how to take the essence, how to make life meaningful. First of all persuading the mind how to make it meaningful and then later to make life meaningful.

Also karma and refuge, and faith in the action and result, which is the root of all happiness. If you do not feel these things, these teachings in the heart, it is difficult to have faith in all these things because there are not enough causes created. Having devotion in the lam-rim teachings, especially karma, and refuge, is itself is a kind of a realization; that itself is an achievement, a realization. For example, to develop faith in the karma, the action and result which is the root of all the happiness and perfections, from the outline you can see how this is the most important thing. This is the root of all happiness.

From this wisdom of understanding Dharma, karma, and faith, from this the practice starts. Abandon, as much as you know about negative karma, and as much as you know and practice the right things, you accomplish that much happiness. As you stop the obstacles and practices, you accomplish that much happiness, then liberation, enlightenment.

Without having created much merit, purification, and pacifying obstacles, it's not easy to understand the teachings. Even if you understand the words, to really feel it in the heart as true, that takes time. It needs a lot of merit. That's why everybody is not the same—they hear the same words, but there are different effects on the mind. For some, the person feels nothing, For some, the person was already feeling like this, when he was child, he was feeling reincarnation and feeling completely that the purpose of life is for others, completely. Many things, karma and many things, naturally, even in child-time he feels it. So when he hears the teachings, it's nothing new. It's like talking about his own life, what he's been practicing. For some, even after one month in the course, there is still uncertainty about reincarnation, whether there are past or future lives, and it is still difficult to understand.

This depends on each individual person's merit is accumulated from past lives. Some have greater obstacles, some have less, some have no experience, some have very quick experience—after even a few days, doing retreat, doing meditation, they are able to see shunyata, emptiness, just by even one session trying to meditate on emptiness. Examine, study—even if it is difficult

to have faith, try, examine, study, examine more and more, study more and more. If you practice correctly as explained in the teaching, then as the Buddha explained in the lineage lamas graduated path to enlightenment, continuously, skillfully, doing strong continual practice of purification, accumulating merit, in this way the realization comes. And then the understanding, the definite understanding, the faith comes.

So without practice, without correct practice, just by hearing the words, realization does not come. Just by hearing words, mind peace does not come, liberation does not come. Even if the person is taking medicine if he's not taking it correctly, as the most skilled doctor has advised him, the person cannot recover. It is similar with the teachings. Even if you are practicing, if you are not correctly practicing as it is explained in the teachings, then like this.

YOU HAVE TWO CHOICES: TO CHERISH YOURSELF AND BE MISERABLE OR TO CHERISH OTHERS AND BE HAPPY

The conclusion: there's nothing much to think about life, nothing complicated to think about. It's a question of two things, whether you want to follow the selfish mind, whether you dedicate your life for the selfish mind, the continuation of consciousness that has no beginning. So far you have been following the selfish mind, the continuation of selfish mind with no beginning, and so far no end, and the disturbing thoughts with no beginning and no end, the true cause of suffering. So all the sufferings, samsara, all the confusions, did not have beginning, and still did not end. This is the result that happens if you follow the selfish mind. And same thing—so far without beginning until now it has been like this, still not free from suffering, samsara, and so if you devote your life to selfish mind, without end, continuously it will be like this within the six realms, just as we went over in the twelve links.

If you follow the thought of cherishing others, so far you didn't achieve liberation from samsara for yourself. By leaving aside leading others, helping others, bringing others into liberation from samsara, you didn't get to achieve even liberation even for yourself. So even the work for yourself didn't succeed, it has still not been achieved. The result of following the selfish mind, becoming a servant, a slave to the selfish mind, interferes even with your own happiness. So that's why His Holiness says that if you want to be selfish, if you want to live life with a selfish mind, be the best selfish—now, what is that? That is to cherish others, renounce yourself and cherish others. In that way you get all the happiness, all the success.

Whenever the mind, whenever the attitude changes, as soon as you cherishes others, no matter how many problems there are—family problems, personal problems—as soon as you cherish others, those who have greater problems and those who have similar problem, as soon as you change the attitude and cherishes others, immediately in the mind there is great happiness, there is relaxation, there's no uptightness, but there is relaxation, inner peace, tranquility. As soon as you cherish yourself—"I am more important than others. My happiness is more important than others."—as soon as you change the attitude, as soon as you cherish yourself, then immediately there's this pain in the heart, there's uptightness. If you analyze, if you watch the nature of that attitude, it is not peace, it is uptight.

When you meditate, when you remember how other sentient beings are kind, when you are aware how other sentient beings are precious, the uptightness in the heart becomes loose. There is relaxation when you feel the kindness of others, when you think how others are so precious. It's very good to practice awareness of the other being the mother, kind in the four ways, the three great purposes, or the three levels of happiness—the happiness of the future life,

liberation, enlightenment, and how all your three times' happiness is received by depending on these sentient beings.

During the meditation session, practice awareness of the kindness of other sentient beings—those who are sitting around, behind, right side, left side, in the front, here in this meditation hall. Every person that you see, every bird, every fly, every dog—every creature that you see, practice, feel the kindness, whichever way you think, as soon as you see a being, remember the kindness. And especially with the person whom you dislike or who criticizes or who disrespects you, especially with this person. Either especially go to see that person, sit next to that person, then meditate, or walk, or sit with that person, and then meditate on the kindness.

At the center or at the family house, if you practice awareness like this, the mind is happy with everybody. In this way there's loving kindness and compassion which naturally arises toward them and the mind is happy with whomever you meet, whomever you see. The mind is opened to everyone, and there's a wish to help to everyone. Your mind is so happy, very happy, and there is no space for depression. Life becomes very enjoyable, and you have taken this human body, you are born to enjoy life with a good heart, without an egocentric mind. It is a very happy, very satisfied, very happy life.

Otherwise, as long as you cherish yourself, you are like a rock. The mind is like a rock, a rock of iron—with some sentient beings like this, with other sentient beings like that. There is nothing else to think about except yourself, your own happiness. So selfish, like a rock. No happiness. Life has no enjoyment—you open the door for suffering, the door for all problems. Then life is like another problem, depression, so much failure. The stronger the selfish mind there is, the greater the impatience, the greater the dissatisfaction, and so more and more problems arise.

Even if you live alone, or with other people, wherever you travel, everywhere there's an enemy. Before you came to that place there was no enemy, but after you came to that place there were lots of enemies. Before you came, that place didn't have enemies, but after you came there were so many enemies. Enemies develop more and more, the longer you stay there. Everywhere you go always there are stories, and always people talk about it, very soon everyone knows about you. When somebody starts to speak, starts to mention your name, "Oh, yes! Oh, yes! That I know!" As soon as you start the name, they will finish the name, and the other person has shown the expression, and you don't need to say anything back. You don't need to tell any stories. It is enough in what the other person expresses on his face.

For the person who always practices loving kindness, compassion, cherishing others, it is the opposite. Even if you live alone there is much happiness, satisfaction, in your life. You live life for others, and there is that much less problem, with a less dissatisfactory mind and less anger. Wherever you go, with whomever you stay, there is always much to enjoy, much happiness for you, and also for other people.

For the other person who is so selfish and who so impatient, all the friends become enemy. Even in one day, even within one hour they become enemies. When others hear that he is coming to the house, they manage to stop him. They say, "We are not at home," or they tell the person, "Oh, we're busy," or something. Or "We have to go out," or something. Or somebody else makes a phone call saying that he's not there. Even if the person's coming, before the person comes, they lock the door and they go away.

If you have a good heart, cherishing others, wherever you go, with whomever you live, there is always much happiness and instead of meeting the enemy, you only meet friends. Everyone who

meets you becomes a friend and everyone wishes to receive you at their home, everyone wishes to help, to give you food and clothing, a place. Especially when you are in trouble, and everyone is worried. Somebody who is very selfish and so impatient, with no thought of others, only doing what he or she wants, no matter how much of a problem that person has—even starving, disaster, no place to stay, no job—nobody want to help.

So Shakyamuni Buddha, all those buddhas, all the lineage lamas of the graduated path to enlightenment that complete the path, by renouncing themselves and cherishing other sentient beings, achieved the complete path and achieved enlightenment. They are continuously doing extensive works for all sentient beings, without the slightest mistake. Even in one second, uncountable numbers of sentient beings are brought enlightenment, and they are manifesting in various forms with the holy body, holy speech, holy mind. Even the beams emitting from the holy body lead uncountable numbers of beings to happiness, freeing them from sufferings. They are able to do extensive works for all sentient beings, equaling infinite space.

There is nothing much to think about, nothing complicated to think about. So two things, two choices: you look at if you follow the selfish mind, you examine what advantage there is, whether there's an advantage or not. Then by following the thought of cherishing others, how much profit it has. It's like you want to buy something. If you're going to spend ten rupees or going to spend \$100, \$1,000, you check, you carefully analyze much the quality of the material. You don't want loss, don't want to cheat yourself, you want profit, even for five rupees, you want to buy the better one, the better quality.

This is the question of the whole life, after death, which is the foundation for all the coming future lives—however much happiness there will be, you can enjoy, however much suffering you has to experience in all the coming future lives depends on this life, each day, each twenty-four hours, each minute life, each second's attitude. Not only the happiness, the mind peace of this life, but that of all the coming future lives, from here up to enlightenment—whether it's going to be endless samsaric suffering or have an end. That is dependent on the attitude.

ONLY WITH THIS HUMAN BODY CAN WE PRACTICE DHARMA

So it's a huge question. I'll give you one example. This one hour, this one minute, you are not born as an animal, as a pig, and you have the freedom to practice Dharma. First of all, to a pig, even if they explain meaning of the mantra TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNIYE SOHA, or OM MANI PADME HUM, the Chenrezig mantra, or about Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, or karma, action and result, or virtue and nonvirtue, or what is the cause of suffering and what is the cause of happiness, for billions of eons, there is no way the pig can understand. You tie the pig there to your meditation cushion or to the table, and then you explain for billions of eons about cause of suffering, nonvirtue, the cause of happiness, virtue. And there is no way to make it understand. But for a human being, a sentient being who has a human body, who is able to understand the words, the meaning, within a minute, within one hour, you can make him understand what is the cause of happiness and what is the cause of suffering, about virtue and nonvirtue, by giving the definitions of each one. So immediately, within that minute, that human being has the opportunity to practice, to abandon nonvirtue, to practice virtue, the cause of happiness. He can transform his actions into virtue, and ensure that his actions do not become nonvirtue. Immediately, within that minute, there is unbelievable freedom. You can see from this how the human life, the body is so precious, unbelievably precious. You just think of this example, comparing your life to that of the pig.

So there is no question in relation to the rest of the other Dharma subjects, to achieve liberation, enlightenment. This freedom, not being born as an animal such as a pig, having the freedom to practice Dharma, having the opportunity, any happiness that you wish in the next life, wealth, perfect surroundings, being a king, having the body of the happy transmigratory being—with this human life, with this body, within this second, this minute, you can create that cause. So this human body is much more precious than mountains of dollars, or diamonds. Within this minute, this second, not being born as an animal, as a pig, having the freedom to practice Dharma. Even if you wishes to achieve liberation within this minute, this second, you can create the cause. The mind training in moral conduct, living in the vows, even in a minute, in a second. So therefore this human body is much more precious than the diamond the size of this earth, or dollars equaling the number of the atoms of this earth. Within such a short time, a minute, a second, even if you wish to achieve enlightenment, you can create the cause, thinking, “May I achieve enlightenment. I’m going to practice bodhicitta in order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings.” Generating bodhicitta, the motivation of bodhicitta, creates infinite merit, the cause of happiness, to do extensive work for all sentient beings. Even putting the palms together like this, prostrating to the Buddha, even though you doesn’t see Buddha, even the thangka, the statue, the holy object— you can create the cause of enlightenment. Just in this second by doing this.

Lighting one stick of incense, thinking of the Buddha and offering, creates the cause of enlightenment. You see a beautiful flower, and you offer it to the Buddha. Just simply think of the Buddha, then offer the flower to the Buddha. In that second you create the cause of enlightenment. Even by thinking of the Buddha, offering grains or visualizing gold, grain, offering to the Buddha. By thinking of the Buddha, immediately in that second, you create the cause of enlightenment. By prostrating to the Buddha, one who has finished all the stains, one who has completed all the realizations, in that second you create the unimaginable cause of happiness, merit, the cause of enlightenment.

From your side as long as you don’t know how to practice Dharma, how to create the cause for happiness, not having listened to the teachings, you don’t know that there’s this incredible unbelievable opportunity in the life to create the cause of happiness for the sake of other sentient beings. Or you do know the teachings, but don’t practice. That obstacle you create from your own side, otherwise there’s nobody stopping you from creating the cause of happiness. There is so much that you can. It is incredible how you can enjoy life.

Within a minute, a second, this human body now is much more precious than the dollars, diamonds, filling all of space. If you don’t have these freedoms, okay, if you don’t have this human body, if being born as an animal, a pig, you don’t have the freedom of having the human body to practice Dharma, even if you own that many dollars or diamonds filling the whole sky, there is no way to achieve even the happiness of future lives, leaving aside liberation and enlightenment. No way, no opportunity. There are many beings such as the great yogi, Milarepa, who achieved enlightenment within a few years, within one short lifetime, who completed the path. He lived on nettles, he had one shawl, he didn’t have even one dollar, didn’t have even small piece, atom of diamond, and yet he became enlightened.

So you visualize your precious human body here, on this side, and there, on that side, visualize all the diamonds, all the dollars, mountains of them, the whole earth, the whole of space filled with them. Without having this precious human body, even if you own that much, you cannot close the door of the lower realms. And you cannot achieve the happiness of future lives, nor liberation, nor enlightenment. But with this precious human body, even if you don’t own even one dollar, you can close the door of the lower realms, the happiness of future lives, and can

achieve liberation and enlightenment. In one minute, in a second. So you can see, even in one minute, in one second of the human body, it is unbelievably precious, how precious it is. Inexpressible. All those materials are nothing.

IF YOU WANT HAPPINESS, JUST DO IT!

Also it is mentioned in the teachings, if you want to know what you have done in the past, look at your present body. It means that in the past you have done virtuous actions, practiced moral conduct, charity, dedicated the merits, practiced Dharma. So the proof is that you have the body of the happy migratory being, the human body. Now the question is, where you will go your next life, where you will go in the future life, and that depends on present-life karma.

So even if the past has been mostly lived creating negative karma, before death there's an opportunity to purify, to create the cause of the happiness, to make preparation for those happinesses up to enlightenment.

Also there's another verse that His Holiness used to say,

Because of the precious previous life, this precious human body has been achieved and this present yellow-robed monk won't be thrown over the precipice in the next life.

This means by practicing Dharma you received the present precious human body, but don't waste it and in the next life be thrown into the abyss of the lower realms.

So my conclusion is that this perfect human rebirth is so unbelievable precious. Examine which one has more profit. If you're going to buy something from the shop, even ten rupees, twenty rupees, you analyze the quality, you spend so much time in order to not have loss and to have profit. Even if you are going to the beach, you go to the best beach where there are big waves.

We analyze these things so much, but here now the most important thing about the precious human body is that it has opportunity to create the cause, happiness, from now on up to enlightenment, from today up to enlightenment, which is an unbelievable opportunity. Not feeling the value, the way of living the life, not examining how much worth to put in life, the precious human body, that is lack of understanding Dharma, especially the lam-rim teaching, not having the realization of the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth. This perfect human rebirth is useful and difficult to find again, and can be stopped in any moment. The actual death can happen in any moment. There is no opportunity after that.

This is important to examine, so there are two points: the selfish mind and the thought of cherishing other sentient beings—examine which is more profitable. And after that, dedicating life, the precious human body, to cherishing others.

Each day, each hour, each minute, this is a period that you make decision where you will go after death: to the three lower realms or to the three upper realms. You have a choice. With this precious human body you have a choice, a freedom to purify, to abandon the cause of the lower realms and to make preparation, from there up until enlightenment. Each minute you have a choice, where to go to create the cause and to stop the cause of happiness and to abandon and purify the cause of suffering.

So I think, I started from the Buddha holding the white circle at the top of the Wheel of Life which shows the sorrowless state, liberation. Now on the other side there is a verse, two stanzas that I mentioned yesterday, that show the true path. The conclusion of what the Buddha is saying is that if you do not want life of suffering, if you do not want a life of problems, if there are ways to be liberated from the problems, then do it! Then practice it. There is point to being depressed or upset and doing nothing. Practice! If there's a method to be liberated from true suffering, the true cause of suffering, from problems, then practice it! If there's no method at all, then what's the point of being upset? That doesn't help. That is like being worried and depressed because the sky is not the earth. The mind is not oneness with the true cause of suffering, with ignorance, it is temporarily obscured.

Even in day-to-day life, without meditating, you can understand that you get attached to that object, and in the evening, it is no longer an object of attachment, an object of anger. It changes. One hour before what used to be an object of anger is no longer an object of anger. Now there's no anger for that object. So even without meditating, this disturbing thought arises and goes. So especially by meditating, especially by following the path, you definitely see that these daily experiences come and go, disturbing thoughts come and go away. This shows that if you do really practice, follow the path, the right path, the correct path, you can definitely cease the true cause of suffering, the disturbing thoughts, completely. The daily life experience shows that. So therefore, you need to do it by listening, reflecting, and meditating, while you have the precious human body which is the complete means, method and wisdom, to liberate yourself from samsara, to be free from even subtle obscurations, and to achieve enlightenment, the great non-abiding sorrowless state. In order to show this, that one can be free from suffering forever, the Buddha holds the white circle, showing liberation, the other path is the true path.

