

# KOPAN COURSE 10

Kopan Monastery, Nepal  
November 19 to December 03, 1977

Archive # 092  
Lightly edited by Gordon McDougall, May 2011

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*Editor's note: Besides some very poor quality tapes, many of the old reel-to-reel tapes were not labeled or inaccurately labeled and so it has been impossible to determine the chronological sequence of the lectures.*

## LECTURE 1

### INTRODUCTION

I am very happy to meet again old students who attended the previous courses and have not yet experienced death and impermanence. And even though you lived long time in the West still, there's that energy existing in the mind, and you have come again to try to develop further. And also I would like to mention thank you very much also the new people who have come here to practice some meditation, to study, who are seeking an inner method to achieve peace in the mind, inner peace. You have taken much effort, and had many difficulties coming from such far countries to study this method.

I am not saying thank you very much because you came to listen to my terrible voice. I am not saying thank you very much for that! But I am saying that you have such aim to obtain peace of mind and to learn the methods to obtain, and for that you have had to come from such far countries and bear many difficulties. For that reason I want thank you. I have great rejoicefulness. I think that it is extremely good that the new people who came to take course, who came to practice meditation, feel that the life and all the old methods they tried before don't really eliminate the problem, don't really stop physical and mental sufferings. And feeling that this is not right, there must be something else, some other method. So, you have come, wanting to seek those other new methods which you haven't actualized, which you haven't experienced, without closing your mind—by opening your mind, by opening the door of your own wisdom. You have come to let your mind to receive the understanding of other methods. Which means you to make yourself free.

If you always concentrated on the same method to obtain happiness—what you have been doing before, the old methods—you can never change the mind, never open the mind for other new methods. In that way, there is no way to understand those other new methods. And then you constantly make mistakes. You do the work to obtain peace of mind but what do you receive from that? By trying that method, it just problems. You put yourself in prison, instead of making yourself free. You are always bound by that limited understanding.

An example is this. A child is born in very dark building, where there are no windows or doors, where he can see through the different outside phenomena. It is a completely dark building, and there is only one tiny hole he can see through, but what he sees through that hole is a very ugly place, just desert. Growing up in that dark building, he might believe that the entire environment outside is desert, just desert, even though there are many other beautiful objects—beautiful mountains and beautiful flower gardens and beautiful houses, many different views. But that child never comes out of that building and never sees those things, so he believes everything what is outside is only desert. (Only desert: I think I am mixing with the food dessert! Desert,

you know: just sand, no water, where there is much sun, very hot, like, you don't want to be there.)

That is why I usually feel great rejoicefulness when people want to seek a new method, whose mind is opened, to understand the new methods to obtain the mind peace. Because in that way that person starts on the root of the path to temporal happiness and ultimate happiness: that person has started on the root of the path. As he opened his mind to seek different methods, not closer, so there is a possibility to achieve all the happiness—all the temporal happiness and ultimate everlasting happiness. When Tibetan lamas see a person helping himself in that way, they feel great rejoicefulness.

## THE REASON WE DO PUJAS

Just before the discourse, I am going to do short puja or, another way of saying: a method, method that is explained by Buddha. The first method, that is to do with the offering, with the cakes, the offering cake. And then there are different, after that there will be different prayers that will be said. All those are different psychological methods, like a psychologist to cure the patient has to use different skills, different methods, different subjects even with one patient. Even with one patient, for his different problems he has to use different methods. Similarly, different doctors cure different problems that the patient has using different methods. Taking tablets or liquids to drink, having surgery—there are many different methods to cure even one patient. So like this, there are thousand, thousands, thousands of hindrances to understand the teachings, for the teachings to become effective, to be beneficial for our mind and for the meditations to be successful and to be able to actualize the meditations. There are thousands and thousands of hindrances which disturbs us, so there are many different methods.

All these different prayers, reciting mantras, are different psychological methods for different hindrances, which have been abiding in our mind.

For example: even for a person to come to the East from West, there are so many hindrances: for the whole trip to be successful there are so much hindrances. And because there are so many hindrances, many people cannot come. So many people want to come to Nepal and India, they want to see Himalayan mountains, they want to see the things there are to see in the East, but they can't because of obstacles. Even just for this temporal pleasure, to obtain just this temporal pleasure there are so many hindrances. Even in the West there are so many people who want to come to see the Himalayan mountains and who want to see Mount Everest, but they don't have enough money, or there are many other hindrances like this.

So this is similar. What we are doing here, the work what we are doing here is not just to obtain temporal happiness, is not just to obtain mind peace for one hour or one day, for one month, not like this. The work what we are going to do here is to eliminate completely the whole of suffering and to achieve everlasting or ultimate happiness. This is the greatest work. So, of course, this is not easy. If even just to obtain temporal pleasure of coming to the East has so many hindrances, of course, for something like this there must be so many thousands of hindrances.

So, therefore, before the discourse, I am going to do a short puja and, which are, all are meditation subjects.

The coughing might make the language unclear, you know. This time, coughing is souvenir from Switzerland! So it's precious to spread and to keep it!

## THE MEANING OF DHARMA

You people came here to do a meditation course and I'm supposed to teach the teachings on meditation: the method to eliminate the problems and to obtain the peace in the mind. But from my side I don't think that I can. I'm not capable to teach on meditation, because I don't practice Dharma, I don't practice Dharma, I don't practice the teachings and I have no one single experience. For the teacher to teach, for the teacher to teach meditation, to teach teachings to disciples, first of all he himself should have experience through practice. So I don't have that qualification. My experience is just only telling lies that I am religious person, just only imitating a religious Tibetan monk. I have no knowledge of Dharma, not one single experience of meditation, so there is no way that I can benefit to your mind.

You people coming here to do this course and to listen my ridiculous talk, it is definite that why we are meeting each other like this, and that I have to talk about Dharma to you and that you are listening, is because we have met each other in our previous lives. We made a connection in the previous lives, so that is why we are all here. That is why in this life, even though we don't know why, somehow this relationship has happened at such place, that you are listening, and that I have to talk about Dharma.

However, if I talk a little bit about Dharma by imitating the teachings I have received from my incomparably kind gurus, the highly realized gurus, just by imitating the words I heard from them, maybe there is a little bit of benefit.

Of the subject that is Dharma, there are different spiritual teachings. The methods of the Dharma that we are going to try to understand and practice and actualize is the method which is Dharma, explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. The Buddhadharma is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's psychology—although perhaps using the term "psychology" is also limited. It is a method, it is a psychological method that is explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. It is the perfect and infallible method to pacify completely all the mental and physical sufferings, and to achieve ultimate happiness, everlasting happiness.

What does "Dharma" mean? It is that which saves, that which saves sentient beings from the whole entire suffering and its cause. It is a method which has the function of saving sentient beings from all suffering. For example: if a person is going to fall down a precipice, from a cliff, but there is a rope that the person can hold on to, which helps that person not fall down and not damage to his body, that rope is the thing that saves the person from the danger of falling down. This is just a simple example, just an idea what Dharma means, what it means.

The purpose of practicing Dharma is to obtain happiness and eliminate all suffering—it saves from suffering.

If I practice Dharma, my Dharma saves me from suffering, from the various sufferings and the causes of sufferings, and my Dharma offers me all temporal happiness. Happiness and suffering are internal factors; they are not external factors. So, the principal cause of happiness is not material phenomena.

If the cause of happiness were material phenomena, then in the previous time, when this earth evolved, when there were the original human beings, at that time there was not the high material progress there is now, and so in those times there would have been much greater suffering, no peace. And conversely, these days there should be much more greater peace, much more greater happiness in the world than those times when there were first, original human beings were on this earth. But it is not like this. In fact in those times, in the time of those original human beings, there was much greater peace, even though there was no one machine to be seen.

Just one example. If you think of one country where there is highest material development, consider whether there has been less and less suffering and greater and greater happiness as material things have developed. If you think of one country you can understand. And also if we think of just one person who wasn't wealthy in his earlier life but became wealthy later on, having incredible material possessions. Just by checking his experience, which time in his life did he have more realizations, more contentment, more quietness. Even just by checking like this, even in the story of one person, you can see that when he was not wealthy his mind was much freer and there were more realizations than when he became wealthy and had a great reputation and so much material power. Then, the mind was much more worried; there was greater and greater worry.

An example like this which shows the principal cause of happiness is not material phenomena. Even here, we who don't have that much in material things, but our mind is much happier, it has more realizations than the person who has the most incredible reputation in the world and who has incredible material power and who has incredible populations under him. If you check up the different experiences of mind, you'll see this. Even if we don't have that much material power, that many people working under us, even if we don't have that much reputation, but the mind has much realizations, it has much calmness and less worry than those people. Through this example, you can understand.

It's the same thing with suffering. Just as the happiness does not depend on having the material things, in the same way suffering does not depend on not having material things. The principal cause of the suffering isn't not having material possessions. You can understand that from this example. both suffering and happiness are internal factors. The cause of happiness, the cause of suffering are internal factors, within the mind.

From what type of mind does happiness arise? Happiness arises from a good mind, happiness comes from a good mind, from a virtuous mind. Another name for a good mind is a virtuous mind, whose nature is calmness, is peaceful. Suffering arises from bad thoughts, from nonvirtuous thoughts. Another name is nonvirtuous thoughts, whose nature is unpeaceful and cruel.

## THE DANGERS OF ATTACHMENT

From nonvirtuous thoughts, suffering arises. For instance, ignorance, hatred, attachment, pride, jealousy—there are many other delusions, there are many other bad thoughts like this. For instance, a person who has much worry with material possessions, about them being stolen by other people, being confiscated by other people, breaking down—no matter how many material possessions that person has, he still thinks, "I don't have enough." He thinks in his mind, "I don't have enough material possessions. I want this and that. This and that are missing," He

wants better and better quality; he wants more and more. And all these problems, all this aggression, arise when he loses his money, when he loses his material possessions, when his factory closes. There are all these problems, all this aggression, so much depression, all caused by attachment, the dissatisfactory mind. Through this, we can understand how all these material life's problems are caused by mind, by the bad thought, the dissatisfactory mind of attachment.

Similarly, a person who has hundreds of clothes at home still thinks, "I don't have enough," and still wants more and more, always worrying that there is not enough. Never able to get enough, never able to make enough money to get all the material possessions that seem necessary. All this worry is caused by the bad thoughts, by attachment. While experiencing all these thoughts, all these problems, all this dissatisfaction of never having enough, of always wanting more, if that person could all of a sudden changes his mind, "Oh, what I have now is enough to keep me warm, to keep my body warm, why I should worry? Why I should worry about getting better quality material or getting more, I have enough to protect my body from the cold." Whenever he makes a determination like this in his mind, all of a sudden there is a great realization. When he makes the determination that he has enough to protect his body for one or two years and there is nothing to worry about, all of a sudden, there is a great realization, there is calmness in his mind.

This happiness that the person experiences comes from the good thought, renouncing attachment that always seeks more and better. His happiness he experienced arises from the good thought, which is the opposite of attachment, which is the contented and satisfied mind. From just this example, from this experience, we can see how happiness arises, how the happiness is received from the good thought.

The example is like this. By renouncing attachment that seeks more and better quality material possessions, what he is doing, that itself is Dharma, that itself is Dharma. Even though the person himself doesn't call it Dharma, even though he thinks, "I'm not a religious person, I'm not a Dharma practitioner." What he is doing, when he renounces attachment, that itself is practicing Dharma. And through his Dharma practice, he experiences happiness, his mind becomes calm and peaceful.

When I was in England just before, at the center, on television, there was the story of a single person who lives in England, who doesn't live in a family, who lives alone. Before, in his early life, I think he opened the car factory and he made many cars, and he made business for a long time, selling cars like this. By doing that business he became very wealthy and he had a very big property, a very huge building. In that building, I think, there were maybe thirty or thirty rooms maybe more than that, I'm not sure. He was alone, just him and his bodyguard, who has long boots and long hair. Because he's very wealthy, and maybe to protect him from danger. What did he do at nighttime, when he went to bed? As there were many rooms, in each room there was a large and very comfortable bed and he slept in one room, in one bed, on each night. The next night he went to sleep in another room, in that bed, and another night still in another room, other bed, like this. He changed his bed each night, so he slept by going round and round like this, sleeping in different rooms. And he drank. He didn't eat much, but he drank, I think, six or seven bottles of alcohol. I think he can't eat so much somehow!

Because he drank so much, I think he drank in order to make friends more easily. He had one or two dogs outside so if people came, if thieves or robbers came to steal from him, the dogs were trained to kill them. They were trained to jump up and bite at the neck of the person.

At each weekend, what did he do? He had many small model cars, like children play with, and he came outside and there's a kind of cement table, sort of a round thing. Then he put the small model cars on that and poured kerosene over the cars there, and with the help of the bodyguard, he lights matches and set alight to the cars. He did that each weekend.

On the program he was talking and he explained the reason he did this was because he now hates cars, because that what made his life bored, that was what spoiled his life, it was what made his life addicted in that way, and unhappy. Even though he had that huge property, he had that many material possessions, he thought what caused his life to be so unhappy, what spoiled his life was the cars, because he had made a car business before. With the car business he became extremely rich and allowed him to have all those material possessions, but even though he had everything, he got bored and he did not know what to do with his life. He didn't know how to make his life happy. He had everything, but still life was not happy and his mind was not satisfied. He didn't know how to make his life happy. So he blamed all the problems of his life, all his unhappiness, on cars, and he had a kind of aversion for cars. That was the significance of burning the small model cars each weekend—he thought he was destroying the root of his suffering and or his unhappiness.

And he cried that his life was essenceless, he had not found yet the essence of the life. He was very upset, he was crying, telling like this about his life. The reason I mentioned this, the short story of this person, is because he had only been concentrating completely on externals, only the material development, material progression. He never made progression in the mind, nothing, he made nothing to progress, to make his mind better. So, instead of his life becoming more and more satisfied, happier and happier, having more and more realizations in his life, he became more and more unhappy, more and more worried. That made him drink more and more. Actually, all his life's problems were caused by the dissatisfactory mind, by attachment.

Similarly, the problems that what we experience, fighting each other, killing each other, all these things in the family, between a couple, in society—so many of these are also caused by attachment.

After being married to one wife, a man changes and tries another wife, then changes again and tries another one—like this in one life, the same thing, changing five or six times. Even seventeen times! Those others are usual, but there may be more than that! Seventeen times recently happened—there was a story in Malaysia. There must be stories happening in other countries. In Malaysia there was an old man, whose age was over 117. One of his girlfriends—I don't know what she did—somehow she was in prison, and she owed a lot of money to, she was in debt, so she had to pay. This old man came to help her, to give her some money so she could be released from prison. In his life, this old man changed wives seventeen times. He went to prison to make arrangement for another wedding and when he was leaving he told her that he would marry her soon.

Never being satisfied with one person, with one husband or one wife, changing many times like this, creates much confusion. Even people who were friends, you make them enemies, you cause

many people to be jealous, to get angry. Then fighting each other, killing each other—all this aggression, all this depression. Then you commit suicide yourself. All these things, all these problems are caused by the dissatisfied mind of attachment. We can see this clearly from the example.

So, I think I stop here. As these are the source of the life's problems, therefore, this is the reason we practice Dharma, to be free from these delusions, these bad thoughts.

## LECTURE 2

### ATTACHMENT TO ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

The big problems in the life that so many people have through drinking alcohol is also caused by the dissatisfied mind, which causes the mind to have no control over desire. Without talking about the dangers it causes to person's mind and body, coming from attachment whatever garbage there is in the mind of the person, the secret things, blaming other people, at that time everything comes out, like in a movie.

Besides all that, it makes so many other problems. The drunk easily gets angry even though in the view of other ordinary people there's no actual reason. Because there's no control in his mind even, without any base, he easily gets angry and fights other people. Also that time there is no more shame, there is no more fear in the mind of that person. Because the mind, the consciousness has no control, if there are also weapons around, there is real danger to the lives of the people around—family, children, other people, and it causes danger to even his own life. There are so many examples of that happening. Then he completely destroys his material possessions, what he has collected with so much effort, things he and his wife have worked day and night to buy. On top of that, he can't work properly, he can't do his job, and so he gets dismissed or kicked out from the office. After losing his job, his family suffers. There is no more money left, so he can't take care of the family, he can't take care of the children. For his parents and his wife there is so much worry. It is difficult to take care of him. All those problems are caused by the dissatisfied mind, attachment. You can see this clearly.

Smoking is similar to that. A person who smokes many cigarettes cuts short his life. Even though, if he didn't smoke, his natural lifespan would be long, he himself causes his life to be shorter. On one hand, he has a natural long life and on the other hand he lacks the understanding of the effects on the elements, he lacks the understanding of the effects of this to his mind and body. He causes this himself; other people do not cause this, he himself causes this shortage of life. Then, he damages his own lungs and liver, or maybe has a heart attack. There are many diseases, it makes the inside things like rotten fruit. There are so much dangerous disease like cancer, which are difficult for doctors to cure. So things like that happen.

Anyway, besides becoming physically unhealthy, without question mentally smoking is harmful. It also damages the mind; it pollutes the mind. It pollutes the body, it pollutes the mind, and it also pollutes—whatever they are called, the nadis—the arteries, that many people talk about who are studying yoga, they talk about chakras. It pollutes the chakras. It has many damaging effects to the mind. Physically & mentally he becomes unhealthy and all these problems comes. His teeth become yellow, and we can see even the face loses its color. Even in the nails also, you can see the signs; they look burnt. Even when you see the person's face, you can see, you can feel

whether that person is smoking a lot or not, you can see even from the face you can feel the vibrations. Even if he is not smoking, you can't stand to be close to him, because of the smell. Even though he's not smoking at the moment, but the smoke is living inside. There is a smell, you can still smell it.

Anyway all these problems, which is difficult to cure by medicine, if you think if you check back the cause of the problem, it is attachment. That is very clear. Not smoking cigarettes doesn't cause death, it doesn't cause starvation. Anyway, you can see all such problems are caused by attachment, the dissatisfied mind.

It's the same thing with drug addicts. A drug addict has also lost control over desire, attachment. Because he is unable to control the, he can't give up the habit, and because of that his life has all those other side effects. Because of that, his parents hate him and refuse to take care of him. As he gets more addicted, he has less control and most of the time he is more and more unconscious. All these problems—going in the prison, owing a lot of money—all these are caused by the dissatisfied mind, by attachment.

Even terrorism comes from the dissatisfied mind. This is happening so much in Germany, with terrorists causing much danger to many people, shooting people and each other, creating so many problems. They are confusing many people and causing many governments to have meetings. [RL GL] All these things again are the problem of attachment, of not controlling attachment. Because a person can't control attachment, all these problems happen, causing problems to other people, disturbing the happiness of other sentient beings.

Then also kidnapping. There are many problems in the West of people being kidnapped. That is one of the worst things; it is incredible, very dangerous. You have to make a choice, either your life or all the money in the bank, either you give your life to the person, or you give the money in the bank that you have been storing in your life. Even with the daughter or sons of the family, the parents have to pay incredible sums of money, which they could never repay in their life—so much they would have to be born and have another life, and work again to pay it all back. Such an incredible sum of money, even in one life they couldn't pay it. This is a very bad thing. Problems such as this are created by mind. It is not created by mountains, it's not created by the earth, it's not created by rocks or water or weathering. It's by the mind. By bad thoughts.

We had one Italian student, last year, actually, quite an old man, who was in danger of death twice in one year. He lived alone, and was alone at home when gunmen came in and tied him to a chair. They put guns to his neck and confiscated whatever money he had. Fortunately, as he was screaming, downstairs there was a lady who heard it, and she quickly made a phone call. Then they left. They kept on phoning him and demanding more. I don't remember exactly how much, but it was too much! [RL GL] I think certain a number of millions. They had fixed the date, "If you don't pay before then we will kill you." He was in such danger. I think he escaped, though. [GL] Lama Yeshe sent an Italian monk to guard him, to protect him. He lives alone and is quite old so Lama thought a monk from the monastery could protect him.

Anyway, the main point of the story is you should understand how the attached mind is dangerous, how delusions, how bad thoughts such as attachment are dangerous.

We can see clearly how attachment disturbs the happiness of oneself and the happiness of other sentient beings. It constantly makes the person create the cause of unhappiness, of suffering, and it always binds him, it doesn't let the person get liberated, to be free from attachment, from the suffering of attachment.

For example, attachment always causes further attachment. That's how attachment keeps beings in suffering. Therefore, it is extremely important to renounce attachment as much as possible. If you want to know what attachment means, it is a thought. Attachment is a thought that sinks into an object of beauty. The mind gets stuck, or it sinks, and it becomes difficult to separate from the object. That is the nature of attachment. To find out what is attachment, what is not attachment, mind that is in such a nature, that is attachment. So that's why mind gets stuck on the beautiful object and it's difficult to separate, it's extremely difficult to separate. That's why mind gets confused; that's why unhappiness and problems rise.

### THE DISADVANTAGES OF ANGER

Then anger. Two insects, two tiny insect fighting one another, killing one another—this is caused by anger. Two people fighting each other, hurting each other, destroying each other's material possessions—this is caused by anger. If somebody is in a dining room eating food, when he has anger, even if he is eating off of a nice plate, even though there's not a single benefit, he breaks the dishes, he breaks the cups—whatever expensive material possessions are around, he breaks. Or he beats up other people, or destroys other's material possessions; he even kills other people.

Even if his body is lying on a luxurious comfortable bed, when the mind is not happy, when the mind is angry, he can't feel the enjoyment. Even if he has beautiful house. When the mind is angry the person cannot feel enjoyment. Even if he's eating delicious, expensive food, he can't feel the taste, he can't feel the enjoyment.

Many times we hear of a husband killing his wife and the children that were born to him. We even hear of the daughter or son killing the parents who helped them. All the time we see pictures in the newspaper, on the television—fires, fighting, rioting, protesting, angry people trying to destroy different things. Black people trying to destroy white people's property; white people trying to destroy black people's property. Starting fires, throwing bombs, destroying hotels, banks, markets—killing so many millions of people with bombs. And besides the millions of people, animals, killing so many creatures, destroying their happiness.

All those problems, the unhappiness of the living beings in this world, these are all caused by anger. One person's anger can destroy many countries, can destroy many millions and millions of people and their material enjoyments. One person's anger can destroy so much. Like, for example, you can think of Hitler, how many millions of people were killed by him. From this example you see how one person's anger is so harmful, incredibly harmful that it can ruin so many countries and millions of people. That one person's anger is not physical, it is a mental thing, it is colorless, shapeless, it is mere thought, it is only thought, but you can easily see, how if we do not try to control anger, how dangerous it is. Besides being so dangerous for ourselves, it is so dangerous for other sentient beings.

Anger is so extremely harmful for our own peace and other sentient beings' peace. It is like one fire spark. If it touches the grass or a wire, it can burn down the whole property, it can destroy

the whole factory. One small spark can burn the whole farm easily, quickly. Like that anger is so harmful, even one small spark of anger

Anger is so harmful for the peace of mind of ourselves and others, so therefore by understanding the harmfulness of anger it is necessary, whenever anger arises, it is necessary to be aware when anger is starting to rise and to learn to control it. By being aware, it is extremely important for the benefit of ourselves, for our own peace, and for the benefit of other sentient beings, for all sentient beings' peace.

### THE MOST DANGEROUS IGNORANCE IS NOT KNOWING WHAT SELF IS

Ignorance. Ignorance, again, is extremely harmful. Ignorance is like this: ignorance is unseeing or unknowing, unseeing or unknowing, not knowing. A person who is ignorant, who follows ignorance is like the person who runs towards a very high cliff where there is danger to fall down but completely believes there is definitely a road leading to a beautiful park. He completely believes this, but he is not running on a road that leads to a beautiful park, but where there is a cliff and great danger of falling down. Just like this example, as he follows his ignorance, it causes him to fall down and hurt himself, to kill himself. Ignorance is similar to this. Not knowing Dharma, not really knowing what is the cause of suffering and what is the cause of happiness is like this. The danger of this ignorance, not knowing Dharma, is like this example.

Actually, the ignorance of not knowing Dharma is much more harmful than blindly running towards a precipice believing it to be the road to a beautiful park. The ignorance of not knowing Dharma is many thousands of times more harmful than that blind person's ignorance of not recognizing the road.

And among the ignorance of not knowing Dharma, the most harmful, the greatest ignorance is the ignorance not understanding the meaning of the self. This is one ignorance of Dharma, not understanding the absolute nature of the self. So therefore it is extremely important to make the ignorance that we have less and less. The more ignorance in the mind of a person, there is that much more suffering for that sentient being.

The conclusion is, even if we could be free from this suffering body, which produces pain, with which we experience sickness, old age and many other problems, even if we didn't have this suffering body, even if it was our mind alone, since our mind is not liberated from the delusions, from bad thoughts, from the nonvirtuous thoughts, since it is bound, not free from these disturbing bad thoughts—ignorance, anger, attachment—then we are still not free. We are not free from suffering because our mind is not free from suffering.

### REAL FREEDOM IS CESSATION OF SUFFERING

So now, what is real freedom? What is *real* liberation, *real* freedom? Now we are coming to the point, we have to recognize it. [RL GL] The complete cessation of the disturbing negative thoughts, the cessation of the disturbing negative thoughts, *that* is real freedom. *That* is ultimate freedom.

Even if you say, "I want liberation," as long as you do not renounce these disturbing negative thoughts, and as long as you doesn't practice Dharma, even if you put an announcement in newspapers or on television announcing, "I want liberation,"—you put it in Time magazine, you

make meetings, you make documents, you make applications with the government declaring “We need liberation,”—women’s liberation, men’s liberation, dogs’ liberation (I’m just joking)—and even though the government says “Yes, you can have liberation,” it is announced everywhere, in all the small towns, in every newspaper saying that you have got liberation—even with all this, if your own mind is not liberated from disturbing negative thoughts, you will still always have problems; you are still not free from your own problems

If your mind’s not free from the disturbing negative thoughts, so you still have your own problems, therefore there is no way you can be liberated even though you say, “the government gave me liberation” on paper.

The conclusion is this. We want such perfect peace, the cessation of disturbing negative thoughts, to be completely free from all the suffering, from all the problems, from all delusions, from disturbing negative thoughts, and the cause of suffering. For that, there is no other method except the Dharma that can save us from this suffering, and to achieve such this perfect peace, ultimate happiness. We can achieve this only by practicing Dharma, only by developing the mind, only by making the mind better and better, creating less and less negative thoughts. So, I think I stop here.

## HOW TO MEDITATE

As you have already been doing breathing meditation, I think you have some idea. If I just mention some things I think you can understand, without needing to rely on my words to do the meditation.

So, before doing the meditation practice, in order to have the action become positive, if you want to meditate, there is a preparation. If you want to eat, if you want to make a cake, first you have to make preparations: what different stuff to buy, going to the supermarket, coming back home, then getting all the ingredients together to make it how you want. Without any preparation for the cake, you can’t bake the cake. You think of your mind as the cake, it doesn’t just appear outside on the table, it doesn’t just appear in your hand. Just as this needs preparation, meditation needs preparation, for the meditation to become real meditation, to become the meditation that you want. For it to become a meditation that benefits the mind, that purifies the disturbing negative thoughts, the delusions.

The meditation has to become Dharma, so you have to make the action of meditation Dharma. To become Dharma, before the meditation you have to have the motivation. For the meditation to become Dharma, to purify the disturbing negative thoughts, to cause happiness, first you should have the correct motivation, that which is Dharma, which is oneness with Dharma. That is the preparation. Then the meditation or any other action becomes Dharma, becomes a good action, a cause of happiness. So, first think, motivate like this. You can think right away as I repeat.

Ignorance, anger and attachment, these poisonous minds. Those who understand a little bit about reincarnation think, “Since beginningless time, these have caused me to suffer, obliged me to suffer until now. Even in the present, they constantly oblige me to suffer, and they also will oblige me to suffer in the future.” Those who cannot understand reincarnation, the existence of past lives, think, “These three poisonous minds have been obliging me to suffer since I was born until now, and will continue obliging me to suffer in the future. Only when I become free from

delusions, from the three poisonous minds, will I receive the blissful state of peace for myself. But that is not right, that is a selfish motivation. I must achieve the highest blissful state, enlightenment, the state of buddhahood, in order to free all sentient beings from all their suffering stage and to reach the highest blissful state, enlightenment. Therefore, I am going to do the purifying breathing meditation.”

Now at this time, what you can do is this. As you breathe out from your right nostril, visualize all these three poisonous minds, the delusions, come out in the form of smoke, of pollution. If you want to think of the pollution like you can see in California, also you can think as you breathe out, “all these pollutions are coming out.” Then, like smoke coming out of a chimney, where there is a factory, so much smoke like that comes from the nose, then it goes away, crossing the whole world and then it disperses, it completely disperses. Then after that, as you breathe in slowly, visualize the holy beings, such as the perfectly enlightened beings, the Buddha, perfect understanding, power, the limitless knowledge of understanding, the limitless knowledge of power, compassion, and holy beings, like the bodhisattvas and then think, “I am receiving from all the holy beings infinite knowledge, I am receiving the bodhisattva’s knowledge, the loving compassionate thought of enlightenment. I am receiving this from the holy beings bodhisattvas in the form of white light.” As it goes to the left nostril, it goes inside and goes to the heart and it cleans the whole body—even all the atoms of the body—and you feel much blissfulness at the heart.

Then think, “I have received all the infinite knowledge of the perfectly enlightened buddhas, and the knowledge of the bodhisattvas, the loving compassionate thought of enlightenment. Think like that.

Then the second round you do vice versa. As you breathe out your left nostril you purify the disturbing negative thoughts in the form of pollution and as you breathe in your right nostril, you are receiving the light through the right nostril, think it is the essence of the knowledge of the buddhas and bodhisattvas and same thing, filled with blissfulness.

As you breathe out third time, you breathe out through both nostrils and you purify. And as you breathe in through both nostrils, you receive the light of the wisdom of the knowledge of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. You can try to meditate like this.

First you have to breathe in otherwise there’s no breath to breathe out. [RL, GL] So, you breathe in first, you visualize, then you do the purifying breathing meditation.

You need to put in a little bit physical effort, because if you don’t, if you just do your normal breathing then... A person whose mind is not so disturbed, whose concentration can last, who can concentrate on the normal breath without putting physical effort, that is OK. The main purpose of this breathing meditation technique is to not let the mind slip into nonvirtue, to not let the mind to go to the side of the disturbing negative thoughts. If the mind does go to that side, if the mind becomes nonvirtuous, if it becomes angry or attached, you can’t meditate. It is difficult to concentrate, difficult to meditate. In order to meditate, the mind has to become virtuous first. To start the meditation, first the motivation has to be virtuous, the mind has to be virtuous. In order to keep the disturbing negative thoughts from going to that side, therefore the breathing technique is used by the meditators. It is a technique to cheat the mind, so that mind can be under your control, otherwise, the mind is not under your control, you are under the

mind's control, the control of the disturbing negative thoughts. Then you can't meditate, you can't make the mind calm. In order to meditate, you have to have the mind under your control, and for that you have to make the mind virtuous. Therefore, first the breathing technique is used.

What I'm saying is, if your concentration can last on just the normal breath, breathing slowly in and out, that is very good, but if not, you can do like this. If mind is very disturbed, even the purifying breathing practice cannot do it. If the mind is very, very disturbed, you can close a nostril like this. First you breathe in, then blow left nostril like this, then you breathe out, even if it makes noise. As you put physical effort in, it is easier to concentrate. Then, the same again like this. Breathe in and out, breathing in and out like this by putting physical effort. Even though it makes noise it doesn't matter, because as it makes a noise you can concentrate upon that. It can be done like that at the beginning, then maybe after one set like this maybe you can do it without so much noise, the quiet breathing meditation, the rest of the meditation purifying the disturbing negative thoughts. In that way, the breathing meditation, even for five minutes, becomes real Dharma. It becomes *real* Dharma. It becomes a very powerful remedy, like medicine to our real sickness, the disturbing negative thoughts. So, you can try like this.

[Gewa...]

## LECTURE 3

### THE REASON FOR THE PRAYERS

We are going to do a little bit on the different methods which involve the action of speech. Besides the action of mind meditating, thinking about the meaning of the prayers, saying also involves action of speech. Prayers remind us of the subject of the meditation [and saying them] purifies the negative karma—the negative power and the disturbing negative thoughts that cause us various problems—created with our body, speech and mind.

So, these different prayers are different methods to purify different hindrances, in order to actualize the meditation quicker to be able to understand clearly the teachings, to be able to become effective. As we say them, the prayers that contain the meditation subject, besides purifying ourselves, we have to also purify other sentient beings. So it is like this. Everybody does the prayer. We don't have enough books that contains the different prayers, the different practical purifying practical methods, which contain the method to collect merit. It will be printed soon, so when it is ready you can try to read and understand it.

Actually, in a briefly introduction, I can't really explain the meaning of these different prayers, the different methods they use that make them effective, or how they should be practiced. It is difficult to understand, and to talk about it in detail takes much time. The whole following meditation, what we are going to talk about or when we are going to try to practice, all that meditation, also Mantrayana, the tantra meditation, also comes in the prayers. So, therefore, it's a very extensive—a very profound subject. It is something that we can come to understand slowly and gradually as we go into it deeper and more clearly, following the meditation practices.

It is not a mindless ritual, one that has no meaning, like we usually think of rituals in the West. It's not like this.

[Prayer: Lama La Kyab Su Chi Wo...]

[Rinpoche chants preliminary prayers.]

## THE NEED FOR A COMPASSIONATE MOTIVATION

For one sentient being, the cause of suffering, the root of the whole sentient being's suffering is this: the disturbing thought, the delusions that are abiding in the mind of that sentient being. And in the same way, the root of all the problems of the whole world—all the confusion there is in the world—is the disturbing thoughts, the delusions, as I briefly mentioned yesterday. So until the sentient beings of this world are free from this root of the suffering, disturbing thought, the delusions, until they are free, there can be no peace. As long as they don't try to diminish the root of the suffering, the disturbing thoughts, which are in their minds, no matter whatever other methods they try to have peace in their minds and in the world, they will fail. There's no way to bring peace in the world, as long as they don't try to diminish the disturbing thoughts, which are the root of the suffering. There is no hope to cease the problems of the world, or problems of one sentient being.

You have to practice Dharma, you have to practice meditation in order to achieve a blissful state of peace such as the cessation of the whole suffering. Wanting to achieve such a blissful state of peace for yourself is a good idea. It is a good idea. That motivation is much better than wanting to practice meditation or practice Dharma to obtain just temporal pleasure, such as having a month's holiday, or a week's holiday, just wishing for the pleasure of only this life.

However, even though you wish to achieve the blissful state of peace for yourself, that is a selfish motive. That doesn't make you different or higher from the animals, the nonhuman beings. Even the nonhuman beings, the animals, also have that similar wish, thinking, "How good it is if I receive happiness." Even when they find water to drink, it would not think that water should be kept because there are other animals who are suffering from thirst and who also need water. It does not think, "I should leave it. I should keep it for the benefit of other animals." Even if an animal has found a small bunch of grass, the animal would not think that there are many other animals who are starving, and it is needed for them. Without thinking any of this, they think, "How good it is if I get it. I will drink myself, I will eat it myself." By holding in the heart "my happiness," the animal only keeps in his heart, only concern for his own happiness. So with that motivation, whatever drink whatever food that animal finds he drinks for himself.

Since nonhuman beings, other animals, have similar thoughts, wishing happiness for themselves, even if we wish to achieve the blissful state of peace for ourselves, that is not right. That is a selfish motive. There are numberless sentient beings, who are the field from where we receive all our happiness, all our enjoyment.

## HAPPINESS COMES FROM OTHERS

For instance, how is the happiness, the pleasure that we receive by eating food received? From other sentient being, from the field of the sentient beings. There is not one single morsel of food

we have ever received that has not depended on the kindness of the sentient beings! There is not one single crumb. To get that food, many creatures have been being killed in the fields, or suffered. Many human beings, too, have suffered, have borne much difficulty for us to actualize, to receive the food. Like this, it is similar thing with clothing, our pleasure of wearing clothes has come from the kindness of sentient beings. So many sentient beings have suffered, working to create the clothes that we enjoy. Also, our pleasure that we experience by having a place to live is also dependent on other sentient beings. There is no place that we can enjoy without depending on the sentient beings; there is not one small place where we can enjoy where we can sit down that does not depend on the kindness of the sentient beings!

If we carefully think like this, we can see clearly how our pleasure is received, from the kindness of sentient beings; it depends on the help of sentient beings. Therefore, besides all this temporal happiness, all the ultimate happiness, the whole enjoyment, any perfections, the perfection of place, of material enjoyments, anything, we have received from the field of the sentient beings. Besides this, also all the ultimate happiness we have received from the field, from sentient beings. Since there's not one single, tiny happiness, not one tiny pleasure that we experience without depending on sentient beings, therefore, it is very evil to always be concerned only with our own happiness, to never be concerned with obtaining the happiness for other sentient beings, and to guide other sentient beings from suffering. Such this thought is a very unworthy one, an evil one.

#### SUFFERING COMES FROM THE SELF

All happiness comes from others, but on the other hand, not one of the problems—none of the many sufferings big or small—we experience is caused by other sentient beings. There's not even one sentient being from whom we have received any suffering, who has caused us one tiny bit of suffering.

So, where does all this suffering arise from? All the suffering we experience arises from ourselves. How has all this sufferings arisen from ourselves?

Then the question can come up in our mind: “Yeah, many times, even though I didn't create the problem, I didn't create the situation, other people, other sentient beings accused me, they gave me trouble. Even though I didn't do anything, even though I did not create the situation, they caused it. It's not true that there's not one sentient being who causes my suffering, there's not one sentient beings from whom I receive my suffering. It's not true. Many times, even though I don't create the situation, other people accused and gave me trouble.”

All the suffering we experience which involves other sentient beings was originally caused by ourselves. Originally it came from us, not from them. How?

First of all, there is the self-cherishing that abides in our mind, the devil, the self-cherishing thought that abides in our mind. We listen to this devil, the self-cherishing thought and we follow it, and following it, we create the cause, we create the situation where other people are forced to harm us. It is just circling. The cause starts from ourselves, it circles and the suffering comes back on our own head. It circles like this. So, in fact we have caused other sentient beings to give us harm, to give us trouble.

Like this, even though we think that a problems has nothing to do with us, that it is entirely the fault of the other person, in fact that is completely wrong. It is a mistake. Anything, any suffering, any problem that we experience, all arises from ourselves. How? By following the self-cherishing thought. All suffering arises from the self-cherishing thought.

At the moment it might not be so clear, but gradually, if you think carefully, deeply, you can see how all the problems, all the unhappiness, all the confusion that we experience are only our own fault. The original creator us, ourselves.

We'll have a pipi break.

### OTHERS ARE THE CAUSE OF OUR LIBERATION

Since all our own happiness is received from the field of the sentient beings and all the suffering arises from ourselves, therefore sentient beings are so precious, so extremely, extremely precious. Even if there's a collection of diamonds the size of Mount Everest, one sentient being is much more precious to us than that. One sentient being is such much precious to us than a collection of diamonds the size of Mount Everest.

Therefore, we should cherish other sentient beings and we could renounce ourselves. We should cherish other sentient beings, we should take care of other sentient beings and we should renounce ourselves.

Since we are the base from where all our suffering arises, and sentient beings are the field from where all our happiness arises and are therefore extremely kind to us, and since what they wish is happiness, but because they're ignorant of the causes of happiness and so always do the wrong practice [we have a responsibility to help them]. Instead of avoiding the cause of suffering, they practice the cause of suffering, thinking this is the method which brings happiness. And on the other hand they don't practice the cause of happiness, believing that it is the cause of suffering. They avoid the cause of happiness, like this. No matter how much the sentient beings do not desire suffering, because of ignorance, of not recognizing what the cause of suffering is, they always run towards it, continuously creating the cause of suffering.

Therefore, since they are extremely kind like this, and since we have met the Dharma, the teachings, by meeting the teachings then we can recognize what is the cause of suffering, what is the actual cause of happiness, and we can actualize the path. We can liberate ourselves completely from all suffering. We can attain the highest blissful state, enlightenment and we can help all sentient beings, releasing them from all suffering and leading them to enlightenment. We have the possibility to help all sentient beings.

At the moment, we cannot guide even ourselves. At the moment we can't guide even ourselves alone from suffering, so we don't have the power to guide all sentient beings from suffering. Who has the power? Who can release sentient beings from all sufferings and lead them to enlightenment? Only a buddha, a fully enlightened being, using different methods of body, speech and mind, can guide them from suffering and lead them to enlightenment. Even each beam of a buddha's holy body can guide numberless sentient beings from suffering, and can bring happiness in the minds of great numbers of sentient beings. Even each beam of the a buddha's holy body can do incredible beneficial work to an incredible number of sentient beings.

## WHAT ENLIGHTENMENT IS

A further explanation of what enlightenment is will come afterwards. The simple way of saying it is this. At the moment our mind is not completely purified of all the disturbing negative thoughts, of all the obscurations, the dualistic mind, and because of that, our mind is not completely qualified in the whole of knowledge. Another way of saying is that our mind is not perfected in all the realizations, because our mind is not completely purified of all obscurations, the disturbing negative thoughts, the dualistic mind. Because of that, our mind is not qualified in all knowledge, not perfected in all the realizations.

Whenever our mind is purified of all obscurations and is qualified in having all knowledge, all realizations, at that time, when our mind is in such a state, that is what is called enlightenment. Therefore, at the moment we haven't achieved enlightenment. Whenever our mind reaches that state, qualified like that, then we will have attained enlightenment.

Another way of saying it is we are enlightened when our mind is fully developed. Simply speaking, when our knowledge is fully developed, when there's no knowledge missing, there no knowledge left that we don't understand, that we don't know, when there's not one aspect of existence left outside our understanding, when there is no realization is missing—at that time we have attained enlightenment, we have become a buddha. We are a perfectly enlightened being. There is not one single obscuration left, there is not one single realization missing, no knowledge is missing, the mind is qualified of all knowledge, all realizations, so what's why it's perfected, and any person who has such a mind is a perfectly enlightened being.

When we attain this enlightenment, there's perfect knowledge of understanding, perfect knowledge of compassion, perfect knowledge of power. Like this. When we attain enlightenment, at that time our mind becomes an omniscient mind.

This omniscient mind can clearly see all the future existence, not just a billion times, not just a trillion times, anything that will happen in the future, any future existence can be seen clearly. At the same time, the omniscient mind can clearly see all present existence and all past existence. So there is not one single existence, there is not one single atom, there is not one of the numberless sentient beings that an omniscient mind cannot see. There is not one sentient being's mind, not one sentient being's thought that an omniscient mind cannot read or cannot see.

## STORIES OF SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha who is a perfect enlightened being, has this power. For instance, if all the plants from all the different countries, from different places, were taken and cut into very very small pieces, and then put into the big ocean and mixed well for a long time—maybe for eons, after they were taken out, each grain of these plants could be recognized by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—where it came from, from which country, from which area, from which part of the tree, limb or root or whatever.

With his power, his perfect knowledge, if someone asks Guru Shakyamuni Buddha about them, he can tell clearly without one single mistake, from which country that plant came from and from which part of the plant, and from which place, mountain or land, name of the town,

without one single mistake. This is one example, just a small idea of the perfect knowledge and understanding that the Buddha has.

When we attain enlightenment we achieve perfect knowledge and understanding, and we can clearly see not just the numberless sentient beings, but each sentient being's different thoughts. Whatever different thoughts we have now, here, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is seeing clearly. Right now, whatever we are thinking spontaneously, there is not one single second that enlightened beings' omniscient mind does not see the sentient beings, does not read their thoughts.

“Because of having perfect knowledge and understanding, I can guide. When I receive enlightenment, I achieve this perfect knowledge and understanding so I can guide sentient beings. Also I will attain infinite compassion.”

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—like all enlightened beings—certainly doesn't have a partial mind, feeling great compassion only for those sentient beings who like him and make offerings to him, and disliking and not guiding sentient beings who don't make offerings to him. For Guru Shakyamuni Buddha there is no difference between the two—those who make offerings and always admire him with much devotion and those who have heresy and complaints and don't make offerings. There is no difference for Guru Shakyamuni Buddha between them; he doesn't have partial mind. There is infinite compassion equally for all sentient beings.

When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was in India, after taking the aspect of a prince in India and a married man, he took the form of a pure monk. During that time there was a king whose name was Maigeta(?) who always criticized Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, always competing with his knowledge and power. He always tried to abuse Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Even though he himself is always free from the cause of sickness, sometimes Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, for the benefit of other sentient beings, took the aspect of being ill. His doctor made pills that had incredible power, so powerful that ordinary beings could not take them, they would be unable to live if they did.

Because he always tried to compete with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, he also tried to take those pills, but as he swallowed the first he couldn't stand it, he suffered so much. The Buddha came to him and said, “If it is true that I have equal compassion to you and my son, then your sickness should be cured right away, right at this moment.” Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha put his palm on the king's head, but because he always competed with the Buddha he thought, “How dare Gautama touch his hand on my head.” But, right at that moment that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha touched his hand on his head, his disease was completely get cured. Right at that moment it became completely cured.

## LECTURE 4

### THE BUDDHA AND THE MONKS GREAT PATH AND SMALL PATH

When you receive enlightenment you become highly skilled at working for other sentient beings as you have perfect knowledge and understanding, compassion and the power.

There are stories of how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, subdued very deeply ignorant living beings, In previous times, when Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was in India. there was an monk called Small Path, who has achieved the blissful state of peace, nirvana, and so became an arhat. I'll just mention very briefly how he was subdued by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

His family had two children. The first one was called Great Path, who also achieved nirvana and became an arhat. The second, his younger brother, was called Small Path. Why? Because before they were born, their mother gave birth to many children, but they did not survive, they all died. The elder son was called Great Path because his life was saved by talking the center of four roads where there was a big road. So when he was baby, just after he was born, he was taken there to ask for a prayer from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and his followers came. As they passed along that road, founders of other religious and their followers also passed by.

[Audio is very unclear. There are likely to be mistakes in this section]

It was suggested to his mother by an old man that if she wanted her child to survive she should name him. She should wrap him in a white cloth and give him to a young girl, we would stand and wait in the center of the big road, and as people passed by, ask for prayers.. So the mother followed the old man's instructions. Because this son was saved by taking the big path, so the girl who was carrying the baby requested the disciples of the founder of other religion to pray for the baby to have long life to fulfill the parent's wishes.

After that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and his disciples came and again she asked for prayers, and they prayed for the baby to have long life and the parents' Dharma wishes to be successful. . So the baby did not die that day unlike her other babies who hadn't even lasted one day. So, the older brother was saved like this. He didn't die before the sun set, and she brought back to home.

After that another child was born. This time, the girl took the baby to a small, very narrow path in the town. No other people came through. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, as all the time he sees sentient beings and is always concerned with working for other sentient beings, with his psychic powers he saw the young girl waiting, carrying another baby. So Guru Shakyamuni Buddha came, after a long waiting the came to that in front of the young girl, in the narrow road. So she asked for prayers, and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha prayed, and the baby, too, was saved. So this is why the name was given by the mother, Small Path whereas the elder brother's name was the Great Path.

The elder brother became an expert in his studies, all the knowledge. In India, one of the castes is called Brahmin, and the subject that they studied included poems or other things. He studied Dharma, became ordained, and he actualized the path and became an arhat. His younger brother, Small Path, was also sent to study all these subjects that the Brahmins taught. His first teacher taught him two words—*si* *dam*. When he learned *si* he forgot *dam*, when he learned *dam* he forgot *si*. And again, maybe the same teacher or maybe another teacher, teacher tried to teach him another words—*om* *bhu*. When he learned *om* he forgot *bhu*, when he learned *bhu* he forgot *om*. His teachers found it so difficult they all got tired and bored and they kicked him out. By that time his family was very poor.

Then he went to see his elder brother, the one who was an arhat. His elder brother taught him one stanza, four lines, but even though the arhat taught him for three months, still Small Path couldn't learn one stanza by heart. All the people around, such as the shepherds, had learnt this stanza very well the one stanza by heart, but Small Path still couldn't say it.

Anyway, his elder brother checked up whether he should be controlled by peaceful or wrathful means and saw with his psychic power that it should be by wrathful means, so he kicked him out of the monastery, leaving him outside the door, saying like this how ignorant and slow he was. Feeling like this, he was left there.

Small Path was incredible worried, crying so much. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha saw this with his psychic powers and came in front of him and asked, "Why are you crying like this?" So then Small Path explained everything that had happened, how he found it impossible to learn anything. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said, "I can teach you." Small path said he could never learn because he was too slow, too ignorant. This was what he had been told by others, his teachers and he repeated it. So Guru Shakyamuni Buddha told him to go to the monastery and clean the monks' shoes.

Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha took him to the monastery and let him clean the monks' shoes. While they were doing meditation and prayers in the monastery, their shoes were left outside, so Guru Shakyamuni Buddha let him to clean their shoes. And also Guru Shakyamuni Buddha taught him two words, "avoid dirt, avoid smell." Guru Shakyamuni Buddha also asked the monks as they passed by to remind him of these words. By cleaning the monks' shoes on and on, afterwards he could say these words by heart, "avoid dirt, avoid smell."

After he learned the words by heart, his job was changed. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said, "Now you can leave that work and clean the outside of the monastery." He went outside the grounds and cleaned, but when he had finished cleaning one side, the other side was dirty, and when he had finished cleaning that side, the first side had become dirt again. In that way, he had to clean continuously, one side after the other, like this. As he was doing this, he kept repeating, "avoid dirt, avoid smell," then one stanza which he could not learn before even in three months just appeared in his mind, and besides just the words, he completely realized their meaning. He completely realized the meaning that was contained in this one stanza.

The one stanza which contained the subject, talked about the entire path, the evolution of suffering, the nature of suffering, how the delusions are the cause of suffering. So he completely realized the meaning of that stanza just by doing this work, which was instructed by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Then, seeing the truth, he fully realized the absolute nature of reality and became a arhat, achieving the blissful state of peace.

Normally this does not happen, it's unusual. Right after finishing cleaning again dirt comes there. This is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's skillful method. Usually it doesn't happen. But for him to keep on working, so that it purified his ignorance—such an incredibly deep ignorance—for that reason Guru Shakyamuni Buddha made the dirt come back right after he has finished cleaning, and the same thing with cleaning the monks' shoes.

After he became a arhat, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha told him to go to give teachings. There was a nunnery, nearby and the Buddha's servant who usually accompanied him wherever he went,

Kungawa, went with a message to the nunnery that Small Path was going to come there to give a teaching. When they heard that Small Path was going to give a teaching at the nunnery, the nuns freaked out!! They thought he could not learn even one stanza. “Such an ignorant person, he could not learn even one stanza even in three months, so how can he compete with the nuns, how can he teach us? They must be abusing us, putting us down us, we the nuns!” They couldn’t stand it. So the nuns had a meeting, and they proposed to shame him when he came to give the teaching. They completely believed that he couldn’t give the teaching, so they wanted to oppose him. They wanted to shame him.

Having fixed the date for the teaching, the nuns went to the city to announce to everybody that they should come on this day to receive teaching from Small Path, “Everybody should come. If you don’t come you will never become free from suffering, you will never realize absolute true nature.” They put it like that, laying such a heavy burden on him. The nuns made everybody come to the monastery. With everybody there, when we were unable to teach, that would be the best way to shame him, to put him down.

On that day, an incredible number of people came from all over the country. When Small Path came the nuns, they put a very high throne, without steps, for him to teach from, so he would not know what to do.

As he arrived, somehow he just was there on the throne. Nobody knew how he got up there without steps. They didn’t know how he reached the throne. But an amazing thing happened, and he was on the throne. After he sat down on the throne, he told the people the meaning of the stanza he had learned in three months he will explain for six months. Then he gave the teaching, which was contained in that one-stanza poem. Some people came just with a curious mind, just to watch, but many came with a serious mind, and many people achieved the realization of shunyata by listening to the teaching. Many people became arhats, many people entered into the path, many people have received the realization of refuge, many people received different realizations. So, he became one of the expert arhats, among many of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s disciples who are arhats, he was the one of the most skillful arhats to give teachings.

That’s just one story how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has subdued such incredibly ignorant being, by these two words, *om* and *bhu*. Just by saying these one time we can learn them, without repeating on and on!

So like this, there are many such stories, of incredible beings who have incredible, unbelievable attachment, and how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha helped them, and beings who have incredible unbelievable pride, and how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha subdued them. There are many other stories like this.

When we attain enlightenment, we can guide sentient beings from suffering and lead on the path to enlightenment. We can work for other sentient beings without effort.

If we should attain enlightenment in order to perfectly work for sentient beings, then what is the cause of enlightenment? What should we do in order to quickly attain enlightenment? The principal cause of enlightenment is bodhicitta, the precious, the loving compassionate thought of enlightenment. How quickly we can achieve enlightenment depends on how much we can

practice bodhicitta, the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment, and how quickly we actualize this.

## MEDITATION: WATCHING THE MIND

First we'll do a breathing meditation. You breathe strongly from both nostrils, you breathe out, and you purify, and as you breathe in, you visualize you are receiving the knowledge of the buddhas, and the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment, the knowledge that the bodhisattvas have.

This time you are just going to do it very simply. Just breathe out through both nostrils, and as you do, when the light of knowledge is received, you keep the mind inside. This expression, I'm not saying the mind is outside, it is expression to not wander outside, without thinking of outside objects. Slow down the mind, make it calm, keep it quiet. Then think, be aware what you are thinking. Concentrate: "What I am thinking?" Whatever thoughts you have, be aware of them—"I'm thinking this"—and watch that thought within the mind. Question yourself, "What I am thinking?" Whatever thought you have, watch that thought or that mind. As you recognize that thought, question yourself about what you are thinking. Then as you found it—"Oh, I am thinking this. I have this thought."—then when you catch the thought, recognize it and just watch it.

While you are doing this, if anger or attachment arises, it's extremely good to recognize it and just watch it. That is very good. While you are doing this, if anger or attachment arises, it's extremely good to recognize it. Like when you catch a thief, you try to recognize it's a thief, and you catch the thief and destroy it. This time, when it arises, you can use it for meditation, you can meditate upon it, you can analyze the nature of attachment, the nature of anger. You can meditate on it.

If anger or attachment arises, think you are just examining the nature of anger or attachment. If you have pride, just examine the nature of pride. When you watch the thought, or the mind, examine like this. What is its color? What is its shape? And the same thing with anger, attachment, pride, jealousy. Examine the nature of such a mind, whether it has color or shape, and specially check whether the anger, attachment, pride or jealous mind is coming from the brain, coming down like this. Or coming from the feet, from the inside of the shoes, the toes. Where is it coming from? From the brain? Where do you feel it?

Actually your own feeling is what, is where? Your own feelings of anger, attachment—is it oneness with the brain? You check up, whether it's coming from the brain, where you feel it. Actually, your own feeling is what? Is it oneness with the brain, or not? Your own experience is what? Your conception of your own experience, is there a difference or not? Your own intellectual conception of your thoughts and your own experience—check whether there's any difference? If a disturbing emotion arises, it's very good. Then you can check up like that.

So before you do that, think, "I'm going to practice the meditation in order to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind sentient beings."

We do some more, another session, watching the mind, specially a checking meditation on attachment. Maybe it's good to remember the object first. Let the object, anger, arise, then

examine its nature. Examine how do you feel? Do you feel anger is in the brain? Is it coming from the brain? Or how it is? Like that you check up. Whether attachment is part of brain, whether you feel it is part of the brain, like this you try to recognize your real experience. Try to recognize without listening to your intellectual conceptions. Then question whether it has color or shape. If you find it has color and shape, examine the properties of that color and shape and see whether it is real color and shape of the mind, or if it is only your visualization.

You know, sometimes if you visualize white light, sometimes you can even visualize different colors. And so, as you think of different colors, then there will be different pictures in the mind, there will be that picture in the mind. So examine whether that is, whether you believe color and mind, or whether it is just your visualization. Ask yourself, “Is the color I have visualized the color of the mind or not. Check up like this. If you find this color, this shape. If you don’t find them, then just concentrate, concentrate purely on the nature of the thought.

Another meditation to do is this. Today’s consciousness, my mind today is a continuation of yesterday’s mind. Yesterday’s mind is a continuation of day the mind of the day before yesterday’s. Like that, this year’s mind is a continuation of last year’s mind, and last year’s mind is a continuation of the previous year’s. Then try to go back like this, try to go back like this, to the childhood mind, the time when you were a baby, and try to go back all the way to your mother’s womb. Try to go back to the very first moment of conception, to the very first time that the mind, the consciousness, takes place in the mother’s womb. Try to go right back to that. And then ask yourself the question, “What is the cause of that mind, that first moment of consciousness of this life?”

## LECTURE 5

### LAM-RIM MOTIVATION

As I emphasized yesterday, before listening to the discourse, it is necessary to cultivate the motivation. It is necessary to think, “I must receive enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind sentient beings, so I am going to listen to the teachings.”

In order to attain enlightenment you must actualize the principal cause of enlightenment, the loving-compassionate precious thought of enlightenment. To be able to actualize this realization, you must actualize the mind fully renouncing samsara, the suffering realms. This mind and body we have now, that which is not free from suffering, *this* is suffering realm, *this* is what is called samsara. To be able to attain a mind fully renouncing the suffering realm, the samsara, you must clearly see how this samsara is in the nature of suffering. To be clearly able to understand this, you must understand karma, action and the effect. To be able to understand this, you must be able to understand reincarnation; to understand reincarnation, you must understand the evolution of mind, you must understand the relative nature of mind.

### IMPERMANENCE

I’ll just talk very briefly about it, The whole of existence, if you divide it up, comes in two divisions: permanent and impermanent. The whole existence is defined as whatever exists as an object of the conventional mind or the omniscient mind. That is the meaning of existence,

whether it exists or not is up to whether it can be the object of the omniscient mind or conventional thought. That is the definition of existence. This existence has two divisions: permanent and impermanent.

Impermanent existence has three divisions. Matter is compounded phenomena. At this point what I want to clarify is that the mind is not matter. The meaning of matter is that which is formation of atoms. Then, knowing, the phenomenon called knowing, meaning that which nature is clear and has the ability to perceive objects, to understand objects.

That is the meaning of the second phenomenon, knowing. Knowing, what we call sense or feeling, all the different types of thoughts formations, sensations, whatever, all the different names that we call, whether it is a thought, the different types of thought, love, compassion, wisdom, also the bad thoughts—all these are phenomena are knowing.

What we have here, the base which we thinks “I”, thinking that I’m Richard, the base upon which the person thinks “I’m Richard” then there’s the mind, there’s two things: mind and it’s object. There are two things. The body is part of the matter phenomena, mind is the knowing phenomena.

### THE IMPERMANENCE OF THE MIND

The body itself doesn’t have that function, doesn’t have that nature as the knowing phenomenon has. It doesn’t function as the knowing phenomenon functions. It has color and shape—it is matter.

The phenomenon that we have, that we possess, which is clear nature and which has the ability to perceive objects, because of that different nature and function and because it is colorless and shapeless—by this function, we call it “mind.” This is the distinction between mind and body.

Mind is not principally caused by the combination of sperm and egg, as matter is. No part of the combination of sperm and egg becomes the mind, which is formless nature. Just as the earth which is form, cannot become space, which is formless. So, the physical body has its own evolution, the principal cause being the combination of sperm and egg, which comes from the parents.

Evolution of our mind is different. Because of this, there is reincarnation, there’s a past life where all this present consciousness of the mind came from.

Think about what would happen if the mind came into existence in mother’s womb out of nothingness, without depending on any cause, without depending on its continuity, without depending on the continuity of the mind. If the consciousness came into existence out of nothingness, without depending on a cause, then our consciousness has to be either permanent, or self-existent. It becomes either permanent or self-existent.

For instance, a clay pot is impermanent. Why is it impermanent? Because it changes, even in each second. What makes it change? By the cause. Before the clay pot is made, the principal cause of the clay pot, the material, the mud or whatever used to make clay pots, is impermanent, the material. Before the earth took the form of a clay pot, before it get mixed with water and it appeared in the form of clay pot, before that, if it was permanent, then the clay pot cannot be

impermanent. There's no way the clay pot can become impermanent. There's no such thing, there's no way for this to happen.

That which is permanent can completely cease, it can become non-existent but it cannot become impermanent. From permanent, that material cannot change to impermanent. So, because the original, the principal cause of the pot, mud, was impermanent, so, that's how the clay pot becomes impermanent, that is how it has an impermanent nature. Why is the very first moment of our consciousness today—the moment after midnight—impermanent? It is impermanent because it changes each split-second, and what makes it change each split-second? It is because the previous moment of consciousness—the one a split-second before midnight—was its principal cause and that was impermanent. One moment of consciousness is the cause for the next and each is in the nature of impermanence.

Similarly, what is the principal cause of the split-second of consciousness in the very first moment in our mother's womb? It could not be the physical body, it has to be a precious moment of consciousness. It has to be the moment of consciousness that existed before the mind entered the mother's womb. The consciousness, which was existing before, which was about to take place in mother's womb, *that* has caused the consciousness of this life to change in each split second.

The cause which existed before the result makes the result change. The cause forces the result to change, that is how it becomes impermanent. So the cause has to exist before the result.

#### AN INDEPENDENT MIND IS IMPOSSIBLE

If continuity exists without depending on any cause or creator, then consciousness becomes self-existent. There's not one consciousness like this, since consciousness has to be dependent. It has to be dependent, otherwise there is no way consciousness can exist. Without being dependent, there is no way that consciousness can exist. Just like this the meditation says.

Since this exists, this has to dependently exist. This has to exist by depending on that. There is no way the whole entire thing can exist without depending on something else. The existence of this house depends on the person who rented it, the person who gives the idea, dependent on each piece of building material—all the things that make it an actuality. You see, there is no way for this place to exist without being dependent.

Therefore, an independent manifestation of a phenomenon does not exist. An independent table does not exist. Similarly, an independent cloth does not exist. If the cloth exists, there is no way it can exist independently. The cloth has to be dependent. Without being dependent it cannot function as a cloth, so it cannot become a cloth.

So, an independent consciousness, a self-existent consciousness does not exist. Perhaps somebody might think that conscious is some sort of continuity that originates from a universal principal consciousness. All the sentient beings' consciousnesses originated from this big consciousness, this total, big consciousness like this earth, like this globe. Then, all the individual consciousnesses broke away into pieces—like the evolution of the Earth is explained, how there was a very big globe that broke into pieces, each piece becoming a planet. Sort of like that. Before, it was an incredibly big, huge continent, then that becomes pieces, what is called universal principal consciousness.

If consciousness came from some universal principal consciousness, if each of our consciousnesses came from that big consciousness, there would have to be a big self, an enormous self. In that case, since all the sentient beings' consciousnesses are pieces of that person, that big self—all the sentient beings' consciousnesses are that person's mind—then all the bodies are part of that person's body. What happens is that all the sentient beings are one person, taking different bodies. In that case, everyone should have the same knowledge, since they're all the same person. For instance: whatever knowledge one person has, I should have [because we are all part of this universal consciousness], and conversely whatever knowledge I have, he should have. Whatever experience he has, I should have, because we are in fact one self.

When he feels hungry, I should feel hungry; when he's upset, I should be upset. Otherwise what happens is that one person is hungry and full at the same time; one person is happy and unhappy at the same time; one person is a baby and a hundred years old at the same time.

In that case there should be no problem with possessiveness—this is my material possession, it is not yours; this is *my* property, that is *your* property. There wouldn't be any this discrimination. If we were all part of this one universal consciousness, there wouldn't be this intuitive feeling. Even though you lived in a big apartment, you wouldn't think you owned all the material possessions in it. But in fact we always think, "This is mine." Every time we see something, *anything*, when we see it we think it is ours. We never have the concept that something belongs to others, because everything is ours. If all sentient beings were one consciousness, there would be no discrimination of mine and theirs.

No sentient being's consciousness ever came from a universal principle consciousness or the one big mind. No sentient being's self ever came from one big self. Our different daily experience alone prove this, the many different lives that sentient beings lead, having different experiences, having different desires and so forth.

Using this kind of reasoning, that you can understand how our consciousness has not come from our parents' consciousnesses, so therefore our own consciousness must be a continuity of its own previous stream of consciousness—it *must* have come from a previous life.

Many experiences confirm this. We can see many different children born from the same mother, who have different personalities or minds. Some babies are born very impatient, even they were not taught how to be impatient by their parents, some are very greedy even though they were never taught that. They just seem to be born with such types of mind. Some babies are born with very calm, very good personality, even a little philosophical! Some have very loving minds and are compassionate to creatures and to other people, not wanting to harm them and being very upset when they see creatures being killed, or people being beaten by other people. They feel very upset, feeling much compassion. Baby animals, like puppies or calves, can do things right away, instantly they make physical contact, like suckling, without being taught.

All this proves there is a past life; it shows the existence of past lives. How is that? A child whose mind is very greedy or cruel, always giving harm to other beings, in a previous life his mind was so habituated to doing those actions, to harming others, and because of that habit or that continuity, in this life, the baby was born with such a personality, with such a mind. It's the

same thing with a baby who is very loving, full of compassionate thoughts, wanting to always help, never wanting to harm. That kind of mind comes from a previous life, when his mind was trained in that way. His mind was habituated in that and because of that continuity, in this life the child was born with that personality.

It's the same thing with the animals, doing what we call instinctive actions, things they do without needing to be taught in this life. Previous similar actions that they did left impressions on the consciousness, so that in this life they instinctively do the action.

It is very common, too, even in Western countries like Germany or America, for children and older people to remember their previous life, talking about their previous life, the home they lived in and how they lived their life. There have been many examples like this.

One girl remembered how her father had been her enemy in her previous life. She has belonged to the army of one party and her current life's father has been a soldier of the army of another party. He had shot his enemy, only to have that person reborn as his own daughter. I've forgotten now all the details, but she described the castle where she was shot and the circumstances.

There have been so many stories like this, without talking about the reincarnate lamas who were born in Tibet, and also many of the old people, some of whom had psychic power powers, who can remember their past lives or who can explain other people's past lives.

Even in America there are many people like that. There is a book here in the library, from California, (I don't know its title) that describes the experiences of a lady. She explains that she experienced how there is another life after this, how the consciousness continues, even after it has left this body. She explains in the book that she died and all her relatives came to see her corpse, and they were crying.

## QUESTION AND ANSWER

*Student:* You said the other day that when a person attains enlightenment he becomes omniscient, which in my understanding means he can see all things, all possible things. This confuses me a lot. This means the Buddha can see all possible futures, which makes me think that my idea of coming here was already seen by Buddha, and he's omniscient, and he can't be wrong, and if I hadn't chosen to come here, this creates a cycle for me that I can't understand this.

*Rinpoche:* What kind of cycle?

*Student:* A cycle of, well, if the Buddha is omniscient, then what I've done has already been done, he's already seen it, it's already happened all possible futures.

*Rinpoche:* You mean it's already done?

*Student:* But he's seen it, and I have no choice.

*Rinpoche:* Your futures, he can see all of your futures, so it's like already done.

*Student:* Yeah, but...

*Rinpoche:* But it's not done.

*Student:* ... the play is written, actors in a play.

*Rinpoche:*

But it's not done.

*Student:* Yeah, but the play is already written, and the actor walks through the play.

*Another Student:* But you don't know what the script is. [GL]

*Student:* It's like I'm an actor going through my life, and the Buddha has a copy of the script and he's sitting in the audience watching us act and knowing exactly what's going to happen.

*Rinpoche:* Then?

*Student:* Well, I don't know what the script is. I think that is this play which is my life, I have a choice.

*Rinpoche:* Yeah, you have choice.

*Student:* But if I have a choice then I can change things, so how can they be seen before? If the Buddha can see all possible futures, all things that will happen, he sees what will happen to me tomorrow, when, if I ever will reach enlightenment, when that will happen. He already knows what will happen. So what difference does it make what I do now?