So that is a very brief description of the Wheel of Life.

YOU ONLY HAVE TO ELIMINATE THE CAUSE OF SUFFERING ONCE

There are uncountable numbers of sentient beings who have become enlightened, who have practiced the path. During Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's time uncountable numbers happened, great yogis, pandits in the various countries. You can read their life-stories, how they practiced and achieved enlightenment. Milarepa, Lama Tsongkhapa, like that. You can read the experiences written by them and you can visit the holy places, the monasteries where they lived, where they practiced. It's not just mere belief; becoming enlightened is not just mere belief without logic, or experience. This is the way of examining. If there are many others, then this is the proof, this is the worthwhile path to practice. There's no cheating from the side of the teaching, from the side of the path. This is only from your own side if you do not correctly practice. If you practice correctly there's no cheating from the side of the teaching.

Even if I give enough food and money to all the present human beings on this earth, if they don't change their mind, if they don't change their attitude of miserliness, their dissatisfactory mind, attachment, anger, ignorance, and if they don't change their actions, their negative karma, such as stealing, they will continue to create the causes of poverty. In another life they will become a beggar. Again they continuously create the cause, and in another lifetime they will become a beggar. So on and on like this. All the famines, all the starvation, the droughts, the killings, the wars, all the problems, all these things, it goes on and on like this. As I mentioned, the one who has the greatest suffering of hunger and thirst is the preta, and what causes them to be born in the preta realm and suffer those things is so many hundreds of lifetimes of miserliness and attachment.

And then the cause of the naraks is basically anger, and of animals is ignorance. If you use your enjoyments now with ignorance, if you don't try to understand Dharma, what is the right thing to practice, what is the wrong thing to be abandoned, then continuously the mind becomes ignorant in karma, and creates the cause to be born as an animal. When you use the enjoyments without bodhicitta, without renunciation, without shunyata, this is the cause of an animal rebirth. With miserliness, a preta. Or with anger, a narak being. It's all to do with the attitude, the mind. Virtuous karma that is done unstained by anger or worldly concern leads to the body of the happy transmigratory beings in the next lives.

The six realms all these come from the mind and the lower suffering realms come from the three poisonous minds, signified by the three animals. As long as you don't change your attitude, as long as you don't change your actions, the problem will be continuously like this. So you develop your mind in the graduated path to enlightenment, and then change the attitude, action. Even just giving the teaching of patience, knowing how to control anger, just one meditation technique on how to control anger stops rebirth in the lower realm, and stops you from creating all those problems in the human realm, all the problems that which you experience in the human realm and next lives. It stops this life and next life's problems.

Even knowing how to keep the mind in equanimity without being involved in anger and the dissatisfactory mind, attachment, even though one meditation on equanimity, that you yourself practice—this can be an example of equanimity and teach others. Just one meditation on equanimity, one meditation on patience, helps changes the attitude. It benefits all the years you are going to practice. It's the same with loving kindness and compassion. Unbelievable negative karma is stopped. Each complete negative karma has four suffering results. The worst one is creating the result similar to the cause. Besides the suffering rebirth in the lower realm, you can be born as a human being doing the actions again: killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, speaking harshly with the negative mind. All those things you repeat again. That's one of the results: creating the result similar to the cause. Then again you experience all that, and there is no end in the suffering of samsara.

You can see now how unbelievably important the change of the attitude and action is. So you yourself being the good example and teaching other just even one meditation on equanimity or patience stops unbelievable negative karma. The benefit is unbelievable.

By giving one hour of the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment, you are healing billions of people. There is no comparison to this one hour of teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment. This gives me a little bit of encouragement to teach lam-rim.

You should examine like this—this is the real benefit. Eliminating the cause of the sufferings is a one time work, a one time healing. Once the root of suffering is eliminated, it is impossible to come back. For you, it's a one time Dharma practice. In this way, starvation, fighting, war, everything, all the thousands of problems altogether stop.

We all think, "I want to benefit others, I want to help others." So it is very good to check how you're going to benefit others. What kind of benefit. That's very important. To benefit them in this way you bring them to enlightenment, the highest peerless happiness, and you yourself need to develop your mind by listening, reflecting, and meditating, practicing the complete path, such as this graduated path to enlightenment.

So then, might finally stop. So it's good to discuss, those who don't know, okay? Yeah, thank you so much. Good night.

LECTURE 8, 6 DECEMBER

NEPALI MUSIC IS THE SOUNDTRACK OF SAMBARA

[*The Heart Sutra* and motivation.]

The subject of listening is the four noble truths.

Lama Tsongkhapa explained in the *Hymns of the Experience of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, if you do not attempt to think of the true suffering, the shortcomings of the samsara, you won't get the thought seeking liberation exactly or correctly. If you don't know what exactly liberation means, you wouldn't know what you needs to achieve. Even though you believe that you have ultimate liberation it is not actual liberation, but only temporary happiness.

Even if you are able to experience that, it doesn't last, since that is not ultimate liberation, the cessation of the control of the karma and disturbing thoughts. Since you don't know that is the fundamental suffering, that its cessation is the main liberation, then ultimate liberation wouldn't arise and also the very strong thought seeking liberation won't happen.

[Nepali music in background]. This Nepalese music is very sad music, kind of showing the nature of samsara, showing the biography, the life-story of samsara. There's music when a marriage goes on, and then there's music when the body is being carried out.

There are biographies of the holy beings and of samsaric beings. There is meeting and separating, becoming high then falling down. After collecting there is finishing, after meeting there is separating. The end of birth is death. This music shows samsaric life. All these things happen being under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts.

The way of entering samsara is through the twelve links, by the cause of the karma and disturbing thoughts. If you don't reflect well, you will not know how to cut the root of samsara. So therefore, practice renunciation, the sadness of being in samsara. Then, to understand what binds you to samsara is extremely important. The way that Lama Tsongkhapa wrote it: "I, the yogi, practiced like that and you, the seeker of liberation, practice this way."

So one very important thing, as I mentioned yesterday, at the time of death be careful. Yesterday I mentioned about the craving and grasping that arises at the time of death, and how important it is to control, because what rebirth you take in the next life and in the life after that depends on that. Before death craving and grasping arise. So therefore it is very important to not cling, to not be overwhelmed by the dissatisfactory mind, attachment and anger, these three poisonous minds. If there's attachment arising for the family, if there's attachment rising for the home, the property, the house, even for your own reputation, even for your own body, it is extremely important to remember the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment at that time. It is the most crucial time to remember the meditations you have done, the retreats you have done, the teachings you have listened to. If you have to die, remember the twelve links, the three types of sufferings, and the six types of suffering

Nothing is definite in the shortcomings of samsara, not friends, or enemies.

And then as is mentioned in the sutra teaching, *Ting nye seng nyi Gyalpo*, the father becomes the son, the mother becomes the wife, the enemy becomes the friend—so it always changes.

Therefore, in samsara nothing is definite. Nothing is certain. Life to life the whole thing changes, and even in this life, even in one year, one month, even in one day it changes. Nothing is definite.

There is a story that Sharipu, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's disciple, when he was going for alms in India, he went to one family. He looked through the door of the family house, and he saw the father who used to catch fish from behind the pond to live on, he died and was reborn as a fish in the pond. The son was eating the fish who is the father. The enemy of the son was attached to his wife and died and was reborn to him. And so the son was carrying his enemy on his lap. The mother was attached to the property, to the house, and was born as the dog of that family. The son was beating the dog, the mother. Sharipu laughed at samsaric existence. The whole family was completely changed. It is like that. In our present families, we have animals, and it is exactly like this, like the story of this family.

The problem is only that you cannot recognize past relationships. So therefore when you meet other sentient beings there is a big gap, no feeling of the father, no feeling of the relatives, no feeling of closeness. You feel you have nothing to do with them, they're nothing to do with you. But nothing is definite.

SEEKING ENJOYMENT IS THE DOOR TO ALL SUFFERING

There is no satisfaction in samsara. Lama Tsongkhapa explained in the prayer of the graduated path to enlightenment that seeking enjoyment is the door of all the sufferings.

If you put this teaching into your own life and experiences, on what you see in the world, on other samsaric beings' lives, it becomes very extensive commentary. Put this verse on your own life and put this verse on the life of other samsaric beings. This is what you see by reading the newspaper, all the time, or if you watch TV. You see the six shortcomings of samsara, the three types of sufferings. It's all commentaries on the three types of sufferings, the six types of suffering, and the eight types of suffering, the particular human sufferings. The whole newspaper is a commentary on the lam-rim. If you look at it with the thought of lam-rim you can relate to shunyata, bodhicitta, the renunciation of samsara. The shortcomings of samsara, dissatisfaction. Uncertainty is one basic problem of the shortcomings of samsara—from the six types—so therefore Lama Tsongkhapa particularly mentioned this. Also, enjoying no satisfaction being the door of all the sufferings—it's very clear.

A person who's an alcoholic is unable to stop, even though he sees it is a problem, not only to himself but to others in the family, to other people. He has no control. Because of this, he has no satisfaction. He is not satisfied with the previous experience, the comfort, he wants more and greater, and expects to get more, more, even though it's not possible in reality. So he loses all his money that he collected by working hard. It's all used to create a shorter life, to cause more problems. The whole family fears that something will happen, a car accident. Also, fights. When one is intoxicated things that people usually hide comes out. On and on. Interfering, harming the family, besides other people.

He has to go to prison again and again and again, and it's exactly true as Lama Tsongkhapa says. Not having satisfaction is the door to all of the sufferings. You can apply this in so many cases. Drugs. Some people begin to open their mind, but are never satisfied, and later destroy their own lives, their body and health, causing worry, fear, and so forth. They lose all their possessions. Also cigarettes. I saw one body in America, one dead body, one old mother, I think it had been six months ago since she died, so the body was laying down there. The Tibetan doctor, Ama

Lobsang, said it was due to smoking cigarettes. She gave the body to the hospital or the university, where they study the body.

It is very clear what Lama Tsongkhapa says, that not having satisfaction by enjoying is the door of all the sufferings. So now another big problem is sexual misconduct—having other people, other husbands or wives, belonging to others—it is the same as alcohol, as I mentioned. Even in reality there is nothing, there's no pleasure increasing, more and more. Even in reality there's no pleasure. This is a problem of the dissatisfied mind—dissatisfied with the previous experience, wanting it again and again, expecting greater pleasure—the whole life is lived on this hope and this expectation, but actually in reality it is like this. So because of this hope, this expectation, this samsaric work is done continuously, on and on and on, and there is no satisfaction. The more you follow desire, suffering has no end, the problem has no end. That brings various problems. Lama Tsongkhapa explained in the great commentary of the lam-rim that the worst suffering of samsara, the greatest suffering of samsara, the most painful you are that however much you follows desire, it has no satisfaction, it has no end.

This is mentioned and that's very true. All those are bigger and bigger, and there is more and more disharmony in the relationships, you are continuously living life in disharmony with that person, then after that with another person disharmony, with another person disharmony, on and on.

Therefore, if you live the life with loving kindness, with compassion for each other, there's happiness. With the thought of cherishing others, loving kindness, and compassion, you are born—the purpose of the life, I think I might have mentioned already before. I don't remember. The purpose of life, of each day's breathing, eating, each hour, each minute breathing, in and out, surviving, this human body, this is an incredible unbelievable opportunity to obtain happiness. To eliminate the sufferings of all other sentient beings equaling infinite space, to obtain the happiness of all the sentient beings equaling infinite space. That includes this person with whom you are living. This is the purpose of the life according to your own capability. If you are able to benefit others for ultimate happiness that is the best thing, that is what they need. The purpose of life is to cause happiness for others, to obtain happiness for others, to eliminate the sufferings of others, and not to harm others. That is contradictory—if you harm others then the reason you have taken this human body, this precious human body, is lost. To give harm you don't need to take a human body.

For that purpose, giving food to this body, giving clothes to this body, giving a good comfortable place to this body, giving medicine when it's sick, spending much money to be healthy, to have a longer life is all for the benefit of others. In that way all these things become for others. Naturally it becomes for others, it's not for you, but for others. Naturally it becomes for others. That includes however many people there are at the center, or however many there are in the family—one person, two people, three people. Parents, children—it includes all these. So therefore your own life is for other sentient beings. So thinking like this, the other person also learns, other person also changes their attitude and practices in that way. So there is much happiness, much freedom, much happiness.

Otherwise what happens is pointless, from child-time when you went to learn the A B C D, all the education, to get a job to earn money. But if you don't stop giving harm, if you don't do the practice of Dharma, if you don't stop giving harm to others, then what it looks like is that from child-time you were born, went to school, college, all these things, took a job to make money to have a longer life in order to give harm to others—it all becomes ridiculous.

One example of following the desire of the samsaric work is sexual misconduct. This is one example. This involves killing and brings many other troubles, many other negative karmas. It involves killing, hurting others, beating others, harming others with body, speech, and mind. So many things, so many negative karmas it brings. Each of the actions of following desire. These examples can be seen very clearly—they bring much negative karma, so much trouble.

So this is very clear what Lama Tsongkhapa says—not having satisfaction by enjoying is the door of all the sufferings. It's very good to meditate on this verse using your own life-story, and in this way your own life-story becomes the commentary of this verse. Then every day what you hear, what you see in the world becomes commentary to this verse, a lam-rim teaching.

Many people think, “I don't need to practice Dharma, I don't need to practice meditation. I don't have problems, I don't have suffering. Dharma practice and meditation are something only for the poor people to practice. It's a practice for poor people. It's a practice for beggars, who don't have money. It's for them to practice.” They have incredible suffering but do not recognize it. The person looks very nice outside, the appearance is very nice, wealthy, but if you speak a little bit longer and longer, you hear more and more problems. Whichever class, lower class, middle class, high class person, whatever, at the beginning you might believe he's okay, it's all completely all right, very healthy, but when he relaxes, you can hear suffering. Business problems, family problems—there are some problems there. In his mind there is some problem there, some dissatisfaction. She is not happy with her husband; he is not happy with his wife, something is not satisfactory.

LEAVING THE BODY AGAIN AND AGAIN

Then leaving the body again and again, and joining again and again. This mother came from another mother. If you count, starting from this present mother's mother's mother's mother's mother—even this whole earth is not enough. With this meditation, you can also use your father or your grandfather. This body, this blood, came from this present life's mother and grandmother. That continued from another mother—it is unbelievable, the continuation of this physical body. Then the other part of the body came from the father, which came from the grandfather. It is kind of like junk, garbage. This is a very effective way to meditate to cut the clinging to this body, the attachment clinging to this body.

However much you clean it from the outside, this is what it is in fact. After each of these points, you should make this conclusion, therefore there's nothing to be attached to. Otherwise, that is the whole point, that is the cause of samsara, the cause of suffering, making the conclusion after each meditation. You can elaborate with examples, with each outline, and then make the conclusion that there is nothing, no reason, no point at all, to cling.

Leaving the body again and again, there is nothing to cling to. There is nothing that you haven't taken in samsara. Even this body has to be left at any moment—there is nothing to cling to.

Then, again and again, becoming higher and lower, not having compassion when you are born and when you die, you have to go to the intermediate state alone and to the next life without companions, without friends. However many friends, billions and billions of friends, you cannot take even one when you die. As it's mentioned in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, when you get born, when you die, you are alone.

Then remembering the six types of sufferings, the five types of suffering of the aggregates, all these things are very important to control, to stop, especially when you are near death. Letting go

of clinging to your own body, possessions, your son, family, properties, then there is no problem. Even if you don't know those particular methods of transferring consciousness to the pure realm of a buddha, just remembering these teachings, the shortcomings of samsara, controlling the mind, there is no problem at all of rebirth in the lower realm.

In this way, nothing keeps you down, and even if you wish to have a perfect human body in the next life again to practice Dharma, to train the mind in the path, to benefit other sentient beings, you get the chance from this. Or to be born in the deva realm. Even rebirth in a pure realm comes from this fundamental practice of not letting the mind under the control of these disturbing thoughts.

Otherwise even if you have trained well during the life in *powa*, transferring the consciousness, these special methods, at the time of death if you don't remember the lam-rim, desire comes at the time of death, clinging to the family, property, things like that, your own belongings, your own body, it's like the bird—the legs are tied with rope, with stone, tied, and you cannot fly.

A person who is going to be born in the hot naraks feels very cold. If you have the experience of being around sick people, being around dying people, before they die many people scream and talk about feeling cold. Many of them are very hot. You have to put many blankets on them, and however many you put it's never enough—still the person feels cold. This is the craving and grasping arising, which causes them to be born in the hot naraks or cold naraks. If they feel very cold they cling to the heat, and that craving and grasping leads to the hot narak. Then the person feels so hot he wants everything to be taken off, and that leads then to the cold naraks. During their lifetime they make preparations like this for the path to the lower realms.

At that time it is important to recognize the teachings that you have heard during your lifetime, and then control the disturbing thoughts. In this way you get protected from the lower realms.