*Rinpoche:* For instance, let's say yesterday you took some food that might cause you to get sick, to get fever today. And so, if you did not have that food, and if you did take that food you will get sick today. In those things we have a choice. And whatever choice you take, that omniscient mind sees.

*Student:* He's already seen it!

*Rinpoche:* That's right, that's right. That the choice for you. You can choose which one, whether to take that food or not.

*Student:* But someone has already seen what I will do.

*Rinpoche:* Hmm yeah .... I didn't hear.

*Student:* Someone has already seen what I'm going to do.

*Rinpoche:* Someone can see, yes, can see what you're going to do, but that's no problem. [GL] The problem is from your own side. If you change, if you stop the cause of problems, you can change by yourself. If from your side you do not change, you make yourself unfree, not free from problems, and you will experience the problems in the future. But the omniscient mind

seeing doesn't mean that you don't have any choice. The omniscient mind sees that you also have a choice, whether you are going to choose or not.

I'll give an example. Let's say the omniscient mind sees whatever rebirth you will take. The omniscient mind sees it causes, the virtuous or nonvirtuous causes that you are going to create in this life. But the omniscient mind also sees that you have choice in this life.

I think I can make you understand. The omniscient mind sees what rebirth you are going to take, the cause of the different rebirths, the virtuous or nonvirtuous causes that you will create, but you also have the choice, to stop the nonvirtuous actions and to create the virtuous actions. The problem is not from the side of the omniscient mind, the problem is from your side, whether you pacify the disturbing negative thoughts or not.

*Student:* I was thinking, the only one who has a real choice is the Buddha, because all our choices are determined by past karma and all our choices are determined by the cause of that action. I was thinking that the idea of choice is one of the delusions that comes around from the whole of samsara. Really the only person who can make a choice and decide is the person who has transcended the wheel of samsara, and therefore is a buddha. All our actions are caused by our past life and past karma, so I can't understand how we have a choice?

*Rinpoche:* Do you want to get diarrhea tomorrow? Do you want diarrhea, stomach pains? Do you want to experience that tomorrow? Of course, you don't want. What would you like? Do you want to be comfortable or not? Do you want the pleasure of not having diarrhea? Or do you want diarrhea?

*Student:* I don't want diarrhea. [GL]

*Student:* If tomorrow you want the pleasure of not having diarrhea, can you can stop the cause? Is there a possibility, can you manage to stop experiencing diarrhea tomorrow?

*Student:* [inaudible]

*Rinpoche:* Let's say you take medicine today in order to not to not having diarrhea tomorrow. You keep away from the conditions which cause diarrhea, therefore you can make yourself not experience diarrhea, by putting injections before the disease. Many times you put injections before the disease spreads to you. Like that the experience of this can be stopped, you can create conditions to not experience the diseases, isn't it? Is it possible or not? So, you have freedom! Why? Because what you do not wish to experience you can stop, and what you want to experience you can achieve. You can make it possible to achieve, so you have freedom, you can make yourself have freedom.

*Student:* [inaudible]

*Rinpoche:* That because you haven't managed to not have a car accident before, so you have a car accident.

*Student:* If the Buddha had foreseen that I would have a car accident at the age of 39, no matter what I run around trying to do to avoid that car accident I'm going to die in that car accident

because the Buddha has seen it all and I'm dead at 39. Because somebody hits me with a car if I come to Nepal.

*Rinpoche:* What about if the Buddha sees that if you did not change the cause of the car accident you will definitely experience it, *but* if you change the conditions you won't experience it; you won't die in that situation.

*Student:* [inaudible]

*Rinpoche:* That's not created by God, that's created by your own mind.

*Student:* [inaudible]

----- if you do what I tell you, you will go to heaven, but if you don't, you will go to hell.

*Rinpoche:* That is according to him.

*Student:* If the Buddha sees someone is making a wrong choice, why doesn't Buddha stop a person making the wrong choice?

*Rinpoche:* When a guide tell you not to go on that rock because you will fall down and you'll kill yourself, but you don't listen and you go to that rock anyway, without listening to your guide's advice, you fall down and die, whose fault is that?

*Student:* At the same time we know that he's all-powerful, why doesn't he stop you from going the wrong way? [Lots of cross talk with students]

*Rinpoche:* The Buddha's wish is to guide all sentient beings from suffering but without the efforts of the sentient beings, trying to escape from the cause of suffering, there's no way from his side he can do it. If from their side they don't try to escape, to pacify delusions, to be free from suffering, if they never try to pacify disturbing negative thoughts, try to be free from suffering, then the Buddha cannot do it for them. Not listening to the path, the method shown by Buddha how to pacify, then only creating, only developing the disturbing negative thoughts, cause of suffering, then in that way the Buddha cannot guide the sentient beings from suffering.

Like a doctor who has given the patient the medicine and the instructions, he has power to cure the fever of that person. He has cured many other people who have listened and followed his instructions, who followed his method to purification, those people he has cured. But those people who, despite being given the medicine and the whole method to be cured, don't follow the doctor's instructions—don't work hard, don't drink wine or eat meat, that sort of thing—if they do the complete opposite, then not getting better is entirely their fault.

This is entirely different from how people think about God's power? Your conception about God's power, how God created everything. For a person to become well depends on the doctor and depends on himself. It depends on both. In the same way, for sentient beings to be free from suffering depends on the sentient beings and depends on the Buddha's instructions.

[Dedication]

## LECTURE 6

### DELUSIONS ARE NOT ONE WITH THE MIND

This morning I was talking brief explaining how, even though the continuity of delusions, disturbing negative thoughts is beginningless, it can be ended by following the path, the perfect path. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself has achieved this; he has had the experience of actualizing the path, how all the delusions were completely removed. This is also one reason how it is possible to receive enlightenment, how we can make our mind an enlightened mind, how we can become a buddha, or a fully enlightened being.

Just a very brief explanation on that. Even a white cloth which is very dirty, there is a possibility of making it clean, of separating the dirt from the cloth. Why is that? Because the white cloth itself is not oneness with the dirt. That is why there is the possibility to wash it and separate the dirt from the cloth, because the cloth itself is not oneness with the dirt. Just like that example, the clear light nature of mind is not oneness with the delusions. And just as the clear light nature of mind is not oneness with the pollutions, there is a possibility, by following the perfect path, that the obscurations, the delusions can be removed, can be purified. Just as when you wash the cloth, the dirt is removed gradually, this method also is a matter of gradual purification.

For instance, when you first wash the cloth with water, you simply take the heavy dirt out. The second time you wash it, with the heavy part of the dirt already removed, you wash it again with soap and even the subtle dirt comes out. And again you clean it. The water you use for the first wash is very dirty, but with each wash it becomes lighter and lighter. Afterwards the cloth becomes completely clean, and it's the same with the mind.

The way we clean our mind from the dirt, the obscurations, the different obscurations, that is by following the graduated path.

### THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LIBERATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

In regards the paths we can take, there are two main divisions, the Paramitayana or Mahayana (Great Vehicle) and the Hinayana path. It is sometimes translated as the lesser vehicle.

First of all, the Hinayana path also has five paths. By gradually following the five paths, disturbing negative thoughts, delusions gradually become less and less. Then afterwards, when all these disturbing negative thoughts and the seed of the disturbing negative thoughts, the principal delusions, the I-grasping ignorance are completely eliminated, the meditator achieves nirvana or the blissful state of peace, and becomes an arhat. But even though the arhat has completed the Hinayana path, completely removed the disturbing negative thoughts and the seed of the disturbing negative thoughts, he still has to enter into the Mahayana Path in order to attain enlightenment.

The reason he is still not enlightened yet, despite having removed all the disturbing negative thoughts, is because there's still subtle obscurations. The disturbing negative thoughts are gross in comparison and there are still subtle obscurations that have to be purified. It is like a cloth that has been cleaned, but even though you can't see dirt there is still the trace of smell remaining.

These subtle obscurations that remain are called in Tibetan *she-drip*. *She* is “knowing,” *drip* is “obscuration.” So we can call *she-drip*, “obscurations to knowledge,” which means obscuration to receiving the full knowledge which fully sees the whole of existence.

The other, previous one, the gross delusions, are called *nyön-drip* in Tibetan — *nyön* meaning “unpeaceful” or “unsubdued.” This gross obscuration, *nyön-drip*, can also sometimes be called *nyon-monpa*. The thought which has the action of make a person’s mind unsubdued is the gross delusion, or what is called *nyön-drip*. It is the ignorance in the mind of a person that causes feelings such as anger that in turn has the action of making a person’s mind unpeaceful, unsubdued, unhappy. It’s the same thing with attachment, pride or the many other disturbing negative thoughts. Because of the function of these disturbing negative thoughts is to disturb the mind, they destroy the peace of the person. Therefore, I call *nyön-drip* disturbing negative thoughts. By doing that, it makes it clear; it reminds us what they do. They don’t benefit us. Anger, attachment, pride, don’t benefit us, so what’s the point, what’s the use in keeping them, in following these disturbing negative thoughts? Even just remembering the name “disturbing negative thoughts” affects the mind, it reminds us of Dharma.

The subtle obscuration, *she-drip*, or obscuration to knowledge, is the impressions left on the consciousness by the *nyön-drip*, the disturbing negative thoughts, the truly-grasping ignorance, the truly-believing ignorance. For instance, right now we believe ourselves and all phenomena to be truly existent. These obscurations are impressions left on the consciousness by the truly-believing ignorance and the dualistic mind.

## THE NEED TO CLEAR ALL SUBTLE OBSCURATIONS

Again, the Mahayana path which leads to enlightenment has five levels of path. First the *nyön-drip*, the disturbing negative thoughts, get purified completely, then, afterwards, after some time, as one continuously approaches the higher path, the *she-drip*, the subtle obscurations get completely purified. These subtle obscurations, the obscurations to knowledge, are the obscuration to attain the omniscient mind. These are the main distraction that obstructs us from attaining enlightenment, that block the mind from becoming omniscient. When the obscurations to knowledge are completely purified, then we are enlightened.

As we proceed from higher path to higher path, the different obscurations gradually get removed; they become less and less. As the obscurations become less and less, at the same time, knowledge, the realizations increase. When even the subtle obscurations are completely purified, then this mind is perfected in all the realizations. Then, there’s not a single existence, there’s not a single object, not a single existence that we does not know, that we cannot see. So this mind, which is purified of all obscurations and perfected in all realizations, is the omniscient mind and this is called the dharmakaya. One name for the state of enlightenment is dharmakaya.

The example often given is cleaning a mirror. When the mirror is full of dirt, it can’t give any reflection, but as you remove the dirt, as it becomes thinner and thinner, it gives more and more the reflection of things. When all the veils or the obscurations are completely removed from the mirror, as it becomes very clear it can give a clear reflection. This is similar with the mind. The knowledge of the realizations as we purify the obscurations gradually develops like this. When our mind becomes the omniscient mind, the mind is fully developed, it has finished the work of actualizing the path. We have finished the work of practicing Dharma. When the temporary obscurations, the disturbing negative thoughts and the subtle obscurations, are completely

purified, the nature of this mind becomes the nature of the omniscient mind and that is called the state of the self-nature. Before I used to translate it as “holy body”, but that gives the idea of some kind of physical body, so I prefer the state of self-nature. This in Sanskrit is called nirmanakaya. This is also enlightenment.

It is impossible to be able to attain such an fully enlightened stage, the state of buddhahood, without following the gradual path what will be explained during the course. So, since we wish to achieve this goal to work for other sentient beings it is extremely important follow the Dharma without any mistake, to not be on the wrong path. We must follow the perfect path which definitely brings us to enlightenment.

It is vital to check up any religion we plan to follow. If it talks a lot about how, if you do this, if you practice this and this, we will receive liberation, be omniscient and be free from suffering, we need to check up and see whether any followers who have followed this path have actually achieved liberation. How many followers have there been who became liberated, who became completely free from the suffering, from delusions. How many followers are there? In former times, in the present time, are there any followers who really experienced liberation by following this path. If there's no evidence, if there is just a lot of talk about what we will receive if we follow this path, but evidence that this has been anybody's experience, we can discount that religion. We need to hear of followers who have the whole experience, being completely free from all the suffering and having realized bodhicitta, the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment, having realized absolute nature, and completely removed all the delusions. We don't hear any stories like this. Why? Because the path itself does not contain any teachings that contain the two paths of method and wisdom that lead to enlightenment, or even nirvana.

Why is there not even one follower who has realized shunyata, who has removed all delusions? Why are there no stories of followers who attained bodhicitta and enlightenment. That shows that the teachings on that particular path don't contain the perfect method and the perfect wisdom. It doesn't talk about having compassion to all sentient beings. Maybe it talks about compassion to some sentient beings, to some humans, but not to animals. For pigs and dogs? Let God take care of them! (I'm just joking.) But you can check up with this. I'm giving an example. Does this path contain explanations on the delusions, the root of suffering, the I-grasping ignorance and how to destroy it. This is a simple way to check up on the path.

## THE GRADUAL PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

The path that is explained from Buddhadharma, this gradual path to enlightenment, has not only been explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself, he himself went through it, he achieved the complete path. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself attained enlightenment by completely removing all the obscurations. He himself followed the path as it was shown by his guru.

As Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has done, numberless of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's followers, the great Indian pandits, the great yogis have also followed the path perfectly as it was shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, completing the experience and attaining enlightenment. Then not only that, as the Dharma was brought from India to Tibet, again, so many great Tibetan lamas received the teachings from those highly realized Indian pandits, and they also completed the whole path. An incredible number of yogis in Tibet attained enlightenment even in one life.

Even now, as the teachings have not completely degenerated but are still existing, there are many practitioners who are actualizing the path. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained how to follow the path, how to practice Dharma, and if we follow it perfectly, there is not a single doubt that it leads to the attainment of enlightenment, because this has been the experience of numberless other followers.

To be able to be able to follow a gradual path to enlightenment such as this, you have to hear the teachings, to understand and practice them, and to do this you have to depend on a teacher. So, again one of the most important things is this. You have to be extremely careful in seeking a guru. If you want to attain enlightenment, the teacher should be qualified of all the teachings of the path that leads to enlightenment. If he himself is not qualified to show all these paths, then the teacher cannot lead you to enlightenment. If the teacher himself does not know the teachings that lead to nirvana then the teacher cannot lead you there.

[Break in tape.]

...everything I did in my life, all the work, all the actions, has only been done for this life. I never made preparation for coming future lives. I made a great mistake, I never made preparation for my future.

That was the end. I am quite lazy, I didn't start at the beginning. [GL] I only wanted to see what the conclusion was!

#### REINCARNATION CANNOT BE DISPROVED

In Tibet, there was a lama whose name was Tengye Rinpoche who was quite poor and who didn't have much reputation. He was very simple and didn't have many disciples in the beginning. Then after some time he had many realization and gained many followers. He became quite famous and his monastery became very wealthy and famous. A Tibetan governor burned the whole monastery down, and the lama passed away. The governor tried to gain power by making an agreement on paper that if this lama reincarnates nobody should recognize that incarnation.

What happened was that the lama reincarnated but he was born to that governor. He became the governor's child and the governor had to recognize that he was the reincarnate lama of the Rinpoche. So he lost his point. It has happened many times that lamas were killed by somebody and then were born to the person who killed them.

Even though at the moment with our limited knowledge and power, we cannot remember our own past life and we cannot see our future life, we cannot just say, "Because I cannot remember, therefore there is no past life." That cannot be pure logical proof of no past or future life, because even though it is not the object of our knowledge at the moment, it is object of other beings' knowledge, those who have the power and knowledge, and who can see their past and future. So how can we say otherwise? How can we contradict other people's experience?

As I normally say, if you can describe to a primitive person about a rocket that can go to the moon, of course he will contradict this, saying there is no such thing, because it is not object of his mind. He never thought nor heard of that before, and even his friends haven't seen it. But he

cannot contradict you by only using the logic that it doesn't exist because he hasn't seen it. That doesn't mean there is no rocket, that rockets cannot land on the moon. So, it's just like this.

The conclusion is this. It's good to check up on the person who wrote the theory that denied a life after this one, that refutes the continuity of consciousness, who says there is no consciousness or that there could be no past life consciousness of which this present life's consciousness is a continuation. You can check up whether they have achieved this theory through great clarity, without one single mistake in their understanding, by fully seeing how the continuity stops, how this consciousness ceases at the death time. Check whether the theory was written with the clear, full understanding of the evolution of mind, what happens at death time. Was it experienced in their own mind, or was this some sort of supposition, not done with a full understanding of the nature of mind and the evolution of mind? Was it just done by examining the physical parts, the physical reaction, the physical movement, then believing there can no more than this, even though consciousness cannot be seen, it is formless.

We can check the fallacy of such arguments like this. The argument would apply to yesterday: "Did I exist yesterday? Because I don't remember today that I existed yesterday, what sort of life I had, therefore I did not exist yesterday. I can only remember my life after I woke up this morning, therefore I was born this morning."

Beings who can remember their past lives are numberless. On the other hand, there are no beings who can clearly see there is only one life, without one single mistake.

I think I'll stop here.

MEDITATION: THE MIND IS BEGINNINGLESS, THE DELUSIONS ARE BEGINNINGLESS  
Then, maybe we'll do just five minutes meditation.

[Think of this moment of consciousness. It must have had a cause and that cause must have been the previous moment of consciousness. And the cause of that moment of consciousness was the moment of consciousness previous to that. We can that that right back. Yesterday's consciousness came from today's consciousness, last year's consciousness came from this year's the consciousness of a few years ago came] from the last year's consciousness. That year's consciousness came from the previous year, and so on, back to first moment after leaving the mother's womb. That moment of consciousness came from the last moment of consciousness of the fetus, and again taking it back to the first moment of the fetus, what is the cause of that moment of consciousness. It must have been a previous moment of consciousness, and the only explanation is that it must have been the last moment of consciousness of the previous life. That consciousness came from another previous life's consciousness. So, go back and back like this, go back farther and farther. Try to feel the beginningless continuity of the consciousness. The continuity of this present life's consciousness has no beginning since it is continued from a previous life, so the continuity of each of the previous lives has no beginning. Therefore, the continuity of consciousness is beginningless. Feel this. Just as this life is continued from the previous life, each previous life was a continuity of the life before. Try to feel the beginningless continuity of life.

Now, think again about this present life's disturbing negative thoughts, such as attachment, anger and ignorance. Where did they come from? They came from previous lives' disturbing

negative thoughts, the delusions. Why was I born with anger, attachment, all these disturbing negative thoughts? Because my previous life was not free from the bondage of these disturbing negative thoughts, these delusions, and their actions. The actions of disturbing negative thoughts are called karma. My previous life's disturbing negative thoughts came from other previous lives' disturbing negative thoughts. Again that was the continuity from the previous life. Like that, it has always been continued from one life to another. Feel the beginninglessness, the continuity of the disturbing negative thoughts. From beginningless previous lifetimes, we have not been free from the bondage of the disturbing negative thoughts.

Think: "I have not been free from the bondage of the disturbing negative thoughts, the delusions. Because of that I have been constantly suffering."

The conclusion is this. In this life as I have met the incredible method, the perfect method, the Dharma, which can completely cease the beginningless continuity of the disturbing negative thoughts, the delusions, in this life. So far, for that many incredible number of lives, I have not been able to cease the continuity of the delusions, so in this life I must stop the continuity of the disturbing negative thoughts, the continuity of the suffering. I must stop it. If I don't cease this, I cannot reach enlightenment in order to work for other sentient beings, therefore, to practice Dharma as much as possible, to cease the disturbing negative thoughts, this is the most important thing.

## LECTURE 7

### MOTIVATION: THE NEED TO BE FREE IN ORDER TO HELP OTHERS

The first and most important thing is to cultivate the pure motivation of bodhicitta.

Usually, in the world, ordinary people who never make plans to stop future problems are considered very foolish. If they fail to plan for next year, for their life until death, but are only concerned with enjoying today's pleasures and dealing with today's problems, then others see them as being very unskillful, very unwise, very foolish. Such a person makes no preparations and then is so upset when problems happen. Ordinary, worldly people see this as being very foolish.

We can take this line of reasoning from a Dharma viewpoint. As there is continuity of consciousness, after this life there will be the next life, so if a person only thinks about the problems of this life and completely ignores the problems of future lives, never bothering to make preparations for them, that person, too, is very unskillful, very foolish.

We need to do more than just be free from the problems of this life, we must try to be free from the whole suffering realm. Even if by some means we could ensure we would only ever be reborn in the human realm again and again, we are not free from the suffering realm of samsara. However many times we are born as human beings, we are all the same still in a suffering realm.

Therefore, we must liberate ourselves from the whole suffering realm, from samsara. But achieved the blissful state of peace by being free from the samsara for ourselves alone is not right. We must achieve enlightenment in order to release all the human beings from suffering and lead them to enlightenment. In order to fulfill this work, I must achieve enlightenment. That

depends on the teaching that shows the path to enlightenment, to listen, understand and to practice and to meditate. Therefore, I am going to listen to the teaching for the benefit of all the sentient beings.

Yesterday, we tried to feel a little bit how the continuity of consciousness is beginningless, the continuity of life is beginningless and the continuity of the delusions, the disturbing negative thoughts is also beginningless. But, we could think that something like disturbing negative thoughts that is beginningless could also never have an end. How can it have end? It has an end if we make it to end. It has end. It can be ended if we follow the path which has the ability to completely cease these delusions.

## HOW TO ELIMINATE FUNDAMENTAL IGNORANCE

I'll just briefly talk how these disturbing negative thoughts can be destroyed. Normally the objects of our anger, attachment or other these delusions, the object of our experience, are nothing definite. On one object, sometimes we get angry, but sometimes anger does not arise, but attachment or pride arises. The object is the same, but the delusion about the object changes.

Also, all the other delusions can be completely destroyed because they are caused by ignorance. All disturbing negative thoughts are caused by the king of the delusions, ignorance. By destroying the root, the cause of all other delusions, all the branches can be completely destroyed.

Through meditation practice or through Dharma practice, we can control attachment, anger and those other delusions, and we can completely destroy the cause of those other delusions, ignorance. This ignorance is the ignorance that grasps onto the I. It is the I-grasping ignorance that believes in the I in a completely wrong way. It views the I in a completely false way. The I-grasping ignorance believes in an I as we believe it now.

At this moment we are unable to see the I as it really exists, and this is what I am talking about, how we believe the I now is the way I-grasping ignorance views the I. What the I-grasping ignorance views and believes is a false I.

The way, the method to destroy all these false views and be liberated from all the suffering is by practicing Dharma. It is clarified here in this point.

## SHAMATHA AND ETHICS

It is like this. We can completely destroy this I-grasping ignorance, the cause of delusions, by actualizing the realization which is called penetrative insight, or higher seeing, which is the realization of the absolute nature of reality. The meaning of penetrative insight or higher seeing is this. Once we have achieved shamatha or single-pointed concentration, possessed with great bliss, then, the mind one-pointedly concentrates on the absolute nature of reality without any distraction. It is compared to fish swimming in the water without the surface of the water moving at all. With the realization of shamatha, possessed by great bliss, without any distractions, the mind can continuously concentrate on the absolute nature of reality, it can analyze the absolute nature. This is what it means by the realization of higher seeing or penetrative insight.

To achieve this realization, as the foundation, we must first achieve shamatha, or tranquil abiding. Without achieving shamatha, we can't control the distractions of meditation, such as sluggishness and the scattering thought, agitation. This cannot be stopped without actualizing the meditation called shamatha, tranquil abiding.

To be able to achieve shamatha, again the foundation or preparation is the moral conduct, discipline. By virtuous action, we protect our body, speech and mind, that we keep our body, speech and mind away from creating negative action. That, simply put, is what is called moral conduct, or virtuous discipline. We can also say it is *not* nonvirtuous discipline! Protecting our actions of body, speech and mind from doing virtuous actions. [GL] Nonvirtuous discipline is not allowing our body, speech and mind to create positive action. Making a vow to protect ourselves from good actions, that is nonvirtuous discipline. Like, for instance, if we vow "I want to become a fisherman, hunter or a butcher," we are making a vow that protects us from not killing. Those are nonvirtuous disciplines. Disciplining ourselves to be longer in suffering realm.

Conversely, with the higher practice of moral conduct, we are kept away from the cause of the delusions. It stops external distractions, and because outside distractions get stopped, inner distractions, the delusions, don't arise. As a result, a person who live in virtuous discipline keeps him- or herself away from external distractions.

By diminishing external distractions, internal distractions, delusions do not arise. Usually, because of external distractions, internal distractions arise. But with moral conduct the mind becomes quiet, tranquil, it becomes relaxed, calm. Living in virtuous discipline keeps us away from external distractions and internal distractions. Because of that, we can quickly achieve shamatha, tranquil abiding. It becomes very easy to achieve this by having the foundation, the higher practice of the moral conduct. Shamatha controls delusions; it doesn't let them arise. Moral conduct controls the gross inner distractions. Then shamatha, that realization, controls even the finer ones.

The higher seeing realization completely destroys the I-grasping ignorance. How does it destroy completely the I-grasping ignorance? By realizing the emptiness, by realizing the absolute true nature of the self, by discovering the false view, realizing the emptiness of the self. How can that happen? How can it be achieved? By recognizing false I, the I that the I-grasping ignorance believes!

It is like a person who took drugs, whose mind is hallucinating. While his mind is hallucinating, he sees all the ground around him as full of worms, squirming. The whole of the ground around him is moving with worms. Then, as the effect of the drug causing this hallucination wears off, he sees that there are no worms, and it is just the ground. Seeing the worms was an effect of the drug.

That is the way it works, the way ignorance is destroyed by following the path, or by practicing Dharma. That's how the delusions, disturbing negative thoughts have an end. That is how the delusions can be ended, through the Dharma practice.

I think I'll stop here. Pipi break.

## PROSTRATIONS ARE AN ANTIDOTE TO PRIDE

Do you have any questions?

[Student: question inaudible]

*Rinpoche:* She is asking why I make prostrations. The purpose of prostrating before sitting on the throne is a psychological method, it is the lamas' method, the practice by the lineage lamas of the teachings on the gradual path to enlightenment.

You see, all actions should be virtuous actions. So if your actions are possessed by delusions, what happens is such there is a great danger of pride when you give a talk, when you sit on the throne. When others are sitting lower, when you are sitting higher, there's a danger of pride arising, then if the action of sitting on the throne is possessed by pride, it is nonvirtuous action. I think pride and also inflation, the mind which is inflated, thinking "I'm a great teacher or I'm this and that." You see, the mind becomes full, inflated, an inflated mind.

Also if the teacher comes to the teachings with an impure motivation, such as attachment, seeking only the pleasure of this life, and expecting material offering, or reputation, or with greed, all kinds of things like this, then, if one has a motivation like this it doesn't become a pure action, it doesn't become of benefit to the minds of the disciples, even though you're talking about Dharma.

On the part of the guru who is giving teaching, even if there's no pure motivation to give the teachings, the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment, at least the action of giving the teachings should not be motivated by a mind seeking only the pleasures of this life, fame, material offerings and things like that. That's at least what the mind should be.

That's why, in order to control pride, the psychological method is to trick the mind, to cheat it of pride. The technique that has been given by the lineage lamas is to visualize before you get on throne Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all the lineage lamas, on the throne, all the merit field, visualize the whole thing on the throne, then you make prostrations. Also when you sit down, with the right hand on the throne, if the throne is high you to imagine it lower, you are putting it down lower. That also overcomes pride.

Then as you sit on throne, you visualize all the lineage lamas one after one from whom the teachings were handed down, then the root guru from whom you have received the teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment is at your heart. That is to bless the mind, to make the mind pure, and for also the teachings to be effective. There are many purposes for this.

And also, as you sit on throne, you snap your fingers like this. That is to remind yourself of impermanence, that you and all the compounded phenomena—everything—changes in each split second and the sound of the finger snap also shows also shunyata, emptiness.

As you do that you, the guru, should remember that all the compounded phenomena, all the causative phenomena, yourself and others, the whole thing, are like a star, a mirage, a flickering flame of a butter lamp, an illusion, a drop of dew, a water bubble, a dream, a flash of lightning and an autumn cloud.

## LECTURE 8

### SUFFERING COMES FROM NONVIRTUE; HAPPINESS COMES FROM VIRTUE

You should cultivate a pure motivation in order to make the action of listening to the teachings a pure action, making it the cause of happiness. If you can make the motivation virtuous by renouncing the nonvirtuous motivation, then you don't let the action become a cause of suffering. This is something extremely important. This is what we have to do right away, this moment, with every action of body speech and mind. What we wish is happiness, so therefore it is extremely important to be careful on this point. Therefore, I often repeat the motivation.

Just as a poisonous fruit is the result of a poisonous seed and a medicinal fruit and all the branches come from the root of the medicinal plant, all the suffering of life arises from the nonvirtuous actions of the body speech and mind, and the nonvirtuous actions in turn arise from the mind. From what type of mind? From the nonvirtuous mind. The mind which is possessed by those disturbing negative thoughts: anger, attachment—seeking only the pleasure of this life—or ignorance. Conversely, all the happiness, all the perfections, of this and all future lives arise from virtuous actions and this is produced by the mind. What type of mind? By the virtuous mind, the mind not possessed by attachment, anger and so forth. Now you can see, all your happiness, and your whole entire suffering, the whole thing is created by your own mind, not by God. If you are happy, it is created through the power of your own good mind. All the problems and suffering you experience, now, is created only by your own mind, by your own bad thoughts.

Therefore, you see, mind is the base, mind is the field, your mind is the field from where all your suffering arises, the field from where the entire temporal and ultimate happiness, everything, arises. The whole thing is completely dependent on your own mind, so the whole thing is completely dependent on you, on what you do with your mind, on how you take care of it. The whole question of whether you'll have a happy or a suffering life all the time depends on how you take care of your mind. So, your own mind is the creator of all your happiness and suffering of your own life.

Practicing meditation, practicing Dharma is done to take care of your mind. The essential purpose of these methods is to make your own mind good. By developing your mind in virtue, then you see, any happiness that you want you can receive.

It is necessary to recognize this most important point. It is extremely important to know way to use your meditation. Generally, not only with meditation, but with any kind of work, it is extremely important that any kind of work you do in your life becomes a method to attain happiness; it becomes a cause of happiness. It is necessary that this should be the focus of an action, the place you want to strike, like the target of an arrow, the point you are aiming for. If you are cutting a tree with an axe, there is a certain place where you cut; you don't just chop anywhere.

In meditation and in any kind of daily-life work, especially if you practice meditation, it is extremely important to focus on the goal and to use it to diminish the delusions as much as possible. That is the only way. You can understand it is the only way. This is very scientific; it is not exaggerated, you can recognize this with your own experience. If you try it, it works. By experimenting you will see this is the only way you can attain happiness.

## KARMA: KARMIC RESULTS

Nonvirtuous actions lead to suffering. For instance, a person has a short life having, dying in the mother's womb, or not living long, dying as a child before he becomes old. Perhaps the way he dies is by being shot, by being killed by other people. Such things are caused by the nonvirtuous actions, and those nonvirtuous actions were done with nonvirtuous thoughts, either in previous lives or in this life. Shortage of life is the karmic result of having causes others shortage of life, such as killing somebody. He has created this karma by causing the shortage of life to other human beings or other non-human beings.

Some of the experiences, results of this karma were collected in the previous lives of the person and some were collected in this life. We see and hear many times about people who were shot in early life by other people. Sometimes it happens very quickly, without taking much time. Sometimes even within one year, even within one month, within one week, the person who shoots other people is then shot by other people. Similarly, people who have stolen things from other people experience having things stolen in this life. It is not necessary to experience it in this life, but for some karmas that are very heavy, the result is experienced by the person in the life, he starts to experience it in this life.

There are some results of the karma that the person doesn't experience it in this life, if it is not ready to be experienced. This is like a seed which is planted in the ground, but is not ready to sprout yet. The result will be experienced in the future life unless the person has purified the negative karma, the cause of suffering, in this life.

Heavy negative karma, whose result will be experienced in this life, is collected connected with beating your parents, beating your father and mother, scolding your father and mother, killing your father and mother. Karma in connection with parents is heavy negative karma because of the object. That kind of karma is very powerful as it is with doing actions with a negative mind to holy beings, such as enlightened beings, bodhisattva, arhats, beings who have attained the minds of the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment. In relation to such beings, you create very heavy karma. Then cheating and telling lies to parents, all those negative actions are very heavy, and the suffering that the person experiences even in this life is very powerful.

There have been many examples of a person who, in his early life, did not take care of his parents. He beat them and did many bad things to them, or else he cheated them and lied to them. He did all kinds of things with a negative mind, not with a positive mind, not with a beneficial thought, not wanting to benefit. There are many examples of people who experienced the result in this life. Sooner or later their eyes became blind or they become very poor, things like that. There are different problems; it depends on what negative karma they created.

If a wife can never control her husband or the husband can never control the wife, if they can't get along, that is the result of the negative karma of sexual misconduct in a previous lifetime.

Negative karma in relation to friends and family in a previous life, created by nonvirtuous thought, with a jealous mind causing misery to other people. In this life you can see many families fight every day.

Then, for a long time some countries experience much enjoyment, then all of a sudden things go wrong. There is no more water, the crops fail, there is no more enjoyment. Or from being rich, it becomes poor and there are many thieves in the country, many storms, much hail, no more rain. The normal food becoming scarce. These are caused by the nonvirtuous action of stealing, which is created by the people in the country who were stealing the crops, either created in this life or in a previous life.

One time I heard a man talking about the place he came from, saying how terrible it was there now, how there were no more crops growing and there were many problems, which is result of the negative karma of stealing. When I said that, he said that it was true, the people in his country used to steal so much, they used to rob so much. So, it's possible for the karma to ripen in this lifetime.

There are so many stories of people like this, explained in the teachings by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, telling of different sentient beings' karma, by creating such-and-such a cause, the result was experienced in this life.

In a previous life, in India Guru Shakyamuni Buddha went to give teachings to the sentient beings. On the way, he discussed the karma of the sentient beings, human beings, animals. Sometimes his followers see people or animals who are suffering so much, having a terrible life. They can see in the shape of animals, that they are very fearful, having a very fearful body. Many times the disciples asked Guru Shakyamuni Buddha about the karma of the sentient beings, why one was in such trouble. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha can see clearly all the details about the karma of this life, of all the previous lives.

Also sometimes Guru Shakyamuni Buddha went to a certain place where there was great suffering. People, such as fishermen, had terrible trouble from very fearful animals. With his psychic power, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha could see and explain the karma to the people. In the teachings, there are many explanations about karma.

Anyway, as you develop your mind through meditation practice you can understand karma. As you make purification, as you purify the ignorance, you can see karma clearer and clearer still. Sometimes when you have purified enough, you attain the psychic power to remember your past and see the future. At that time you can clearly see your karma. Even though at the moment you cannot see our karma, we cannot see the cause, we can certainly experience the result.

Therefore, it is extremely important to have a pure motivation, this time, to listen to the Mahayana teachings with the pure motivation of bodhicitta. Think, "Therefore I'm going to listen to the Mahayana teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings."

I think we'll have a pipi break.

## LECTURE 9

### DHARMAKAYA AND NIRMANAKAYA

In order to receive enlightenment for the benefit all the kind mother sentient beings, I am going listen to the teachings on thought transformation, the great Mahayana thought transformation, the thought of enlightenment.

Yesterday, someone has reminded us, I was talking about the dharmakaya, and the different names of enlightenment. The omniscient mind itself called dharmakaya, and it is the transcendental wisdom. The absolute nature of the omniscient mind in Sanskrit is called the svabhavakaya, the absolute nature of the omniscient mind. The omniscient mind according to the Tibetan term is called *ye-she chö-ku*, and absolute nature of omniscient mind is called *ngo-wa nyi-ku*. So what I mentioned yesterday, the self-nature, is a translation of this present term *ngo-wa nyi-ku* which means the absolute nature of the omniscient mind: the holy body of self-nature. Yesterday I think I mentioned that the absolute nature of omniscient mind is nirmanakaya; that is not nirmanakaya.

The nirmanakaya is one of the four kayas, four holy bodies of a buddha. One is the dharmakaya, the omniscient mind of transcendental wisdom. One is the absolute nature of the omniscient mind, the svabhavakaya, the holy body of the self-nature.

This dharmakaya, the omniscient mind, transforms into different aspects. It transforms into the aspect of the holy body that can be only seen by higher beings, by bodhisattvas. This aspect is called the sambhogakaya in Sanskrit or *long-chö zog-p'ai-ku* in Tibetan. I think in English it is translated as the holy enjoyment body or the holy body of complete enjoyment. This is the omniscient mind of the dharmakaya transformed to work for other sentient beings in the aspect that can be only seen by the higher bodhisattvas. So

Then, for ordinary bodhisattvas, the aspect of a buddha that they can see is the nirmanakaya, the emanation or transformation body. This is the body of a buddha that ordinary beings, ordinary bodhisattvas, beings who haven't completed the path, those who have thinner obscurations, can see.

When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was in India, the aspect that he took when he was teaching to his followers is called the nirmanakaya aspect. Even though at the same time, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha transformed in different aspects of many different deities like you see on the Tibetan thangkas, in this aspect, he worked for other sentient beings and gave teachings in the form of a monk, being adorned with special qualities of the holy body, like having the long ears, long eyes and so forth. There are many special qualities of his holy body which signify realizations that he achieved, things you don't see in normal people.

While Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was in this nirmanakaya aspect in the form of monk, he had special qualities of the holy body. Each quality of his holy body signifies how he is a completely enlightened being. Each one signifies that he has achievement of realization by creating the different causes when he was following the path.

The absolute nature of omniscient mind is not nirmanakaya, the nirmanakaya is the aspect of taking the holy emanation body, the holy body of transformation, which is transformed for ordinary beings, so a buddha can be seen by those who have thinner obscurations.

Sometimes this thing happens. Out of my ignorance or a mistake in the translation, I use the wrong word, so those who know should tell other people that it is a mistake, that this should be the right translation. If you know, you should tell one another like this.

## THE FIVE DEGENERATIONS

Of the 84,000 teachings, the oral teaching of transforming the mind in thought training in the thought of enlightenment, as explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, all this is the nectar which leads to nirvana and completely destroys all the 84,000 delusions and all the suffering which arises from that: death, old age, sickness, rebirth and all those other sufferings. This training on the Oral Teaching for Training the Precious Thought of Enlightenment, the Great Mahayana Thought Training is the best, the most sublime, the principal and the most holy.

It is generally stated in the teachings that nectar is the medicine a doctor uses to cure all illnesses, and so nectar is used in this way here, to cure all the 84,000 delusions. It is very easy to have a partial understanding of the path, but to make mistakes and so be left with wrong concepts, with wrong views, believing that karma does not exist, or there are no past and future lives, or that the four noble truths are incorrect in some way. There are an incredible number of people who find it so easy to believe in wrong explanations about reality, shunyata and who follow the wrong path. There are an incredible number, and it is so easy to follow a wrong path. That is the *degeneration of views*. Why it is like this is because of the mind. Why it is like this is because ignorance is so strong.

There is also the *degeneration of time*. In previous ages, there was much peace on earth, then more and more violence happened, until these days there is an incredible amount of violence on earth. There are always wars, always fighting; even within one country there is so much fighting. Then there is less and less peace.

There is one degeneration I can't remember exactly, I'm not sure, the *degeneration of enjoyment*. I can't remember. I'll tell you afterwards.

So, this age, our time, this is more degenerate time than even the degenerate time, it's more degenerated than previous degenerations. Why? Because for sentient beings all their thoughts are delusion, what they have is only delusions. The actions they do, the work they do, what they think—it is all only delusions and the work they do is only collecting nonvirtuous actions, collecting negativity. Except for ourselves of course, whenever we see other sentient beings we think of as enemies in danger or if some misfortune happens to them or even if they get killed, we rejoice, we feel such joy. How fantastic it is! Then other people's factory has to close, or of their material possessions are taken or stolen, or if they get sick—as long as this is happening to others—we feel joy. Like, if there are people working in same office who we dislike, if they lost their job, then we think, "How good." Even when we hear that somebody not in the same office has failed in their job we are pleased. If we are at university and we hear that a student we don't like has failed their exams, or didn't get their degree, we feel such joy. How good! And the same thing if some danger happens, if some bad thing happens to the teachers or professors at the university, we feel so happy that this has happened to them. When there is rivalry between teachers or between students and the director steps in and fires people, we feel very happy, and in fact we try to create conditions where people get into problems, dividing people with gossip and so forth.

If bad things happen to us, however, there is no rejoicing there at all, only to other people. We want other to admire us and we are consumed with jealousy when we hear praise about others. When we hear that others have passed their degree or that they have great knowledge, we feel a real pain, there is such jealousy. If we hear somebody say that somebody else is so handsome or so beautiful, it is like a pain in our heart, we are filled with jealous thoughts. We overhear conversations like "She is such a good meditator." or, "She understands so much Dharma," and we feel black with anger, wondering why things like that are never said about us.

Rejoicing is a wonderful Dharma practice, but it must be rejoicing in others' virtues, *not* rejoicing in their problems!

In times such as this, the world is full of sentient beings who only give harm to others with their actions of body, speech and mind. Even the white spirits, white gods, such as nagas, who usually help people who practice the Dharma or praise it, who look after the teachings, even they can't stand being in this world with the powers of the negativity and the pollution—the inner pollution and the outer pollution. And there are black spirits, who always try to destroy the teachings and to harm people who do good things, who try to develop the good heart, who practice Dharma, who meditate. The power of the black spirits increases because of the delusions in the minds of the sentient beings. Just as the black actions, the negative actions of sentient beings only increases, so the actions of the black spirits are similar in increases as their power increases and because of the negative minds of the sentient beings they can give so much harm to all and do so many inauspicious things, like the earthquakes that are happening, destroying whole cities, killing millions of people or creating droughts and famines where people die of thirst or hunger. Or they create terrible storms and floods that destroy many things, such as in China or Russia last year. You must have heard of the earth-quakes that happened in China. They are often caused by people having given offense to black spirits, relating to the powerful delusions that arise in the minds of the sentient beings.

[Dedications]

## LECTURE 10

### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION

Make the decision again to cultivate the pure motivation of bodhicitta. "I'm going to receive the oral teachings of training the thought of enlightenment, the essence of the gradual path to enlightenment, in order to receive enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings."

I think I have defined the five degenerations, I have counted all five. When I believed that one was missing, that was similar to the Tibetan saying that whenever a Tibetan travels to another country with many donkeys and counts the donkeys, there is always one donkey missing, because he always forgets to count the donkey he is riding on. There is always one donkey and he can never figure out what is happening. This is similar.

The reason I was talking about China because besides that happening before, I also heard that there was a terrible dust storm. And, not so long ago, also in Russia, there was an incredibly

hailstorm with hailstones like huge rocks. There have been many unusual things happening, all very inauspicious.

It is generally like this in the world, especially for one who is interested in the teachings, who tries to practice Dharma, who try to sincerely practice Dharma. In so many ways thousands and thousands of hindrances come, disturbing the practice. So many bad conditions, so many impossible hindrances attack the Dharma practitioner. In such a degenerate time, such a bad time, if we don't try to practice Dharma thought training, the Mahayana thought training, we can't complete the practice. If we enter in this Dharma, to practice the thought training, then any bad conditions, any hindrances that arise can become a friend, For one who has entered in this Dharma and tries to practice the Mahayana thought training, any bad conditions, any hindrances can be taken in the path to enlightenment. Anything, any bad conditions, can be taken in the path to enlightenment. Any hindrances or bad condition become a friend, they become helpful.

For instance, if to-day you are very tired, you don't want to go to work or to school, then you find the road is blocked because of snow and you can't leave your house so you get your wish.

For a Dharma practitioner, by transforming everything into the path to enlightenment, including all the bad conditions, by transforming them into the path to enlightenment, the whole thing becomes helpful, it benefits. Instead of being a disturbing to Dharma practice, any bad condition, any hindrance benefits him, helps him to practice Dharma. You can transform all the hindrances to practicing the holy Dharma into beneficial conditions, and only beneficial conditions. Then, that is what is called a wise person.

*Student:* [inaudible]

*Rinpoche:* [GL] Oh, you need the meaning, the real meaning.

*Student:* [inaudible]

*Rinpoche:* Wise, WISE. [GL] Oh, the meaning of "wise." [GL] The word or meaning? Huh?

*Student:* Yes, the meaning.

*Rinpoche:* A person in the West who can even make hindrances, even distractions, who can make them beneficial, don't you call them a wise person?

*Student:* I haven't met any.

*Rinpoche:* You would recognize them as a wise person, wouldn't you?

*Student:* I'm not wise, so I probably would not recognize him.

*Rinpoche:* But even though you are not wise you would recognize that person is wise. OK.

So one who can transform all the bad conditions into help, into a beneficial cause—the bad conditions that disturbs a person, if he can transform the bad condition that disturbs him into help or a beneficial cause that person is called a competent person. A competent person.

*Student:* Competent.

*Rinpoche:* Huh? Competant.

*Student:* Competent.

*Rinpoche:* Competent. We need electricity like television, all the letters appearing, you know. [GL] So that is a capable person or competent person.

The oral teaching is about taking all bad conditions into the path to enlightenment, about making all inauspicious things auspicious. So by transforming all the bad conditions in the path to enlightenment, it relieves you from the danger of the bad conditions.

The person who practices thought training, even though there are so many hindrances to his life and to his Dharma practice, for him it is like walking along very comfortable ground, where there are no rocks at all; it's just soft, smooth grass. Even though his life is full of hindrances and especially in Dharma practice, for him, his life is as easy as if he is walking on very comfortable, flat ground, like walking in a beautiful park.

When a person who does not practice thought training meets many bad conditions to his life and Dharma practice, he can't practice Dharma at all. His life is like stumbling over rocks.

I think thought training also makes a person not experience physical decay, like those nectar medicines that can relieve a person from physical problems. It is explained in Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's *Prajnaparamita* teachings that to solve those dangers, there's a medicine called *sinmargi*. If you have it, then even a poisonous snake, just by smelling *sinmargi*, the poisonous snake runs away. It came to bite and spread the poison all over the body, but just by smelling this medicine, the poisonous snake just runs away. This is just an example.

This person who practices thought training is always happy. Even though his life, his Dharma practice is full of hindrances his mind is always happy. That person's body is called "the world of the blissfulness." Wherever he goes, wherever he is, his mind is always happy. No bad condition, inner or outer, can become a condition for suffering or the unhappy mind to arise for that person. So any external or internal problem always becomes a help to his happiness. That practitioner's body is also called "the unshakeable world" because no outer or inner bad condition cannot disturb his mind or cause unhappiness.

Even if incredible problems pour down like a monsoon shower, not just one problem but so many problems, even his body and mind both have a great heap of sufferings, nothing can disturb his mind, nothing can shake him.

For instance, the person becomes completely homeless and weak with starvation and his body is full of leprosy, and nobody wants to touch him. Even the doctors hate him; they dare not touch him. Not only that, he has no money, and nobody wants to take care of him. Everybody wants to kick him out of the country. Everybody complains, criticizes, put articles in the paper and on television about him, saying they shouldn't let that terrible person in because he will spread the disease. So, not only is his body suffering, but there is so much mental suffering. But, even if he gets beaten by other people and is in constant danger of being killed, if that person practices thought training nothing can disturb his mind, nothing can shake him.. So, that is what is called "the city where the happiness arises."

This is also what is called “having received the concentration of bliss to any object.” It means that no matter what hindrance appears to the person’s mind, he is always happy. The person’s mind is continuously in the practice of thought training. So therefore person’s mind is constantly in a happy state.

In such degenerate times as this, all the five degenerations are flourishing and life is full of outer and inner hindrances. If you practice this thought training at such a difficult time, it becomes a method to quickly accumulating such extensive merit, such good karma. This is a special method for making even such a bad time as this good. So for a person who practices like this, even though it is a such terrible time for other people, for him it is best time.

Here’s another example. There is a person living is in the middle of a city where there are so many problems. There is so much fighting, so many dangers, all the electricity has stopped in the city, all the big buildings are completely dark. He can’t get food—the refrigerator is not working, there is no food in the kitchen, Outside there is fighting, with people killing each other, stealing from each other, stealing from the supermarket, robbing banks. Like what’s happening in New York. Besides the danger of the atomic bomb that is everywhere, in the center of city there is so much danger. Everybody else is so nervous. For most there is no food at all and even those who can get food can’t eat it for fear of it being contaminated. People just survive. If they can make it through the daytime, there is still the night to get through. They almost can’t recognize what’s day and night.

This person practicing thought training, however, even though he is in the center of the place where there is so much danger to life, is having the best time. For him all those things become the path to enlightenment. It only makes him happier to receive more hindrances. You can experience this as you practice. It’s something that you come to experience.

So this is briefly the particular qualities of this oral teaching, the oral teaching on the Mahayana thought training.

The actual body of the precious oral teaching has two things: meditating on the preliminary practices and the graduated practice training in the precious bodhicitta, which is the actual body.

Just knowing the technique is not enough. The main thing is the method, knowing the technique. I mean you can read books, you can read many thought training teachings but if you don’t use the technique in the daily life, then it is not that useful. Just understanding the words alone does not solve the problem.

It is the same as the person who has lot of books that explain about medicine—the different types of medicine there are and how to take medicine, and the person himself knows how to make up the prescriptions and so forth. And he does this, and he has all that medicine in front of him, but he never takes the medicine. Just knowing about the medicine in books, even having the medicine there can’t cure him unless he takes the medicine.

So, the main thing is to try to be conscious as much as possible. Of course, you can’t do everything. You can’t change your mind, you can’t stop all your negative minds in one second, just like that, just by wishing. It takes time, but there the mind can definitely be trained, gradually. It gets better and better.

I think we’ll look at those two stanzas, the next day.

I thought maybe one time we can meditate together from the beginning, we practice together, with the recitation of Avalokiteshvara mantra. That depends on time.

So I think I'll stop here. Then tomorrow morning there will be a geshe here who has been teaching the boys.

#### LIKE THE SUN REFLECTED IN DROPS OF WATER

Perfectly following and completing the Hinayana path liberates a person from all the samsaric suffering, from rebirth, old age, sicknesses and death. That person becomes an arhat. An arhat is completely liberated; all disturbing thoughts have been completely purified, all delusions have been removed. They have no cause to be reborn back in samsara.

Higher bodhisattvas have still to completely remove all subtle delusions, but they have reached the stage where they don't die under the control or delusion of karma. Let's put it this way. We die without choice, by under the control of delusion, by the force of delusion and karma, we die and we get born and we get sick without choice. But arhats and higher bodhisattvas who are living in the pure levels—there are ten levels of bhumis—have completely removed the gross delusions, and so there is no mark that is produced by delusion. The bodhisattvas, through their great compassion, choose to take rebirth—they have total freedom and the choose to be reborn—but when they take that transference, the death transformation is still dependent on mental effort. Why is there still mental effort? Because the subtle obscurations—in Tibetan *she-dip*—the obscurations to total knowledge have not been purified. Because of that, in order to take another rebirth to work for sentient beings, there must still be mental effort. Why? Because *she-dip* is still not purified.

When the subtle obscurations to knowledge are completely purified, with body, speech and mind—when the being becomes a buddha—there is no need for effort to work for other sentient beings. There is no more need to have motivation, such as the thought, “I must do this” before doing an action—first the thought, then the action. When the subtle obscurations to knowledge have been completely purified, there is no further mental effort, his work to work for other sentient beings with this his holy body, speech and mind is entirely spontaneous.

That's why when the buddhas work for other sentient beings, there's no effort. They don't have to think and decide that they should give teachings and then give them. Whatever is most beneficial, they just spontaneously do. If it is to manifest in another form, that is what happens, without mental effort, like the reflection on the water that occurs when the sun rises. When the sun rises in the world, wherever there is water outside—in drops of dew, in bowls, in streams, on blades of grass—the reflection of that sun appears in every drop of water spontaneously, millions and millions of tiny suns appearing in the drops of water everywhere. The sun doesn't set its motivation, “Oh, I must reflect in all this water.” It doesn't sit down and think, before it rises, that this is the first job it must do today. There is no effort there. In the same way, the buddhas, who have removed all the subtle obscurations, the dualistic mind, do not depend on effort. The whole work for sentient beings is done spontaneously and effortlessly.

## LECTURE 11

### MOTIVATION

[Whatever we do with a bodhicitta motivation] not only becomes an the cause of happiness, it becomes the cause of the fully completed, purified perfect state, enlightenment, for the sake of other sentient beings. So therefore meditate to feel at least this short motivation.

"I must achieve enlightenment in order to guide all sentient beings from all the sufferings they are experiencing now and lead them in enlightenment. Such a fully enlightened state cannot be achieved without actualizing the path to enlightenment and that depends on listening, understanding and meditating of the teachings, on practicing the Dharma, so therefore I am going to listen to the oral teachings on training in the thought of enlightenment, which is essence of the gradual path to enlightenment for the benefit of all the mother sentient beings.

The recent subject is the oral tradition training in the thought of enlightenment, which is the door of the Mahayana, which is the method the fortunate ones to receive enlightenment. It is well expounded by the highly realized propagators Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is the profound teaching which contains the essence of the great bodhisattva Atisha and Dharma King of the three worlds the great Lama Tsongkhapa, the essence of the infinite knowledge of Dharma they have. This contains all the essence of the 84,000 teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni Buddha without missing anything. All these are set up for the gradual practice for one person to achieve enlightenment. And it is the sole path through which all the past, present, future buddhas have achieved enlightenment.

So just offering very brief commentary on the oral teachings of this thought training.

### BEING MINDFUL IN BREAK TIMES

In the break times, you should keep the doors of the senses away from the negative thoughts that conclude in negative actions. You should avoid talk that might give rise to anger. If you talk in the break time, it should not be about things that make attachment or anger arise. It is not so good to talk about sex or books you have read, such as books you see in the West, at the airports, everywhere, in the shops, in advertisements. They are advertised everywhere, on the ground, on the road, everywhere. They're presented just like enlightenment, as the main goal in life, just like nirvana or enlightenment is for the meditators. Anyway, I'm joking.

It's a different matter reading books that tell of the life stories of great people, telling of their experiences, showing you how to lead your life.

Avoid things that make anger arise, things like that, which cause delusions to develop. In break time, if you talk, it depends on how you talk. If you talk about the shortcomings of samsara, looking at its suffering nature, it is different. However, dwelling on all the things that cause attachment and delusions to arise means that when you come to the actual meditation session, it lacks reflection. These subjects come up more in the meditation sessions, especially if you talk about these things just before the session. It comes strongly, continuously and you never get time to meditate. After the session is finished, you realize you have lost your whole session.

There are other generally negative actions, such as eating food [with attachment] and even sleeping in a non-Dharma way. You have to sleep in the middle of the night, but how do you make it virtuous? These are the methods to constantly make the life meaningful, to not waste the life. Then, it becomes highly meaningful, not

only during the meditation sessions also during the break time. Practicing like this during the break time becomes a helper to quickly actualize the meditation during the session.

## THE SHORTCOMINGS OF HARMFUL THOUGHTS

Before going through the meditation, I'll mention one point. The whole purpose of whatever you do is to make yourself better, to become better, to have a better life, to become better person. You can become a better person by changing the mind. Only by changing the mind can you become good person and have good life. If you don't change your mind by trying to recognize harmful thoughts—which give harm and which bring only peace—if you keep the same mind as you had before, you can never improve yourself.

By recognizing this, if you do not try to change, if you constantly keep the same harmful thought all the time, then just as your mind doesn't change, your life doesn't change. You can never become a better person. Even if you have received the whole teachings, the whole Buddhadharma, this won't happen.

Only by transforming the mind, changing the mind from one full of the harmful thoughts into a good mind, only that brings peace to yourself and to other sentient beings. By changing this, your negative personality changes. Renouncing the mind of the harmful thoughts, you no longer have a bad personality, you have a good personality. That's how you become good person and have happy life, free from confusion. Then, you have a meaningful life. This is what the teaching on meditation does.

Therefore, the first thing you need to do is to recognize what makes you harm yourself and others, the bad thoughts that give you a bad personality. You need to see the mistakes of this, how it makes life so complicated and unhappy. If you only look at the good thing, you won't see the cause of your unhappiness and you won't be able to distinguish wrong actions from right ones. By recognizing wrong thoughts and wrong actions, you can recognize the opposite, positive thoughts and positive actions.

So, the teachings begin by explaining harmful thoughts and harmful actions and the shortcomings of harmful thought and harmful actions. In that way, the teaching become like a mirror to your mind, to your life. When they talk about the shortcomings of wrong thoughts and actions, it is necessary to recognize and be aware of this happening in your own mind. To see, "Yes! these delusions really do bring these problems! If I follow disturbing negative thoughts like this, of course I'll have these kinds of problem." You should be aware of the shortcomings of delusions like this.

Instead of thinking, "Oh, I am oneness with the delusions. The delusion is me and I am the delusion" you should recognize that delusions happen but they are not an integral part of you. They are not oneness with you mind, therefore you *are* able to renounce them. When the teachings say you must renounce delusions, if you associate yourself with your delusions, you might think that when the teachings say you must destroy the delusions, you think you are being told to destroy yourself. Thinking like that is a completely wrong way of understanding the teachings. Therefore, if you don't know how to listen the teachings, It can be a great hindrance. When the teachings talk about the shortcomings of delusions, you shouldn't think this means this is how you are and will always be. They are describing the shortcomings to make you understand why you suffer and show you how to renounce the delusions.

It is extremely important that the teachings act as medicine, and the person who give teaching acts as a doctor. The listener—you, yourself—are the patient, suffering from the disease of having disturbing negative thoughts such as anger, ignorance and attachment. These are the principal diseases, the worst diseases that we have. It is necessary to think of yourself as a patient.

Listening to the teachings are not like gobbling food down quickly, making kaka and then that's it, finished. We hear it once and we don't have to think any more. It is not like that. The teachings are something we have to try to understand and understanding takes time, because we have a difficult mind, and it takes time to understand what is being said. So, we should have patience with the teachings. As I explained before, our understanding, the meditations, happen step-by-step. It is not like we first attain enlightenment, and *then* we practice Dharma. It is not like that at all.

With machines, things happen very quickly. We put clothes in a washing machine and we expect to have clean clothes, but even that takes some time. We can't expect perfectly clean clothes instantly. In the same way, meditating on the lam-rim subjects takes time. This is the graduated path to enlightenment, so there is a gradual process in how we develop.

So, I think we'll have a pipi break.

#### THE PERFECT HUMAN REBIRTH: YOU CAN OBTAIN TEMPORAL WISHES

[Break in the taping. It continues mid-session.]

Sometimes things are not clear, but there's no reason to feel depressed if you can't. Some people can't understand that easily, others can. If things aren't clear to you, you can get disturbed. And even though it might be a subject that you have heard before, somehow you forget. And each time you rehear a subject, you hear new things and you understand new things. There's always something new.

The understanding of the eight freedoms and ten richnesses is extremely important. It is very, very important. You should check up whether you have received each of the eight freedoms and ten richnesses. If you find that there are one or two missing, then there is the possibility that you can work towards receiving it. If it's possible to attain enlightenment, then it's certainly possible to attain whatever freedom or richness you are missing.

Understanding how you can make the very most out of this human life is so extremely important. You can see how so many people in the West feel that life is meaningless. They always feel angry or depressed and so, instead of trying to bring some meaning to their lives, they do all sorts of crazy things. They manage to make their whole life crazy. If they could understand the meaning of life, it would not make life crazy, it would make it happy. When you do meaningful actions, then life is not only meaningful but also full of happiness. You receive happiness and peace in the mind. The purpose of attaining this human body, is not to squander it doing meaningless things, but to fill it with meaning.

This precious human rebirth is highly meaningful because with the precious human rebirth, which has eight freedoms and ten richnesses, the three great meanings can be obtained. The principal causes of the perfect human rebirth are pure moral conduct and great generosity, great charity, as well as strongly praying to have such a rebirth, and when these causes ripen, then we can attain this perfect human rebirth and so obtain the three great causes. Besides a better future rebirth, we can obtain whatever status we desire, as a king or as a long-life god, having incredibly enjoyments.

Making charity is the cause for great wealth, so when we are reborn as a human being, if we wish to have temporal happiness, we will get whatever we want. If we want to be a millionaire, we will be. If we want to have a beautiful apartment with many swimming pools and huge beautiful gardens, we can. We can have hundreds of televisions if we want. Every time we turn a corner, there is another television. There are even televisions on the ceiling, so we never have to miss the news, even when we are lying down. Even in the dining room. Even in the

bathroom. Even in the toilet! Whatever worldly enjoyment we wish, we can easily obtain it, because, with this perfect human rebirth, one of the principal causes is charity, and that means we will be wealthy in the future.

Similarly, in our future life, if we want perfect, temporal happiness with perfect surroundings, and lots of helpers and servants, lots of friends, many many people guiding us and helping us in our needs, that is possible too, because with this perfect human rebirth we can create the cause for all this, which is patience. By controlling our anger, by practicing patience, we can obtain all this.

You can see many people who are unable to get along with others. They are always quarreling with their partner, with their children, their relatives, their friends. They don't seem to be able to go a day without getting angry. If they have staff under them, or servants, they can never keep them. The staff leave very quickly because of arguments and disagreements. People always criticize them. This is due to not having practiced patience in a previous life and so now in this life they are impatient with others and others are impatient with them.

If you want everybody to be your friend and if you want many helpers around you, you need to create the cause, which is patience. You have to learn to control your anger, especially in a situation where you would normally criticize another person or when somebody abuses you. At such times you should try to control the anger, by meditating on patience.

#### THE PERFECT HUMAN REBIRTH: YOU CAN BE REBORN IN THE PURE LANDS

With the perfect human rebirth, even if you want to be born in a pure realm, the pure field of a buddha, you can. A pure land is the buddhas' method to enlighten sentient beings quickly. Pure realms happen, they come into existence, due to the karma of sentient beings and the compassionate power of the buddhas, the power of the prayers that were done with compassion when they were bodhisattvas.

Even before they become buddhas, with unbearable compassion for all the sentient being, the bodhisattvas prayed for there to be these pure lands, where sentient beings are able to practice Dharma purely as well as having perfect enjoyments. So, pure lands are due to the prayers of the bodhisattvas before they became buddhas, the power of their compassion and the power of their prayers, and the karma of the sentient beings who created the karma to be born there.

When a sentient being is born in the pure land, what he enjoys, what he experiences, is the result of his previous karma, so you can say it is created by his karma, it is born from his karma. If a sentient being is born in the pure land, whatever enjoyment he wishes, he effortlessly receives.

Even the ground of the pure land is soft and shiny, with nothing hard or solid like our ground, full of rocks and stones, hurting our feet and making us dirty. It is completely clean and reflective; its nature is lapis lazuli, but not solid or hard but like a spring bed or a rubber bed. It is flat, without undulations to trip the person up, but even if he falls down, there is nothing to hurt the body. Everything feels very blissful.

The soft, flat ground is full of beautiful plants, full of flowers, all kinds of incredibly huge flowers that don't grow on this earth. These flowers are described in the great bodhisattva Shantideva's *Entering the Path to Enlightenment*. These incredibly big flowers have petals the size of a bed. There are also many beautiful lakes, swimming pools, and many beautiful birds flying around, landing on those beautiful plants. Even the sound of birds is Dharma sound. When you hear the bird song you hear the Dharma. When you hear other sounds too, like the wind blowing through the trees, you hear the Dharma. The whole place is full of scented smells. There are no unpleasant smells at all.

However amazing these enjoyments are, none of them cause you to develop delusions, disturbing negative thoughts, at all. Being reborn in a pure land, you don't get born from the parents' sperm and egg but you have what is called an entering birth. Your consciousness enters a lotus and you are born from that. You don't have an impure body, with flesh, bones, blood and so forth, but a very pure spiritual body, one that doesn't suffer from sickness, old age, decay, such as the hair becoming white, the teeth falling out and so forth.

You will also have the opportunity to see the actual buddha of the pure land and receive teachings directly from that buddha and because of that you will be able to actualize the path quickly and attain enlightenment.

How is this all possible? You can do this because you can create the causes for it when you have this perfect human rebirth. The base is pure morality and great charity and strong prayers for such a rebirth, and the principal cause in all this is renouncing attachment clinging to this life alone.

There is the story of a lama called Longbon Rinpoche, and there is a pure land called Shambala. I am sure you might have found the books from Shambala printing house in America; you must have heard the title from that. In the pure land of Shambala there is chance to practice the Vajrayana path, if you haven't completed the Vajrayana path in this life. So, Longbon Rinpoche wanted to be born in this realm as the king of this pure land, so he practiced by trying to keep his mind purely aware and free from attachment seeking the pleasure of this life. Every day, his only food was a small amount of tsampa—I think I told you before that tsampa is roasted barley flour, the particular, typical Tibetan. He had no material possessions and kept his mind pure, observing moral conduct and so forth. He did this so he could be born as a religious king in the pure realm called Shambala.

I think that is enough.

There is also a specific Vajrayana technique, where you can transfer your consciousness at the time of death, to be reborn in a pure land.

#### THE PERFECT HUMAN REBIRTH: IT IS EASY TO ACHIEVE NIRVANA AND ENLIGHTENMENT

With the perfect human rebirth, even if you wish to obtain ultimate happiness, the blissful state of peace, release from the samsara, it is possible. How? With this precious human rebirth in this life you can create the cause, by practicing the three higher trainings: the higher training of moral conduct, the higher training of the concentration and the higher training of the penetrative insight.

The exact Tibetan translation for that third realization is "higher seeing" or the higher training of wisdom. By actualizing this path, you can attain the blissful state of peace, nirvana.

As I mentioned before at the beginning of the course, the higher training of the moral conduct is the base to attain the two other realizations, the higher trainings of the concentration and of wisdom. For a human of the northern continent, it is impossible to receive nirvana in that life, because it is impossible to practice the higher training of the moral conduct. The prerequisite of the higher training of morality is to take ordination. This is needed in order to observe moral conduct perfectly and completely renounce samsara, the suffering realms. Without wishing to renounce samsara, it is impossible to take ordination because ordination cannot be granted.

Because it is impossible for human beings in the northern continent to take ordination, it is extremely difficult to see samsara is in the nature of suffering, because of the incredible great enjoyments and not having so many problems as we humans of the southern continent experience. It is also extremely difficult in the god realms to observe the moral conduct. On the other hand, it is extremely easy in this human continent, the southern

continent to observe the moral conduct because it is easy to see the suffering, to understand how samsara is in nature of suffering.

Like this, it is very easy to attain nirvana with this precious human rebirth.

Even if you wish to attain enlightenment, that can be obtained. How? With this precious human rebirth you can create the cause, by following the path to enlightenment. You can follow the bodhisattva's path, the Mahayana path, and you can attain enlightenment.

Even if you want to attain enlightenment in the next life, even in this life, without the need to mention any other lives, it can be done. There is no need to mention that it might take a hundred lifetimes of hundreds of eons. Even if you wish to attain enlightenment in this life, in this one short lifetime, it is possible. How? With this precious human rebirth you can practice and achieve the state of Vajradhara, enlightenment, by practicing the co-operative Sutra-Tantra path together.

Many people leave the Sutra path and only concentrate in the Tantra path in order to attain enlightenment quickly. That's wrong practice. Without practicing Sutra, the general path, the fundamental path—the mind renouncing samsara and the thought of enlightenment, bodhicitta and the right view—with the wisdom realizing the absolute nature, then practicing tantra is like trying to build a house in space, like those very tall buildings in New York, that have many stories, only our house has no foundations.

There's no building that exists without depending on the ground, the base. Without the base of the Sutra path, the Tantra path does not become the quick path to enlightenment. The Tantra path doesn't become tantra.