As Shantideva said in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, when you have the fortune to accumulate merit, if you don't do it, then when you are born in the suffering, evil-gone realm and you are always ignorant, what will you do? You won't get even a human body and if you don't get human body, there is no virtue, only nonvirtue. I think we can understand this to mean, as I mentioned yesterday, that if you get born like those red worms that are given to the fish, to feed the fish, or as a goat or a buffalo, or a sheep it's impossible to accumulate virtue, the causes of happiness. For so many eons, life is like this, and there is no opportunity to accumulate virtue at all. There is only nonvirtue, wandering back and forth in the lower realms, like the turtle that lives under the ocean, just going back and forth under the ocean, in the three lower realms. For eons and eons like this.

Therefore, to be able to practice, to be able to control the mind at the time of death, you need to train. So therefore you need to make preparations training in the lam-rim, the teaching on the graduated path to enlightenment. Like the military, like the army—before the actual fighting they have to do a lot of training as if they're actually fighting. You need training in everyday life, and this way you can remember it at the time of death. When anger comes, immediately you are able to control it, immediately you are able to recognize it and control it—as well as attachment and ignorance.

Otherwise you will still get angry. I've seen a benefactor who did a lot of prayers and read so many texts, lots of prayers, but at the time of death he got angry. Doing so many prayers, reading so many scriptures, many texts, every day while he's doing business for the family, but I have no idea how much the person practiced in terms of the actual lam-rim meditation controlling the

mind. I'm sure that my death will be much worse than his death. At the time of death suddenly he got very strong anger at his friend—even though there was no anger before, the karma was very strong, so those negative reasons suddenly came into his mind, like a water bubble.

Before when he was sick I asked him, “What prayers do you do?” I didn't know that he was doing a lot of prayers, so I asked him. I was going to suggest to say some Chenrezig mantras and maybe some thought transformation, how to think, how to use the sicknesses, even death, for other sentient beings.

When I asked him, “Do you do prayers or not?” he laughed. I didn't know that he was doing many prayers so he laughed. Then after some days then he showed me all the texts that he read every day, *so* many—but I don't know how much he understood.

Therefore the happiness that you want is not only happiness right this moment—if there's anger, there's no happiness even at this moment. Especially if you wish for long-run happiness, you need to every single effort into this to pacify anger. You need to remember all the teachings.

It is a serious disease, anger. Put every single effort into controlling it. By trying like this, after some years, six or seven years, even if anger arises, it arises for just one second. The mind becomes dark for one second, then it disappears. It doesn't last.

After some time, no matter whatever they say, whatever they do, even if they come to kill you, instead of anger arising, there is only unbelievable loving kindness and compassion.

Therefore, if you have problems, the main thing, especially with anger, is that you should put all your effort, all your meditations into controlling it. If your main problem is jealousy, put all your effort into this. As well as pride. Listen to the teachings, use it for that, read Dharma texts, use them for that. Even sightseeing, even reading newspapers, everything, use it for that. Hearing other people's life-stories, those who have much pride, who are so jealous, who are so angry. Use this to solve your own problems, for your own liberation.

SAMSARA IS ONLY IN THE NATURE OF SUFFERING

What is samsara? These aggregates. So you have some idea of the evolution of samsara's twelve links. These aggregates are caused by karma—now you have the idea of how these aggregates came from karma and disturbing thoughts. One explanation of the twelve dependent arisings is related to the outside of the plant, then the second explanation of the twelve links. These aggregates are caused by karma and disturbing thoughts, and the contaminated seed of karma and disturbing thoughts. This is samsara. Samsara means the circling or the cycle. The straight translation is not cyclic existence. “Circling” can be more effective. *Korwa*: circling.

With this samsara, these aggregates, because the seed of karma and disturbing thoughts is there, when you meet a beautiful object, attachment arises, when you meet an undesirable object, anger arises. When you meet an indifferent object, ignorance arises, and then with these aggregates, creating karma, compounding the seed of the future samsara, it leaves the potential on the consciousness. So with this samsara you compound the cause of future life's samsara.

As long as you are not liberated from samsara, when you don't experience the suffering of suffering, you experience the suffering of change. Pleasures don't last. On the other hand, Dharma happiness, however much effort you put, however much you practice, however much you attain, it increases more and more. More and more, and it can be completed.

Samsaric pleasures that depend on outside conditions, however much effort you put into them, they do not last. The longer you try, they change into suffering. They become greater sufferings, greater and greater sufferings. And it has no end. You try again and then it changes into suffering of suffering. It becomes a problem. It has no end. The work has no end, no way to finish. This is said in the *Four Hundred Stanzas* by Aryadeva.

The reason samsaric experiences transform into the suffering of suffering is because the nature of the pleasure itself is suffering. If the nature of the pleasure were not suffering, if it were true happiness, then the more you sit, the longer you sit, the longer the pleasure would last. The happiness should be developed more and more. Like after feeling so hot, and jumping into the water, at the beach, you could stay there for months and years, like doing retreat—and there should be unbelievable, inconceivable happiness, bliss. More and more.

The same thing—if you kept on eating for months, years, after, then at nighttime there should be unbelievable, inconceivable happiness. That is not the reality. Were it the reality, even death would not happen. The reason it changes is because the nature is suffering. The basis is suffering, and you label it pleasure.

So for example when, after you are standing a long time, you sit down, the tiredness of standing stops, and then the tiredness of sitting starts, from very small. As soon as you sit down the tiredness of sitting starts from very small. On that feeling you label pleasure. The feeling is only that the great tiredness of standing has stopped and the small tiredness of sitting has started. So on that you have labeled pleasure. The longer you sit, the more the action of sitting compounds the tiredness of sitting—as soon as you sat down it is started compounding. The longer you sit, the more the tiredness of sitting compounds. It increases and so because it increases, when it becomes visible, as it grows, it becomes suffering, the suffering of suffering.

This is the same with all samsara, with all the pleasure that is to do with the outside conditions, except the happiness derived from practicing Dharma. As long as you don't get liberated from the samsara, whatever life changes, if you become a king, if you become a farmer, if you become a circus performer, or if you live your life in sports, or travelling, on the mountains—whatever different style of life you live, it is in the nature of suffering. Whatever you do. So therefore, again, besides the suffering of suffering again, there is nothing to cling to. The conclusion is that there is nothing to cling to. There's nothing to be attracted to.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said in the sutra text *Entering the Womb*, which he basically taught to his younger brother, Chungawa, that one should understand that eating, standing, sitting, walking, sleeping—all these actions individually are only the nature of suffering. When the meditator examines it (I don't remember word by word) he sees only suffering. He experiences these things, not happiness or pleasure. Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha told Chungawa, whose story I told the other day, when the suffering arises, when it arises and arises, it is the nature of suffering. Even when it stops, it is the nature of suffering. So like this it compounds: when it arises, it is in the nature of compounding; when it stops, it is in the nature of compounding.

Even when you don't experience the suffering of suffering, or the suffering of change, there is the contaminated seed of karma and the disturbing thoughts. This is caused by the aggregates, which came from karma and disturbing thoughts, under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts. So that's why even when you pinch your flesh like this, there's a pain. The body is so easy to find discomfort.

I used to tell it like this. Even having this pain proves reincarnation. If there were no past lives there wouldn't be this pain. There's no reason why there has to be pain. This came from karma and disturbing thoughts, so therefore we don't have a choice to use the aggregates to do virtue, as you wish. So as we meet the different objects, suddenly the disturbing thought arises. We get overwhelmed by the disturbing thoughts, the six root delusions, things like that.

Lama Tsongkhapa explained in the *Lam-rim Chen-mo*, even if you're not experiencing the suffering of suffering now, even if you're not experiencing the suffering of change, since there's the third suffering, pervasive compounding suffering—being under the control of karma and delusions, not being free from these,—from this pervasive compounding suffering, the suffering of change and the suffering of suffering can arise. Immediately, right this minute. They can happen, they can arise.

Pervasive compounding suffering, as I told you before, is compounding, because by meeting the object, again these disturbing thoughts arise and you create the karma compounding the cause of another samsara.

Now pervasive, *ka-pa du-che*, pervasive, this is being under the control of karma and delusion, and this one becomes the base for the suffering of change and the suffering of suffering. This one covers those, like a water bubble coming from the water. This one covers both sufferings: the suffering of suffering and suffering of change. Therefore this is the root of all problems and sufferings. So therefore, it is extremely important to have strong renunciation for this pervasive compounding suffering. Lama Tsongkhapa said in the *Lam-rim Chen-mo*, very clearly that this is the main renunciation we should have

Now you can see that the whole samsara is completely, only in the nature of suffering. Meditate on the sufferings of samsara. And then, not having the slightest attraction to it, feel that it is like the nature of fire, it is like being in the center of a fire, as long as you are in the samsara. If you feel like this, like an arrow has gone inside your own heart, and then think about other sentient beings, unbearable compassion arises. Then, it is very quick to generate bodhicitta—bodhicitta, strong compassion, strong renunciation for you own samsara, and there's aversion and strong compassion for other beings' suffering in samsara. There is stronger bodhicitta to lead sentient beings into the highest happiness, peerless happiness, enlightenment. So therefore, enlightenment is quicker. The stronger the bodhicitta there is, the quicker the enlightenment.

So I think I'll stop here.

Please dedicate all the three times' merits accumulated by yourself and all other sentient beings, of listening and explaining the teaching. May I be able to have all realizations of Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings, the understanding of sutra and tantra both within my mind, and that way be able to spread the pure teaching on liberation through sutra and tantra, the complete teaching of Lama Tsongkhapa in the minds of all sentient beings, and in this way lead sentient beings to happiness, and to enlightenment. Do a short mandala.

LECTURE 9, 7 DECEMBER

HAPPINESS DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON OTHERS

[Motivation prayers.]

Maybe before the discourse, if there are some questions? Yeah?

Student: Lama Zopa can I ask _____ relationships _____.

Rinpoche: Um, I thought I answered that yesterday.

Student: _____ I'll take more.

Rinpoche: I don't know that I have any more. Basically what I mentioned yesterday. Yesterday I mentioned about the purpose of life, that you should realize, should recognize, that you have taken the human body, and that this body is not for your own happiness but for other sentient beings to obtain happiness, to eliminate the sufferings of other sentient beings.

So each day, each hour, each minute, the purpose of survival, the purpose of this human body is for others to obtain happiness, and to eliminate the sufferings of other sentient beings. So live life with equanimity at least, with the thought of equanimity that as you don't wish the slightest suffering or discomfort, even in a dream you wish for happiness, others are the same, exactly equal. As I am important, all others are important. As my happiness is important, all others' happiness is important.

Then there are six ways of equalizing oneself with other sentient beings. There are six ways of meditating on equanimity. The simpler way is to understand, to meditate, on equanimity between yourself and this sentient being, the friend or husband or whoever you are living with, or working for. All the rest of the sentient beings exactly equal, wishing happiness and not wishing suffering. As you are important, all others are important.

As I think I mentioned in the earlier time, right at the beginning of the discourses, your happiness depends on the other person, every day your happiness is dependent on other person, your comfort is dependent on the other person. The friend or the husband or wife, whatever it is, your happiness depends on him—by his kindness you receive comfort, depending on him, and *his* happiness depends on you. Similarly, the other person's happiness depends upon you. As your happiness, comfort, and success depends on him, depends on other sentient beings, particularly the person with whom you always live together, eat together, that you see every day, this comes from them. So their happiness also depends on you. As I mentioned before, as you want loving kindness, compassion, you yourself don't want any harm from them, any insult, any dislike, only loving kindness, compassion, only benefit, you don't want the slightest harm from them, similarly all the rest of the other sentient beings, even this person with whom you live and eat, that you see every day, is also dependent on that. That person also wants from you only loving kindness, compassion, toward him or her. Only benefit and no harm. Only help, no harm. Like this.

As I mentioned, look at how others' happiness depends on you yourself. The people that you deal with or you live with, in the office, at home—their happiness is dependent on your own attitude, how you behave, with body, with speech, and how you think. If you are angry, they don't like you. If you have loving kindness or compassion they like you. So their happiness is dependent on you, how you behave toward them. If you show them a dark face, if you show them with wrinkles here, if you look at them, they are unhappy, they become unhappy, they become depressed. But if you look at them with a flat mouth with some wrinkles here, if you look at them then with narrow eyes, fine eyes, and there are some wrinkles here, if you look at them like this, they very happy. If you look at them like this, it makes them happy. If you look at them like this, okay—even in the street, if you look at them like this, it makes them happy.

So you can see in everyday life how people's happiness is dependent on you, even in the expression of their face. One expression of the face brings unhappiness to others, one expression of face brings happiness. So you can see how in everyday life others' happiness depends upon you. Day-to-day life. Also you yourself depend on others—if you feel that they like you, they have loving kindness, compassion, then you are happy. They smile at you, you are happy. They praise you, and you are happy. And they give physical help, something, that makes you happy.

Similarly, your happiness is completely dependent on them, completely comes from them, from their support. So in the same way, their happiness is completely dependent on you. So they also need your support. If you have met Dharma, if you yourself have met Dharma, if you know karma, you can benefit them, not only for temporal happiness but for ultimate happiness. If you haven't met the Dharma, then there's no help for others; the opportunities are limited. You can help for temporal happiness, according to your capability, intelligence, and knowledge by remembering their kindness—even if you don't know extensive kindness. They have been your mother numberless times and have been kind, or other extensive kindnesses explained from the lam-rim teaching. Day-to-day life kindness, at least that you can see that by eye.

The wife get much support from the husband, and the husband gets much support from the wife. So there is much support, much help. So remember the day-to-day life kindnesses that help, that you receive comfort. So at least if the person doesn't know any teaching, in day-to-day this is what you can see with the eye. Remember that kindness. Then from your own side benefit as much as possible, according to your own capability. Understand this.

And then someone who has met Dharma—there's so much opportunity to help in the ultimate way, to eliminate the root of suffering, ultimate happiness. But if the other person says, "You must kill this person," things like that harm other sentient beings greatly. This doesn't mean that you listen exactly to every single thing that the other person says, because you have to think about many other sentient beings. Even if he wishes some enemies to be killed, that doesn't bring ultimate happiness for him, for you or for anybody. Even if the other person believes that by killing those enemies he solves his problems completely. That is due to hallucinations or due to not having Dharma wisdom, not thinking of long-run happiness. Not knowing that itself is creating negative karma, suffering. But acting with compassion, not getting angry at other person, the friend or family, with compassion trying to give advice or trying to be skillful—that is just an example. Otherwise, the conclusion is this: giving up many sentient beings for one sentient being's happiness is not skillful. Giving up many sentient beings for one sentient being's happiness, even that is temporal happiness. You should of make happiness for the majority of the sentient beings. You should think of the happiness of *all* sentient beings equaling infinite space. You should think this. You should think that you yourself will attempt to obtain happiness for all sentient beings, temporal and ultimate happiness. Also, this practice, this effort, is a great attitude, a great action, a great benefit for sentient beings equaling infinite space. So, being concerned with the happiness of one sentient being, two sentient beings, but ignoring the others is not skillful.

Student: Thank you for the teaching on happiness.

THE INNER ENEMY ONLY HARMS

Now you can see by talking about the evolution of samsara, the three types of suffering, how the karma and disturbing thoughts are so harmful, by explaining the twelve links.

Now, as it is explained in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, “It is easy even if I get burned or if I am killed, even if my head is cut off—I won’t slander the inner enemy, the delusions forever. Whatever the circumstance, miserable or happy, I won’t slander it.” What it is saying is that even if somebody comes to burn your clothes, or cut off your limbs, that is only separating the consciousness from *this* body, but that’s all, nothing else. So if you haven’t created negative karma, if you don’t have disturbing thoughts, negative karma, you don’t circle in samsara, you don’t take rebirth in samsara. You don’t suffer in the lower realms. Even if you don’t get burnt or killed or have your limbs cut off by somebody, as long as there’s delusion, if you follow the disturbing thoughts, creating negative karma out of that, then continuously you circle in samsara, and experience the suffering of death and rebirth, and all those other problems go on and on without end.

So this within karma and disturbing thoughts there is no greater or a worse enemy than this inner enemy dwelling within your own mind. Also it is explained in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, “With my enemy, the disturbing thoughts, the length of time has no beginning. The other enemies do not last that long.” What he’s saying is that in relation to the inner enemy, disturbing thoughts, there hasn’t been a time that it has been a friend. It has been always harming—there hasn’t been even one second that the disturbing thoughts benefited. But those whom we point to now as an enemy have been friends and strangers in the past. They have not been harming us all the time.

More benefit, as I mentioned before, more benefit, less harm. So like this, the other enemy, the outside enemy, has *not* been the enemy from beginningless time. Also, in the *Bodhicaryavatara* it is said, “If you offer service according to the enemy, that one benefits you. All the time benefits you and obtains happiness.” If you take the side of the enemy, and if you offer him service, if you help him, he changes. The outside enemy changes his attitude from dislike to like, and changes his actions. So instead of harming, he benefits you.

In this way, the outside enemy becomes the friend, but now the inner enemy, the disturbing thoughts, however much you take the side of delusions, if you benefit the delusions what they do in return is only harm. Only harm, no benefit, no benefit any time, forever. The more you follow the disturbing thoughts, the more you receive harm from the disturbing thoughts. So like this. If you change your attitude, if you change your action towards the outside enemy and instead of giving harm, you benefit him, he becomes your friend and benefits you.