Only on the basis of these realizations do you receive the Vajrayana initiation, which makes the mind ripen, ready, like ripened fruit. Then, you enter the practices of the Vajrayana path, then you actualize the Vajrayana path. In that way, you purify, you obtain control over ordinary death, ordinary intermediate stage and ordinary rebirth, you received control over the ordinary circle of the death and you attain the three kayas.

By opening the knots and channels, you attain control over body and mind. In that way you purifies the impure body and attain the vajra body, which is called the state of Vajradhara, enlightenment. This is possible, even in this life, especially with Guru-Yoga Practice.

I think I'll stop here.

## THE EIGHT WORLDLY DHARMAS

If you examine it well, you'll see that there is no happiness from outside at all, that it all comes from the mind. And if you examine the mind that clings to an object with attachment, you'll see that it's an unpeaceful, cloudy mind. Just as when the sky is cloudy you can't see the stars and the moon, when the mind is clouded with desire, overwhelmed by desire, it cannot meditate on emptiness at all. Even if you have some intellectual understanding of emptiness, your mind can't come anywhere near it because of the agitation within it caused by desire. At other times, when the mind is peaceful, then it's possible, but when it's agitated, it's like everything is completely covered in fog. You can't see a thing. During that time you are unable to meditate on emptiness and even unable to think about the shortcomings of desire, the result of negative karma.

With this thought of worldly dharma, of desire for a worldly object, it is impossible to relax when the mind is near the object. Even if the body doesn't have any particular work, because having desire means there is no mental relaxation, it's impossible to even have physical comfort or relaxation.

You become nervous, irritable; this desire isn't fulfilled. The thought of worldly dharma seeks the object, and if it doesn't obtain it then you can have a nervous breakdown. You can even think of committing suicide. These things come. This may have happened to you, that you have contemplated suicide, no longer wishing to have a human life. These are the basic shortcomings of desire, the thought of worldly dharma.

The thought of the eight worldly dharmas, the clinging to obtaining the four desirable objects [and to avoiding the four undesirable objects] is completely suffering. It is the originator of so many other problems. By meditating on impermanence and death, and by reflecting on and realizing the shortcomings of thought of the eight worldly dharmas, you are able to cut off the clinging to the four desirable objects. When this happens, when the mind is free from clinging, there is real peace. Real peace of the mind is a question of determination. If you decide right now, if you able to make the determination right now, there is peace in your mind. If you are unable to make determination right now there is no peace in the mind.

On the same cushion, on the same seat, in the same minute, as soon as you make the determination not to follow desire, immediately there is peace. When you *don't* make that determination, there is no peace. Peace is something that you can immediately achieve. It's something you can experience right this second, if you make the determination.

Without the thought of the eight worldly dharmas, clinging to the four desirable objects of this life, there is so much calmness and peace in the mind. When you meet these four undesirable objects, it doesn't bother your mind. If praise happens, it doesn't matter; it cannot disturb your mind. If criticism happens, doesn't disturb your mind. So there is stability in your life, there is peace. There are no ups and downs. That is what Nagarjuna means by "equalizing the eight worldly dharmas."

Therefore, the best way to train the mind is to expect to be criticized, to expect to be disrespected. You expect the opposite, you expect the four undesirable objects, rather than expecting the four desirable objects. With this psychology, with this practice, renunciation, cutting off desire, whatever happens, even if undesirable things actually happen, which you have expected, it doesn't become shock, it can't harm you in any way.

Whenever you practice the remedy to desire, when you don't follow desire, that is practicing Dharma. When you follow desire, it's not practicing Dharma. It's as simple as that.

The whole subject we are talking about here—about the shortcoming of the eight worldly dharmas and about the remedy, meditating on impermanence and death—comes from the different advice given by the Kadampa geshes, gained through their experience. These instructions come from their holy mouths, from what they actually practiced, what they themselves experienced.

These instructions are purely to help us be free from desire clinging to this life, to be free from the thought of the eight worldly dharma which is source of all obstacles and all problems, both for the person who practices Dharma and even the non-religious person. All obstacles, all undesirable things, come from the originator, from the thought of the eight worldly dharmas.

When you are told you have to give up desire, it looks like you are being told to give up happiness. It sounds like you have to sacrifice your happiness. That is because you feel that desire *is* happiness, so if you give up desire, you sacrifice your happiness, and what you are left with is nothing. You give up your desire, you don't have happiness, you are left with nothing. It's only the I that sees it that way. *I* give up desire, so *I* don't have happiness, so *I* own nothing, *I* don't have anything. It might appear like that. Your desire has been taken by

somebody! It has been confiscated by somebody, robbed by somebody. Your happiness has been taken away and you are left there empty, kind of like a deflated balloon or something.

That is through not having realized well how desire itself is suffering. You need to thoroughly realize the shortcomings of desire. It is a suffering mind, an unhappy mind. Not realizing that, it feels like sacrificing desire is the same as losing your life. You no longer have a heart in your body; your physical heart has been ripped out. This is through not having realized the shortcomings of desire and how the nature of desire itself is suffering. It is a hallucinated mind.

You are unable to see that there is another happiness. To you, when you see an object of desire, of attachment, you label that “happiness,” and it appears as happiness, but in reality it is only suffering. If it were real happiness, then if the action continued the happiness would continue, but the happiness doesn’t continue, it diminishes, it decreases until it becomes the suffering of suffering. Until it appears to you as suffering, you continue to look on it as happiness. Only when that subtle suffering, that has been there all the time, becomes gross enough for you to notice, then you label it “suffering.” Before it was unnoticeable and so you labeled it “pleasure” but now it is noticeable and so you label it “suffering.” By continuing what you think is a pleasurable experience, the experience of pleasure is not compounded, it decreases until it becomes visible suffering. In fact, from the very beginning it was in the nature of suffering.

On the other hand, the peace that you experience by freeing yourself from desire, by abandoning desire, this peace continues, it doesn’t diminish, and it leads to nirvana, the sorrowless state. This continuation of this peace, this absence of desire, this freedom from desire, from the thought of eight worldly dharmas, this peace is able to develop up to enlightenment. This is the peace you experience forever. It starts from the very first practice, from the first time you manage to free yourself from the thought of the eight worldly dharmas. This is something you can develop on your mental continuum, you can experience it forever.

The reason you don’t want to let go of that thing you call happiness but which is only suffering is because you don’t know there is a better happiness. The little pleasure you gain through clinging to the eight worldly dharmas is next to nothing, but it feels better than nothing, and yet if you could see it, you would know that letting go of that clinging brings real peace, real happiness. You can’t see that you can develop this peace within

If you have a disease that causes itching, like leprosy, the strong temptation is to scratch that itch, even though you might know that scratching will cause the sore to get worse. This is like the disease of attachment. The more you scratch the more you need to scratch. The more attachment you have the more attachment you generate. It’s not that you can even satiate your attachment. That’s not its nature. Isn’t it better not to have that infection that causes the itch in the first place? Desire, attachment, clinging to this life—this is like leprosy, where the itching makes you want to scratch all the time and there is no relief.

Without this body, without this samsara, which is caused by karma and delusion, the contaminated seed of disturbing thought, you wouldn’t need to experience hot and cold, hunger and thirst, all these problems. You wouldn’t have to keep so busy; you wouldn’t have to worry about survival, to keep fit, to try to stay attractive by buying all those clothes. You wouldn’t have to spend so much money on your body. Your whole life is kept so busy, just working for the things your body needs and wants. This is more than just the survival of your body, it is the huge shopping list of things that your body demands to keep it happy. From the hair down to the toes, so much money, so many hours each week, is spent on working to decorate the body. You have this perfect human rebirth and we waste it in slavery to this body.

Then when you get sick, even if you can get some medicine, it's still not certain it can be cured, so wouldn't it be better to not have this samsara at all. Then you wouldn't have to experience all those problems.

All problems come from desire, from the thought of the eight worldly dharmas, so without that the whole process of samsara breaks down. There is no cause of suffering so there can be no result of suffering. That means there is so much tranquility in the mind, there is great peace that can be developed to the ultimate, which is when all your work is complete, it is finished. Similar, if there is no desire, so all the, as I explained before how all the problems, how all the problems come from desire, the thought of worldly dharma, so all these, there is no evolution, there is no cause, there is no evolution, all these things do not happen. So there is so much tranquility or peace in the mind, that which, the happiness, the peace which can complete, which can develop, which can complete, the work for that which can be finished, the work which you can complete, which you can finish or it can end. Conversely, the work to obtain samsaric pleasures depending on the external sense objects has no end. No matter how much you do, it doesn't end. It is like ripples of water lapping against the shore of a lake, always coming, one after the other after the other, never ending. Like that, because temporal happiness is dependent on external phenomena, sense objects, first of all itself is in the nature of suffering and also, because it can never bring the satisfaction it promises, the work to get it never ends. And as it continues, what begins as the suffering of change becomes the suffering of suffering.

#### THERE IS NO CHOICE BUT TO PRACTICE DHARMA

It is important to concentrate on developing this greater, this real peace, which is something you can immediately experience, by freeing yourself from the thought of worldly dharma. When there is independence from desire, there is great freedom, great peace. When you choose that option there is no problem. When you take that side, when you attempt for that real peace, that greater happiness, this other one becomes uninteresting. You have no difficulty cutting it off because it becomes uninteresting, it becomes like picking up used toilet paper. [GL RL] It's as uninteresting as that. Being aware of this, concentrating on this is important. When you do, there is no depression, there is no danger of becoming crazy in this way.

Therefore, the main thing is renouncing this life, the eight worldly dharmas. That doesn't mean that everybody can do this immediately. His Holiness often advises that the best way to lead your life is to live in an isolated place and renounce this life, keeping the mind one-pointedly in the practice of the path to enlightenment. So developing the realizations of the path to enlightenment is the best. If that's not possible, then the second best thing to do is, for those who have an education in Dharma knowledge, to teach the Dharma. Those who have studied and who have Dharma knowledge, you can teach others, and that can be your practice. Even if you are not able to be like that person who as completely renounced this worldly life, you can do whatever practice you are able to do and you can teach the Dharma to others.

Then next, If you have neither the renunciation nor the Dharma education to teach others then the third way you can practice is to serve others in society. By serving other sentient beings you are doing whatever you can do. In other words, that means that you can all practice as best as you can, developing on your level.

Since nobody likes problems of any kind, there is no choice, you have to practice Dharma. That is the conclusion. The only thing that brings peace of mind, that solves problems, is Dharma; nothing else does. There is no other means. If you don't like problems, suffering, there is no way to give up Dharma practice, no way to escape from Dharma practice. [GL] Because what "Dharma practice" means is renouncing the cause of problems, renouncing what is in the mind that creates suffering and developing in the mind the cause of happiness, the positive attitude. To stop experiencing problems—this life's problems, future lives' problems, day to day problems, disease, AIDS, cancer, relationship problems—whatever it is, you need to realize it all comes from nonvirtuous actions, from nonvirtuous karma, from disturbing thoughts, self-cherishing thoughts,

from the ignorance, grasping the I as truly existent. If you don't want problems, now and in the future, you have to purify that negative karma. If you don't want problems, you have to purify the karma that is the cause of those problems, you have to abandon creating negative karma. *That* is Dharma practice. Whether a person is Buddhist or not Buddhist; whether a person accepts religion or not, there is no other way to really stop life's problems, to make it impossible to experience problems.

Therefore, no matter how many problems you experience, even if you don't have time to do a long retreat, if you don't have time to do many things such as studying, still you have to practice Dharma, because you don't want unhappiness, you don't want problems. It's as simple as that.

Even if you are overwhelmed with problems, with illnesses and relationship problems and so forth, and you think you don't have a second for anything but these, there is no excuse not to practice Dharma. Because you want to be free from these problems, you have to practice Dharma.

The last thing is, even if you can't renounce this life, even if you don't have the karma to live an ascetic life like those meditators, whatever the reason is, it's still important to generate the wish.

By hearing this text in the next life [RL] what's the purpose of listening to such teachings? There is great importance. You can see all the benefits of practicing and all the shortcomings of not practicing, so even if you cannot practice now, if at least by hearing the teachings you generate the wish to be able to practice, generating that wish itself is the preparation or seed that makes it possible in the future to actually be able to practice pure Dharma, able to live an ascetic live, to renounce the eight worldly dharmas and to succeed in actualizing the rest of the path. So, even generating the wish to be able to practice is very important.

So I think we'll stop there.

[Break in the taping.]

All causative phenomena can and do change within every second due to cause and conditions, but these things can be stopped any time. These things exist by depending on the base. These things are nothing else than merely imputed by the mind. Actions, objects, starting from the I—all the existence is nothing other than what is merely imputed. So meditate on this. Concentrate on this.

There is no I other than what is merely imputed. There are no aggregates other than what are merely imputed. There is no body other than what is merely imputed. There is no mind other than what is merely imputed. So therefore all these are completely empty.

Similarly the actions and sense objects, all the friends, enemy, strangers, possessions, all these, bad or good, including form, sound, smell, taste and so forth, all these things are nothing else than what is merely imputed by the mind, so all these things are also completely empty, as if they don't exist.

Whatever we think from morning until night—we are talking, we are thinking, we are looking at something which is merely imputed. We are hearing something which is merely imputed. We are thinking something which is merely imputed. So, from morning to night, from birth to death, from beginningless rebirth up to enlightenment, the whole thing is like this.

Therefore, there is no base, there is no reason at all for anger to arise, for discriminating mind to arise, for attachment and ignorance to arise, there is no reason. It's completely nonsense. It is something not needed, something that is meaningless.

So without reason, without meaning, one's mind creates problems, one's own mind makes up ignorance, one's mind makes up attachment. One's own mind makes up anger.

[Chanting]

The great yogi Milarepa who has achieved enlightenment in one brief lifetime of degenerated time said:

"I escaped the mountain by being scared of death, but now that I have realized the ultimate nature of the primordial mind, even if death comes I have no worry."

This Milarepa's teaching, or hymn, which he composed through his own experience.

As I mentioned, no matter how many problems you have, you need to practice Dharma. There is no other solution. For example, when you have some heavy disease that no external treatment can cure, where many doctors have tried but been unable to cure it, when there is nothing that can be done externally, many of those diseases, many of those problems can only be solved by doing very intensive, long-term practice. This is because the obstacle is very heavy.

Some people who have the karma to meet lamas and receive correct advice from them, such as meditation instructions and Dharma practice, they recover quickly. There are many examples of people like this, who had some heavy disease for a long time but had been unable to be cured by external means such as medicine and so forth, but have been able to be fully recovered by doing meditation practices.

Like example, my uncle was sick for many years but nothing helped. He went to Tibet and saw many doctors, then finally he went to see a lama, who lived in the Cherok cave, near to Lawudo, the cave that I sometimes go to. This old monk meditator advised him that because the sickness was caused by his karmic obscuration, he needed to do a lot of purification. He took commentaries on the preliminary practices, prostrations and refuge and so forth, from the lama and also the old *ngagpa* [lay tantric practitioner] who lived in Cherok. While my uncle was doing the preliminary practice his disease gradually recovered. He did seven hundred thousand prostrations. At the same time, he was taking care my grandmother who was blind, making food for her and bringing her out to do *kaka*, all these things. For many years he took care of her like that. There are many things that happened like this.

When no external things work, then you have to take refuge in the Dharma, not only to not experience future problems but even to stop experiencing present problems. You need to practice Dharma.

The very essence of what I was saying is the need to practice Dharma. That is the main subject of the teaching this time, cutting off clinging. From not giving up clinging comes all the problems. Diseases like AIDS come from there. It's very clear that AIDS comes from the thought of worldly dharma. I have asked the people who have AIDS what mental state they had when they got AIDS or HIV and they said from very strong sexual desire, their mental state was that. During the time they were involved in nonvirtue, in lack of morality, with such a mental state, they came down with fever every day, sweating, becoming weak and so forth.

Basically, all diseases and problems come from the thought of the eight worldly dharmas. Besides that, all the relationship problems, being unable to concentrate when you do meditation sessions or retreats. Even somebody who practices meditation, the basic obstacle not allowing them to have good concentration, which blocks the peaceful, relaxed mind, which doesn't allow continued focus of the mind on the object—all that is basically caused by attachment, the scattering thought.

Whenever you try to do different practices, this evil thought of eight worldly dharmas comes to defeat you. It comes to fail you, not allowing you to practice.

When there is so much clinging, such strong desire, it is very easy to be impatient. The stronger the clinging there is in this life, the easier it is for impatience and strong anger to arise. If somebody disturbs you, threatening something that you cling to the most, you get the greatest anger. If it's something that you don't cling that much, when somebody threatens to take it, there's not much, disturbance; there's less anger. It might hurt, but less.

Anger, jealousy, all those other things, is to do with the clinging, something related to that. By depending on that, then those other things happen. So many of those things happen by depending on clinging. Then all these negative thought arise and you create negative karma, the cause of the lower realms.

When you are able to cut off clinging, when you can free yourself from clinging, you free yourself from the threat of the lower realms.

## BODHICITTA: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GOOD HEART

The main subject of this course is the perfect teachings of bodhicitta, the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment. This is the main subject. Even before we receive the complete teachings on the meditations on bodhicitta, it is necessary to train our minds in the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment. Even before that, especially, the main aim of the practice of meditation, of listening to the teachings, the main aim of the course should be to attain enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings. Also, from the side of the person who is doing the teachings, from my side, that is the sole aim. So, if from your side that is the aim, then listening to the teachings, practicing meditation, whatever you do, besides becoming the cause of your own happiness and perfections, besides becoming beneficial to you, it becomes beneficial to all sentient beings. So, at the beginning of each session, before doing the meditation, it is necessary to have the motivation to be possessed by such this pure motivation of the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment.

For instance, before the breathing meditation, think like this, "I'm going to practice the breathing meditation in order to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all the sentient beings." Then the breathing meditation is done with this pure motivation, and besides being of benefit for your own happiness, it benefits, it brings happiness to all the sentient beings. It benefits by pacifying all the sentient beings' sufferings, as you dedicate the action for all the sentient beings, when you do the breathing meditation, not only your own happiness. If your motivation, your aim is that, even if the breathing meditation it is done for one minute or five minutes, it can benefit all the sentient beings.

No matter how difficult practicing meditation is—being tired and having pains in your backside—how difficult it is, all this that you experience, all the difficulties you bear become worthwhile. In that way then, as you have dedicated the action of the breathing meditation for the benefit of other sentient beings, you are bearing the difficulties for the benefit of other sentient beings. In that way, doing the meditation practice with such pure motivation, you do not waste time, and the meditation becomes great purification. And each meditation without doubt, without question, becomes a cause to attain enlightenment.

What is the heart of Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism? What is that? It is the loving-compassionate, precious thought of enlightenment. If we are practicing this, as we are practicing this, we are practicing the essence of the Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism.

The whole purpose of meditation is to have good heart. The conclusion is this. If you have a good heart, whatever perfections, happiness, you wish, anything, can be easily achieved without much effort, temporal happiness or ultimate happiness.

Before saying that, at the beginning of each session, if you try to motivate like this, first of all, right after you sit down, try to make the mind virtuous. If it is a bad mind, try to renounce it, by recognizing, "This does not benefit, this is useless, this only causes suffering." Then try to transform it into a virtuous thought, by motivating with the loving-compassionate precious thought of enlightenment. Then, if you think again and again like this, if you train your mind again and again like this, your mind becomes closer and closer to the realization, the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment. So, there are great benefits.

Also, by motivating with the compassionate loving thought, the thought of enlightenment, the meditation practice or any action that you do doesn't become the self-centered attitude, it doesn't become an egocentric action.

In order to actualize bodhicitta, the loving-compassionate thought of enlightenment, you must achieve the realization, the mind fully renouncing samsara. A simple way of putting the term samsara is the suffering realms. Just this mind and body that we have now, with which we get so confused, on and on, one after another, constantly, constantly we experience suffering. This is samsara, this is the suffering realms.

We should achieve the mind fully renouncing samsara. In order to achieve the realization of the mind fully renouncing samsara, we should understand how this samsara is in the nature of suffering. We should discover this. In order to discover this, we should understand karma. In order to clearly understand karma, we should understand reincarnation. In order to understand reincarnation, we should understand the evolution of the mind—not the absolute nature of the mind, but the relative nature of mind.

I think I'll stop here.

## LECTURE 12

### THE BENEFITS OF BODHICITTA: RELATIVE BODHICITTA IS THE DOOR TO THE MAHAYANA

So, in the afternoon what I will try to talk is the actual body of the oral teaching, the graduate of training the thought of bodhicitta. In that way then most of the teachings about the thought training perhaps could be finished during the course.

Explaining the graduated thought training the bodhicitta has two sections: the oral teachings of actually training in relative bodhicitta, and the branches of the relative bodhicitta. So before explaining the different types of meditation to train in relative bodhicitta, it is very beneficial if you understand a little bit about the benefits of relative bodhicitta.

Generally the benefits of relative bodhicitta are explained in the Sutra teachings, such as *The Sutra of the Beautified Tree*. In these Sutra teachings so many incredible benefits of bodhicitta are explained. Also Maitreya Buddha as well as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha have explained so many of the benefits of the relative bodhicitta.

The only door through which you can enter the Mahayana path is by relative bodhicitta. If you don't have relative bodhicitta in your mind, then even if you have the full realization of shunyata [emptiness], you cannot enter the Mahayana path. The higher beings who follow the Hinayana path, those transcendental beings who follow the Hinayana path, even they having the full realization of shunyata. The Hinayana arhats have completely removed all the disturbing negative thoughts, even the seeds. They have incredible psychic powers to transform anything with their psychic powers; they can fly, they can transform anything using the power of their body—water coming out, fire coming out, they can even transform solid rocks into tiny forms, the size of a grain of rice. They have incredible knowledge, psychic powers, but even though they are completely free from samsara and have attained nirvana, still they are not have not entered the Mahayana Path. Even though they have incredible knowledge like that and have complete control over death and rebirth they cannot enter the Mahayana path. The only thing which can make you enter the Mahayana path is only relative bodhicitta, the thought of enlightenment.

So, if the Arhats with their incredible knowledge, their psychic powers cannot enter the Mahayana Path, of course people with just ordinary psychic powers cannot. There are people who can see past and future life, who can see very distant things such as what is happening in America from here. Some people have mundane powers to transform things, with a body that cannot be burned, or able to bend a solid thing like a knife. Some are able to produce material things. But even people with such amazing mundane psychic powers are not free from samsara and have no realizations on the path, so of course it's impossible for that person to enter the Mahayana Path. Even somebody with unshakeable concentration which can last even for eons, which cannot be disturbed—even with such incredible realizations like that, that person cannot enter the Mahayana path.

Even a person who has a Vajrayana practice, and has passed the generation stage and is able to practice the completion stage, being able to manifest in the form of a deity and move the winds into the channels, without the realization of bodhicitta it is like a small baby looking at the paintings on the wall of a temple. He can be skilled at *tum-mo*, inner heat. I'm sure most people, especially those who have read *Tibetan Mysticism*, and about practices such as the Six Yogas of Naropa, know about *tum-mo*, the meditation on the generating heat power. Even though somebody has such an advanced Vajrayana practice, without the realization of bodhicitta, it's nothing more than making fire, like you can do with one of those machines. What do you call it? We have them in Nepal, made of bamboo and animal skin, and I've seen them in the West. You use it for blowing on the fire and making it stronger. [Student gives name.] Oh, bellows! B. E. L. L. O. W. S. If somebody tries to practice *tum-mo* without bodhicitta, it's just like me with a bellows.

So the door of the Mahayana Path is only bodhicitta.

#### THE BENEFITS OF BODHICITTA: YOU BECOME A SON OF THE VICTORIOUS ONES

The second benefit is you receive the name, the Son of the Buddha, the Son of the Victorious One. Victorious One means the Buddha. Usually you find the word like this in the texts. Why victorious? Victorious has much meaning. In Australia there is a place called Victoria. There must be some story. Why the Buddha is called the Victorious One is because he has conquered not only the disturbing negative thoughts but even the impressions of the disturbing negative thoughts, every single, subtle dualistic mind, even the tiny part of subtle dualistic mind. Having attained victory over all obscurations, you also receiving the name, the Son of the Victorious One, which means a bodhisattva.

Even is a person is extremely ugly looking, even if he is of the very lowest caste, even if he doesn't even know how to make food, he can't even make a cup of coffee, and everybody puts him down, calling him stupid or a fool, if he has actualized bodhicitta, then from that moment on he receives the holy name of bodhisattva and all the buddhas recognize him as that, they call him that. He becomes object of respect.

He is called that even if others call him a hippy, because he has long hair down to his feet, he wears clothes that nobody on Earth would want to wear and he lives in the forest, where the monkeys live! I'm joking! Everybody thinks he's terrible, and he gets kicked out of one country after another. As soon as he arrives in one place, the people tell him to leave. Even such a person, with a body full of smells, skin completely filthy and yellow, if he has attained bodhicitta, the thought of enlightenment, he doesn't need a passport or a visa, he is completely free from this world. He has nothing to bother others with. Having bodhicitta, he receives the holy name of bodhisattva and all the buddhas and bodhisattvas recognize him.

Even a king or president living in such a rich apartment or palace, controlling such a huge population, with an army of bodyguards and hundreds of suits and other clothes, even such a person with the highest reputation, the most famous person in the world, without bodhicitta he doesn't have a reputation that really counts, whereas the hippy with bodhicitta has the very best reputation. The king or president doesn't become an object of respect by the buddhas and bodhisattvas. We say about a person, "You are just like a pig" because it is recognized that a pig is the most ignorant animal. But even a pig or a turtle—you remember the example of how difficult it is for them to receive the perfect human rebirth—even though they are so incredibly ignorant, if they manage somehow to attain the thought of enlightenment, they receive the holy name, bodhisattva.

When bodhicitta is actualized by human being or even animal, all the buddhas and bodhisattvas are happy. It is like having found a new friend to work for other sentient beings together. It is like have found a new friend so all the buddhas and bodhisattvas are extremely happy. When the person attains bodhicitta, all the earth shakes, even the pure fields of the buddhas move. It is like thinking have received new child who will be able to inherit their position, like a king is pleased when he gets a child who is the new prince and will be the king after him.

Like that, the buddhas' holy minds are extremely pleased. The buddhas communicate with each other, and when the bodhisattvas in the pure realms ask them what caused that shaking, they explain that today, in such-and-such a world system, such as the southern or the western continent, such-and-such a being has attained the precious thought of enlightenment. I suppose if it were here, they would say that today, in New York, a man called Bob attained bodhicitta. And this is what caused the pure realms to shake.

Why does it make the earth shake? Because it is power of bodhicitta. This whole earth came into existence due to collective karma, karma that we all have, that all the people, all the sentient beings who live on this earth have. All the general karma is collective karma. This earth came into existence because of the general karma that has been collected by all the human beings and all the animals who use this earth. So when one sentient being attains bodhicitta, the person has received the higher power to lead other sentient beings from samsara. Having actualized Bodhicitta makes samsara shake. The vibration of power of this realization makes the Earth shake.

The great bodhisattva called Shantideva, whose teaching is the base of the thought training teaching, said in his teaching, *Entering the Path to Enlightenment*:

Having received what is called the thought of enlightenment, in that very second that fainted (?) being who had been in tortured and bound in the prison of samsara is called son by those who have gone to the blissful state and has become and object of devotion and a holy object for worldly gods and humans.

“Those who have gone to a blissful state” refers to the buddhas. The translation is a bit difficult. In Tibetan it is called *de-she*—*de* means “blissful state,” and *she* means “have gone,” so this is another epithet for a buddha. These enlightened beings call the person who has attained bodhicitta their son.

The realization of what is called bodhicitta is attained by the fainted (?) being. That refers to any being trapped in samsara, such as the narak beings who have not even one second to experience happiness, or the preta beings or animals who are constantly suffering, experiencing incredible suffering, incredible problems, so much heavier than human being. But it also includes suras and asuras, who are also bound to the prison of samsara by the delusion and karma.

Like now, we are bound to the samsara with this mind and body, therefore because we are bound with this body we suffer so much, we experience so many problems.

So these beings, having attained bodhicitta are called “sons” by the ones who have gone to the blissful state. Furthermore, these beings are now objects of devotion for suras and asuras as well as human beings, objects to be prostrated to and to make offerings to.

I think I'll stop here.

For the meditation, maybe try to remember the benefits of bodhicitta that I just mentioned again, the door of the Mahayana path is the Bodhicitta and receiving the name “the son of the Victorious Ones.”

If there's time after remembering the benefits, then you can do the equilibrium meditation.

### THE BENEFITS OF BODHICITTA: YOU CREATE GREAT MERIT

I'll give a brief explaining of the benefits of the graduated training on the thought of enlightenment. One thing that I mentioned yesterday, maybe it wasn't become clear. Without having the realization bodhicitta, the thought of enlightenment, the Vajrayana path doesn't become the cause of enlightenment. The two stages, the becoming [generation] and fulfillment [completion] stages, meditating on the chakras, generating heat, concentrating on the flame, what is called *tum-mo*, never becomes the cause of attaining enlightenment if it is not possessed with the motivation of the thought of enlightenment, even if there isn't an actual realization of bodhicitta.... that practice it didn't even cause to receive Enlightenment, it didn't become even cause to receive Enlightenment. It cannot even become a Mahayana practice; it cannot become Mahayana Dharma.

Even if you don't have the actual realization of bodhicitta, but if your practice is possessed by the motivation of the bodhicitta, even a simple breathing meditation, even making charity to one ant of one grain of rice, that becomes the cause to attain enlightenment. Whatever very high practices a person has tried, without any motivation of the thought of enlightenment—even if the person can sit on the mountains without clothes by generating heat—it still it doesn't become a Mahayana practice; it doesn't become cause to attain enlightenment. If you have a realization of bodhicitta then, ah, then, realization of Bodhicitta, then, whatever practice he does, whatever practice the person does, the actual thought of enlightenment, without question your entire practice becomes Mahayana Dharma, and yourself are a Mahayanist.

Without the thought of enlightenment, no matter whatever psychic powers or other knowledge, the person is not a Mahayanist. As I explained yesterday, an arhat is still it is not a Mahayanist, even though he is free from samsara. The door of the Mahayana path is only bodhicitta. Only then do you receive the name, “the son of the victorious ones.”

Even the arhats, the hearers and solitary realizers, who are completely free from samsara, who have completely removed all the disturbing negative thoughts, are not as high as the newest bodhisattva. Even if that bodhisattva has a dog's body, because the mind has bodhicitta, it is higher than the Hinayana Arhats.

It is just like when a prince is born to a king. Even though he is still a tiny baby, all the other important people who are under king, the ministers and politicians, are controlled by that baby. It is not because of knowledge—they know far more than the baby does—but because of caste. Because of caste, they have to respect the prince, even if he is still a newborn baby.

So, in regards to psychic power, the arhats have incredible knowledge, much more than a new bodhisattva, but because the bodhisattva has attained bodhicitta, he enters the caste of bodhisattva, and because of that controls those higher beings, the arhats.

It is said in the text, any sentient being who has actualized bodhicitta, right away, in that moment, that being becomes the supreme object of offerings. Right at that moment, he is the supreme object of offering, by human beings, even by the gods. When a bodhisattva walks on the road, the footprint left on the road on the dust, you know, on the road, even the King of the Suras has to bow down and touch his crown to the footprint. It is said in the Sutra teaching, that even the bodhisattva, even the Bodhisattva wants to go to have sense pleasures, if there is no one to pull the chariot for him, the Buddha will pull it.

For somebody who has attained bodhicitta, whatever he wishes to obtain, everything becomes successful. The hindrances that disturb him fulfilling his work are prevented by bodhicitta. Having realized bodhicitta, any kind of work the person wants to do will be successful, and without question any Dharma practice.

It becomes very difficult for any delusion or disturbing negative thought, any distraction to the Dharma practice, to arise. The main distraction to actualizing the path is the inner disturbing negative thoughts but it becomes very difficult for these disturbing negative thoughts to arise. Instead of all the actions becoming nonvirtuous negative karma, each action of body speech and mind, become virtuous actions, the cause of attaining enlightenment.

Now, even if we try to do a purely positive action, trying to help another person, the action is done for the self, to receive some benefit from that person. Even though it looks like we are helping another, it is very difficult for the action to become pure, without involving the self-cherishing thought. However, for the new bodhisattva, without much effort, each action easily becomes virtue; it doesn't involve the ego, it only becomes the work for other sentient beings, pure.

Then, also the mind is very happy. You have to develop a small good heart, then develop it more and more, then afterwards you achieve the realization of bodhicitta. It has to come from a good heart. First you have small good heart, then as you practice, as you train your mind, you develop your heart and it becomes better and better, better and better.

The actions of the bodhisattva are done without self-cherishing thought, The self-cherishing thought is one of the main hindrances that disturb the quick attainment if achieve enlightenment. That is how by actualizing bodhicitta you can attain enlightenment quickly.

Humans and non-humans cannot harm somebody who has actualized bodhicitta. A Kadampa Geshe called Chunlungpa lived in a place called Tingri. There are many mischievous spirits in that area. Many of those spirits

tried to give harm to that meditator. One of the powerful spirits went to disturb him, to cause danger to that meditator's life. Geshe Chunlungpa was meditating on bodhicitta and he used to cry all the time all the time he meditated on bodhicitta. He started to cry by remembering suffering of others. So, one of the powerful spirits went to give harm. When he reached the cave he couldn't harm him, so he went back and told the other spirits. "I tried again and again to give harm him. Besides I dare not give him harm. Forget about giving him harm. He nurtures compassion for us. He himself was crying for our suffering."

Also one time, there was a monk called Monlam Tsawo. There was danger of a flood destroying the monastery, so this bodhisattva monk wrote on a stone, "If I, Monlam Tsawo am real bodhisattva let the flood water go away." Then he put the stone where the water was flooding and the flood turned back, when it reached the stone. That was because of the power of bodhicitta, the truth.

Not so long ago, only three or four years ago, in the extremely isolated part of northern Tibet where only nomads lived—there were no houses or buildings—there was a family who had a daughter who became crazy. In that village they have a lama who they used to invite to do puja. They invited him to stop the craziness of the daughter. This lama did a puja called "Dispelling the spirits," asking the spirits to leave by giving presents and so forth, but the daughter, directed by the spirit stood up and beat the lama over the head with a shoe. Later, a simple monk came begging and the family invited him into the house. He doesn't know many prayers or the other things that monks know. He couldn't do the pujas, such as the one to help sick nagas or spirits called *Chashung*, asking them not to harm humans. The family asked the monk if he can do this puja and he said he could, so they invited him to do it, but when he sat down he didn't offer any ritual cake to the spirit. He didn't do any of the usual things, but just sat there and wrapped the zen [upper robe] around his head and kept quiet. However, after a few minutes the patient was cured from her disease.

Bodhicitta is extremely powerful. It prevents general harm from spirits, and especially harm from spirits which you cannot be cured by medicine. If you have actual bodhicitta of course that is without question, but even if you don't have it, meditating on compassion is an excellent method.

This monk's monastery had a new residence built so the monks had to move to the new place. The other monks kept only the valuable things, clothes that were not torn, things that were not broken. This monk, however, his room was full of garbage! It took one week to transfer all his material things from his old room to his new room. When other monks watched, they saw *nothing* interesting. There is not one thing that is useful, that is complete. Just only pieces of torn clothes, but he had it all transferred, as if it was so important.

The monk ate old food, food that would make other people sick if they ate it, rotten food that others would throw on the ground. The other monks could never understand how he could eat this and never get sick. He normally didn't show compassion that much, just went around the stupa, sometimes thirty times a day and came back and made very delicious Tibetan tea, while only repeating the Twenty-one Praises to Tara, very loudly repeating each syllable many times. For instance, if he was reciting "OM MUNI MUNI MAHAMUNIYE SOHA" he would recite the OM many times, then the MUNI many times, and the same with the Tara prayer.

I heard that he had a very good death. I think he left a good example from the way he died. On the same day one of our lamas, Serkong Rinpoche was giving teachings there, he was making offering to all the monks, giving everything he had to other people. He made offerings and before he died, offering everything to different monasteries, his different Gurus and Lamas. Then, later on that day he passed away.

[Dedication prayer]

By actualizing bodhicitta, you quickly become an object of offering, and by your superior caste, you control the arhats. Then, any wish you have will become successful. If you have bodhicitta, then neither human beings nor non-human beings cannot give you harm. Remember these things I have briefly mentioned if you can. I think that's enough.

### THE BENEFITS OF BODHICITTA: MEDITATION ON THE KINDNESS OF THE MOSQUITO

In meditation, you start from love, great love, great compassion, then bodhicitta, then up to enlightenment, attaining all the wisdom of the buddhas. This is the advantage we receive from the kindness of the bodhisattvas and arhats. Through purifying and collecting merits in connection with these holy objects, we gain great realizations. All these advantages are received from these holy objects. They are also received by depending on kindness of sentient beings.

Then, as I mentioned yesterday in the afternoon, all the three times—all the past, present and future's—happiness, every single perfection, all the temporal happiness, all the ultimate happiness, everything, every single happiness comes from depending on the mosquito. The same mosquito I mentioned yesterday. All the temporal happiness, all the perfections, whatever happiness you have at all in samsara, comes from this kind mother sentient being mosquito biting you. Try to understand this.

[Meditation]

Maybe just concentrate, try to feel this.

[Meditation]

Visualize the mosquito is making a terrible noise. Then drinking your blood, putting his—what do you call it? trunk? nose?—proboscis [GL] into your toe, where the skin is very thin and it is very painful. Visualize this. [GL RL] [then, uproarious laughter as small plane buzzes overhead.]

Fantastic! That's very helpful. It's a sign of very good meditation, very clear concentration! [GL] If it's not concentration this does not happen. [GL]

[Meditation]

All my past, present and future happiness, all the temporal happiness, all the enjoyment, the perfections of samsara, all the ultimate happiness including enlightenment, everything has been completely received from this mosquito. All these things are received from all the sentient beings.

[Meditation]

All my happiness—temporal and ultimate happiness—came from creating good karma.

[Meditation]

My creating good karma is the action of the Buddha. That is the way how the Buddha guides me from sufferings and lead in the path to happiness. And I create good karma by understanding the teachings that explain karma, what is called the happiness, what is called suffering. Where do the teachings come from? The teachings come from the Buddha. Even the person who creates good karma, out of compassion, even though

he doesn't know what the cause of happiness or suffering is, even though he hasn't received teachings in this life—still that good action is the result of having understanding the teachings in a previous life.

All the good karma I create is because of understanding the teachings. My creating good karma that itself is the teaching, that itself is the Dharma. The teaching is received from the Buddha. The numberless buddhas are born from bodhisattvas. The bodhisattvas are born from bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is born from the thought of Mahayana love and compassion.

The thought of Mahayana love is received from each sentient being, so it is received from this mosquito. It is received from each sentient being. Even by excluding *one* sentient being, there is no way to receive the realization of the Mahayana love and compassion. By excluding just one, by leaving out just one sentient being, there is no way. It is received from each and every sentient being. So, it is received from this mosquito, who is biting me now.

From this thought of Mahayana love and compassion I have received from this mosquito, bodhicitta is born and from bodhicitta a bodhisattva is born. All the numberless bodhisattvas have happened dependent on the teachings of this mosquito. All the numberless buddhas, as well, originally came from this mosquito. How they happened is by depending on this mosquito. Therefore, my receiving teachings from the Buddha, my meeting the holy teachings of the Buddha, is also received from this mosquito. My creating good karma, the cause of all the three times' temporal happiness, all the ultimate happiness, including enlightenment, that is completely received from this mosquito. Everything, all temporal and ultimate happiness, including enlightenment, is completely received from this precious holy object, the mosquito.

[Break in tape.]

Even if every sentient being makes charity for hundreds of eons of every material thing in the universe to hundreds of deities, this is in no way comparable to making charity of even a small bowl of food, a small bowl of rice to an animal with the motivation of bodhicitta. Think, "I am going to make this charity to this dog, in order to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all the mother sentient beings."

Simply motivating like this, cultivating the motivation bodhicitta like this, even one small bowl of food to a dog, if this whole earth were full of jewel and you made charity for hundreds eons to each human being, and to each animal, the different sentient beings who are on this earth, the pretas, narak beings, the benefit can never compare to giving one small bowl of rice to a dog with motivation of bodhicitta. Even one small rice like this, making charity to ant, with motivation bodhicitta.

Without a bodhicitta motivation, what you give is just one bowl of food to one dog, to one sentient being, that's nothing compared to other charity. But because of the motivation of bodhicitta, with this action you have received infinite merit, which equals the infinite space. As the great bodhisattva Atisha said in his teachings, *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, the benefit of bodhicitta is like this.

Even though you made incredible, unbelievable charity like this, for many hundreds eons, every day, using the most incredible materials—the whole earth, piled with jewels, you will gain great merit, but without a bodhicitta motivation, it is nothing compared to the smallest offering made with a bodhicitta motivation.

This is why training mind in bodhicitta, trying to actualize bodhicitta, is the most important thing. Even if you don't know the Vajrayana, all those mystical, secret, Tantra teachings it is not important if you have bodhicitta. Take a person who practices Vajrayana without training the mind in the bodhicitta, knowing everything—how to

achieve the rainbow body, all the profound methods the Vajrayana teaching—but he has never trained his mind in bodhicitta. Now compare him with a person who doesn't have any training in the Vajrayana but who has bodhicitta. Who is closer to enlightenment? The person who completely concentrates just on bodhicitta and spends whole his life on that, meditating on compassion, he is the one who will attain enlightenment first. He is closer to enlightenment than the person who completely knows everything about the Vajrayana teachings but has no bodhicitta. This shows something about the benefit of bodhicitta. If you have actualized bodhicitta, then you can collect infinite merit, instantly, effortlessly.

### THE BENEFITS OF BODHICITTA: WE PURIFY OBSCURATIONS

The next benefit of bodhicitta is that all obscurations and negative karma are quickly get purified. Even with the motivation of bodhicitta, even if you don't have the actual realization of bodhicitta, you receive infinite merit. Therefore, obviously, if you *have* actualized bodhicitta, the merit you create and the obstacles you purify is infinite.

It is said in the teaching, *Entering the Path of Enlightenment* by the great bodhisattva Shantideva:

Just like the fire at the end of the time that definitely burns all the great negative karma in one second, so that [bodhicitta] burns negative karma and obscurations.

The fire of the end of the time is the end of this age when the whole of this mandala, of this world system, ends due to the karma of sentient beings. Seven suns rise and it becomes so extremely hot that all the mountains burn up and melt into nothing, and everything is destroyed by the fire. When that happens there are no more sentient beings on this Earth. This is just trying to describe how powerful bodhicitta is, how it can burn up all negative karma and obscurations like the fire at the end of time. In a single second the world is destroyed, and in the same way, in a single second, with bodhicitta, all negative karma and obscurations are destroyed.

The heaviest negative karma you can create are the five immediate negativities of killing your father, your mother an arhat, causing disunity in the Sangha and maliciously drawing blood from an enlightened being. But even if somebody has collected the karma of having done all five of these heinous actions, bodhicitta can burn up that negative karma in one second. With bodhicitta, you can purify anything in such a short time with so little effort.

I think I'll stop here.

Even if you are concerned because you have created so much negative karma and you need to do strong purification—even if you counted your negative deeds on your mala and they were more than one full round—the best way to purify, the most powerful way, the most skillful way, is to meditate on bodhicitta, training the mind in the precious thought of enlightenment.

Like the talk this afternoon, the two benefits are collecting infinite merit and purifying all obscurations and negative karma quickly. If you have made notes, try to remember the main points.

## LECTURE 13

### THE BENEFITS OF BODHICITTA: THE FRUIT IS NEVER FINISHED

Think, “I am going to listen to oral teachings on the thought of enlightenment, which is the essence of the graduated path to enlightenment, the wish to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings.”

So, I stopped yesterday with the benefits of actualizing bodhicitta. No other sentient being, human or non-human, can give you any harm. Like for instance, sometimes a doctor with a very good mind can just touch a patient to examine him, without even giving any medicine, and the patient will be cured.

Another benefit is that the fruit is never finished. The fruit of a water tree grows, ripens and then dies, but the fruit of the bodhicitta tree is born but is never finished. The bodhicitta tree always bears fruit and it always increases and increases, without ever finishing.

The great bodhisattva Shantideva explains it this way. Other virtues you collect, even the realization of shunyata, voidness, even the mind renouncing samsara, done with a virtuous motivation not possessed with the attachment seeking pleasure in this life, even those virtues are like a water tree, bringing fruit once a year in spring. Having eaten the fruit, there is nothing left. You don't continuously get fruit once you have picked it. The bodhicitta tree, on the other hand—once you have actualized bodhicitta—the more you experience the result, the more the fruit comes; it never finishes and it continuously increases.

Even the merit created by cultivating the motivation of the bodhicitta causes you to actualize the path, and actualizing the path, once you attain the mind of bodhicitta, you receive the result, enlightenment. After you attained enlightenment, you constantly work for every sentient beings until they attain enlightenment. Therefore, with just the wish to attain bodhicitta you are working for the benefit of all sentient beings, and attaining enlightenment you are actually able to benefit billions and billions of beings by showing different methods with your holy body and with your holy speech and holy mind, constantly benefiting all the sentient beings, until every sentient attains enlightenment.

All this comes from just having the merit of having the wish to attain bodhicitta, from cultivating the motivation of bodhicitta. The merit of even one thought of attaining bodhicitta is billions of times more than making charity of jewels filling this whole Earth to every sentient being every day for hundreds of eons. Even giving just a tiny plate of food to a dog with the motivation of bodhicitta creates far more merit than this. Even if you made charity for hundreds of eons of this whole Earth full of jewels to every human being, every animal, every preta and narak being—all the different beings on this Earth—the merit that creates is nothing compared to giving even a grain of rice to an ant with the motivation of bodhicitta. Making even the smallest act of charity with the motivation of bodhicitta creates the merit equaling the infinite space.

In his teaching, *The Lamp for the Path of Enlightenment*, the great bodhisattva Atisha explained the benefits of bodhicitta like this. Even the most unbelievable acts of charity done without the bodhicitta motivation are nothing compared to the tiniest acts of charity done with it. It creates infinite merit. That's why the great yogis encourage us to make strong determination to devote our whole life to doing nothing but this. We should plant our feet firmly and not waver from this task. Plant your feet, you know, like a child does when they want to fight. When people are incredibly determined to get their way, they have incredible energy and they plant their feet so nobody can budge them. It signifies they are trying very hard. This is how we should be.

By planting our feet and determining to only do this, we can actualize the subjects such as impermanence and death and practice the Dharma so purely, no matter what difficulties arise. That's what I think “planting the feet” means.

So, I think we'll have a pipi break.

## THE BENEFITS OF BODHICITTA: WE ACHIEVE ENLIGHTENMENT

The essential thing is this: how many others gain happiness depends on us achieving enlightenment quickly, and that depends on how much we train our mind in the two bodhicittas, absolute and relative bodhicitta, the cause of enlightenment. So to receive this depends on understanding the meditation techniques.

I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings therefore I am going to listen to the teaching on the practice of the bodhicitta. Then, listen with this motivation.

The part of the subject where I stopped last time that is the stanza:

“In short both, directly and indirectly do I offer all the benefits and happiness to all my mothers. I will take upon myself, all their harm and suffering.”

It is necessary to cultivate the motivation of the bodhicitta, in order to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings. I am therefore going to listen to the oral teachings, the training the thought of enlightenment which is essence of the graduated path to enlightenment.

The last benefit of the bodhicitta is quickly attaining enlightenment. If you have actualized bodhicitta, then without taking much time, it is very quick to actualize the rest of the path. Once you have laid the foundation of the realization of bodhicitta, then the rest of the whole path, even the Vajrayana path, can be actualized very quickly without many hindrances. In that, you attain enlightenment quickly.

One reason why you can attain enlightenment quickly by having bodhicitta is because with bodhicitta, every action of body, speech, and mind is always without the self-cherishing thought; it is always dedicated for other sentient beings, it always becomes work for other sentient beings, without much effort. All of daily-life's actions—eating, eating, sleeping, talking—becomes work for other sentient beings. Because of that, after bodhicitta is actualized, you never do meaningless actions, actions that don't benefit other sentient beings, that don't benefit yourself, that harm. Meaningless actions become much less.

Any action that is done with this realization, without needing much effort, becomes virtue, it always becomes method to create infinite merit and to purify so many obscurations, negative karma. That's why having bodhicitta, it is very quick to attain enlightenment.

It also makes the Vajrayana path the profound quick path to attain enlightenment in just in one short life, even in the next life. Without having actualized bodhicitta, then even if you practice the Vajrayana path for a hundred eons, you can never attain enlightenment. Without having actualized bodhicitta it's impossible. By taking initiations and practicing the Vajrayana path, even if you have the complete understanding of the whole Vajrayana teaching, there's nothing that you don't know about the quick path, the Vajrayana Path, but since there is no bodhicitta, it is impossible to attain enlightenment.

Without mind training in bodhicitta, such as the relative bodhicitta, the precious thought of enlightenment and right view, emptiness, even if you practice the yoga method, [able to control the nadis and chakras] it is possible you could be born in the lower realms, such as the animal realm, and even in the naraka realm. It is possible that it can become the cause to be born in the lower realms if you do not train the mind in this principle path, but by just being hung up on what's called yoga practice, without knowing how to practice the graduated path.

So this is just a very brief description—like a tiny seed—of the benefits of bodhicitta in order to train our mind in this precious thought of enlightenment, bodhicitta.

## BODHICITTA: THE SEVEN POINTS OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

In this course the subject of the teachings we will debate is the seven-points of cause and effect of thought transformation. The practice of thought transformation has been handed down, came from Lama Serlingpa. There are two ways of presenting the teachings, one is according to Lama Tsongkhapa, who is the embodiment of the buddha of wisdom, called Manjushri. Lama Tsongkhapa, the one who has completed the whole path the whole gradual path to enlightenment, who has destroyed the wrong conceptions that people had about the practice of the Buddhadharma. Lama Tsongkhapa, after he took birth in that time, he completely spread the pure teachings, with much detailed explanation. Teachings were not so clearly explained before, but he made them very clear, such as teachings on the absolute nature of things. Things that were not so clearly explained before, not in much detail, he made clear. He completely destroyed people's misconceptions and spread the pure teachings, not only the teachings on shunyata, but also the Vajrayana teachings, which had not been clearly explained before, not in so much detail. He gave certain practices of the Vajrayana path, such as obtaining the illusory body.

After he took birth in Tibet, in his life, Lama Tsongkhapa made very clear explanations on the Vajrayana practice, the profound and quick path to enlightenment, just for a simple idea of what Vajrayana is.

As I said, there are two ways of presenting the seven-points of cause and effect, one according to Lama Tsongkhapa and the other by the highly realized bodhisattva called Geshe Chekawa. This time, I present the teaching on the basis of the commentary given by to Lama Tsongkhapa. It will take much time, it will exceed a month if I go through the commentary in detail, as it is here, so I'll just go through the main points. It wouldn't be an exact translation of the whole commentary given by Lama Tsongkhapa.

This is from the root text, it is good to write down the words of the root text:

The essence of the advice nectar has been handed down from Serlingpa.

These two verses show the qualities of the teaching, the particular preeminent qualities of this teaching. There are many teachings but one specifically mentions the qualities of this teaching on the seven points of thought transformation in order for devotion to arise to the oral teaching. It talks of the general qualities of the teaching and the particular qualities, the preeminent qualities of the teachings, in order for devotion to arise to the oral teaching, and it explains the stories of the lineage lamas of this oral teaching, in order to show the pure reference.

The normal title of the teachings is “The Oral Teaching for Training the Precious Thought of Enlightenment, the Great Mahayana Thought Training that Has Been Handed Down from Ear to Ear.”

This is an extremely important, a very precious teaching. It has been handed down from ear to ear. These teachings are sometimes called thought training and sometimes thought transformation. “From ear to ear” means that this teaching is so profound, so precious that in former times, the lineage lamas did not give it in public. The teaching was only given privately from one disciple to another disciple. And some lineage lamas would even only teach it in a private place where there were no other people.

So now, just to talk about the details of the commentary to this verse. Generally, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has shown 84,000 teachings as the remedy to the 84,000 delusions. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gave all these

teachings in three different places, in three different sermons, which are called the three turning of the Dharma wheel.

Firstly, what is totally contained in this subject is the method to completely finish, completely cease the delusion of the I-grasping ignorance. Not only that, it contains the whole method, the whole path to develop the mind, taking the burden of the work for other sentient beings. It contains the path, the method to develop the mind which takes the burden the work for other sentient beings—not forced but voluntarily, with freedom, the path which develops the mind to take the burden, the work for other sentient beings, freely.

So this contains the method which completely destroys the delusion of the I-grasping ignorance, and the three baskets, three divisions of teachings of the Hinayana path, which explains the gradual Hinayana path to attain nirvana, the blissful state of peace for oneself.

The method developing the mind taking the burden of work for other sentient beings, the subject it talks about is the Mahayana path, the resultant enlightenment, and the causal Mahayana path And also the Mahayana Sutra teachings. There are two different types of teachings, Sutra and Mantrayana. What you call Vajrayana is included in the Mantrayana. Here in this method is contained the teaching, the Mahayana Sutra and Mantrayana teachings. So this is all that is explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

Here, the main teaching is the method for the fortunate one to attain enlightenment, the state of the omniscient mind. The oral teaching on transforming the mind in the precious thought of enlightenment, which is the goal to enter into the great vehicle, Mahayana. All the oral teachings to transform the mind into the precious thought of enlightenment, all explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, have traditionally been presented in three different ways, three individual traditional ways by the different great expounders, great propagators, who have completely experienced the whole path, and who have clearly expounded the different practices of transforming the mind in the thought of enlightenment.

All these teachings immediately give the cessation of suffering, nirvana, by completely destroying the disease, the 84,000 delusions, also by completely destroying sufferings such as rebirth, old age, sickness and death and many others, which arise from the 84,000 delusions. Therefore, this is the best, the most sublime, the principal or the most holy. From those methods, the 84,000 teachings are the nectar which immediately destroys the root, the 84,000 delusions and destroying completely even the results, the sufferings, old age, sickness, death and many others that arise from the 84,000 delusions. So these 84,000 teachings are nectar. Nectar is to cure disease or to pacify suffering. So the 84,000 teachings, as they benefit like this, are nectar.

But this Mahayana thought training is the best nectar, is the sublime one, the principle one, the most holy nectar from those other nectars, the 84,000 teachings.

[Dedications]

## THE ESSENCE OF ADVICE NECTAR

The arhats and higher bodhisattvas, who have completely removed all the gross delusions, the disturbing negative thoughts, even the seed of it, don't die under the control of delusions and karma. Put it this way, we get born and we die without any freedom, without choice. Under the control of delusion and karma we get sick and become old, we die and get reborn, without choice.

But arhats and those higher bodhisattvas who have reached the higher of the ten levels have completely removed disturbing negative thoughts, and have no karma that is produced by delusion, but even so, they need

to exert mental effort during the death transformation. Why there is still mental effort? Because the *she-dup*, their subtle obscurations, the obscuration to full knowledge, has still not been purified. The subtle obscurations are still not purified, not finished. When at death they transfer their consciousness to a different aspect, a different body to work for other sentient beings, their work still depends on the mental effort, because the subtle obscuration, *she-dup*, is not purified.

But when the subtle obscuration is completely purified, then there is no need for effort to work for other sentient beings with your body, speech and mind. There is no need for motivation, like before doing action, “I must do this.” Before you do action, you have to think, then you do the action. But when the subtle obscuration, the obscuration to full knowledge, is completely purified then at that time that being doesn’t does not depend on mental effort to work for other sentient beings with his holy body, holy speech and holy mind.

That’s why for the buddhas to work for other sentient beings there is no mental effort. It is not that first they have to have the motivation to give teaching or whatever, transforming his holy body into different aspect. There is no mental effort, just like when the sun rises, there is a reflection of the sun on the water—on the ocean, the lakes on all the bodies of water—without any effort from the sun. Wherever there is water, the sun’s reflection automatically appears, thousands and thousands and thousands of reflections appearing on the water, but it does not depend on effort; it does not depend on the sun’s motivation, “Oh, I must reflect.” [GL] “In all this water, I must reflect.” Before it rises, the sun cultivate the motivation and then rises.

Just like this, having completely removed all the subtle obscurations, the dualistic mind, how the buddha works for others does not depend on effort. The whole work for sentient beings is done effortlessly.

What the Hinayana path can offer is release from all the samsaric suffering, by completing the whole Hinayana path. But if one actualizes this thought of enlightenment, which is the highest and develops the mind in the whole Mahayana path, what it gives is it makes to completely finish the unimaginable change, the death transference, that which is not purified, that which is not finished, that which is not finished, by the higher bodhisattvas who are living the pure level and the arhats. And it gives immediately enlightenment or the omniscient mind.

“So therefore, relating to the teaching, among the nectar, which gives the undying state, the essence, the principle, the best, that is the precious thought of enlightenment.”

This is the commentary to that verse, *The Essence of Advice Nectar*, handed down from Lama Serlingpa.

In the Hinayana path, all those other teachings, generally what it is advising, it is nectar because it cultivate relief from all samsaric suffering. With *The Essence of Advice Nectar*, from that advice nectar, the essence is what? The essence is the precious thought of enlightenment, bodhicitta.

All the oral teachings of training the mind in bodhicitta, the thought of enlightenment, were originally explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha then handed down to Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom and Maitreya Buddha. From Manjushri, the oral teachings of this thought training were handed down to Nagarjuna, one the most famous Mahayana propagators who attained enlightenment in one life by completing the whole Vajrayana path. From Maitreya Buddha the oral teaching of thought training were handed down to the great pandit Asanga. From there, the teaching have been handed down to many other Indian pandits.

Then, the different traditions that came from those highly realized propagators who made new commentaries, amplifying them, and then all the three different traditions of teachings came from them. From Lama Serlingpa

the great bodhisattva Atisha received the whole oral teachings on the thought training, training the thought of enlightenment. It is just like whatever nectar is in one pot is completely transferred to another pot. Whatever oral teachings on training the mind in the thought of enlightenment Lama Serlingpa received, he passed on to his disciple, the great bodhisattva, Atisha.

I think I'll stop here.

### THE SEVEN POINT OF CAUSE AND EFFECT: EQUANIMITY

One method of generating bodhicitta is through the meditation called the seven oral teachings of the Mahayana Cause and Effect.

According to this process, the first thing you need to address is partiality. Now, when you see a friend attachment arises and when you see an enemy aversion arises. When you see beauty there is attachment, and ugliness causes aversion, it is seen as undesirable. When you see a stranger, an indifferent person, an indifferent thought arises, also from that ignorance arises.

So, the first step in this process of the seven point of cause and effect is to equalize all sentient beings. Normally we discriminate between sentient beings based on the help and harm that they give us. This one helps me so he is a friend, this one harms me so he is an enemy, this one neither helps nor harms so we just ignore him. That is unrealistic, because our friend has not always been our friend and the same with our enemy. In previous lives if not this life our friend has harmed us countless times and our enemy has helped us countless times and every stranger has done both countless times. It's impossible to discriminate, thinking that over countless previous lives this one has been of more help than the that one.

In that all beings have given us help and harm countless times over our infinite lives and so to discriminate now is wrong. Therefore, we need to equalize the feelings we have towards others. We can't actually make all beings equal, we can't go around to every beings and ask, "Please be equal" but we can equalize the feeling we have towards them. We can lose the discrimination we now feel, the attachment for some and the anger for others.

When you see all sentient beings as equal through this meditation, then that realization brings so much peace in the mind; it destroys the uptight, painful mind, the painful mind that clings to the friend and the painful suffering mind of anger that we feel towards an enemy. These emotions we felt before this meditation are gone, disappeared. Even before you gain actual realizations with this meditation, just contemplating the reasons, thinking about how this is happening in our mind, brings great calmness in the mind.

Even from very beginning, visualizing the enemy you dislike and the friend you are incredibly attached to, after you have equalized friend and enemy, the very moment, that uncomfortable feeling, that painful feeling, that uptight, unhappy mind dissolves. It feels like a lump of metal, a rock in the heart, but when you equalize, it feels like this has gone. Immediately, the mind becomes so comfortable and so relaxed. The equilibrium meditation means cutting off attachment and anger, which discriminates one person as friend and one as enemy, these minds that make your life unhappy, that bring all the ups and downs, all the time. After you have actualized this meditation, it is very difficult for anger and attachment to arise.

With this realization, even if somebody acts very badly towards you, harming you, cheating you, or conversely if somebody does everything possible to win your favor, by giving you incredible presents and flattering you greatly, your mind doesn't get confused at all. There are no ups or downs, no matter how people treat you. Enemy and friend are equal and the mind is so happy.

## THE SEVEN POINT OF CAUSE AND EFFECT: ALL SENTIENT BEINGS HAVE BEEN OUR MOTHER AND INCREDIBLY KIND

After you have equalized all the sentient beings, you should check up on what you think of your mother. Look at all your family and relatives and think which one you are closest to. If you asked most people whether they felt closer to their mother or father, most of them would answer they like their mother best. This is why this next part of the seven-point meditation focuses on the mother. Because we are closest to our mother, we now try to see that all sentient beings have been our mother.

By contemplating how [because you have had infinite lives] all sentient beings have been your mother, again and again. This is what you need to understand fully here. This is what you need to meditate on. Perhaps you didn't know your mother very well—maybe she died when you were very young—or you had difficulties with her. In that case, you can think of somebody who was incredibly kind to you, such as your father or the relative who raised you, and think on them, rather than the mother.

Think of how your mother, or this other person, has benefitted you so much. They have been unbelievably kind to you. Try to feel the wonderfully warm feeling you have for your mother, and they transfer that to every other sentient being, because they too have been extremely kind to you.

## THE SEVEN POINT OF CAUSE AND EFFECT: THE KINDNESS OF THE MOTHER

After remembering the kindness of the mother, the next step is wishing to repay that kindness. So, the steps of the meditation are first to know that all sentient beings have been your mother, then to remember their great kindness and then to wish to repay that kindness.

Even if you do this meditation effectively, at first there will be a big difference in meditation and out of meditation. Perhaps, because you can see all sentient beings as your mother and as incredibly kind, they look very beautiful to you. But when you don't meditate, you forget that, you don't remember that they have been your mother and their kindness and all these things and so you don't constantly see the heart-felt beauty of all sentient beings.

I think I'll stop here.

At this time, normally, we have been doing the graduated training of the meditation on bodhicitta, starting with, the equilibrium meditation, then see all beings as the mother, their kindness and remembering the kindness. Usually the explanations is done in that way, but according to the practitioner of high intelligence, the great bodhisattva Shantideva has explained another method in his teaching [called equalizing and exchanging oneself with others]. This is one way how to see all the sentient beings in beauty, but this basic meditation will come with those other techniques according to Shantideva's teaching.

Even a sentient being who we have benefitted but who has returned that benefit by harming us, in return we should meditate on great compassion. The holy beings of the world repaid negative actions with good actions in return.

What it is saying here is that sentient being whom we benefited so much whom we gave our home to him for free, all his food is free, we worked very hard for him all our life and let him enjoy our property, he has benefited so much from us and we expect to receive help in return. But the person is in prison, and he owes so much money. He needs billion dollars, which we lend him, thinking for sure this person will never forget my

kindness. He will repay all my kindness. We expect to receive help or reputation or things like that from that person. However, in return, without benefiting us, he even gives us harm in return for receiving help from us. Without retaliating against the harm, what we should do is meditate on great compassion. Meditate on great compassion, great compassion for him, that sentient being.

As I explained before, what it is saying here, the ordinary beings who do not know the Mahayana thought training, they don't know how to deal with it, they don't know how to make their life happy, they have no method, so they retaliate with harm, by harming. But the holy beings in the world, they who realize the sentient beings are the field from where Buddha is born, from where they can receive enlightenment so he only return good things, good actions, he repays only good things, good actions in return of the harmful, the bad actions, the harms that is given by other sentient beings.

So I think I'll stop here.

## LECTURE 14

### EQUALIZING AND EXCHANGING SELF AND OTHERS

The actual body, the training on the thought of enlightenment, the graduated training of the mind in bodhicitta, has both relative bodhicitta and absolute bodhicitta. When explaining the graduated training in the thought of the relative bodhicitta, the thought of enlightenment, relative bodhicitta, and the oral teachings on it, there are branches. The actual oral teaching training on the thought of enlightenment has two things: the graduated training in the thought of enlightenment seeking the work for others and graduated training in the thought of enlightenment seeking enlightenment.

The first one is the graduate training in the thought of enlightenment seeking the work for others. The second one is the graduated training in the thought of enlightenment seeking enlightenment.

The graduated training in the thought of enlightenment seeking the work of others has two things: exchanging oneself with others by thinking of the shortcomings [of self-cherishing] and the benefits [of cherishing others], then actually training in the thought of enlightenment seeking the work of others.

The teachings about the training in the thought of enlightenment that is shown by the great propagators such as Nagarjuna and Asanga show these two things: seeking the work for others and seeking enlightenment. First, you must see the other sentient beings, for whom you work, you should feel beloved, kind-hearted towards them. Just like when you see your dearest friend, who is more important than anything else in the world, or the son who loves his mother so much, when you see that friend or your beloved mother, she seems to be so beautiful to you, even though maybe she isn't so physically beautiful—maybe a nose missing or no cheeks, or blind, missing an arm, full of wrinkles, extremely thin—nothing but bone—but to the son who only sees the kindness of the mother, who loves his mother very much, she appears very beautiful, and that's how we should see all sentient beings. We should see the sentient beings for whom we work as extremely beautiful. We should feel for them like a mother feels towards her beloved baby, heart-felt in beauty. There are two ways to meditate in this.

This part of the text comes after the meditations which are preparatory, the different levels of practice, which lead to bodhicitta.

Before in the course we talked about the shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought and benefits of cherishing others. Then after that the outline says “it is worthwhile to exchange others with others.” First we see that it is possible to exchange oneself with others and then the next outline is actually exchanging oneself with others.

Then after that, there is this special practice called *tong-len*. This is very a powerful, practical practice to generate and increase compassion and great love.

The practice is like this. By clearly visualizing the object of compassion, the practice of taking other sentient beings’ sufferings is done. Then, by clearly visualizing the object of great love, the practice of dedicating one’s body, possession and merits to other sentient beings is done. This meditation practice has incredible benefits. After describing the actual practice, how to do it then according to time, I will talk a little about the experience of other beings who actually practice *tong-len* and the benefits they have received.

## THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: THE SHORTCOMINGS OF SELF-CHERISHING

In the graduate training on the thought of enlightenment, according to Shantideva’s teaching, you need to understand the shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought and the benefits of cherishing others. Also to understand that the self-cherishing thought is what has to be renounced and cherishing others is directly what has to be practiced, has to be achieved. According to the root text:

Put all the blame on one.

This quotation is from *Entering the Path to Enlightenment* by Shantideva. This is very useful to remember. It explains the whole thing, all the harm we experience in life, all the dangers we experience in life, everything we experience in the world—where it all came from. And also the harm that other sentient beings experience in the world—where it came from. Usually we question where fear comes from. Why are people afraid? Because they dislike fear, people study it and try to find the cause, but it is this.

All the fear we experience in our life, all the fear other people, the sentient beings in this world experience, every single suffering we experience in our lives—the whole thing comes from grasping the I. Therefore there is no greater devil than this. This is the real devil. This is the real devil and this is the real enemy. There is no enemy worse than this, there is no greater devil than this.

Why it’s called a devil, I’m not sure. [GL] I think devil is one who harms your happiness, who never gives help, who misleads you, who misguides your life, who cheats you, who interferes with your life, who causes a shortage of life. Ordinary people point to an external devil outside, another sentient being who only gives harm and who never benefits. But Shantideva says that there is no greater devil than this, the self-cherishing thought.

What benefit can this great devil offer me?