Then also it is mentioned in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, if you are going to cover the whole earth with leather, the leather won’t be enough. But putting leather on the soles of your shoes is like having covered the whole earth with leather! The meaning of that is this: I don’t remember word by word. If you’re going to destroy all the outside enemies, you will never finish. But once the inner enemy the anger is destroyed, it’s like having destroyed all the outside enemies. So the meaning of that is in relation to anger, the disturbing thoughts, ignorance, grasping things as truly existent—you can relate it like this. So here, if you have anger, then there’s the enemy; if you don’t have anger, there’s no enemy. If you have anger, there’s an outside enemy; but for those who do not have anger, there’s no outside enemy. It’s differentiated by that. It’s dependent on whether there’s anger inside—whether this person has an enemy outside or not depends on whether he has anger or not. If he does not have anger, he has no basis on which to label enemy.

So in other words, however much you destroy the outside enemy, it only increases. Actually, in reality, it causes the enemy to increase, even in this life, without talking about future lives. As in the histories, the world situation the fighting between countries has still not stopped for so many thousands of years—you can understand from the stories, from the histories. So it goes on and on like this. Once the inner enemy of anger is destroyed then the person has no enemy outside. It’s like having destroyed all the outside enemies.

Then the same thing—once ignorance, the root of samsara, is eliminated, there's no enemy. It's like all the outside enemies are destroyed. Having eliminated ignorance, the root of samsara in this life, all the future lives, all the enemies in all the coming lives are destroyed at once, in this life, at one time, like that. By having eliminated ignorance, the root of samsara, all the sufferings, all the problems that you experience as real, all is completely ceased. Completely ceased, impossible to arise, impossible to experience again because there's no cause. The reason the suffering exists is because it is empty of existing from its own side, existing independently, existing without depending on thought and base, causes and conditions. By depending on cause, conditions, base, and thought, the result of suffering exists. Similar the cause, ignorance, comes from emptiness. Anything that exists comes from emptiness. They exist because they're empty, dependent arising.

For example, the reason there's ignorance today is because it came from the cause of yesterday's ignorance. This is dependent on the cause—the characteristic of mind that does not know the absolute nature of the “I,” hallucinated, not knowing Dharma, the base, path and goal. So just like that characteristic of mind, on that thought labels ignorance. Ignorance exists by depending on cause and conditions, the base and thought labeling. So that is why ignorance is empty of existing from its own side, empty of independence. Once ignorance is completely eliminated, the cause, the root of samsara is completely eliminated. Developing the wisdom of shunyata, it is impossible for ignorance to arise because there's no cause. Because ignorance is empty of independence, empty of existing without depending on cause and conditions, the base and thought, there's no other way of existing. If it exists then it has to be a dependent arising, depending on cause and condition—the thought, the base.

So because it is empty, a dependent arising, we have the opportunity to eliminate it. If it's not a dependent arising, if it's not empty, then there is no opportunity to eliminate it, no opportunity for us to be free from samsara, from karma and disturbing thoughts. For example, anger arises by thinking that he or she is harming me; by interpreting the action as a harm, anger arises. But if you meditate and look at that person as a guru, a teacher of patience, completing the paramita of patience, benefiting, subduing my selfish mind, subduing the anger, these disturbing thoughts, helping me to complete the practice of patience, to complete the mind training in the graduated path to enlightenment—the anger stops and loving kindness arises.

Then the same thing in relation to the object you have attachment toward. Look at the object in a different way, and you can see that these disturbing thoughts are not independent, not truly existent, but are dependent arising. Depending on how you look at the object, the disturbing thought arises. With one way of looking at it, the disturbing thought stops. With one way of looking at it, it arises.

Also then mentioned in *Bodhicaryavatara* by Shantideva, once the inner enemy, disturbing thoughts are eliminated, then it's like having destroyed all the outside enemies. So even if the leather you put on your feet is very small compared to the earth, wherever you walk on the earth, no thorns can go inside. By having this small leather on the sole of the shoes, it is like having covered the whole earth with leather by shoes!

That's a very effective example. What Shantideva is trying to explain to us is that if you put effort to destroy the outside enemy that brings only problems, only more and more disaster. Instead of putting the effort outside to harm others, to hurt others, all the outside harms came from the inside, the delusions, the inner enemy, so put all your effort with the body, speech, and mind to destroy the inner enemy, the disturbing thoughts. This is a one time work. It is very worthwhile.

It also mentions even devas, even the worldly gods, devas, non-devas, asuras, human beings, animals, those other beings, worldly gods, those non-gods—even if they all become your enemy, even if they arise, they cannot lead you to the naraks. The powerful enemy, the disturbing thoughts, destroys even the great mountains in one second. People have so much fear of atomic danger, but if there's no anger, if everyone practices patience, everyone has bodhicitta, compassion, loving kindness, bodhicitta, even if there's that many atomic bombs equaling the number of atoms of all the mountains in each country, nothing gives harm. However many weapons there are in the world, nothing gives danger, nothing causes harm.

On the other hand, if there are disturbing thoughts, if there is karma, the bodyguard who is supposed to protect your life may kill you. Even the weapons that you have as a protection for your life kill you. The person himself uses the weapon to kill himself, even though he kept the weapons to protect his life. To protect for his long life.

Therefore you can see now your greatest fear is the anger that you have in your mind. The anger, selfish mind, these things are the greatest danger to the world, to yourself. Then all those guns, all those atomic bombs—the world can be destroyed within one hour, that is not the danger of the atomic bomb, that is the danger of the anger. The third war, the atomic danger to the world—all these depend on whether the mind follows, whether the anger arises or not. It is up to that question, whether the person follows the anger or not.

If there's no bodhicitta, loving kindness, compassion, if there's no practice of patience, then the world is in danger every minute. The fear is not the weapon but the fear is the mind, the unsubdued mind, disturbing thoughts.

If all the sentient beings become your enemy, they cannot lead you into the narak fire, but if there's delusion, disturbing thoughts, it leads you into the fire of the narak. By leading yourself to create the cause, karma, it brings you into the fire of the narak.

THE SIX PERFECTIONS

To be able to free all the sentient beings from suffering, to lead them to enlightenment, you need to achieve the two kayas: dharmakaya and rupakaya. In order to achieve the enlightenment depends on accumulating the method—the merits of fortune—and the merit of transcendental wisdom. The merit of fortune causes you to achieve the rupakaya, in either the sambhogakaya or nirmanakaya aspect. These are manifestations for sentient beings. These are the manifestations of a buddha, the various aspects of a buddha to do work for sentient beings.

The merit of transcendental wisdom causes you to achieve the dharmakaya, so you have to practice method and wisdom both. By separating the wisdom or the method you cannot achieve the enlightenment, the dharmakaya or rupakaya. In other words, the unification of the holy body and the holy mind of a buddha. To do that you should practice the six paramitas or perfections:

- the paramita of patience
- the paramita of charity
- the paramita of moral conduct
- the paramita of perseverance
- the paramita of concentration
- the paramita of wisdom

The first five accumulate the merit of method, and then wisdom accumulates the merit of transcendental wisdom.

The six paramitas ripen your own mind and then the four practices drawing other sentient beings, subduing the mind of other sentient beings, ripening the mind of other sentient beings.

CHARITY

Then just to briefly mention the definitions and a little bit of details of each one. The first one is *charity*. The definition of charity is the thought of giving the body, the possessions and your merit to others. That is the definition of the paramita of charity. The mind training in the thought of giving is called the paramita of charity.

Every single good thing that comes from that, even the merit, everything that comes from that you give to others. Completely dedicated for others, with the thought giving for others. Completely dedicated for others. So it's very important thing when you do charity to not expect to receive something from that person in return. And to not have pride is very important. If you feel pride when you make charity, if you feel pride in morality, in moral conduct, if you feel pride then the merit does not become strong, it becomes very weak. There are three types of charity: the charity of material, charity of miscellaneous, making the charity of body, possessions. Then dedicating the merit, I'm not a hundred percent sure whether that goes in that section or not, the charity of miscellaneous. It might go in the Dharma charity.

The *charity of miscellaneous*. It's very good when you make charity like this. When we dedicate the merit when we make charity, when we hear the shunyata teachings, remember. What you hear all the time, "merely labeled, merely labeled," on and on. Like this. The merely labeled "I," the "I" which is merely labeled on the aggregates, and this action of charity—the action done with this thought of giving, on that which is merely labeled "making charity." The object is merely labeled. Same thing when you dedicate the merely labeled "I," the action, merit, virtue, anything that it brings, which is not the cause of the suffering of suffering, which is the cause of happiness, is virtue. It's merit; it's virtue. The merit which is merely labeled on this, then merely labeled enlightenment, for the sake of merely labeled sentient beings—dedicate with this awareness.

If someone has the recognition of the refuting object then it's good to make charity with awareness of emptiness. Do the dedication. Another simple way that gives the feeling of emptiness, to not cling to things as truly existent, is while you are making charity or dedicating, you look at it, you think, "I am dreaming, dedicating. I am dreaming making charity." Object, subject, action—as if you were making charity in the dream. Think that I am dreaming, look at it as a dream. So while you are looking at it as dream then doing the practice of charity and dedication, there's a natural understanding that even if things are appearing as existing from their own side it's not true. It affects the mind to not grasp, not cling to the appearance of true existence. It gives that idea by looking at it as dream. So this is the advice, if somebody who doesn't know how to meditate on emptiness, doesn't know what emptiness means, what truly existent means, if the merit that you accumulate, the dedication, is done with the thought of ignorance grasping at true existence, then it becomes poison and the *lo-jong*, the thought-training advice or the samaya is, "Don't eat poisonous food." That means dedicating the merit, accumulating merit stained by the wrong conception of true existence. This way the merit that you accumulate doesn't get stained by the wrong conception of true existence, so it is pure.

Then, in regards the material charity that you cannot give to others. If it's a monk, in celibacy, they cannot give the three types of robes to other sentient beings.

Then main charity of those who are living in the ordination of renunciation is the Dharma charity. But the bodhisattvas who are living in the ordination of renunciation but also have wealth can make material charity too.

One who has taken bodhisattva vow has to practice when reciting. Those who have taken mahaanuttara tantra initiation have to recite the Six-Session Yoga prayer, so there it says, “I dedicate my body, possessions, merit, everything to sentient beings.” The prayer is recited in order to practice awareness, to remind you. So you are constantly supposed to have that awareness that everything belongs to others, everything is others’. So as soon as you think this in the mind, it is the wishing thought of bodhicitta.

Then especially for those living in the ordination of renunciation, if you do not train the mind in this then it breaks the other pratimoksha vows, like the bhikshu’s, not the root vow but the branches. If one has bodhicitta it helps so much, it becomes great protection to not degenerate the pratimoksha vows. Even if you transgress from them it does not become an obstacle to enlightenment, or negative karma. Then so that’s why Kadampa Geshe Sharawa said, “To those who are living in the ordination of renunciation I don’t talk about the benefits of giving but I talk about the shortcomings of holding.”

What you should not give to others—if you are a monk, there are three types of robes that you wear. If somebody wants to kill himself, making charity of poisons, guns, those things that harm. Things that harm others are not objects of charity. Then, those who are fasting, who have taken vows, who are not eating in the afternoon—like brahmins, those who keep very clean, do not eat black food, those people making charity of black food like garlic, onions, meat, and those things. Those are not objects of charity for those types of people.

The *charity of fearlessness*. This is for somebody who has great fear, worry, and then you talk about thought transformations, especially transforming the suffering into happiness. Then what you call in the West “counseling,” giving advice that protects the person from fear, the troubles, and I think also giving medicines also protects from the fear of disease, things like that. Those dangers. Death, untimely death. So it could become material charity, but also charity of fearlessness.

Then if the mouse attacks the cat, or the worms are attacked by ants, the flies attacked by ants—if you see this help if you can, if you can’t, if there’s no way to help, what you can do? But there are some things that you can help, help as much as possible. Protect it if it’s not dead. This is the charity of fearlessness. If there are animals in the water, suffering there, you take them out of the water. Like those things.

Then *Dharma charity*. When you recite prayers, mantras, you can visualize all sentient beings around then, making Dharma charity to them. Especially creatures around—dogs, birds, whoever, who are around—by reciting verbally you are planting the seed in their mind which leads to enlightenment. Dharma charity. Even if you are gossiping. Keep the motivation, even if it is gossip for the other person—whatever you are talking about—the family, world, friends, relationships. Even the most basic, common thing in the West—talking about sex, things like that. Even if it’s gossip for the other person, your motivation is to benefit these people. Bodhicitta motivation. You are talking with these people but you come to the conclusion, you talk it in a way that benefits their minds. You generate loving kindness, compassion toward others, renunciation of samsara, the wish for them to find satisfaction by talking about the shortcomings of desire. You have this aim to benefit to other people, to pacify the unsubdued

mind. Even these talks become Dharma charity. Otherwise it becomes gossip—anything that is done with disturbing thoughts, anger, attachment. If you have this aim, if you have this motivation, it definitely benefits.

So it is said here in the *Bodhicaryavatara*, “If no beggars living on this earth is the completion of charity, then how have the buddhas completed it, if still there are starving migratory beings?” So completing the paramita of charity is not making no beggars in this world. It’s not that. It is not even not having miserliness. Arhats do not have miserliness, so the *Bodhicaryavatara* says, by thinking of the benefits of charity, the shortcomings of miserliness, and giving one’s own body and possessions, even the merit without miserliness, from the heart to others, when the training of this thought is completed this is the paramita of charity! So in regards the body, when it comes to the point that you can give it as easily as a cup of water, or vegetables—though when you are very hungry maybe there are a few vegetables, maybe difficult to give to others—but generally when you reach the state where it is as easy to give your body as it is to give vegetables, this is the completion of the paramita of charity.

There are three things: giving, protecting, and keeping pure. Three things. Until you reach the right time, until the right time comes, you protect the body from the obstacles. Keeping the body pure is not using the body to create nonvirtue. That is keeping the body pure. This is done with this creating cause to receive the eight qualities in the next lives. I won’t go through that. I think in the lam-rim texts you can read about that. That’s better. Then you can argue with yourself.

Virtue, giving to sentient beings from the heart, then protecting from anger. Increasing virtue, protecting and keeping it pure. Then accumulating virtue, unstained by worldly concern and selfish mind. By practicing virtue, by practicing rejoicing, if you feel happiness, the merit that is accumulated by you in the three times, all the past merit of the present and future, whatever merit that has been accumulated by listening to the teachings, that merit becomes double by practicing rejoicing. “How wonderful it is that I have accumulated merit by listening to the teaching.” Oh, I think it’s time to stop. The tongue is not functioning well.

So each of these four things—giving, protecting, keeping pure, increasing. I think I will stop here.

PURIFICATION AND VOWS

So tonight I thought to do a little bit meditation on shunyata, and see if we can do meditation on the four analyses. We’ll do the rest of the paramitas, maybe tomorrow afternoon or day after tomorrow morning. If there’s time then I’ll go through them. I am thinking perhaps to do the Great Chenrezig initiation, the great kriya tantra initiation, so people who want to do nyung-nä practices, the two-day Chenrezig retreat that involves a lot of prostrations to Chenrezig and the Thirty-five Buddhas and recitation mantra and taking the eight Mahayana precepts, you can do it. By doing these two days in retreat, one nyung-nä, it purifies 80,000 eons of negative karma. This is the general idea, but still it’s dependent on individual—how perfectly you practice, with thought of shunyata and strong bodhicitta. It’s all dependent on that.

It is mentioned that even by reciting one Chenrezig mantra, a full monk who broke all the four vows, who received the defeat of killing, stealing, telling lies, and intercourse, by reciting one mantra, all that negative karma get purified. So there’s an inconceivable, unbelievable benefit of reciting this mantra. In other words, this is like Vajrasattva, a powerful deity to purify. I think we have so much negative karma on a daily basis, the cause of problems—we accumulate them and

we don't want the problems, we don't want to experience the results. So in that case what we should do then is purify. Studying the teaching of karma, listening, reflecting, and meditation, abandon as much as possible negative karma and practice as much as possible virtuous actions, the cause of temporal happiness and ultimate happiness. All these practices are very powerful methods. Unbelievable negative karma gets purified by each of these practices: prostrations, taking Mahayana precepts, reciting mantra. They are very powerful things to put together.

So if you don't want problems, do something with the cause. That is the main thing. And especially if you want to help every sentient being, practice Dharma, practice purification. So now by going back in the West, normally what I advise and tell the centers is to make the Dharma centers for other sentient beings—to eliminate their sufferings, to obtain happiness for others, to lead them to enlightenment, and especially to benefit them for ultimate happiness. That is missing for them and that they need. Even if life is so busy, so much to do, on Saturday and Sunday do a nyung-nā, this two day retreat, and finish these sessions so it's kind of fixed. This is not a question of one-month retreat, it's not a question of even one week—it's two days, a weekend. So in one year to do one nyung-nā, or in six months to do one nyung-nā. It's unbelievable, those two days; an unbelievable cause of happiness. Each time you generate bodhicitta, there is infinite merit. Each time you do the seven-limb practice, infinite merit. Each prostration, inconceivable merit. Anyway I'm not going to go over talking the benefits. Geshe-la may have spoken of the unbelievable benefits of prostrations.

Therefore, it's a very practical thing to do. If you are concerned with making life meaningful, you cannot stop the disturbing thoughts in one day, in a one month meditation course, uncontrollably accumulating negative karma. Each year you do some practice, then whenever death happens, even though you have created negative karma, so much is purified. At the time of death it is very thin. Not heavy. Even if you didn't reach the state of complete purification in this life, so much preparation for the happiness of future lives, up to enlightenment, even for the happiness of this life, is done. That is one thing.

Then the other thing is that even if you don't do a nyung-nā, by taking the eight Mahayana precepts, if you are going to do retreat, to recite mantras, you have to concentrate, you have to repeat them for a long time. But on these eight Mahayana precepts you need only a few minutes in the morning. It depends on how quickly you say your prayers. You need only ten minutes in the morning, that's it. Then until the next day comes, until the sun rises, there's unbelievable merit to achieve, abstaining from killing, all these things, the eight precepts. There are branches also. Just taking the vow without bodhicitta is unbelievable merit that you can enjoy even while you are in samsara. You have so many hundreds and hundreds of lifetimes to enjoy the result.

Now, taking each of these vows with bodhicitta, bringing infinite merit for the sake of all sentient beings. You can see the purpose in the prayer—it mentions all the purposes for sentient beings to stop their problems. The more people there are in this world living in the eight Mahayana precepts, the less dangerous the world becomes. The rest of the sentient beings receive less danger, less harm. Whether you are working in a factory or not, or sitting in an elevator, all day going up and down. Whether you are doing a car race, this sport, even if the legs are broken, even if you are in the hospital, still the merits are there. Still the merits from taking this vow in the morning, even if your ribs are broken, if you are in hospital, you accumulate so much merit taking the eight Mahayana precepts. This doesn't need concentration. To do perfect retreat you need much concentration. So easy, unbelievable merit—the profit is unbelievable. Like this.

Again this starts with the seven-limb practice. This is unbelievable merit—if you practice each of them, the seven-limb practice, there is unbelievable merit. There are prostrations, offerings—every prostration that is done to Buddha, as I mentioned before, the other day, everything becomes a cause of enlightenment, to benefit all sentient beings. So this is a really practical thing to do, because to get liberation from samsara, we need to generate the path. As I mentioned the other day, death comes before completing the path to the liberation in this life. For the sake of the sentient beings to achieve enlightenment, we need to generate the path. So therefore we need to continuously practice Dharma to develop the mind in the path, and take the body of the happy transmigratory being in our next lives. Therefore we need to create the cause. From this moment we need to create the cause, to make preparations—however many hours, how many minutes we have to live, we have the opportunity to practice. The actual cause of the happy transmigratory being is only moral conduct. If a lifetime living in the vows is difficult, then this is a very practical thing: eight Mahayana precepts. Just do it for twenty-four hours. Then one can also take them like this: the eight Mahayana precepts for one year. One year or even longer—like fifteen days altogether, in the morning, one time taking.

One text says you need to repeat the prayer fifteen times in the morning. I think probably if you think I'm going to take the eight precepts until such and such a date, you can do that. Or you can say that you're going to take the eight Mahayana precepts on the fifteenth, thirtieth, and eighth, all those days. Anyway in one month you're going to take the eight Mahayana precepts, and instead of repeating the prayer every morning you can do the prayer one time in the morning, and then in the “until tomorrow the sun rises” time you think I'm going to take it until such and such a date. Then you take them. But of course it's better, on those days, if you could repeat the prayer in the morning because it makes it fresh and more precise, more effective. All this has reference, Lama Tsongkhapa's disciples.

When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was in India, during those times, one arhat gave a butcher a vow not to kill at night-time. Because for him it was easy to keep the precepts night-time, but in the daytime it was difficult. But if he kept the vow at night-time, by taking the vow from a teacher, there's merit, there's benefit. If you don't make a vow in the front of a holy object, there's no benefit, even if you don't do the action, there's no benefit. So there's a big difference between taking the vow and not doing the action, and not taking the vow. Guru Shakyamuni gave someone else the vow to live in moral conduct and to not have sexual misconduct in the daytime. The night-time is difficult, so in the daytime. For that person it was easier to keep it in the daytime, so he gave him the vow to refrain in the daytime. This is much better than not living in the vow at all. Every day there's merit, even though there's no merit at night-time. So there are references. This is one very practical thing to do, preparation for the happiness of future lives up to enlightenment. This also benefits the whole world, and the whole world.

The other thing is the Vajrasattva mantra. The long one twenty-one times, the short one twenty-eight times, OM VAJRASATTVA HUNG. Now, the reason to recite this before going to bed, at the end of the day, is that if you do not confess with this method then the negative karma that you accumulate during the day with body, speech, and mind becomes double the next day and then becomes triple on the third day. It increases more and more, so even if you haven't killed a human being, even if you didn't go to war, even if you did not become a butcher, there are so many other negative karmas that accumulate. Even if you think, “I haven't done any heavy. I won't go to the lower realms,” it is said like this,

The wise person's negative karma, even though it's great, becomes small.
The foolish person's negative karma, even though it's small, it becomes great.

So if you practice confession, especially with the Vajrasattva mantra, the most powerful one, the Maha-anuttara Tantra Vajrasattva, father and mother embracing, even if you have degenerated the Maha-anuttara Tantra vows today, it does not become double or triple tomorrow. By doing this practice, even if you don't do many retreats, meditation, other things, when death comes, but it purifies all the past negative karmas. Your negative karma is very light at the time of death.

If you never do confession practice, even if you don't do heavy things, the negative karmas become like mountains, like earth, at the time of death. That's what it means when it says for the foolish even if your negative karma is small, it becomes great.

Particularly Vajrasattva has this advantage. This is what to do if you want happiness, now and in the future. This Vajrasattva and especially the four opponent powers should be practiced. This way there are thinner obscurations, so it is easy develop the mind in the lam-rim.

STUDYING THE LAM-RIM

Concerning lam-rim meditation, I would suggest the book, *Essence of Nectar*, which is not too detailed with stories and many things, but not too short. It's quite extensive, it's very good to use like a pocket dictionary of lam-rim. It's very good. If you understand the extensive one you can use the short one, Lama Tsongkhapa's *Hymns of the Experience of the Path of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, then you can expand by yourself. The *Essence of Nectar* has both of the preliminaries there, the *jor-chö* practice is there, the whole preliminary practice is there, before the actual meditation starts. All the prayers that come before the actual meditation are the methods of pacifying the obstacles, creating causes for realizations. All the *jor-chö* is there. So that's why it's very easy, it's all in one book. I think there is a very short, brief one at the end of the *Essence of Nectar*, I think.

Then those who do *Lama Chöpa*—on the basis of *Lama Chöpa*, you can expand. That's an incredibly effective *Guru Puja*. For a while you do, you train the mind from the beginning meditation to the end. So you do the *jor-chö* prayer in the *Essence of Nectar*, if those are very long you can use some short ones. You can use the *Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga* prayer and then you can use the lam-rim part from the *Essence of Nectar*, or from *Lama Chöpa*. You can make the prayer shorter, even though prayer is short but the important thing to, by knowing each practice to not just become words to really become the practice. That's important. Prayer, if it is successful, has everything. You can take even the short one, *Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga*, something short, as long as it also has the essence. Today start from guru devotion, read to yourself, then whatever is not finished do tomorrow. If you have time tonight do a little bit, go, read, think of the meaning. Go on like this up to the end. Then again you go back, and do day by day like this. For a while, until you understand, have all understanding and until you get the feeling with each one, “Now if I really try this meditation, I think I will have realization. If I really put effort.”

Then after that you put main effort in guru devotion, to have realization. That is the main one. Then if you have more time spend time on the perfect human rebirth, usefulness, trying to generate the realization. If you still have more time you can start to have the realization of the lam-rim path by putting the mind more in these meditations every day. Before death you will have one of the realizations, either shunyata or guru devotion. If not then just put all the effort into one realization, but still go over the basis of some lam-rim prayer, doing the direct meditation on lam-rim.

So one of the most important things, on this basis, every day do the meditation, *Yonten Shirgyuma*, so either from *Lama Chopal* a prayer that shows all the path—it is very important to recite every day, after the preliminaries. When you read it mindfully think of the meaning, a direct meditation. This way each day you plant the seed of the path, the whole path. If it has sutra then also tantra. This way each day you become closer and closer to that path, the graduated path to enlightenment, so you are closer to enlightenment and closer to benefiting all sentient beings.

After you have the guru devotion realization, then do the perfect human rebirth—and one after another go step by step to have this realization. Train the mind in guru devotion because that's the most difficult realization, and the most important one. Take tantra initiation and do shunyata meditation—one part training the mind in the lam-rim, one part training the mind in tantra, the first stage of generation, one-pointed concentration on that, or one-pointed concentration on the Six Yogas of Naropa, or *tum-mo* meditation. This makes life meaningful.

For those who want to know how to do lam-rim meditation, it is like that. Then for those who don't have time to do meditation, who are very busy with their families and other many things, do the Mahayana ordination, the nyung-nä, the eight precepts. Then do direct meditation on lam-rim, with some preliminary practice.

When you go to work remember the purpose of life. If you're doing six-session yoga, you can do the motivation during that time. This practice contains dedicating everything to sentient beings, so when you do direct lam-rim meditation prayer in the morning, and when you go from your bed, from your room, when you go to work, generate wishing motivation bodhicitta, thinking, "In order to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings, I'm going to work for these sentient beings." The other people who employed you need your work, they need your help, so pray that by doing work for them you will generate the whole path to enlightenment, especially bodhicitta in their minds, that your service for them will become the cause of generating the path in their mind. Then also pray again and again, "Just by seeing me, hearing me, touching me, talking about me, remembering me, anyone, all sentient beings' suffering may be pacified immediately and they receive all happiness."

In a family it's very important to remember again that the purpose of life is for others, to eliminate sufferings, to obtain happiness for others. So think, "Oh how wonderful it is that that I am found useful, even for one sentient being." Practice a bodhisattva's attitude and conduct. This becomes similar to bodhisattvas' attitudes, and in this way doing the activities, unstained by selfish mind, they become purest Dharma, even if you don't know karma, don't accept karma, don't accept reincarnation.

LECTURE 10, 7 DECEMBER

MEDITATION ON THE EMPTINESS OF THE I

We are going to recite some mantras before the meditation on emptiness.

There are strong nectar beams from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha purifying all the obscurations in your mind, in the minds of all sentient beings, and entering your own four places—the forehead, neck, heart, and secret place. Concentrate strongly on the white nectar beams. You receive the realizations from guru devotion up to enlightenment, especially the wisdom realizing emptiness, which eliminates the root of samsara. Sutra, tantra, all the profound paths are generated in your mind and in the minds of all sentient beings.

This *lung* was given before or not? [Discussion with Ven Wangmo.] During the purification time the strong white nectar rays pacifies all the wrong conceptions, which interferes with the achievement of liberation and enlightenment, and one's ability to extensively benefit all sentient beings, all the wrong views that one has. [Tibetan] TAYATA OM MUNI MUNI MAHAMUNIYE SVAHA.

“I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the sake of all kind mother sentient beings equaling infinite space, so therefore I'm going to listen and meditate on emptiness. Myself and all sentient beings' suffering from beginningless rebirths until now is due to not having realized emptiness, the absolute nature of the I. By realizing emptiness, by destroying all the obscurations, and then by achieving enlightenment, I will lead every sentient being to the freedom from all the sufferings of samsara, to peerless happiness, to enlightenment, by myself alone. Therefore I'm going to meditate on emptiness. Please Guru-Buddha, grant me blessings to generate the realization of emptiness, the direct remedy to eliminate the root of samsara in this session, right on this cushion.”

Now, first of all to get a rough idea in the beginning, all sufferings, the sufferings of samsara, the suffering of suffering, suffering of changes, pervasive suffering, the compounding pervasive suffering, and karma, all the disturbing thoughts came from ignorance not knowing the absolute nature of the I. First meditate on this. The I, the being, the person—think of yourself. This is not earth, which means the body, this is not the body. This I is not the body, okay, not the earth element. Not the water, the liquids inside. This I is not the heat, the fire element. This I is not air, not space inside. Not consciousness. Not space inside. This I is not all of these six things. This I is neither each one nor all together. First of all think of the self—the I is here at Kopan. The I is on this cushion meditating. Whichever makes the I rise stronger. Think I have done this and that.

[Meditation]

Then look at the real self. Now analyze this body, the earth element, this body is not this I. This water element is not this I, this real I. The heat element inside is not this real I. The fire element is not this I, not me.

The consciousness is not me. The real self. The space inside is not the real self, me. All together is not, the whole group is not real, is not the real self, me, separately from the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element, consciousness, space—the I doesn't exist. What exists is the I merely labeled on these aggregates. There is no other I except this I existing and doing activities.

Again think, think I, I. See how it appears to you. Constantly think I, I.

[Meditation]

Now think, within you inside the chest, wherever you feel the I, there is a light. You see it very clear inside the body, like a lighted room. So where is the darkness of that I that appeared before? Can you find it or not? The I that exists from its own side, truly existent, the real self? See whether you can find or not. Is it findable or not? Check. From the head down to the feet, especially in the chest.

[Meditation]

Do you find? Do you find something or not? Did somebody find something? When you start to search inside, it looks like the I can be found, but as soon as you start to search it becomes unclear. Does the I existing from its own side, as real, appear or not? Think, “What is the reason I say I am at Kopan?” Find the reason. “Where I am now, I am at Kopan.” Why do I believe I am at Kopan? There is no other reason at all, except that the aggregates are here at Kopan. The body-mind association is at Kopan. While you’re putting this reason, look at what happened with the I. What happened? What happened in the way of perceiving the I?

[Meditation]

When you put the reason, there is no other reason at all except the aggregates are here. The I, the real self disappeared and became empty.

[Meditation]

So the previous I doesn’t exist, the I that appears to exist from its own side is empty on these aggregates. So now think, “That I is completely empty, but that doesn’t mean there’s no I at all.” There is an I, the meditator. There is an I existing because, “I’m meditating now, searching, the I is searching and could not find.” So the I that is meditating is merely labeled on these aggregates, on the action of the consciousness, and it exists.

So the previous experience is that there is some real self or I existing from its own side. That previous I, appearing from its own side, is the refuted object. Not seeing that I proves that the I appearing from its own side is empty. That is the absolute nature of the I. So now, if the I existed from its own side, without depending on the aggregates and thought labeling, if this were true as ignorance believes, then when your aggregates stood up, the I would be still sitting here, meditating. Sitting is to do with the body—the mind cannot sit. So the I would still be sitting here, the body still sitting here. Same with eating. If the existent I did not depend on the aggregates, if it were independent, it would be like this. The independent I would be at Kopan doing the course. So then when the body reached the West, the I would still be on this cushion, doing this course. So if we follow ignorance it is completely ridiculous.

According to your belief following ignorance, you were born from an independent father and mother who don’t exist. You went to an independent school, which doesn’t exist, and then learned from an independent teacher, who doesn’t exist, and studied independent subjects that don’t exist. Then you married an independent husband who does not exist, and quarreled with an independent wife who doesn’t exist, and had independent children, who don’t exist, in the independent house which doesn’t exist, and bought an independent car, which doesn’t exist. You shopped in the independent shops that don’t exist, and bought independent materials from independent supermarkets, which don’t exist, with independent money, which doesn’t exist. You came by an independent airplane, which doesn’t exist, to independent Nepal, which doesn’t exist, to an independent Kopan, which doesn’t exist, and are doing an independent course, which doesn’t exist, receiving independent teachings, which don’t exist, from independent geshes, who don’t exist.

To get some idea how the independent I does not exist— you are like the person who saw the rope at dusk time and labeled it a snake. After he labeled it a snake, it appeared as a snake to him. All existence is like this—samsara, nirvana—like the piece of rope in the road. And like him, you are not aware that you have merely labeled it—subject, object, action, the whole thing from birth until death. You think, “Because the aggregates exist, I exist.” This is the reality. Knowing the words is not enough— you need to practice awareness all the time and use these shunyata words

when anger, dissatisfied mind, attachment, or pride, or jealousy arise, to destroy ignorance. Then the words became meaningful.

So I think I didn't finish the four analyses. Never mind, a little bit. From this short meditation you get some idea of the I that exists and the I that doesn't exist. By meditating how the I is a dependent arising, you get liberated from eternalism; you get the definite understanding that the I exists in mere name, in conventional truth.

By realizing the absolute truth of the I, you get the realization of the conventional truth; that I exists in mere name. Without choice, no matter how much you try to think that the I doesn't exist, by realizing the absolute truth of the I, then you realize that the strong indestructible understanding on these aggregates that the I exists in mere name so then that the I exists, so powerful, no choice. This is realizing conventional truth, the subtle dependent arising of the I.

THE FOUR ANALYSES

If I go over the four analyses the most important one is the first one. I just mentioned the first one, okay. If you cannot recognize what "truly existent" means, the best way is to do the four analyses. When we believe in a real self, that itself is the truly existent I. So remember your great fear when you are about to have a car accident, or when you have strong attachment, very strong unbelievable attachment—how does the I appear? Or when somebody gave you a present, or you won the examination or something—try to remember the I at that time, you go back to those situations and see how the I appears, the emotional I, strongly arising. Then don't think immediately, "Oh this doesn't exist."