Which implies not one single benefit to yourself or your happiness, not one single benefit from the great devil, the self-cherishing thought. It gives only harm to oneself.

Grasping, ignorance, all the delusions, all the disturbing negative thoughts arise from the self-cherishing thought. The principal cause of these delusions is ignorance grasping the I, and also the self-cherishing thought. Their harm is real harm, their harm to yourself is the real harm. That is much more harmful than the harms given by other sentient beings. The harm that is given by the delusions is very deep harm. The harm received from other sentient beings we recognize as the enemy is nothing compared to this. The length of time others have been harming us is nothing compared to the length of time the self-cherishing thought has been harming us.

The disturbing negative thought, self-cherishing thought, has been giving you harm to us since beginningless previous lifetimes. As the continuity of our previous lives is beginningless, so are the disturbing negative thoughts, which are principally caused by the ignorance grasping the I, the self-cherishing thought. It is the principal, the king of the disturbing negative thoughts. From beginningless previous lives they have been dwelling in our mind; our mind has been their home, it has been the home of the disturbing negative thoughts, the delusions and the principal one, the ignorance grasping the I, and the self-cherishing thought. Our mind has been their home, our heart has been their home, and they have been dwelling in our heart from the beginningless previous lifetimes. Constantly they have been giving harm to oneself. In all those numberless previous lives they have been torturing oneself.

Water and fire can sometimes be dangerous, but they also help. Without fire and water there is no way to live, even though they can be extremely dangerous sometimes. This is the same with sentient beings. People who we recognize as enemy, might temporarily give us harm, but even so, we receive more help from them than harm. We call this person an enemy, but if we examine it we will see we receive more help than harm from them. In general, sentient beings are more helpful than harmful, and if we use the skillful method of thought transformation, we can use criticism to transform our mind in to positive ones, and in that way even the enemies who criticize us are helping us. Their criticism can show us our mistakes, like holding a mirror up to us so we can see our face. This is the mirror of your mind. When we look into a mirror we see our face, our nose, whether it is straight or not, [GL RL] whether we need an operation to make it straight.

By being criticized we can see our mistakes and learn to correct them. We have the opportunity to change our personality, our behavior, our actions. Therefore, there is no point in getting angry at this object, because all it is doing is showing us what we are, holding up a mirror so we can see ourselves. If we look in a mirror and see there is something wrong with our body, we don't break the mirror! [GL RL] It is useful to see this in order to be able to do something about what is wrong. If we break the mirror, we can't correct whatever is wrong and we just have to go out to the market and buy a new mirror.

So actually, just like this example, the enemy is similar in that he helps us see our own mind, whether we are miserly or attached, whatever. You might think you have no attachment. This is common for young people to think. They say they have no ego, even though there it is, as big as Mount Meru. They think that just by saying they don't have an ego, that makes it non-existent.

When something dangerous happens, it makes you to discover your own mind, it gives you the chance to understand it. You can see what state your mind is in. You say you don't have attachment, but when a precious object is stolen, then you can easily see how much attachment you really do have. If you watch your mind, if you are skillful, things that harm are in fact much more helpful in transforming the mind, because they show us what we need to work on.

We receive help from even our enemies, but we don't receive one single piece of help from the self-cherishing thought, not one single benefit. Throughout our beginningless lives it has not brought us one single benefit, only harm. By constantly dwelling in our heart it has caused us to suffering with sentient beings and non-sentient beings alike.

This is how harmful it is. If we follow it for even a minute, it causes us to create negative karma. The self-cherishing thought uses us as its servant, and it has been since beginningless time, obliging us to suffer. Forcing us to create negative karma, it makes us experience nothing but suffering, now and forever in the future.

The self-cherishing thought makes us create immoral actions, such as killing, where even on result is terrible, and even if we are reborn as a human being, we do the action of killing again, because of the previous habit. Then we again have to experience the four suffering results. Even if we do manage to attain another human body, we are forced to repeat the action again and again, due to the self-cherishing thought. With that we are making preparation for a future life of great suffering and this goes on and on and on, all the time, in a constant circle. The negative karma will cause us to create more negative karma and that will increase our delusions, bringing us so much suffering.

So, you see how harmful it is to follow this mind, to become a servant, working only for the disturbing negative karma, the self-cherishing thought. Instead of receiving the benefits it promises, we receive only harm—not only in this life but in all future lives. Following it for just one minute, we become its servant and are forced to create negative karma. So, you see harmful it is.

The great bodhisattva Shantideva said in his teaching,

The enemy that abides in my heart constantly becomes the cause for all the groups of harmful minds and makes them increase constantly. As long as it abides in my heart, how can I be happy and live in samsara without fear?

What he says is extremely effective for the mind. It means as I have been disturbed like this from previous lifetimes how incredible this disturbing negative thought, the self-cherishing thought has been at giving me harm; it has constantly been my enemy. This is where the root of all our problems come from, all the harm we have received and all the harm we do others. So, therefore, how can we ever be happy in samsara without fear, when this is the cause?

It is like the person who knows there is poison in the food, even if it looks very delicious, very beautifully decorated—even if it is like a pizza and has many raisins and nuts, [GL] good shape, good color. Without wasting a second you want to have a bit. [GL RL] One of the monks when he was a young child in England, if his parents gave him ice cream with a cherry on top he would always eat the cherry the very first thing then the ice cream, in case he might die before he could get to it. He didn't want to waste the cherry. Mentioning the pizza reminded me. It's interesting, isn't it? [GL]

It's a small red fruit, you know, it doesn't make a difference whether you get it or not. Not getting this small red thing doesn't mean you're going to die. But he used to think like this. It is a good example. Even for meaningless things, people think like this, so why not meaningful things, actions. Why not try to do meaningful actions before doing the meaningless actions, in case you might be dead, in case death happens before you can do something meaningful.

So, if there is poison in the pizza then no matter how delicious it is, once you know there is poison, then rather than be happy with it, you will only have fear of it. You won't be happy with it. Likewise, as long as there are disturbing negative thoughts, the principal one being the ignorance, grasping I—as long as this delusion is living in your heart, then you are always living in the samsara. There is no way to be out of samsara as long as you let delusions, the disturbing negative thoughts, live in your heart. As long as you keep it, there is no way that you can be free from samsara. As long as you keep delusions in your heart, you continuously get born in samsara, and these disturbing negative thoughts, this self-cherishing thought, this ignorance, grasping the I, makes you suffer in samsara.

That's what great Bodhisattva Shantideva is saying in the last verse, "how can I be happy, without fear, while I am in samsara?"

For example, with the self-cherishing thought and those other disturbing negative thoughts living in your heart, they make you create negative karma to be born in the human samsara. You have been obliged to create the karma in a past life to be reborn in this human samsara, to take this samsaric body, in this life. And after taking this human samsara then you experience so many problems, thousands and thousands of various problems in this life, from since you were born until death. With this human samsara, with this mind and body. That's how the self-cherishing thought and disturbing negative thoughts forces you to be born in samsara and obliges you to experience all the problems such as rebirth, old age, all the sicknesses and death, as well as so many other problems within this samsara.

So, I think I'll stop here.

This meditation is on the shortcomings of self-cherishing thought but there is also a very good teaching on the shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought called *The Thought Training: The Wheel of the Sharp Weapons*. The Wheel of the Sharp Weapons has spokes which are swords which like in previous times—also maybe using certain mantra powers—cut and destroy the interferers; they destroy the enemy. I heard that if a person wishes, as this wheel turns it can cut off the enemy's neck.

This is the example. Thought transformation is so powerful and quick at destroying the deadly self-cherishing thought from where the whole of samsaric suffering comes. This text is very good, the way it explains karma. We can understand karma well through its explanation. There are many examples of karma and it makes you see the shortcomings of self-cherishing thought and the harm it does.

[We are human beings but we are still in human samsara. We should not] be judged to be human just because of the shape of the body. Just because of the shape of the body, that being is called "human" but from a Dharma point of view, a human being is somebody who makes preparation for the happiness of future lives. Non-human being such as animals cannot do this; with such a body they have no capability to make preparation for the happiness of future lives.

So, actually I am born as human being, I am recognized as human being, but if I didn't do the work, even though I have received the name "human being," I haven't done the work.

Maybe, pipi time.

#### SHORTCOMINGS OF THE SELF-CHERISHING THOUGHT: THE FOUR SUFFERING RESULTS

According to the other technique, before working for other sentient beings, the first thing is trying to see, trying to see the other sentient beings in beauty. According to thought training, what comes first is the meditation on the shortcomings of self-cherishing thought.

First, remember again, remember again the four types of sufferings of each negative karma of the ten immoral actions.

Then think, those four things, what we have experienced in this life, are the results of, what we can remember, are all caused by the self-cherishing thought. How the sufferings are given to me by the self-cherishing thought, how the self-cherishing thought obliges me to experience suffering.

In previous lives or in this life, with the self-cherishing thought, we who experience these problems, we created the negative karma with self-cherishing thought. With the self-cherishing thought, thinking of my own happiness, for my own happiness, I *want* this, for my own happiness, we produced negative karma. So, because of that negative karma, that what is collected, the result is the suffering result we experienced. So that's how the self-cherishing thought obliges us, tortures us, tortures us, it obliges us to experience all these problems.

So first meditate like this, meditate on the four results of the ten immoral actions, then if there's still time, meditate, remember all other problems in your life, all the problems you experienced each year, with people, with yourself. Then think how it is caused by self-cherishing thought, try to realize, not just an intellectual understanding, that is not enough. We must realize this, we must feel it. In order to destroy the self-cherishing thought, we must realize this, we must realize the shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought, all the harms that the self-cherishing thought has given us, so far, from beginningless previous lifetimes, this we should recognize, we should feel it, we should realize. In that way we get the courage, in that way, within our mind, we can face the self-cherishing. Our mind is strengthened; it gets strength so that we can control the self-cherishing thought. Then all other problems, what we remember in this year and the other years, how that is caused by self-cherishing thought. Like this, you check. That is the way to meditate.

[Dedication prayer]

#### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: SELF-CHERISHING, THE EVIL BUTCHER

This is part of the subject is training the mind in the thought of enlightenment. There are two bodhicittas, absolute and relative bodhicitta, and this is training the mind in the thought of enlightenment, relative bodhicitta. First, the meditation technique is to see sentient beings for whom you work in aspect of the deity. Then, you meditate on the shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought and the benefit of cherishing others and understanding that what has to be avoided is the self-cherishing thought, what is to be practiced is cherishing others.

The self-cherishing thought is the mind that renounces other sentient beings, from whom you receive all your own happiness and perfections, and to cherish the self from where all suffering arises. This self-cherishing thought is derived from the unknowing mind, ignorance. This self-cherishing thought is like an evil butcher who rips the heart out of life with his sharp weapons. Wherever the root of life is, the heart, or if you think of it as the brain—it doesn't matter—this evil butcher uses his sharp knife to cut it out. The self-cherishing thought makes you careless, not respecting what is virtue and thoughtlessly doing negative actions. It doesn't care at all about the root of the temporal happiness and ultimate happiness, nirvana and enlightenment.

The root is avoiding negative karma and collecting the good karma. This is like the heart, the root of temporal happiness, the root of ultimate happiness, nirvana and enlightenment. It is like the heart. If the person's heart is taken out while he is living, there is no root of life. This self-cherishing thought destroys the root. It doesn't care whether an action is negative karma and the good karma; it doesn't care. Because it doesn't care, that gives rise heresy, to wrong view. Wrong view is such as thinking there is no such thing as reincarnation or from good actions you receive a good result, happiness, and from negative action you experience suffering.

Heresy is like the sharp weapon that the self-cherishing thought uses to cut off the root of the temporal and ultimate happiness. So, the self-cherishing thought is the worst; it is the most evil butcher. If an outside person comes and rips out your heart—I'm talking about the physical heart here, not the mental heart—that alone can't disturb you from receiving happiness in your future life, and all temporal and ultimate happiness. Even you died in such condition, if you haven't followed the self-cherishing thought then you wouldn't create negative karma,

so you would definitely attain a better rebirth and happiness in future lives, as well as being able to attain ultimate happiness. This will happen, even if the condition that is normally called an “enemy” gives you harm by cutting your heart to pieces with a sharp weapon, causing your death. That enemy can’t cause you any suffering at all in your future life.

What causes suffering in your future life, what blocked you from attaining a rebirth as a happy transmigratory being, is not the enemy who killed you but the self-cherishing thought, this mind that makes you careless with karma, not thinking about creating good karma and thoughtlessly creating negative karma. By holding the sharp weapon of heresy, of wrong view, it completely cuts off the root of all temporal and ultimate happiness. This is the real evil butcher. This is nothing more evil than this.

The self-cherishing thought is also like the robber who steals the crops growing in the field. It steals all your enjoyment, the crops, on which your life depends. The self-cherishing thought is just like the robber carrying a big sack, putting all the crops in the sack and then taking them away so there is nothing left for you to enjoy. The self-cherishing thought is the real robber, because it completely robs you of all enjoyments, carrying them off in the big sack of the three poisonous minds, ignorance, anger, attachment. It completely takes away the crops of your virtue, leaving nothing for you to enjoy.

Because the self-cherishing thought’s only concern is for your own happiness, it thinks “I am more important than others, than any other sentient being. My happiness the most important than any other sentient beings’ happiness.” Because of that, in taking care of yourself at the cost of others, ignorance arises, and from ignorance attachment arises. Then, because of this, anger also rises. The self-cherishing thought causes anger to arise, which completely destroys any undedicated merit, leaving no virtuous thoughts at all. Not the slightest thing is left for you to enjoy as the result the happiness. Not the slightest virtue is left.

Therefore, this self-cherishing thought is the root, the real robber, the worst robber than, much worse than any physical robber. Let’s say that one night while you are comfortably sleeping, a hundred robbers come and completely strip all your crops so that not even one stalk of your crops is left. Everything is completely taken away. But even if they do this, and also take every material possession you own in the world, if you still have your virtue, if you can still refrain from anger, then you still have the root of all temporal and ultimate happiness. Your virtue is still there. Your dedicated and undedicated merit is still there; it’s not lost.

Only if you follow the self-cherishing thought and, concerned only with your own happiness it lets anger arise, then your virtue is destroyed. Then you lose the root of all your future happiness. As the anger arises, the undedicated merits are disturbed and then it postpones the chance of experiencing the result of happiness quickly, for many hundred years or thousand years, even for eons. The undedicated merit completely gets destroyed. Therefore, the self-cherishing thought is the *real* worst robber. We can really recognize this if we check.

The self-cherishing thought living in your heart is what invites all harm in—all the harm that humans and non-humans, such as animals or spirits, do you, as well as the harm from fire, water, and so forth. Like in the cities in the West such as New York, all day and all night there are those trucks that make so much noise, what are they called?—fire engines, driving here and there all the time, making so much noise. There is always the danger of fire. You can see this all the time on television—people being killed, shops or big hotels burning down. So, there is the danger of fire, the danger of non-living things such as floods, all the time. In the East, there is always the danger of floods, where so many thousands of people are killed or become homeless. There is also the danger of earthquakes and many things like that, such as cyclones and typhoons.

One time when we were in Hong Kong, people were talking about a typhoon coming, and although in the end we didn't experience it, they were so scared with the typhoon alert. It was so difficult to travel, with all the buses packed as people tried to leave their offices to get home, although I don't know the difference between how safe an office or a house is. There were big pictures of the typhoon coming, like the visualization of the merit field, with Lama Tsongkhapa in the center and the many familiar deities you have received teachings from. It was kind of shock, it was seen without expecting it. However, I think the weather people made a mistake that night, the people, the people who figured out there would be a typhoon, because it never came.

The self-cherishing thought also invites various forms of spirit harm—epidemic disease, paralysis, sudden death, diseases that block the speech, things that make a person crazy and so forth—as well as harm given by other human beings.

When we receive harm from a mosquito, that is due to the self-cherishing thought. Some people never get bitten by mosquitoes, even if they are in the same room as other people who are getting bitten all over. Even if that other person is under a net, he will still get bitten, whereas the other person is exposed but won't. And the same thing with bed bugs and jumping fleas. One person can be covered with bites and another completely free from them. He goes out and gets bitten; he comes back in and gets bitten. All this is the mistake of following the self-cherishing thought. The self-cherishing thought which lives in our heart invites all harm. This is the source of all our problems. With the self-cherishing thought, thinking only of our own happiness and renouncing others. In previous lives we, in a previous life also we were mosquitoes, we were fleas, we were those different types of bugs such as lice, and at that time we only had concern for our own happiness, biting other sentient beings for our own happiness.

It is like the animals we use to get meat from to eat. Or the people who feed us. We receive so much enjoyment from them; we are in their debt, and so if we don't repay them in some way, it is like a pollution in our mind. Not paying back that kindness because of self-concern is a pollution; it creates obscurations and because of that we receive harm, such as being bitten and having tiny worms eating into us. This is the result of previous karma that was collected with the self-cherishing thought, actualizing in this way.

There have been many examples of people experiencing harm like this. It happened in India and also in Tibet. In India during Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's time, there was a teacher with many followers, many disciples, who made so many offerings to him which he did not pay back. Because of that, he received pollution and so was reborn in a lake somewhere in Bodhgaya as an animal—I don't exactly remember name—full of worms, attacking it completely and biting it all over. I think this karma story comes from the time Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was in the nirmanakaya aspect in India.

It also happened one time in Tibet. A lama, a teacher didn't purify the self-cherishing mind from the many offerings made by his disciples—he did not pay them back—and so, because of the pollution he received, he was reborn in a stream as that animal they have in the big hotels, you know, the ones where the person with a tall white hat and gloves takes them and puts them live into a boiling pot. What are they called? [Student tells.] Lobster. Are you sure it is a lobster? It's sort of red and round. A crab! That's it. He was born as a crab, with his body full of worms, eating him. Another lama who has psychic powers was able to see this crab in a small waterfall, and he could see the karma involved in its rebirth.

I think I'll stop here.

It is also good to maybe to tell you about what happened one time in Tibet. There was a lama who has two benefactors who offered him so much milk. Because he didn't repay them in any way, after he died he was

reborn as their cow—actually I'm not sure if it was a cow or a dzo—who gave them so much milk. One day, the cow fell into a creek and drowned and the family pulled it out and cut the body up for meat. When they did they saw on one of the bones we inscribed the words, “With this milk and meat I have repaid my debt.” [GL RL]

When there is pollution like this, if you eat with a self-cherishing thought, without the thought to repay the kindness of the sentient being who has provided your food, but just eat for your own enjoyment, then there will certainly be suffering in your future life, such as being attacked by others or having a body full of worms and so forth. If you eat with the motivation of bodhicitta, however, that pollution doesn't happen, because you are doing it for the sake of all sentient beings including the being that gave you that enjoyment, and so you are repaying that kindness; that is your repayment.

It's very clear that when the self-cherishing thought lives in the heart, in our heart, way inside your heart, that is an invitation for all possible harm to visit, from human beings and non-human beings.

I think I'll stop here.

### PUT THE BLAME ON SELF-CHERISHING

It is very useful and beneficial to remember whenever there is a problem in your life, that this invoked by the self-cherishing thought; it is invoked by the devil living inside in your heart. This is the thing that has arranged all these things; it has invited all these other sentient beings to harm you like this. This is the one who has led you to this suffering. You should always think like this when there are problems, although that thought might not come until afterwards, but it doesn't matter.

Without putting the blame on the self-cherishing thought, you blame yourself. Then you feel down and depressed. You scream a lot, screaming up and down, screaming at your parents, screaming at your friends, screaming, screaming, making other people unhappy, making other people crazy. Jumping up and down, going to the toilet, smoking one cigarette after another, smoking in the toilet, then going into the garden and smoking in the garden, then going into the dining room and smoking there. Then, in the kitchen! [GL] You can't relax. Your hands are shaking; you are almost flying! [GL] Then, every five minutes making phone calls to your friends even though they were nicely sleeping, disturbing them, making them worry too.

By remembering how this problem comes from the self-cherishing thought, however, you can reconsider the whole thing like this. “Why should I suffer? There is no reason I have to suffer like this when it's not my fault at all. Let the self-cherishing thought, let that devil, suffer instead. There is no reason why I have to suffer. Let him suffer.” In your mind you completely make this determination, completely giving the whole suffering to the self-cherishing thought. One thing is this. The psychological thing is that as long as you blame yourself, thinking it is your suffering and you are sick, then you will certainly get sick. But if you completely put the blame on the self-cherishing thought, you will reverse that destructive mind. The thought training is like this. Do to the self-cherishing thought what you used to do to an external enemy. With an external enemy you would normally be cruel and rude, wishing to harm him in as many ways as you can. You don't want to exist anymore; you want to cease right away, to disappear completely so he will never be the object of your eye consciousness again.

Instead of this sort of mind for an external enemy, we have this mind for the real enemy, the internal enemy, the self-cherishing thought. For such a long time we have been training our mind in the wrong way; we have been using the wrong thought training. With Mahayana thought training, it is just a matter of turning that mind onto the correct object. The old thought training only caused suffering; this one brings us happiness.

So now we change our thought training. Instead of blaming the external enemy, we try to recognize that all of our problems come from self-cherishing thought. It is the real enemy. We should recognize that because this is the truth. Then, we should act with this internal enemy the way we have been trained to act with the external enemy, the self-cherishing thought. That is essentially what this new thought training is. By doing this, we can control self-cherishing; we have more power than the self-cherishing thought. And that's how we receive all the happiness, both temporal and ultimate.

So, I think I'll stop here. Not so much time for meditation but I think...

Whenever we give the whole suffering back to the self-cherishing thought, whenever we make complete determination in the mind, right at that second there is a great change in the mind. There is a huge difference between that mind and the one before. Before, we were experiencing the suffering, but if we really see how all this has come from the self-cherishing thought then we have the way to stop that suffering, right at that second. Mentally we have to check. We have to completely make the determination in the heart and when we do, right at that second we don't feel that pain any more. We feel completely comfortable. We are kind surprised at ourselves, how it happened so quickly and so easily. Even if the pain doesn't completely disappear, it becomes much weaker.

Maybe meditate on what I just explained. See how the self-cherishing thought it is the worse, the most evil butcher, destroying the root of all temporal and ultimate happiness, with the sharp weapon of wrong view, heresy. Also, try to understand how it is the worst robber, carrying the sack of three poisonous minds, completely stealing all the crops of the virtue. Then how the self-cherishing thought is the animal eating away at you—in the teaching I think it is related to an owl, but it doesn't matter—how this enemy invites all the thousands and thousands and thousands of various problems, how this invites all the harm. Try to see clearly. Try to feel it clearly.

## LECTURE 15

### THE SHORTCOMINGS OF SELF-CHERISHING: THE SUFFERING IN THE SIX REALMS

Start with the motivation, "I am going to listen the oral teachings, the training on the thought of enlightenment. Therefore, it is necessary to listen to the teaching on the graduated training the thought of enlightenment, bodhicitta.

With Shantideva's technique to actualize bodhicitta, which is according to higher intelligent beings, in order to equalize ourselves with all sentient beings for whom we work, we should first realize the shortcomings of self-cherishing thought and the benefits of cherishing others. The self-cherishing thought is the farmer who, through its actions, the karmic formation, plants the seed on the field of consciousness which makes the sprout grow, ripening it by the water of craving and grasping. The farmer self-cherishing waters the crop again and again with craving and grasping, until it finally ripens in the many, various forms of suffering that we experience, such as the sufferings of the lower realms.

In the naraks, there are the eight different cold sufferings, eight different hot sufferings, as well as the other branches of the narak sufferings such as the occasional naraks. The self-cherishing thought also causes us to be born in the preta realm where we have to experience those unbearable preta sufferings, such as outer and inner obscurations and through those obscurations many different sufferings. They search for food and drink for hundreds of years and even if they find it, they are stopped from getting it by karmically-created guardians. Or they see a beautiful lake in the distance and because they haven't had a drop of water to drink in hundreds of

years they run to it, completely believing its beautiful water, but when they come to it, all of a sudden it disappears. There is no water, just a completely dry desert, and even if they see water it is completely full of garbage, full of pus, blood and things like that, totally undrinkable. They are so incredibly upset; there is so much suffering. It is like this because of their karma. In the same way, because of the food obscuration, if the preta sees food, it changes into something else when it approaches.

Without any other hindrances, even if it can get water, the preta has such an incredible unbelievable ugly body. The mouth is like the eye of a needle, so tiny and so difficult for any find food it finds to get in. It is so difficult to take it as they have strong incredible craving. Even if it manages to get a drop of water through the tiny mouth, like the eye of a needle, because of their karma, it disappears before it gets to the stomach or it becomes poison, like pouring kerosene in the fire. When you put kerosene in a fire, even the small flame, it becomes a huge fire. It is like this if even a drop of water manages to reach a preta's stomach, causing incredible burning and phlegm coming to the mouth. So, there is unbelievable suffering because of the inner, outer and food obscurations of a preta. And these are all caused by the self-cherishing thought. Besides being the cause of being reborn in the preta realm, it causes us to experience all those sufferings.

In the human realm, it causes us to experience the various sufferings, such as those eight sufferings and many other various sufferings; it causes thousands and thousands of problems.

When a being is born as an asura, self-cherishing brings great suffering, especially the chief suffering of the asuras, which is being extremely jealous of the greater enjoyment of the suras. Because of that, asuras are always fighting the suras, and always being controlled and killed by them. They suffer from so much miserliness and incredible attachment to their wives.

Even in the sura realm the self-cherishing thought causes so much suffering. Like the human realm, lesser suras are controlled by wealthy suras, being kicked out from one place and sent to another by wealthy suras who have power. There is so much worry and suffering at the death time, when there are five signs during their last seven days. According to human time, it is many hundreds of years but for them it is seven days. After they hear a karmic voice from the space saying they are going to die in seven days they have to go through all the five signs of death. This is unbelievable suffering because with their psychic power they can remember their previous lives and they can see their future rebirth, as an animal, a preta or a narak. Seeing how their life of the most incredible enjoyment is finishing and a life of the most incredible suffering is about to begin, they feel unbelievable fear.

The suras, the gods, are called also "the three-time beings," because at the death time they can remember all these three lives, the previous life, the present life with all its enjoyments and the future life with its incredible suffering. So, the self-cherishing thought not only causes us to be born in the sura realm, it again causes us to experience all these unbearable sufferings of death, the five signs of death. You can read this in the meditation course book.

It is the same thing with the animal realm. The self-cherishing thought causes us to be born in animal realm and that then causes us to experience all those unbearable sufferings, like being eaten by another, being extremely foolish, having to suffer heat and cold, being tortured and used by people and so forth. These are the general sufferings and then there are particular sufferings. Animals have particular sufferings, such as being kept by people and things like that.

We can relate this to ourselves like this. All the sentient beings who are *now* sura or asura realm and all these six realms, including the human realm—all other sentient beings who are suffering *now*—those realms and that

suffering have all been caused by the self-cherishing thought. They are obliged to experience all those sufferings because of the self-cherishing thought that is living in their own heart.

From beginningless previous lifetimes until now numberless sentient beings, such as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, present founder of teaching and numberless other buddhas, have received enlightenment already. Also on the earth, in the human earth, numberless buddhas have descended, even though Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, a great numbers of buddhas have descended and given teachings but because we have been following the self-cherishing thought all the time, trying to be born in all those different realms, when there was opportunity to see an actual buddha and to receive teachings directly from him, we were somewhere else. We have been wondering in other realms. As we have been following the self-cherishing thought we have never been born in the right time and right place where there is an actual buddha giving teaching. We could not become one of the disciples who received teachings directly from that buddha. Instead we have been wandering in other realms, experiencing so much suffering. From beginningless lifetimes until now it has been like this. We have been in samsara so long even the buddhas cannot count. The time spent is samsara doesn't have a beginning. Despite that great length of time, the mind is still empty of realizations. We have failed to attain any of the ordinary beings' realizations let alone the noble beings' realizations.

Even if we manage to meet the teaching, the Dharma, because of the self-cherishing thought, we run away from it. Even if we are in a place where there are teachings and we have the opportunity to listen to them, we purposely try to escape; we block our ears. Even though this is an opportunity that has only happened after an incredible number of eons. And even if we listen and manage to understand some of the teachings, because of the self-cherishing thought, we are too lazy to put them into practice. This is clearly because of the self-cherishing thought.

Even though we read the entire teachings of Buddha, all the scriptures of the Buddha, and all the commentaries written by highly realized pandits, the lamas; even if we hear all the oral teachings from our own guru, and each explains how wherever we are born in samsara, it's always suffering, and how any friend we are with is a friend of suffering, because of the self-cherishing thought, we don't listen.

If you are eating an incredible, unbelievable cake, but then if you eat that cake for breakfast, and if you eat that cake for lunch time and at dinner time—and tomorrow morning and afternoon all you eat is that cake... [GL RL] This happens. Sometimes, when a person likes that type of food so much, then that is all that other people give him. Then after one day, two days, three days go by, he starts liking that cake less and less, and afterwards he never wants to see that cake again. He hates that cakes. Maybe he prays never to see it again. I think it happens. It is my experience; it's happened to me. [GL] This is samsaric suffering.

What was enjoyment becomes suffering, the cause of suffering. That's how enjoyment is the enjoyment of suffering. It's the same with friends. At first, it's unbelievable. You are inseparable. On the first day, when you see each other, you both say such nice things. The first time you meet, on the first day, in the first hour, it's unbearable, you're inseparable, you almost becomes oneness, as we were talking about this morning. [GL] If the person has choice to become oneness with you, that's what they would choose. You met this morning, and you became so inseparable this morning, as you live hour by hour, hour by hour, then it goes talk, talk, talk, talk, talk. Then after some time, in the evening then many times it happens, even it's just not one day. In the evening you kick the other person out from the house, or maybe they have to have a separate room. There is a big fight, and nothing can be done. You stay in your room and the other person stays in her room. [GL] She closes the door. You are both angry, each in your own room, behind closed doors, with all the noise, all the big noise. It can be like this even in one day, even in one hour, many times. And usually in one month, it is very easy.

If you really check up, if you just watch your own story and other people's story, you can find so many times it happens like this. It's really true. Then you can see whether Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is telling a lie or not. Whether Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is telling a lie or he is telling the truth. There are many scriptures and commentaries, many teaching you hear from your guru, talking so much on the nature of samsaric suffering.

### THE SHORTCOMINGS OF SELF-CHERISHING: GRASPING ONTO POSSESSIONS

How terrible it is, how harmful it is that [with self-cherishing] no one can benefit. How matter much you listen, no matter how many teachings you have heard or text you have read—Vajrayana tantra, sutra, all these things—no matter how many times you have heard how harmful anger is, how harmful attachment is, how samsaric enjoyments are the cause of suffering—all these things explained clearly with logic—still somehow the mind never changes. It never changes in the slightest. Even if you have so much intellectual understanding of the teachings, there is not the slightest change in the mind. Just like me, you still have great miserliness, seeking material possessions, never having satisfaction. Even when a person says one or two little bad words, enormous anger arises. Maybe they say you are selfish. Just hearing these three words—just hearing “selfish”—incredible anger like Mt Everest rises up. With one word like that, just by hearing one word, “selfish” like this. Anger is formless, but if it could take form then it would be the size of the Earth. Mt Everest would be this small. All these things as difficult to control. There is not even a slight change in the mind. You are unable to practice even one thing, even one teaching. All that is cause by self-cherishing thought.

Even for a person who retires with enough money and material possessions to be very comfortable for six years, for thirty years, even if it can last seventy or a hundred years, still that person has so much worry in his mind. There is still dissatisfaction, still the thought that he doesn't have enough. “What I have is nothing. I must work. I must work, I must collect money or I could struggle the next year, I might starve, I might starve.” There is so much doubt, so much worry about life in the mind. He is full of doubt and full of expectation. There is so much incredible concern about his own happiness; he is completely concentrated on that.

Then he keeps himself so busy, not even sleeping at night. Even if he works all day he still has to do another job at night. If his material possessions were to help others or something, if they could become virtue, to make charity or something worthwhile, that would be different. But they are only to take care of himself, bringing so many doubts about future problems. “I might suffer like this. I might not get food next year,” things like that. There are so many doubts; his mind is so full of expectations, and because of that, he is kept so incredibly busy, even when he has holidays, on Saturdays and Sundays, he has no chance to relax. He is so busy at home, making so many arrangements, making so many arrangements, fixing so many things, with his mind filled with doubts, worried about experiencing difficulties in the future. Not in the future life, but just in the future in this life.

He worries that maybe thief might come. If you have many material possessions, there is so much worry over those possessions. They become such a burden to the mind, with all that worry that a thief might come. This keeps him so busy. All that worry, all those doubts keeping him so busy, all these things are caused by the self-cherishing thought, because he is completely concerned for of his own happiness.

Also many people who have received teachings on meditation, even though they understand the teaching, still there is no time in the morning to meditate, or in the evening after coming back home. There is never time to meditate or to study, because time goes by doing something else. Putting it off, after coming back home from work, there's work to do in the house or else spending time just talking, just sitting around and gossiping. Just spending the whole time like that, either sleeping or either busy going to parties, things like that. The person never finds time to meditate, but there is always time to spend by doing something else. All that is caused by the self-cherishing thought. Instead of sleeping, why can't he find time to meditate even for fifteen minutes, even one hour in the morning? Why? Why? He has time. He says he doesn't have time to meditate and things like but

why? He has time for other things. He has time to sleep in the morning. If he didn't have time he wouldn't sleep. So it's not true. If he has time, he wouldn't sleep, he wouldn't do anything, he wouldn't exist. [GL RL] So he has time. So you can see very clearly how it is caused by the self-cherishing thought. He has time to sleep or he has time to talk or he has time to go to see a movie or to watch television.

Many people kill themselves by going car racing. In the West, when somebody says they have no time, it's so obvious, it's so clear, it makes you laugh. [GL] People get themselves killed in motor car racing, getting in these small cars and putting all these things, hat and big glasses, all these things. [GL RL] Then they rush about [GL] Even though it's so dangerous they do it. Just driving normally is dangerous, but in spite of that, in spite of all that danger of death, with car racing there is great expectation in the mind to get something from it. They expect they will get a big reputation from other people and lots of money, and with that expectation they purposely put their life at risk. Then they either get killed or by chance nothing happens.