Then also look at the aggregates. Then think, "If this I exists, it should be either oneness with them or separate from them." Don't think immediately, "Oh this doesn't exist in oneness with the aggregates, even separately it doesn't exist." By checking you will understand.

The vase or, say, the tables, okay, tables, then shoes or pillows or plates—if these things exist, they have to be either oneness with the aggregates or separate. It is the same with the real self that we feel in the chest, within the body, in some particular location. Looking at the aggregates, one labels I, okay? Now, when we look at the I, what the ignorance holds as the I, that one is merely imputed on the aggregates but appears to exist from its own side completely. If this exists it should be oneness with the aggregates. If the aggregates are I then there is no purpose in accepting the I as something separate from the aggregates.

Then the next one— because the aggregates are many, the I becomes many. Then the third one, as the continuation of the aggregates the body stops, the continuation of the body completely stops, when the gross consciousness stops, the I has to stop. When this principal body stops, the I has to stop, so this mistake comes. When this body is burned, is there the danger that the I is stopped? There is this danger without going into details, past or future lives all becomes one. Or it is separate, no connection at all? Then in this case, there is no way to remember past lives, it would be like two separate beings. So this mistake arises. And then the mistake in terms of karma, experiencing the result without having created the cause. These things arise, so the conclusion is that the truly existent I is not one with the aggregates.

There is no other way, no other third way, except that it has to exist separately from the aggregates. If the I exists separately from the aggregates, it's like this. When the I has to go back to the West, the aggregates don't have to be in the airplane, and since the body doesn't have to be in the airplane, you don't need a ticket. Nobody asks you for tickets. Also you don't need a

seat, you don't need a number for the seat, because you don't have a physical body. You don't need a job to make money. Since you don't have a body, there's no hunger and thirst. So many mistakes come. You doesn't need a house if the I exists separately from the aggregates. You don't need clothing.

The I, the real self doesn't exist as oneness with the aggregates, or separately from the aggregates. Think that this real self completely empty, like the million dollars in your hand, or like a rabbit's horn –this is exactly the same as one million dollars in your hand. Then think that the mistake is that you've been believing this from beginningless lifetimes, addicted to this, so this is the whole problem. But this is completely empty, like the million dollars in the hand. Then you start one-pointed concentration by using the remembrance and awareness from the meditation of samatha. Then you continue to develop the wisdom of emptiness, doing the analyses and the fixed meditation on emptiness, to eliminate the root of ignorance, samsara ignorance, even the root of, even the seed of that is able to, you are able to eliminate, by possessing the skillful means, bodhicitta, then tantra, then able to achieve enlightenment. So the outline of the four analyses is finished. There are some things to meditate on. Then I am sorry—a very long time. And sleep for one month next time. Maybe the watch might stop. Yeah.

LECTURE 11, 8 DECEMBER

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON REFUGE

Do you have any question as regards the refuge?

Student: When you take refuge, do you have the vow not to kill?

Rinpoche: It is good to take the vow to not kill because killing means with the intention to kill, and this is the greatest harm. It is good to take that vow to not kill, there is great benefit, but just taking refuge alone, with that, you do not necessarily have the vow to not kill. It's possible to take refuge ordination and stop certain harms. But other harms could be like this. I think Lama Lhundrup explained taking refuge in the Dharma, no? By taking refuge in the Buddha, by taking refuge in the Dharma, by taking refuge in the Sangha, there are two things, two practices. Taking refuge in the Dharma, you should abandon giving harm to other sentient beings. By taking refuge in the Dharma, you should stop killing because this is the heaviest harm for other beings.

If you can take the vow it's better, but there is refuge ordination, only refuge, it does not involve taking those precepts, any of the five precepts. Some sentient beings maybe cannot take any of the precepts but there are other practices that cause them to accumulate merit, preparation for the happiness. This I have checked with His Holiness because I had this question. His Holiness said that there are sentient beings, some people, who cannot take the precepts like that. I think what His Holiness meant is that maybe the other practices such as offering to the Triple Gem, things like that, allow the person to do that. How do you say these animals that come in the kitchen? Cockroach, staying in the refrigerator, yeah? Coming to take refuge in the kitchen? [RL] That you can clean and put somewhere maybe with some food in the box?

Student: If you are a farmer and you have to use insecticides, otherwise you cannot have a crop.

Rinpoche: Yes, farmer, otherwise you cannot have crops, they cannot grow. Once after a long tour with our guru Lama Yeshe, we went to Mussourie for fifteen days to have a rest. We stayed in one hotel that was used by all the abbots, and many of the geshe came for the teacher training, His Holiness Song Rinpoche and Khunu Lama Rinpoche were there for teacher training, and

His Holiness Song Rinpoche was in charge. We did a puja there. You know the geshe who came the other day, that I took around? There was another monk with him who came to the puja. During the meal-time this monk said that he heard that in America, in the West, you can plant sentient beings in a field. I think he said goats or sheep or something growing, coming from the field. I think probably he got mixed up with this idea that scientists have boxes and they put a lot of food and try to grow life. I didn't hear if the result actualized, but I heard that they tried to experiment with growing sentient beings—you mean by putting the eggs [discussion with students]—you mean the tube, that one? No, not that one. I think something you put food in a box and then[*Students*: Cloning.] Anyway maybe he is mixed up with these other ideas probably.

I did not finish the answer. The thing is, though one thing, it might harm but there is no wish to harm from the side of the person. There is no choice, but there is no wish to harm. So I think that's the main thing, that's the most important. Actually strictly speaking, you almost cannot move without harming others. There are tiny creatures when you step, you walk on the ground, strictly speaking you can't have any food. Not having the wish is a very important thing.

So I think it's mainly dependent individual karma. That's like that. Try as much as possible that hold the whole thing not having wish to harm and then try as the capability that you have to not harm, capability that you have to not harm. So if you could try this, there is incredible benefit for oneself and for other sentient beings.

Student: But there is still one thing I'm not sure about refuge—the Christian practice striving to imitate Christ and the Buddhist practice of developing the mind to a stage of Buddhahood seem to be fundamentally different?

Rinpoche: Could you repeat again the question?

Student: The Christian practice of striving to imitate Christ...

Rinpoche: Imitate the Christ, you try to imitate Christ and try to become Christ.

Student: Yes and the Buddhist practice of developing the mind to a stage of buddhahood.

Rinpoche: Yeah.

Student: Seem to me to be fundamentally different. And yet we are told that to take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha will not compromise the Christian belief in the trinity.

Rinpoche: Yeah.

Student: Is this right?

Rinpoche: I think if you look at it in pure way there is no contradiction, okay. If you look at it in impure way maybe contradictory, okay. If you look at it with impure mind.

Student: Can I help but look at it with an impure mind?

Rinpoche: What? Can you repeat that again? Didn't follow.

Student: Just that she can't help look at it with an impure mind, she cannot help but look with impure mind.

Rinpoche: She cannot help.

Student: What worries me is that for instance in this book or any other that one might pick up, it is said that one should not take advice from several different teachers at once. One runs the risk of becoming confused about the way to practice. And the practice of Christianity and the practice of Buddhism...

Rinpoche: Several different teachers?

Student: ...are very different.

Rinpoche: Several different teachers?

Student: Sorry. If one takes advice from several different teachers at once, one runs, this is the point, one runs the risk of becoming confused about the way to practice. And the practice of Christianity and the practice of Buddhism are very different.

Rinpoche: This must be same in even in Christianity, if you follow, if you ask several different priests, they may give you different advice, or even Buddhist, several different teachers if you ask they may give you different advice.

Student: So one would run the risk of becoming confused about the way to practice?

Rinpoche: If that is the topic, generally speaking, then I would say, even as a Buddhist from different gurus—I think like nowadays many Western students who are studying Buddhadharma ask many different gurus, and get different advice. It's happening. I would say to check among this different advice to see what you can do, what you are capable of doing, and explain that one to the teacher and then try to get permission, respectfully explaining if there is something you cannot do. Then when those different teachers give different advice, if you are able to do all those, if you are able to practice all those, then that's great. So like that.

Student: So one can practice.

Rinpoche: So?

Student: Christianity and Buddhism together?

Rinpoche: So I think if it becomes confusion or not, it mainly depends on you yourself, your intelligence, how much good karma you have. The main thing is good karma, the most important thing is good karma: if there is good karma, there is no confusion; if there is not enough merit then there can be much confusion, so that's the main essence, that's the main point. For the person who is very lucky, who has much merit, the foundation, a very fortunate person, there are no obstacles in practicing everything—whatever the person wishes, everything happens very smoothly, very easily, it happens like rainfall—whatever you practice, step by step it comes. The necessary conditions just happen like that.

So if you look at Jesus as having all the qualities that a buddha has, omniscient mind, stainless, having finished all the mistakes and obscurations, having completed all the realizations, having

completed the training in compassion for all sentient beings, if you prostrate with this kind of recognition, even if you make an offering, there is no problem, there is no contradiction. Anyway, generally you can copy anybody who has good examples, something beneficial thing to say, to subdue the disturbing thoughts. Yeah? That does not mean you are breaking the refuge precepts. Anything that pacifies disturbing thoughts is a teaching of the Buddha. The Buddha's teachings are according to the mind of sentient beings, so for some people the teachings can be completely contradictory to other teachings given to some other people.

That's why I think the Italian saint St Francis, when he prayed to a Jesus painting, the painting spoke to him, and they still keep the verses there on the table in Assisi. This was not so much the power of the material as it was mainly the power of his mind. Other people do not regard him as Buddhist, but I think he has a lam-rim realization and the realization of the graduated path to enlightenment, bodhicitta—this happened through the power of his mind so because of the development of his mind, because of the power of his mind, the object can function like that—Francis or St Francis? St Francis right? Not just Francis. He completely cut off worldly concern and attachment to this life, and he wore very ragged clothes with holes and patches. I think he was an unbelievable practitioner, maybe of the same period as Milarepa, the great yogi, in Tibet, who achieved enlightenment in one brief lifetime. Besides not having attachment to this life, on top of that he practiced differently from other groups, so he and his disciples all wear rag clothes, very rough, and walk in the street very humbly. The others would spit from upstairs and shout and scream, make fun, criticize him, but he and his disciples never showed anger and never retaliated. Constantly they walked on the road reciting the name of Jesus.

The sign that he was a bodhisattva—there was a wolf in the forest who harmed a lot of people and the other people were very scared. He told the people he would go to tell the wolf to not harm others. The other people told him please don't go, it will harm you so, but anyway he went. The wolf came in front of him like a very crazy elephant who came to Buddha, and completely become subdued to, and bowed down to Buddha's feet—the wolf was a wild, mischievous wolf, but it went to his feet and lay down like a dog. He told the wolf not to harm others and that he would bring it food, and from then on the wolf harmed no one.

Also, his disciples meditated in a place where there was running water, and they complained to him that they could not meditate because of the noise. St Francis told the water you should stop because it is disturbing my disciples' meditation. So as soon as he mentioned, the water completely stopped.

Pigeons stayed on his body continually. Even now in that place, wherever there are statues, living pigeons stay around on those statues. There are many stories like those—about yogis and Tibetan lamas who travel on the road, and all the birds singing, and all the points on the trees bend toward and suddenly the river stops and they can walk through on the sand and then the river joins again. There are many stories about how harmful creatures cannot harm that person, proving that this person is a bodhisattva. Even though he is not called Buddhist, he has the realization of bodhicitta. There are many, even among the Hindu sadhus. They don't have to be only wearing Buddhist robes, Theravadin or Tibetan you see. So his mind is very pure, understanding, unselfish mind, very developed. Like Jesus Christ.

In Christianity I can definitely see the path to enlightenment, as in the Buddhist teachings. In Christianity, there are many similarities. I think I mentioned one day how Christianity talks about karma, even though it doesn't say karma, it talks about it, because it talks about hell and heaven. There is one word I think for reincarnation? There is so much emphasis on moral conduct,

morality. Ten virtuous actions, faith, and morality. There is talk of karma, but it is not clearly explained. It is extensively explained in the sutra teachings by Buddha.

However, there is the basic mention of reincarnation, karma, moral conduct, faith, and how important faith is, but it does not explain this clearly, Maybe it does not explain very clearly what God means, maybe that can be little bit of a problem.

So, if you can explain Christianity clearly, you can explain the dharmakaya. To understand the dharmakaya you need to sleep for one month. Maybe get more colds.

It says God is eternal, but there is no explanation. I think we stop here.

THE REFUGE CEREMONY

When we have hunger, we take refuge in food, when thirsty, we take refuge in drink. We take refuge in the house to protect the body from hot and cold, in clothing, take refuge in parents, in friends, but the problem so far is that we're not liberated from samsara, samsaric suffering, we can't do this by taking refuge in all these. Not having taken refuge in the Buddha who reveals the whole path to the full enlightenment, not having taken refuge to the Dharma by listening and reflecting and meditating—that didn't get done. As well as relying upon the Sangha, the attainment of the whole path, the actual refuge of Dharma, the examples showing how to practice, who give inspiration and encouragement.

We didn't get to achieve the path, so therefore, we are sleepy, have problems. So why is there a need to take refuge?

To achieve liberation, to achieve enlightenment, great liberation for the sake of all sentient beings, we must take refuge to actualize the path, relying on Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. So that is the essential purpose.

Those who have taken the lay vows, but degenerated them can take the five precepts again. Those who have taken higher ordination don't need to do so in the ceremony. You shouldn't think I am taking upasika refuge. If you take the lower ordination, it makes you lose the higher ordination.

Then, first make three prostrations, thinking of the statue of Buddha as the actual living Buddha.

Please kneel down, putting the palms together at the heart, then think, feel very strongly, what I explained last few days—the twelve links, samsaric sufferings, how all samsara is suffering, “Until I get liberated from samsara, caused by karma and disturbing thoughts, contaminated seed, disturbing thoughts, I will have to experience suffering of samsara without end,” then remember the three types of sufferings that one experiences in the samsara.

“So, this time, I have received a perfect human rebirth, I have met the teachings of Buddha, the virtuous teachings, revealing the whole path to enlightenment without missing anything, and this time as I have all these opportunities I must achieve supreme liberation, the ever-release from samsara, for the sake of all kind mother sentient beings equaling space. Buddha is the founder of refuge, Dharma is the actual refuge, and the Sangha is the obtainer of the actual refuge in my mind; by requesting them, recognizing in this way, I'm going to take the upasika vow.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan.]

Ask the Lama to pay attention...

[Recitation.]

Then mention your name.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan, followed by students' repetition.]

Then, taking refuge in the Buddha.

[Recitation.]

Now taking refuge in the Dharma.

Taking refuge in the Buddha, the dharmakaya, to transcendental mind the omniscient mind, then also the absolute nature of omniscient mind, completely pure, no obscuration, unstained by completely having ceased, separated from, the obscuration. And then, the aspect, the manifestation of the dharmakaya, the sambhogakaya, nirmanakaya, those, so absolute truth Buddha, all obscuring mind, the mind Buddha, the sambhogakaya, the nirmanakaya, those aspects of Buddha that which all obscuring mind can see. Which can become the object of our obscured mind of ignorance. Taking refuge in both.

Now the Dharma. Taking refuge in the absolute Dharma, the true path, the wisdom realizing emptiness and directly perceiving shunyata and the cessation of suffering, now the relative Dharma or the relative truth Dharma or the all obscuring mind truth Dharma, that is the three basket teachings, teachings on the gradual path to enlightenment, taking refuge in both.

So feel yourself a very serious patient, the incredible need for medicine, and then rely upon that.

[Recitation.]

The next one is taking refuge in the Sangha. You feel yourself a serious patient, with the chronic disease of disturbing thoughts, a condition without beginning, this sickness, then the incredible need of the help of the nurse. Feel in extreme need of the Sangha, with that rely upon the Sangha. The Sangha is two, absolute and relative—absolute Sangha is one who has the attainment of the true path and the true cessation of suffering, monk, celibacy, or lay; then the relative Sangha, the Sangha, the all obscuring mind truth, that one, that is four members, living in the full vows.

[Recitation.]

Until death time I'm going to take the upasika one vow. If there is anybody only taking refuge then remember only refuge upasika. Is there anybody? Repeat now, those who are only taking refuge ordination, repeat this, who are only taking refuge today, only refuge not taking vow, repeat this.

[Recitation.]

Then those who are, is anyone taking the one precept? Anyone taking one precept repeat this.

[Recitation.]

Now who are taking two precepts repeat this.

[Recitation.]

Now who are taking three.

[Recitation.]

Now taking the four.

[Recitation.]

Now who are taking five.

[Recitation.]

Now taking five, sorry six.

[Recitation.]

Now please repeat again.

[Recitation as before.]

Now do the third repetition and at the end of the third repetition then those who are taking the only refuge then you receive this and those who are taking just one vow then you receive this or whatever number of vows you are taking then you receive them.

[Rinpoche completes the recitation]

Think, “As previous arhats abandoned the killing, abandoned the mind and also the body and speech, in the same way I will abandon killing with the mind, also abandon with the body and speech.” Anybody who is taking the precepts not to kill, please repeat this.

[Recitation.]

Now the same motivation, the same thinking, and now the stealing, taking what is not given. I think maybe in future like this it might be more simple.

“As the previous Tathagathas and arhats observed the number of precepts, until death time I am going to keep these precepts, until death time I am going to keep these precepts.”

[Recitation.]

Now, the general practices. By having taken refuge, rely on the holy beings, receive teachings, reflecting and practicing, practicing compassion for sentient beings, then take precepts as much as possible, make offerings to the Triple Gem, either visualizing the Buddha in the heart or above your head on the crown or in front. You can do this with the motivation of bodhicitta, and subdue your own mind, purify, and generate the whole path to enlightenment, to have a long

life and be healthy, to practice Dharma, to obtain benefit for all sentient beings. In this way, however many times you eat, it becomes merit, so much merit—and is also done with the motivation of bodhicitta. This becomes infinite merit each time—the way to make life meaningful. Another practice is to make prostrations. In the morning when you get up, make three prostrations to the Buddha, the founder of the Buddhadharma, the actual refuge, who grants the actual method to liberate yourself from the obscurations, from the whole of samsara, to reach enlightenment.

Then make three prostrations and feel great happiness—from now until death time however many precepts you have taken you will continuously accumulate merit. There is something to dedicate, you are doing something for sentient beings. You are one person, so by taking one vow, not to kill, not to take life, numberless sentient beings do not receive harm from you. They don't receive harm from telling lies. So you see, there is unbelievable benefit, unbelievable happiness, received by numberless sentient beings. So many sentient beings' peace depends on you. So you should know that in everyday life as much as you are keeping the vow, uncountable numbers of sentient beings receive less harm and that much happiness from you. You should know this and be happy, very rejoiceful that you are doing something worthwhile for sentient beings, that you are bringing peace to this continent, this world, to all sentient beings.

Now make three prostrations to the lama that granted the vows.

Those who wants a Dharma name?

Somebody wants Dharma name? The one purpose of the name is to remember the practice. The original Dharma name—if anybody wants?

There are some pills. This pill is made for when you do retreat, high tantric retreat you know, Kalachakra, Tara all those deities, any of the maha-anuttara deities. You have to have this pill to purify the whole thing, to develop your mind, to develop tantric realizations.

There are three pills. One you can give away to another person.

[People come up to receive Dharma names and pills]

Due to the merits accumulated by oneself by taking the vows, and all the past present and future merits accumulated by all the sentient beings may I be able to complete the paramita of moral conduct by practicing without breaking, keeping it purely without pride.

[Recites in Tibetan.]

Due to all this merit, may myself, all the family, all sentient beings, enemy friends and all, in all the lifetimes, until I achieve enlightenment, never be separated away from Lama Tsongkhapa and from the virtuous teachers and from the path that pleases all the buddhas, the lam-rim path, even for one second.

[Recites in Tibetan.]

Due to all this merit, may I and all sentient beings, including enemies, friends, and so on, meet Lama Tsongkhapa's pure teachings, live in the pure morality having the great attitude doing the hardest work for the sentient beings, practicing the yoga of the two stages, the essence of transcendental wisdom of truth and voidness.

[Recites.]

As the three times Buddhas have dedicated their merits in this way I will dedicate all my merits to quickly enlighten all sentient beings. Whoever sees me, touches me, remembers me, talks about me—just by this may they become free from all suffering and receive all happiness

[Recites.]

Due to all this merit may all the students in the organization be able to receive the complete Lama Tsongkhapa teachings oneself and be able to spread them to all other sentient beings by giving them the pure morality of the lay vows and of celibacy, monks and nuns, having extensive listening of the teachings, having well trained bodhicitta, and right conduct and view.

[Recites.]

Goodnight.

LECTURE 12, 8 DECEMBER

THE BODHISATTVA VOWS

I thought I'd go over at least the basic eighteen root downfalls, the eighteen root vows, before the bodhisattva vows are taken, with the preparation and the initiation.

At any rate I must achieve omniscient mind for the sake of all the kind mother sentient beings, therefore I'm going to take the commentary of the bodhisattva vows. So please listen to the teachings by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta and then also purifying the righteous conduct of listening the teaching according to the practice of the lineage lamas.

The first one, the root downfall of *praising yourself and criticizing others*.

One who is living in the bodhisattva vow—first this refers to the selfish attitude, for your own sake, being extremely attached to receiving respect and material offerings. That's the attitude, and the action is praising yourself, how capable I am, how intelligent I am, that I have psychic powers, that I have this and that, that I am special person, fantastic person, amazing person.

Some person, whenever he speaks, says good things about himself all the time—whenever he brings stories or something they are all what I did and why, this and that. So the action is not so much a mistake, the main thing is the motivation, as I just mentioned. If he has bodhisattva vows and the motivation is like this, it breaks the bodhisattva vow. Not even the thought to benefit other sentient beings, the action of praising, criticizing others, not having the thought of cherishing other sentient beings, and the action, what the person does, is that benefit, criticizing mind of other sentient beings.

If you have this motivation, praising yourself, the impure motivation, the selfish attitude, and you criticize other sentient beings, it does not necessarily have to be a sentient being having obscurations—other sentient beings or the Buddha—criticizing others who have qualities, who are objects to be praised by other sentient beings. When others hear you criticize and understand the meaning, can hear the words, these four shortcomings are gathered. Then it becomes actual root downfall.

The four shortcomings are these. Not looking at it as shortcoming—for example, out of the selfish mind praising yourself and criticizing others, that it has a result of sufferings to be experienced, not looking at it as a mistake. That it has great shortcomings, sufferings.

Then the second thing is doing it again and again. Not changing the attitude of doing the action, doing this action again and again.

Then, the third thing, for having done this action, praising yourself and criticizing others, feeling rejoicing, feeling happy, satisfaction. After you mentioned your own capabilities or whatever, you praise others, feel kind of, “Oh I got to mention what I wanted to say about me,” so feeling happiness. Then in regards to somebody you dislike, if you are able to express that the person made a mistake or something, there is some criticism, some blame, and you are able to express or tell somebody, and kind of feel happy.

Also if you are able to make the other person change his thought, and think that someone is bad, and you are happy. On top of your criticism, the other person makes the donation of criticism to the other person, and you feel you succeeded, you feel happy.

Then, not feeling shy, shame, doing the mistakes. The first one is by reason of yourself, the second is by the reason of others—careless of others. You don’t feel regret, you feel careless of others.

Not thinking, “How can I do this? I’ve taken the vow, not having this kind of attitude, if I do this I am creating shortcomings, negative karmas, not thinking of the suffering results of karma.” Maybe also like this—“I have taken this vow from the holy objects, for the sake of sentient beings, from the holy object, so I am cheating them.” When you don’t think that way, then it’s kind of careless, telling lies. I think that’s the closest one to get the idea.

If this action is perfected with this fault, it becomes a root downfall, otherwise if any of these are missing, even if one has done these actions, criticizing, praising, if one of these are missing, it does not become the actual root downfall. You receive some vice, but it doesn’t become the root downfall.

If there are all of the four shortcomings, it becomes the root downfall— you receive the first root downfall. Whatever the person did, praising or criticizing, it doesn’t have to go together.

And the duration—you have to have the limitation on time, these four things. One explanation is that when I checked with His Holiness, he answered that if you have done this action within four hours, if this action is perfected with these four shortcomings, you receive the root downfall.

The second one, the root downfall is *not giving the Dharma or wealth out of miserliness*. So when somebody who is either in poverty of possessions or Dharma comes in front of you, while the person has come to beg, your mind is overwhelmed by miserliness for the possessions or teachings on Dharma, and you decide to not give. If that is perfected with the four shortcomings, then you receive the actual root downfall of not giving the Dharma or possessions out of miserliness.

Then, third, the root downfall of *not accepting when others confess*, by either getting angry and beating others, or one of those. You get angry and insult the sentient beings who can understand the

meaning of your words. Then, developing anger, the mind being overwhelmed by that. Beating or putting them in prison, these kind of things—even if you don't beat, harming. Beating or tying the person.

Then somebody who harmed you in the past confesses from the heart, and when he apologizes, according the Dharma, you keep this very tightly in the heart. Harboring, not accepting his asking for patience, not letting go of anger.

When these two actions, the previous one and this one, not accepting patience, when these are perfected with the four shortcomings, one receives the actual root downfall.

In the six-session yoga prayer, when you recite the prayer, you have to remember that root downfall.

Then, the fourth one, the root downfall of *avoiding the Mahayana teachings*, again with this there's another one—but you should remember the root downfall, revealing that which looks like the holy Dharma but is not really the holy Dharma.

However, it is merely dependent on the other person's level of mind. Anything that becomes a remedy to his delusions is the holy Dharma, anything that is the remedy to his disturbing thoughts is Dharma by definition. Any advice, meditation, that you teach, tell others, if that becomes the remedy to disturbing thoughts, if that pacifies the mind, I would say that's the holy Dharma. It is defined by that. If it becomes a remedy to delusions, it is Dharma, if it does not become remedy to delusions, it is not Dharma.

The root downfall, the fourth one, avoiding the Mahayana teachings, or revealing what looks like the holy Dharma—for a person who is living in the bodhisattva vows, all these root downfalls have to be by the person living in the bodhisattva vow.

Saying the bodhisattva teachings revealing the path are not meaningful, saying it is not correct, saying it is not Buddhadharma, is not correct. Saying this is not Buddhadharma, not a teaching taught by Buddha, saying it is not Buddhadharma, or another way of saying it is not Dharma, a teaching taught by Buddha, implying that it is not what is to be practiced.

I think, it might be same thing in relation to the four sects, Kagyü, Sakya, Gelugpa, and Nyingma teachings, which gradually lead a person to enlightenment—saying these are not the Dharma. Saying these are not meaningful, not Buddhadharma.

Now the second one. Those teachings, those other teachings, which do not cut off the disturbing thought, which don't reveal at all the remedies to cut off the disturbing thoughts, the cause of sufferings, which appears as if it is holy Dharma, then happily, revealing, teaching others, letting others follow these wrong views. Then these true actions, perfect to the four shortcomings, then the actual root fall: avoiding the Mahayana teachings, revealing teachings which look like holy Dharma.

I might stop here.

Maybe I'll mention the preparation.

[Rinpoche recites in Tibetan.]

The next one—the root downfall of *taking and not giving things meant for the precious sublime ones, the Triple Gem*. With the motivation for the selfish mind, and on top of that, disturbing thoughts, either out of anger or attachment. Then that belonging to the truth of the absolute wisdom. Remember yesterday in refuge I mentioned the absolute Buddha, absolute Dharma, absolute Sangha, and the obscuring truth Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, that which the ignorance of true existence can see, as appears as truly existent, out of ignorance.

So the material belongs to them, and then either you directly steal it or otherwise indirectly steal it. The completion of stealing is when you get the thought that you have received it. If you haven't generated the thought "I have received it" then the stealing is not complete.

Then, now here is the root downfall, that action perfected with the four shortcomings—this is the actual root fall of having taken material things belonging to the Triple Gem that are not given.

So things that were given as offerings to the holy objects, can be taken, can be used, with the thought of cherishing other sentient beings. In that way, the motivation is not selfish, even though you use those things you don't receive the root downfall, the things that you has offered to the Triple Gem.

I asked His Holiness Song Rinpoche the details about this—Rinpoche said it is heavier to steal things offered to the absolute Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—that is heavier. My question was like food—after you make the offering, then if you use it with a selfish mind, doesn't it become stealing? His Holiness Ling Rinpoche explained that you are offering the essence of it, you are not offering the whole thing. Normally before you eat or drink, you offer first to the Triple Gem. So I think His Holiness is advising, answering in that way. The first thing that is clean is offered to the Triple Gem, before you use it, so His Holiness said it doesn't become stealing. I don't remember what His Holiness Song Rinpoche explained.

Next one is *criticizes the teachings of the lesser path*, the hearer, listener, and the self conqueror, saying that they are not Buddha's teachings.

Then the next one is *avoiding the holy Dharma*. The previous one is criticizing the Mahayana teachings, then avoiding the Mahayana Dharma. However, abandoning the Mahayana teachings, criticizing the Mahayana teachings, the four sect teachings, the basic things from Buddha, criticizing one as good, one as bad, is avoiding holy Dharma. By criticizing the lesser teachings, the Theravadin—many people say the Theravadin teachings are pure, the Mahayana teachings are not pure, that's avoiding the holy Dharma. This is the opposite of refuge practice. By taking the refuge in the Dharma, even one letter, one page torn from the texts, you have to respect these as actual Dharma refuge.

On the ground or in the garbage, pick it up, put it in a higher place, respect it like this. Therefore, there is no question that those were Buddha's teachings, taught to different sentient beings who had different levels of intelligence. You must pay respect.

Avoiding Dharma, stepping over the Dharma text, throwing in garbage, and avoiding holy Dharma are mentioned in the lam-rim texts, given in the text *Liberation in the Hand*, Pabongka Rinpoche's text. The negative karma of avoiding the holy Dharma is much heavier than destroying all the stupas on this earth. They are even heavier than killing an arhat, those holy beings. Also, the teachings are taught by Buddha and because you don't understand, and find them very technical, thinking, "This is not for me," that is avoiding holy Dharma. Even if it does

not fit with your mind at the moment, you should pray that you are able to understand and practice this teaching later, in the future.

So you should practice like this. This is mentioned in the sutra teaching by Shakyamuni Buddha, how its heavier than destroying all stupas on the earth, or killing arhats.

Then, when turning pages of Dharma texts, you shouldn't use spit but use clean water when you turn the pages. The practitioners who know refuge practice use clean water to make the fingers wet, then turn the pages.

You create negative karma by avoiding Dharma. As His Holiness Ling Rinpoche advised turning the pages of the Dharma text with spit cause one to be born in the vajra narak.

Then, *confiscating the robes*. This is in relation to the monks who took the ordination of celibacy—degenerating their vows, taking their robes away, beating them, putting them in prison, causing the other person to become lay, to come down from the ordination, or harming the holy beings who took the ordination of renunciation.

Then, having *committed the five uninterrupted negative karmas*, one or all of them: killing your father, your mother, an arhat, causing the blood from the tathagathas with an evil mind, and causing disunity within the Sangha. These karmas are called uninterrupted because right after death, you will be born in the naraks. Therefore it is very heavy. Even if you have created other negative karmas, at the time of death, among those karmas, some good karmas are strong, and then after death, you experience the result of that good karma. You experiences the negative karma later, so there's a break between the cause and the result. If you create one of those uninterrupted karmas, such as killing your mother or your father, there is no break. So immediately you have to be born in the narak realm. These are called uninterrupted negative karmas.

Then, the next one, *heresy*. This means thinking that there is no such thing as action or result. There are no past and future lives. For nonvirtuous actions there is no suffering arising, no such karma, no action and result, and from virtuous action, saying there is no experience of the result of happiness.

You don't need the four shortcomings to complete this karma. Whenever the thought has arisen, whenever the delusion comes in the mind, that there is no such karma, no future lives, reincarnation, past and future lives—not just the passing thought. That's not serious—but really believing, that is serious.

Then, the next one, *destroying a city, family, village, or area in the country* with the motivation of selfish disturbing thoughts To receive this root downfall, you need to gather the four shortcomings.

Then, the next one, *revealing emptiness to one whose mind is not trained in the preliminary path*, refuge, karma, those basic things.

The main explanation is here also somebody whose mind is not ready, who get scared by revealing shunyata. Then, if you have generated bodhicitta, and without examining that person, you reveal emptiness to that person, and the person gets scared and changes his attitude to achieve enlightenment, that is the root downfall.

Then, the next one is *turning others away from achieving enlightenment*. Telling those who have generated bodhicitta, entered the Mahayana path that they cannot practice the six paramitas,

telling them how hard it is, how difficult it is, saying in this way you cannot achieve enlightenment, and advising that they practice the lesser vehicle path. If doing that, and the other person is turned away from practicing the Mahayana path to achieve enlightenment, then you receive this root downfall.

Then, the next one, the root downfall of *avoiding the pratimoksha vows*. This is telling a person who is living in bodhisattva vows, what's the use of keeping pure moral conduct? If you generate bodhicitta, you turn towards the Mahayana Path, all the vices of the body, speech, and mind caused by the disturbing thoughts will get purified. If you cause the other to abandon living in the moral conduct of the pratimoksha, this is the root downfall.

Then, the root downfall of *praising oneself and criticizing others*—with the selfish reason of being attached to receiving material or respect from others. Even if you do not have qualities, you tell others. Even if others don't have mistakes, telling others that they have mistakes. When the person to whom you speak understands the meaning, you receive the root downfall.

I think I'll stop here.

LECTURE 13, 9 DECEMBER

CHENREZIG INITIATION: MOTIVATION

The story of Chenrezig, with a thousand arms and a thousand eyes—unimaginable eons ago, it happened that the Buddha, The Thousand Lights Flaming, the Victorious One Abiding in Seclusion, descended to the world and explained the great compassionate mantra of Chenrezig. Out of loving kindness, compassion, and benefit for sentient beings, this buddha taught this mantra, Chenrezig, the long mantra, the eleven faced, then the one thousand eyes, one thousand arms.

That buddha put a golden hand on Chenrezig's head. Chenrezig himself explained this story.

So this buddha told Chenrezig, “You the son of the race, you should keep in the heart the essence of the secret mantra, keep this as a mantra, and then in the future time, you will be able to benefit all the sentient beings and cause much happiness, so do like this.”

As soon as Chenrezig heard Buddha of the Thousand Light Flames, the Victorious One Abiding in Seclusion, he completed the eighth bhumi. Then Chenrezig prayed, “If I am able to have the power to benefit to all sentient beings, to benefit and to cause happiness to all sentient beings, then may I have one thousand arms and one thousand eyes.” He prayed this in the presence of that buddha. As soon as Chenrezig prayed, it happened, Chenrezig received one thousand arms. What he prayed became actualized—one thousand arms, thousand eyes.

Then after that Chenrezig prayed like this, “Bhagawan, devas, human beings, anybody who holds this great compassionate one's mantra, who keeps this mantra in mind, who memorizes this, who keeps this mantra in the body, who reads this mantra, who recites this mantra—may all these beings, at the time of death, have all the ten directions' buddhas descend to that place, where the sentient being is dying, and may this sentient being, wherever he wishes to be born in the realm of the buddha, in the pure field of the buddha, whichever pure buddha field that he wishes to be born in, may this being be born there.” So Chenrezig prayed.

“Bhagawan, anyone who recites this mantra, who keeps this mantra, by reciting this, if just one falls down into the lower realms, may I not become enlightened. Anybody who recites this great compassionate buddha’s mantra, if he doesn’t get born in a pure field of the buddha, may I not become enlightened. Anybody who does the practice of this the great compassionate one’s mantra, if he doesn’t receive wisdom, uncountable numbers of wisdom, concentration, may I not become enlightened. Anybody who recites this great compassionate one’s mantra, who does the practice, if all the being’s wishes, whatever he has in that life, do not get fulfilled, then I will not call this great compassionate one’s mantra the heart mantra.” Like this, Chenrezig himself prayed. Then Chenrezig himself became enlightened. So this shows the power of the mantra—if you practice the mantra with devotion to Chenrezig, you can definitely succeed.

The long mantra, and the short mantra, the six syllable mantra, is also extremely powerful for purification.

One full monk, a pandit who broke all his vows prayed to Chenrezig with regret, then as soon as he was reaching the narak realms, Chenrezig immediately saved him and liberated him from the narak realms, and Chenrezig emanated as Hayagriva and many other deities. Then, a person who created very heavy karma of avoiding Dharma asked a lama who was going to the pure realm of Potala, Chenrezig’s pure realm. The lama told the person, ask Chenrezig if you want to go to the pure realm of Chenrezig. Chenrezig said you cannot go to the pure realm, because you have created much negative karma of avoiding the Buddhadharma, having sold Dharma, the 80,000 stanzas, the *Prajnaparamita* texts, to get food, to live with that money, so therefore you cannot go to the pure realm. Then he asked, “What should I do?” Chenrezig said, “Recite my mantra, the six syllable mantra, OM MANI PADME HUM.” Like this, it is very powerful purification, to purify heavy negative karma.

Then, a couple who had created uninterrupted negative karma did much practice to Chenrezig, reciting the mantra, confessing, and then without needing to leave the body they went to Chenrezig’s pure realm, the Potala.

To be able to quickly do the extensive works for all sentient beings, you need to achieve enlightenment. That depends on quickly generating bodhicitta—the root of the Mahayana path to enlightenment. So what should you do to be able to quickly generate bodhicitta? Besides the practice of purification and accumulating merit, the six preparatories, the actual body mind training in the bodhicitta, then doing Chenrezig meditation, Chenrezig absorbing into your own heart and then Chenrezig’s holy mind and your own mind in oneness, reciting Chenrezig’s mantra as many as possible. This way you are able to quickly generate bodhicitta within your mind. Generally people who practice Chenrezig have very good hearts by the power of the deity, because the deity, Chenrezig, the deity is the embodiment of all the Buddha’s compassion. They have great compassion, much loving kindness.

My mother told me she used to recite 50,000 Chenrezig mantras a day. This is while she was working with the cows, giving food to the cows, taking care the cows, working.

People who do much practice of Chenrezig, who do much nyung-nä practice, when their breath stops, then white beam comes from the body, which is a sign that the person has gone to the pure realm, such as the Potala, the pure realm of Chenrezig.

Geshe Lama Konchog, who taught here the the seven point thought transformation practice, has done so much practice of Chenrezig—he completed two thousand nyung-näs. He was in the mountains in a place called Tsum, very high, I think very far, in the Himalayan region, and he

and another lama organized all the villagers around, and each year altogether they did two hundred million Chenrezig mantras. Everybody ate together and they recited together. They did this for about six years. Not only did he himself practice, also he benefited so many by teaching the Chenrezig practice to many other people, to many other sentient beings. While he was on the mountain, one hundred people completed all the four preliminary practices—now Geshe Lama Konchog’s miracle signs will have to come at the time of death.

We have been receiving guidance from Chenrezig. During this one month course, that we were able to accumulate so much merit, each day generating the motivation of bodhicitta, doing prostrations, meditating on the lam-rim, taking Mahayana ordination, during that time we made so much preparation for the happiness future lives, from this day up to enlightenment—actually all this is due to Chenrezig’s kindness, due to the compassionate Buddha Chenrezig’s kindness. All this is due to the guidance of Chenrezig.

Just briefly to mention, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha one day sent five beams from the center of the eyebrow. At the center of the eyebrow, there is called *tzho-pho*, a white hair, part of the holy signs of the Buddha’s holy body. So he sent five beams to the snow land of Tibet, then he smiled and the disciples asked why Buddha smiled.

So then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained to Bodhisattva Devanamse that when the teaching degenerated in India, he would spread Dharma in the snow land Tibet, and offer extensive benefit to sentient beings in the snow land and so many sentient beings will have refuge in the teaching of Buddha will have refuge in their mind, and receive happiness. Then Buddha said, “I will pass away, the sentient beings don’t have any more karma to see me directly. So, now I’m going to pass away in order to destroy the wrong conceptions of permanence and to preserve their minds in the Dharma, to bring their minds into Dharma.”

Then the bodhisattva Eliminating the Obscurations requested Guru Shakyamuni to not pass away, saying that he didn’t have to put his holy feet in the snow land of Tibet to lead and to reveal the Dharma. But the Buddha replied that at the moment in Tibet, the beings don’t have the karma. They will all go to the lower realms, like when the snow dropping on the ocean sinks to the bottom. Later, Chenrezig will start the generation and guide the sentient beings in Tibet by giving them necessities, food and clothing, and then afterwards when their mind is ready, Chenrezig will guide them by revealing Dharma.

During Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s time, Chenrezig was the bodhisattva Devanamse. All the kings in Tibet who spread Dharma were all embodiments of Chenrezig. Like this up to His Holiness Dalai Lama—all these are the embodiment of Chenrezig. So that’s how His Holiness is an embodiment of Chenrezig.

Therefore, if His Holiness did not come from Tibet to foreign countries, there would not be teachings spread in the outside countries and developed. All these opportunities are under the guidance of His Holiness. Now we have that much Dharma wisdom eye, Dharma wisdom, to know the meaning of life. All this is from the kindness of Chenrezig, all this guidance came from Chenrezig’s compassion.

In order to achieve enlightenment, in order to do extensive works for all sentient beings, to generate the path with our mind, we have the opportunity to practice many different aspect of buddhas for different purposes, and to receive teachings on those deities’ paths, to retreat, to accumulate so much merit, to enjoy the life—all this is due Lama Chenrezig’s compassion to guide sentient beings, all having different problems, different levels of mind.

Even though there are numberless Buddhas, the mantra that most people know is the Chenrezig mantra, so many people have the chance to purify, to accumulate merit, then develop the mind. That is because the buddha himself is the Buddha of Compassion, so because of compassion this is happening, this guidance is received.

The Compassionate Buddha, whose initiation we're going to take, is not something with which you have never had connection. He has been guiding you, even if by taking ordinary forms, like I just mentioned, as His Holiness Dalai Lama.

CHENREZIG INITIATION: FIVE PREPARATIONS

In order to do the Chenrezig initiation, there are five preparations: the preparation from the side of the lama and the preparation for the disciples has been done by Lama. Then that is finished, then now generating, preparation for the disciples, that is five.

The first one. Because of the impressions left on the consciousness—the disturbing thought obscurations and the subtle obscurations—without an omniscient mind, you cannot perfectly guide all sentient beings.

Besides that, there is no sentient being who has not been your mother and kind. She has been kind in four ways numberless times. Each time she has been your mother, she has been kind. She is extremely kind having given you this body. If she did not give you this body, if she did not create the karma to give you this body, if she did not give you this body, then by now you wouldn't have the opportunity to practice Dharma.

Then, in one day, even within one hour, minute, you have incredible opportunity, how much you wish to make preparation for happiness of future lives, opportunity, freedom, how much you wish to make preparation for liberation, you have the freedom to create so much. All this by the kindness of your present mother.

This is not the first time she was extremely kind to give you a body. She has been kind like this numberless times. There is no depth, no number. Even if you give up your body, your life to her, including number of atoms of this earth, still there is no way to repay her, still it is nothing compared her kindness, giving body, having the opportunity to practice Dharma.

On top of that she protected your life from dangers. While you were in her womb, she protected you from all harm and danger. Even if she could not look after you she asked someone else to do it. She did this so you would have the chance to live long and practice Dharma, to take the bodhisattva vow, to take this initiation, and to practice the teachings that make you able to benefit all beings.

She has been kind like this numberless times—then feel the debt. Even considering the number of the atoms in the earth for so many millions of eons, her kindness is much greater. On the top of that, she has been kind bearing the hardships of taking care of you. When you felt hot and cold, she gave you clothing, when you felt hunger and thirst, she gave food and drink, when you were sick, she gave medicine—like this she protected you from all these life's dangers and harms. If everything she gave you in numberless lives, all the clothing food or drink, was collected, there wouldn't be any space left—it would be much greater than this earth, much greater than the ocean.

By now you would be maybe in the ocean, running with the fish, under the rocks, stone, born as a worm, wandering around, or in some corners of the trees or house, a spider, eating flies. Or born as a bird, an animal in the forest, or living on only meat, killing, living on other sentient beings as food. If you were like this now, what could you do?

While you're in the mother's womb, all the pains, all the discomforts, all the essence of her body is absorbed into you—her body is completely changed. She must feel all the pain of giving birth to you, much hardship, much screaming, no comfortable sleep at night or daytime. If the mother is meditating, doing study, even in the day time, like this.

Things like that. However much you make a mess, in the bed, all the clean clothing day and night, pipi and kaka. All these difficulties. And how you make the body and the clothing dirty.

Now, every single merit that you accumulate, today, in twenty-four hours, you can say is given by her. If she didn't care for you like this, all this merit you have accumulated today, since you were born, all this merit you accumulated until now, to achieve happiness of future lives and liberation, enlightenment—you wouldn't have all these things. All these things completely came from her. So think how extremely kind the mother is.

Then on the top of that, she is extremely kind in keeping you in the path of the world. When you came out of the mother's womb, like a piece of flesh coming out, you were like the worms crawling on the ground, or like a flat fish, moving around, no different from the worm. She taught you how to walk, how to clean, how to go to school, and all the money she collected with much work, with much exhaustion in the body and mind. To find all this money she spent a lifetime, trying to educate you. She collected all this money by finding a job, and then she spent all this money on you, to take care of you, to educate you.

So you see, due to that she didn't have the opportunity to read Dharma books, to develop the mind, to open the Dharma wisdom eye, to write notes, to read and write. This is not the first time, maybe, that she worked so hard, and led you on the path of the world, experienced the hardships. She has done this for you numberless times from beginningless rebirths, and it is unbelievably kind.

Now you can see the depthless kindness. Even the Buddha's omniscient mind, the most developed omniscient mind cannot see the beginning. So therefore, if you don't practice, if you don't make the most of each hour, each day of life, making it meaningful by practicing Dharma, the good heart, bodhicitta, the ultimate good heart, then so far what your mother receives from you is only worries, difficulties, and fear.

From the mother's side, kindness. If you don't make my life meaningful like this, by practicing Dharma, it looks like you were born only to torture, only to cause problems to your parents, to other sentient beings.

Each sentient being has been kind, has been a mother to you numberless times. So feel the kindness equal to your present life's mother—numberless.

[Meditation]

Now think, "I must repay the kindness. The best way to repay is not just to give food and clothes and material possessions. They have received these numberless times, they have been kind numberless times, but that wealth itself didn't make them free from samsara. So therefore,

the best way to repay all kindness is to free them from the sufferings of samsara, to lead them to peerless happiness and enlightenment, to guide the numberless sentient beings, mother sentient beings. I must do this by training my mind in the gradual path to enlightenment.”

[Meditation]

Meditate on kindness. Loving kindness arises as you feel the kindness. All these mother sentient beings, even if they have temporal happiness, are devoid of ultimate happiness. However much they wish for happiness, in practice what they do is run to destroy the cause of happiness by bringing up anger and heresy. Kind mother sentient beings are ignorant of the cause of happiness. Even if they know the cause of happiness, they are lazy to practice the cause of happiness.

So think, “I will cause all these kind mother sentient beings to have all the happiness and the cause of happiness.” Generate great loving kindness, make this determination. Remember the enemy, friend, stranger, and all sentient beings.

Now sentient beings, no matter that they do not want suffering, are ignorant of the cause of suffering, and constantly keep busy. The nature of the life is to rush to create the cause of suffering. You think that even in one day, one hour, what they accumulate is as much as possible the cause of suffering.

Even if they know the cause of suffering, they are lazy to abandon it, and they continuously experience suffering. Even those who do not suffer the suffering of suffering or the suffering of change experience pervasive compounding suffering, the suffering of samsara. Think, “I will cause all mother sentient beings to be free from all the suffering and causes of suffering, all the obscurations.” Have this determination, this is the way of generating great compassion.

[Meditation]

Wishing all sentient beings to have happiness and be free from sufferings, think, “I will do this work by myself, *alone*.” Take all the responsibility to free each sentient being, including the enemy, from all the suffering and have all happiness. Take the whole responsibility on your shoulders, upon yourself. Like this make the strong determination, generating the thought of taking responsibility.

Think of that starting from here, starting from Kopan. Starting from the Dharma friends around here, starting here, you take complete responsibility. Particularly remember the enemies you dislike, take the responsibility to free them from all suffering, to cause all the happiness, by yourself alone.

[Meditation]

Now, the mother sentient beings’ Dharma wisdom eye is blind, not knowing the cause of suffering, of happiness. They are crazy, possessed by the mara of disturbing thoughts. Acting out of anger, attachment, ignorance, jealousy, pride, doubt, wrong views—crazy like the person is possessed by spirits, becoming completely wild, doing a lot of harm to herself, beating herself, jumping over cliffs. Similarly, being possessed by the mara of disturbing thoughts, creating a lot of harm to herself—creating negative karma.

Then, being sick, having serious diseases, the suffering of suffering, suffering of changes,

pervasive suffering—not having freedom, like this. Each second, as they move, that action of the body, speech, and mind is like walking off the cliffs. Each action they do is negative karma, out of the poisonous mind, it's like walking over the cliffs of the lower realms, each time. Kind mother sentient beings are so pitiful, suffering like this.

So therefore think, “They are devoid of the leader of the blind, the virtuous teacher. I have met a virtuous teacher, especially the Mahayana teachings, and if I want to help sentient beings, I have the opportunity. They have been so kind, so I should repay them, I should take all the responsibility, and on top of that I have the opportunity to help all mother sentient beings.

“When the mother is sick, having all the problems, if the daughter or the son doesn't help, then who is to help, who is responsible, when the mother has been very kind? Similarly, if I don't help, having all the opportunity, whose responsibility is it? It is completely my own responsibility.

“What the sentient beings want is the highest happiness, enlightenment, and in order to lead them to enlightenment I must reveal the path. In order to do that I need to understand every single mind, every single ways and means—and that is only possible by the omniscient mind, so I must reach omniscient mind. There is no other solution to perfectly guide sentient beings. To perfectly do the work for sentient beings, I must obtain the state of omniscient mind.

“Even from my side, to practice the path, to receive enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings, even if I have to suffer in the naraks for eons as much as there are drops in the ocean, then I can do it, I can bear the suffering. From the side of the sentient beings, their being in samsara for even one second, a minute, is so unbearable for me, like so many eons of suffering. Therefore, I need to achieve enlightenment, quicker and quicker.”

The motivation should be the need to achieve enlightenment without delaying it for even a second. Therefore that method to quickly achieve enlightenment is Vajrayana, tantra, the secret mantra. To be able to practice Chenrezig, the yoga method of Vajrayana, in order to lead you to the state of Chenrezig, to attain Chenrezig enlightenment, think, “I must take the Chenrezig initiation and make the preparation for that.”

As I mentioned before, again remember, in order to achieve enlightenment, generate bodhicitta, it depends on a special deity. That is the special deity of compassion, Chenrezig. Therefore think, “I am taking this initiation in order to practice the Vajrayana, the yoga method of attaining Chenrezig.”

[Rinpoche begins the initiation—not recorded.]