They break their leg or their head, they get themselves killed; their body is smashed to small pieces—they purposely put their life in danger for reputation. The same with climbing very high peaks of the snow mountains, or going to war, volunteering to kill other people, all with the expectation to get pleasure, reputation or money. Putting their life in danger, dying on a mountain and so forth, all this is caused by the self-cherishing thought. The self-cherishing thought is what makes all these expectations.

I think I'll stop here.

## MEDITATION ON THE SHORTCOMINGS OF SELF-CHERISHING

Maybe do a meditation, based on what I just explained, how the self-cherishing thought produces karma, and the produced plants the seed of different rebirths on the consciousness to keep being born in the naraka, preta realms, animal realms, the sura, asura, like this. From beginningless previous lives, having to suffer like this. And still in human realm suffering like this, experience all these problems. First meditate on this.

[Pause.]

I haven't attained enlightenment or even the higher bodhisattva's stages, one of the ten bhumis, ten stages. I can't actualize that. I still haven't actualized bodhicitta. Even the door of the Mahayana path, bodhicitta, I haven't received. All this is caused by the self-cherishing thought, because I have been following the self-cherishing thought. The self-cherishing thought has been preventing me from receiving all these realizations.

Also, I haven't attained nirvana. I haven't even attained any of the lesser vehicle path's realizations. I haven't attained even the fundamental, the fundamental path, the wisdom realizing shunyata. And I haven't attained even the fundamental realization, the mind renouncing samsara.

[Pause.]

Besides that, I haven't even attained the realization of impermanence life and death or even the preliminary meditation, the perfect human rebirth and the difficulty of attaining it. I haven't attained any of these realizations. All this is fault of me following the self-cherishing thought. The self-cherishing thought has been preventing me from attaining all these realizations.

[Pause.]

Now I recognize this is my enemy, the one who disturbs me, who doesn't let me to practice Dharma who disturbs my ultimate and temporal happiness. Now I recognize my enemy. From now on, without letting myself be under the control of you the enemy, you the devil, the enemy.

[Break in tape.]

#### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: MOTIVATING ON CHERISHING OTHERS

Shantideva says that even if the benefit of just thinking to benefit other sentient beings is more excessive than making offerings to all the buddhas, then without question if you actually work for all sentient beings without leaving out, the benefits you receive are out unimaginable, incredible.

Then also if a person has taken the bodhisattva vows, , day and night, even when he is unconscious, sleeping, , that person constantly receives infinite merit. Continuously that person receives merit equal to infinite space. It is said in the great bodhisattva Shantideva's teachings,

A person who has taken the thought of wishing bodhicitta in order to release all the infinite sentient beings from now on, person who has taken this thought in order to release all the infinite sentient beings from now on, with unchangeable irreversible thought will receive merit constantly.

This means person who has made a vow to generate the wishing thought of bodhicitta to work for all infinite sentient beings to release from all suffering from now on, with irreversible, unchangeable thought—which means a complete determination in the mind—from that moment on, even though he is sleeping or even unconscious, the strength of that merit continuously arises, equaling infinite space. This way, you can make the perfect human rebirth highly meaningful constantly, day and night, every second. There is incredible profit you can receive constantly without wasting even one second of collecting merit.

Even in such a short time, with the motivation bodhicitta, even making an incense offering, you can think, "I am going to make an incense offering in order to receive enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings." Thinking this and making the incense offering either by visualizing the Buddha or any holy objects becomes great purification. Thinking like this in such a short time again you collect infinite merit.

Similarly, even when you are cleaning the room or washing the dishes, if you think that all your own delusions and karma and those of all sentient beings are absorbed in the garbage and being cleaned with the dust and the dirt, all coming out in the form of pollution in whatever you clean.

Then think, "In order to receive enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings I am going to clean all my own and sentient beings' disturbing thoughts, the delusions and negative karma, and also their impure ugly suffering places." Also think, "The garbage is also the impure ugly places of the sentient beings, which are undesirable objects." For instance, where the naraks and preta beings are suffering there is no water. They cannot find even a drop of water; it is a very ugly place, either extremely hot or extremely cold. Also all the human beings' ugly places that humans do not like, uncomfortable, impure, ugly places where they suffer, full of stones. I think the essence of the garbage is also the impure ugly places of the sentient beings, which are produced by the disturbing negative thoughts and their negative karma.

Motivate like this, contemplating like this while you are cleaning. Just by motivating already you have received infinite merit. Then without question while you are cleaning with the meditation like this, "I am cleaning the

disturbing negative thoughts, negative karma and impure ugly places of the suffering sentient beings,” while you are meditating like this, without question you receive incredible merit.

It’s the same thing if you are washing cloth. If you can meditate like this, if you can transform the action into virtue like this, by cultivating the motivation of bodhicitta, again it becomes great purification.

In daily life, if you continuously remember the practice of bodhicitta, if you know how to transform actions into virtue, and constantly try to have a virtuous motivation instead of nonvirtuous motivation to do the daily work, even if you don’t do meditation sessions, with your daily life’s work, such as cleaning, talking and so forth, that can make life highly meaningful.

### MEDITATING ON CHERISHING OTHERS

The subject is the actual body, the training in the thought to enlightenment. In equalizing and exchanging oneself with others, there are two things: the benefits of cherishing other and the ability to do that. Then there are the two thoughts: the thought seeking to work for others and the thought seeking enlightenment in order to work for others. You should realize the shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought and benefit of cherishing others in order to see all sentient beings, for whom you work, in aspect of beauty. So this part is the benefits of cherishing others.

The way to meditate is like this. The benefits of cherishing others. As it is said in the root text: Meditate on the great kindness of all the sentient beings, on each and every single sentient being. This is not like only remembering the kindness of people you like, your friends, but not remembering, forgetting the enemy, you ignore the kindness of the enemy.

As it is said in the root text, the way to meditate is like this. After meditating on the shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought, then realize how all the sufferings come from oneself. After realizing that then meditate on kindness of others and then cherishing others. As you think of the kindness, the thought of cherishing others comes, automatically. The more you see the kindness of others, the more you see how all the happiness, all the perfections, how everything is received only from other sentient beings. More you see this, the more you discover this, the stronger and stronger the thought cherishing others becomes.

## LECTURE 16

### THE SUFFERING OF THE SIX REALMS

Before, we were talking about taking other sentient beings’ sufferings. As I explained before, but I’m just repeating again briefly, when we practice the thought of taking the suffering of others, and all the sentient beings’ causes of suffering, we should think that the cause of all suffering is delusion, the negative mind that sentient beings have, not only the previous causes of suffering, not only the delusions what the sentient beings have in the present time, but also the future delusions. Then the negative karma, not only the present but also the future negative karma. Then the suffering which came from negative karma, which they experience now and all the suffering they will experience in the future. To remember these three is very important: the cause of suffering, the negative karma, the delusions and negative karma and the result, all the suffering, present and future.

Here we are talking about the *chu*. [??] *Chu* means the potential ones, which means sentient beings. It means the place of the sentient beings. Where the sentient beings suffer, we can see this as an ugly place, a suffering place. It can be visualized like that.

In regards suffering, when you have a little bit time you go into details, and try to remember the outlines of lamrim, which describes the different suffering of each realm. Try to remember all the suffering, such as the naraks, the hot sufferings and the cold sufferings and the four dangers. Then the pretas, with the three hindrances such as the outer hindrance, inner hindrance and hindrance to food. Feeling hot and cold, feeling hunger and thirst, fear, being attacked by others. You can remember all these three outlines from the outline.

Then the general sufferings of the animal, such as feeling hot and cold, being in danger, being ignorant and afraid, being extremely exhausted, being tortured and forced to work for people, things like this. You can remember the outline.

Similarly with the sufferings of the human realms, such as the eight sufferings. Then the suras and asuras, such as the gods of the senses, the gods of desire, that includes also the asuras, besides the suras, some part of suras. Remember how suras and asuras are always fighting each other and how the asuras suffer from jealousy of the suras. Try to remember the sufferings like this, according to the outline.

Also in the form and formless realms, there is also delusion. Even though they don't have visible sufferings or the gross sufferings, they have sufferings because they have delusion. They are under the control of karma and delusion so they are living in pervasive compounding suffering. Even though their mental state, the realm, compared to animals and the other realms, even though it is high, there is less chance to practice Dharma, and so it is more difficult to attain enlightenment quickly. It is just like a bird. A bird flies very high, no matter how high it flies, in the end it has to come down on the land, without choice. There is no possibility to be always there in the space. Like this, even though the form and formless realms gods have reached the incredibly high mental state, without choice, because of previous karma, they have to be born again in the narak.

As you can remember the outline, you can think like this, giving each a little bit of time. In regards the result suffering, like this, you can go through more detail.

## MEDITATING ON PURIFYING THE LOWER REALMS

So the part of the suffering is like this. Then in regards to generating great love, make the practice of dedication. In regards dedication there are three things to dedicate: body, possessions and merit.

When you dedicate the body, although you think it's clean, your current body is dirty; it has an impure nature. [GL RL] It's dirty, so you cannot dedicate a dirty thing, we cannot dedicate kaka to all sentient beings. You should dedicate pure things to others. If you get a bad smell, then you dedicate it for all sentient beings, it's not like this. [RL GL] You don't dedicate things like that for other sentient beings. When you dedicate your body, you should transform this body into a wish-fulfilling body. By transforming into a wish fulfilling body, then you dedicate it to all other sentient beings.

This is talking about how to dedicate the body. First, transform it into a wish-fulfilling body, then dedicate it to all sentient beings. For instance, the body which becomes a wish-fulfilling body, dedicate it to all the narak beings, such as all the beings in the hot naraks. Think, "Just as I have received this wish fulfilling body then I dedicate it to all the beings in the hot naraks, so that whatever they are suffering will cease and whatever they want to receive, they will receive." That's the connotation of a wish-fulfilling body.

Then, with the beings of the hot naraks, from the wish-fulfilling body they receive a rain of nectar, a blissful rain that completely, right away in a second, stops all the suffering places, the fiery places, the hot-red, burning, iron ground and so forth. The places where they suffer is mostly the hot ground that is oneness with fire, just like this when we put iron in the fire, when it becomes red-hot and oneness with the fire, completely red, like that. This is the red-hot, burning ground. The visualization is that. So, from the wish-fulfilling body a rain of nectar comes, pouring down on them from space. Beautiful white clouds form and blissful nectar rain coming falls, completely stopping all the fires. All the hot blazing iron ground and the blazing houses, everything, completely disappears. And all those narak beings who were suffering from the incredible, unbelievable heat, receive this blissful nectar rain, and they feel incredible bliss and wonderful coolness.

All the hot-red iron ground is transformed and becomes beautiful. If it is possible then visualize as it is described in the teachings, how to visualize a pure land, like when you purify the meditation place, when you practice purifying the ground. You know how to visualize the place as beautiful, like a pure land. The teaching explains that practice, and so here you visualize it as it is described there.

Visualize it as beautiful as possible, the whole ground full of beautiful flowers, with many ponds to swim in, very clear and clean, not dirty at all, with a very blissful nature. Visualize it as beautiful as possible, like this. And so many beautiful scented flowers. Even if you can't visualize it exactly as pure land, at least as a beautiful garden. It's not hard for you to visualize a beautiful garden. Think of all the beautiful gardens you have seen and visualize the land of the narak beings at least like that.

The red-hot burning house which doesn't door or windows, in which they have to suffer for eons and eons, due to the wish-fulfilling body, that house is completely transformed into a beautiful palace, like a beautiful palace in the pure realms or in the realm of the gods, well decorated, as beautiful as possible, very shining, radiating, like that.

Then, the beings of the first hot narak, called *being alive again and again*, are attacked by rains of weapons, all kinds of weapons pouring down on them, but due to the wish-fulfilling body, all these weapons transform into beautiful scented flowers, and become a flower-rain. Instead of suffering, the beings experience much bliss by receiving this rain of flowers.

In the same way, the place that is full of very sharp swords covering the ground, these swords are transformed into beautiful flowers. You don't have to visualize small flowers; you can visualize them as big flowers, big scented flowers and they are walking on the flowers.

Also the fearful narak karmic protectors, creations of the narak beings' karmic visions, instead of harming them they are transformed into beautiful gods and goddesses benefiting them. You can visualize them in this way. Those protectors can also be visualized also as Avalokiteshvara. Then those narak beings, having received the blessings of the wish fulfilling body, they also receive the perfect human rebirth and meet the perfect spiritual friend and receive teachings.

Before talking about cold suffering, there are narak beings who, when the karma finishes and it is released from one suffering place, again he has to experience another suffering. So the karmic vision changes. Sometimes the narak beings hears someone is calling him from the top of a tree, like a relative, a brother or someone is calling his name, asking him to come up, calling him. Feeling such incredible desire he wants to go up to see that being who calls him, so he runs to the tree, then all the branches of the tree become weapons and go through the body. All these branches are sharp weapons, pointing down like this. And even when the being reaches the top, when he comes down all the branches, which becomes, very sharp weapons, again they turn up like this,

blocking him from coming down. Even the person tries to come down they go through the body. All of these kinds of suffering come from the tree, it is called the tree which cuts the body. Visualize this.

With the wish-fulfilling body, it transforms into various beautiful leaves and flowers, completely without thorns, very soft, very scented, having flowers and beautiful, very flexible trees, giving much happiness to the living beings. Even by touching it there is much bliss. Visualize like this.

Then the narak being in the cold suffering. They can't see because it is completely dark. There is no light, not even the sun and the moon. But, having received the wish-fulfilling body, they receive sun, which melts the ice and, instead of feeling cold, they feel is warm, they feel the heat. Just like we need heaters in the cold time. Then the ice melts. Usually it's completely dark, they can't see even their legs; they can't see even their body, their hands. Their body is completely stuck in the ice mountain; their body becomes oneness with ice and besides they usually suffer from having so many little sores, blisters, which open up and gets more and more cracked, more and more cracked. They are extremely cold, their body is oneness with ice, and there are more and more cracks, more and more cracks. Also inside the body, there are so many insects eating and a bird with a very long beak, like a needle that pierces right through their body.

So, think by having received the wish-fulfilling body, they receive the perfect human body. And also they meet the perfect spiritual friend and receive teachings. Usually their bodies are naked, oneness with ice mountain, but now they receive beautiful clothes and delicious food. If you can think of it as in the nature of nectar, then like this.

Then all the narak beings gradually attain the path to enlightenment and depending, you can think either they become Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or you can think they become Avalokiteshvara. Think, "Now I have enlightened them in the essence of Avalokiteshvara."

Then do the same thing with the pretas. Again dedicate your wish-fulfilling body to them. One of their main sufferings is feeling hunger and thirst. So due to the wish-fulfilling body they receive plenty of food. You can think of many stores. The food they enjoy is all nectar, relieving their suffering, hunger and thirst like that. Then also you can visualize pretas who suffer incredibly with the heat receive blissful nectar rain, which you can also think is purifying their delusions. Then also they have received plenty of beautiful forms, they have received perfect human rebirth and they have met perfect teacher, receiving teachings, actualizing path. Also they receive a beautiful house, a beautiful palace made of jewels. Also their place is like a pure land, very beautiful. All the ugly desert-like places, all the suffering places are completely changed, they all become beautiful places, like a pure realm, with many lakes, very clear, very clean, very beautiful, very cool, and there are many beautiful trees or flowers.

Then also think, enjoying all these things cause the pretas to receive the whole path and achieve enlightenment. Think they all become Avalokiteshvara. Then think, "I have enlightened all the pretas in the essence of Avalokiteshvara."

Then again dedicate the wish-fulfilling body to the animals. Having received the wish-fulfilling body they have received everything what they wish and it stops all their suffering. All the animals who have suffered from heat, by having the wish-fulfilling body they receive coolness. Those who have suffered from cold, they receive warmth. Those being eaten by other animals, due to the wish fulfilling body, are released from their suffering, and those exploited by people, instead of harming them, people become their helpers. By receiving the wish-fulfilling body they are released from the suffering of being tortured or used for difficult work, carrying all kinds

of things, serving people, having nails under the feet, putting holes in the nose, being tortured in many ways. It makes them to be released from that.

One of their main sufferings is being deeply ignorant, so also by having receive this wish fulfilling body it makes them to receive the discriminating Dharma wisdom, which discovers what is virtue, what is nonvirtue; what is the cause of happiness, what is the cause of suffering. The discriminating wisdom, knowing the nature of their suffering and the path, the knowledge of the Triple Gem, the dharmakaya. You can think like this. Then also think they have received the perfect human rebirth, having met the perfect spiritual friend and received the teachings and actualized the graduated path.

Then think the enjoyments they have received from the wish-fulfilling body make them purify all the delusions, all the negative karma and it causes them to receive the whole graduate path. Then think they have received enlightenment. Think, “I have enlightened them in the essence of Avalokiteshvara.” If you using Avalokiteshvara as a basis you can think like this. Visualize all the animals in the manifestation of Avalokiteshvara.

Similarly, dedicate the body that is the wish-fulfilling body to the suras; the suras, the worldly, the samsaric gods who are in the realms of form and formless and the gods of the desire. Also by having received the wish-fulfilling body, it makes them to receive perfect human rebirth, having met the teacher, actualizing path and they receive whatever they wish. Whatever happiness they wish, they receive.

What the gods of the desire realm usually enjoy is the object of the five senses. By dedicating the body and transformation of the wish-fulfilling body, it makes them to receive whatever object of senses they want, but these objects bring only virtue, not nonvirtue and so they receive the perfect human body and meet the perfect teacher and receive teachings, actualizing path like this.

[Break in tape.]

*[Rinpoche seems to be explaining about the four motivations, such as for saying a prayer, of somebody who says it with the motivation for enlightenment, for liberation, for a fortunate rebirth and for the happiness of this life. The actions of the first three people are Dharma actions, but that of the fourth, wishing only happiness of this life, is not Dharma, even though he is saying a prayer.]*

So therefore, this is extremely important for a Dharma practitioner, for a person who wants to practice Dharma. The last person's actions does not become Dharma, but all the others become Dharma. The first person's actions become Dharma, the second person's actions become Dharma, the third person's actions become Dharma. Even the third person's actions become Dharma and that brings happiness in this life and in the future life even though the person only thinks of future life, but the result of karma, good karma, practicing Dharma, can be experienced in this life. Even these three people did not precisely motivate for it, did not precisely concentrate on it, still [happiness] happens in this life, even though they did not have that specific motivation.

So the last person, with the same practice, that did not become Dharma. Therefore this is the secret point. This is the secret point, if you does not understand this point, what mind makes the action Dharma, if your mind is not clear on this secret point—what is virtue and what is nonvirtue, what is Dharma and what is non-Dharma—there is always the chance to make a mistake, believing you are doing good, believing you are doing the right action. This is extremely useful to remember.

Think, “It’s not right that I think only of myself, having achieve the blissful state of peace, by being free from all the samsara, the suffering realm. I must reach the enlightenment in order to release all the sentient beings from all their suffering and lead them to enlightenment. Therefore, I am going to listen to the profound Mahayana thought training teachings.”

## BIOGRAPHY OF ATISHA

Atisha, this great bodhisattva, was born in western India. He went through the life of a prince. His home was extremely wealthy and his father was one of the most wealthy kings, as was the whole family. Then afterwards he escaped this and went to find a guru. By meeting many gurus he received so many teachings on bodhicitta and refuge. As he met one guru, this guru sent him to meet another guru who he had contact with in a previous life, and that guru then sent him to meet another on, and so on like. Then, the gurus sent him back home to realize the shortcomings and the problems of the worldly life, to be able to receive the mind free of samsara Atisha followed 157 gurus. He had that much number of teachers. Then, just briefly talking about his life.

He was in the same school in Nalanda where there were thousands of pandits. Besides having a general education in medicine, art, and becoming experts in each point, of the many basic ordinary subjects, each of those pandits were fully distinguished in the knowledge of Dharma, the whole teaching of the Dharma, not only having an intellectual understanding, but also having great achievement of the path in their mind. Such as Atisha, the great bodhisattva, who had the achievement the loving-compassionate mind, the precious thought of enlightenment. His actions of body speech and mind were dedicated only to benefit other sentient beings, whose mind was concerned only with releasing other sentient beings from suffering and to obtain happiness. Not only that, he had the realization of all the three higher practices, the higher practice of moral conduct, concentration and penetrative insight and he lived purely in the two-hundred and fifty-three precepts, without any breaking any of the small vows, even the branches of the precepts. Not only that, there are bodhisattvas and the tantric vows; there are different levels of ordinations like this, and he also lived purely in those other precepts besides the fundamental precepts. So like this, he had an incredible realization of the practice of moral conduct.

He had an incredible realization of the practice of one-pointedness. Even if hundreds of big drums were beaten around him, even if big airplanes flew nearby him, they could not disturb his concentration, having a realization like that. He also has the perfect realization of penetrative insight, perfectly seeing the absolute nature. And he had attained a very high tantra path, where nothing, no impure object appeared to his senses. For his senses there was no impure object. With his very high Vajrayana realization, he could transform all impure appearances of objects as well as see himself in the aspect of deity. This is not like us, who see ourselves as ordinary persons and everything around us as impure objects. He could turn impure views into pure views. Even though we try to visualize the Vajrayana mandalas, as it is explained in the Vajrayana teachings, nothing happens in the mind, nothing comes, nothing is revealed. On the other hand, he held the great mandala all the time in his mind; his mind was oneness with the mandala. He has always got mandala. With such power, he could transform the impure, such as kaka, into nectar. Highly realized yogis are like this.

In relation to the teachings in Tibet, the king of Tibet was very worried the people were on the wrong path, filled with wrong conceptions. They were ignorant, not knowing how to practice Mantrayana or the other teaching, Sutra. The people had much confusion, thinking that people who practiced Mantrayana could not practice Sutra, and the people who practiced Sutra could not practice Mantrayana. They had much confusion in the mind, many wrong concepts.

So the king of Tibet chose twenty-one intelligent boys and sent them Nalanda, the famous school, to be educated, to learn the language and also to educate in Dharma, so they could come back and spread the pure

teachings. But as Indian was very hot and Tibet was very cold, only two students survived. Those two came back after they were educated and explained to the king when they got back that at Nalanda all pandits talked about this pandit Atisha. They said that if he came to Tibet, he could definitely benefit for the teachings. Many pandits talk about this pandit called Atisha in this way, but other pandits were not sure. Everyone talked about Atisha, that he could benefit the best in Tibet. Just by hearing the name Atisha, incredible, unbelievable devotion arose in his mind of the king of Tibet. Right at that moment he decided to invite Atisha to Tibet.

Then he sent translators, other pandits, with many offerings of gold, to invite Atisha. While the king himself was searching for the gold, in one place in Tibet, an irreligious king put him in prison. The king of Tibet his name was Halama. His nephew tried to release him from the prison but the irreligious king told to the king that he either had to give up working to spread the teachings in Tibet or his life. He had to choose If he didn't want to lose his life, if he didn't want to get killed, he had to give up the teachings. The king decided to give up his life, in prison. He thought, "I'm old now, and if I live, there's only several more years. Since beginningless numberless future lifetimes until now I never gave up my life for the Dharma, so it is fortunate that I have the opportunity to give up my life for the teachings."

The irreligious king told the nephew to find gold equaling the size of the king. After he found gold the equaled up to the neck, the irreligious king was still not satisfied, he said there's still the size of the head missing. When the nephew he explained everything to the king who was in prison, the king he said: "Don't give even a handful of gold to the irreligious king. He can never be satisfied, no matter how much you give him. Instead, take all the gold you have to Atisha." And the king of Tibet sent a message to Atisha: "I give up my life under this irreligious king for you and the teachings, so please may I see you after this life. What I have in the mind is only the teachings and to invite Atisha and to establish the teachings in Tibet. That's the only thing I have in mind, so please guide me in all the future lives." That was the message he sent to Atisha with the Tibetan translators.

At the beginning they had much difficulty to finding Atisha, but they finally they met him and explained what happened to the king in Tibet. When then they offered the gold offering to Atisha, he did not accept it right away. He didn't give the answer that he would come right away. He told the great pandit Tibetan translators, "Keep it. I will first check up whether going to Tibet will be beneficial or not and whether there will be hindrance to my life if I go to Tibet."

Then he checked up with the female aspect of Buddha, called Tara, and Compassionate Buddha called Avalokiteshvara. They predicted him that if he didn't go to Tibet he could live to ninety-two years old but if he went to Tibet he would only live until seventy-three years old. But if he went to Tibet it would be greatly beneficial for the teachings and for the people in Tibet, even though his life would be shorter. Then, even though his life would be almost twenty years shorter, he decided that didn't matter; it was better he went to Tibet. Then he gradually went to Tibet where he was requested by king's nephew, whose name is Jangchub Ö, to write a very simple text on how one person could to practice the whole sutra and Mantrayana, and to write a very simple teaching explaining about karma and refuge.

## ATISHA: THE LAM-RIM AND LO-JONG TEXTS

So then like this Atisha wrote the teaching called *Lam-drön*, *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*. Actually the text, the meditation, has the title *lam-rim*, *the graduated path to enlightenment*, even though the entire teachings originally had been handed down from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, but putting the title like this on the text and on different practices, shows that it is set up for a person to practice the different teachings without confusion. Atisha clarified and simplified the teachings so a person can practice right away. This is *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, written by Atisha.

Then Lama Tsongkhapa wrote a commentary to it, and then many other lineage lamas, followers of Lama Tsongkhapa, wrote the commentaries using their experiences of the path.

This is just to have a small idea about who Atisha is, because this teaching you are going to practice, these meditation techniques you are going to practice, come from Lama Serlingpa and Atisha. Therefore, if you know a little bit about who Atisha is, if you know little bit about his knowledge, there is a feeling in your mind. Also his teachings will benefit to your mind, as there is feeling, devotion to his knowledge. When I say "Atisha" it won't sound like a robot. [RL GL]

So Atisha was incredible benefit to the people in Tibet who were ignorant. The teachings were spread so much, so purely, through one of his close disciples called Dromtönpa, who is recognized also as an embodiment of the Compassion Buddha.

So this oral teaching, training the thought of enlightenment, has been handed down from Atisha to Dromtönpa. Atisha had many disciples but specifically the lineage of this teaching has been handed down to his disciple Dromtönpa, then Dromtönpa had many highly realized disciples who were great bodhisattvas but he handed the lineage of this teaching to Potawa, who has the whole entire teachings, the sutra and mantrayana. Then Potawa wrote also many teachings. He had more than 200,000 disciples. Also many of his disciples were great bodhisattvas who achieved the graduated path. Then Potawa handed down the lineage of this teaching to his disciple Sharawa, who had also 8,100 disciples, and many of them experienced this graduate path. Then he handed down the lineage of this teaching to Geshe Chekawa.

From a person called Nyalchashingba, Geshe Chekawa heard the words of *The Eight Verses of the Thought Training*, written by a great bodhisattva, Geshe Langri Tangpa. Then, from this Geshe Chekawa he received devotion to the Kadam tradition of teachings. The Kadam tradition had been handed down from Atisha. So all the followers of Atisha, all those geshes, were called *Kadampa*. *Ka* means "order," the teachings of Buddha, *dam* means "oral teaching." Neither Atisha himself or any of his followers ever found any contradiction at all in the different teachings explained by Buddha, not even two or three words. There are many teachings that seem contradictory, like in one saying you can drink wine and in another saying you can't or in one you should eat meat and in another you shouldn't, or keeping a wife or not keeping a wife. The Kadampa practitioners understood that these teachers were for different levels of students and so they never saw any contradiction at all in anything the Buddha taught. They knew that even two or three words of Buddha is an oral teaching for one person to practice in order to achieve enlightenment. So therefore those followers of Atisha are called Kadampa.

After Geshe Chekawa heard this *Eight Verses of Thought Training*, he wanted to find out more about this thought training teaching. He went to Lhasa, the kingdom of Tibet, where he talked about this to his friend who had a great mind. He suggested to him that a Mahayana guru should be like a sun and moon that you can carry on your shoulder and display and show others. His friend, who had great thoughts, suggested he went to see Geshe Sharawa and Chiyurwa.

Geshe Sharawa was giving teaching, he was giving teachings to some disciples, explaining about the Hinayana path, the path of the *nyentö*. In the Hinayana path there are two different paths. One is called path of the self conqueror [solitary realizer], and the other is *nyentö*, the path of the listener and announcer. That means that they listen to teachings and they announce them, they explain the teachings to others. When he was listening to that teaching, it doesn't precisely inspire his mind, he didn't find any of it interesting. It was kind of boring, kind of tiring, like what you experience. [GL RL] I think that's clear.

So Geshe Chekawa questioned whether or not Sharawa had this oral teaching on *The Eight Verses of Thought Training*. He had some kind of doubt. He asked whether this can be practiced or not. He thought if Sharawa said it could not be practiced, he doesn't have that teaching, then he thought to go some other place.

So one day, when the monks had been invited by a benefactor, Geshe Sharawa was circumambulating the stupa. Then Geshe Chekawa met Geshe Sharawa and he put his robe on the ground and said, "Please sit down here, I have something to ask you." Then Geshe Sharawa thought what doubt is there for this person cannot be decided. I have decided, I have cut all doubts, I have clarified the doubts. What has to be discussed is already on the throne. That means he was giving teaching before sitting on the throne, so he was saying this. So then Geshe Chekawa said, *The Eight Verses* written by Langri Tangpa, this tradition teaching has been so beneficial for me. When I didn't find a lodging place, when people do not offer me a place, when people treat me badly, during those times I practice this and it benefits to me. If I practice this, can it become cause to receive the result of enlightenment or not?" Sharawa had a rosary in his hand. While he was passing each bead he was saying from his holy mouth, "There is nothing to talk about whether it can be practiced or not. If you wish to receive result, enlightenment, do it; if you don't wish to receive the result, enlightenment, then give it up. Since you wish to receive the result enlightenment, without entering in the path it's impossible to receive enlightenment." So Geshe Chekawa thought what Geshe Sharawa said in his short talk is great experience, there is incredible great experience.

I think I stop here.

#### ATISHA: HIS KINDNESS

At the beginning before the meditation, just a little about the lineage of this teaching, how it happened, it came down. Then the particular benefits of practicing this teachings. So there is brief explanation that has to be given before explaining the actual meditation.

[Break in tape.] ...again it is necessary to remember to cultivate the pure motivation, to listen to the teachings in order to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all kind sentient beings.

Many young Western people have a chance to receive teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment, and having chance to hear the precious oral teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment. The essence of the teaching is graduated path to enlightenment, the oral teaching of the training thought of enlightenment. Then even having a little bit intellectual understanding of the meditation on the graduated path to enlightenment, knowing how to make life meaningful and even there is a problem in the life but since having method, you can manage to make your own mind happy, by remembering the meditation, by remembering the teaching. Then having chance to make preparation, having the Dharma wisdom to see what is the cause of happiness, what is the cause of suffering and making preparation for the happiness of future life. That is by the kindness of the great bodhisattva Atisha, and the king of Tibet, who was a bodhisattvas. And if the king of Tibet had not given up his life, and many of the pandit translators had borne great difficulties going to India to invite Atisha and spread the teaching in Tibet, if they did not do the work, if Atisha did not come in Tibet, did not write this teaching, *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, then nowadays it would be such an incredible loss then. This is such a profound oral teaching on the graduated path to enlightenment, which is very easy to practice, without confusion and very convenient to study or to practice the different teachings.

If the great bodhisattva Atisha and the king of Tibet hadn't borne the difficulties or didn't do the work then these days there wouldn't be these precious oral teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment and especially the oral teachings on training the thought of enlightenment. So having possibility also such method which

brings happiness to oneself and other sentient beings, which brings enlightenment to oneself and other sentient beings, in these days then spreading in the West. That is also by the kindness of these great bodhisattvas.

## TALES OF LINEAGE LAMAS

So Geshe Sharawa told Geshe Chekawa, “There is nothing to talk about whether *The Eight Verses of Thought Training* can be practiced or not. If one does not wish to receive enlightenment then give it up, leave it. Since one wishes to receive enlightenment, it’s possible to receive enlightenment without entering this path.”

Geshe Chekawa thought that the way Geshe Sharawa talked showed he had great experience. So then Geshe Chekawa asked Sharawa, “Where is this quotation, where is the reference of this teaching, *The Eight Verses of Thought Training*?” This was written by the highly realized Tibetan bodhisattva, Langri Tangpa and usually any Buddhadharma text that is written by anyone should have reference, the root of that teaching should be in the teaching of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. If it’s opposite to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s teachings, if it is different teachings from what Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gave to the different sentient beings who have different level of mind, if the root of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s teaching is not there, then it is recognized as not pure teaching, especially if it is contradictory, because there is not one single method for the happiness of sentient beings missing in the teachings explained by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

So Geshe Chekawa asked Sharawa, “Where is this reference of this teaching, this oral teaching *The Eight Verses of Thought Training*?” And Geshe Sharawa replied, “Who is who doesn’t believe the noble Nagarjuna? Who is there who doesn’t trust the noble Nagarjuna?” So he mentioned the quotation what Nagarjuna said in his teaching called, *The Jewel Rosary*.

“May I receive and experience others’ negativity and may they receive and experience all my merits.”

“Others” means other sentient beings. So what it is saying, “May I receive and experience all other sentient beings’ delusions and the negative karma.” “May I receive and experience,” means to suffer. When it says experience it means suffer. “May I receive and experience all other sentient beings’ delusion, negative karma and may I receive and experience all their sufferings. And may they receive and experience all my virtue, every single virtue of mine.” Virtue means the cause of virtue, even the happiness, may other sentient beings experience this. This is the reference quotation said by the very highly realized Indian pandit Nagarjuna.

So then Geshe Chekawa asked Sharawa, “I have interest to this traditional teaching, so please guide me.” So Geshe Sharawa told to Chekawa, “If you are able to, you should make yourself able to stay here then you will understand by the conditions.” Then Geshe Chekawa asked Sharawa, “When you were giving teaching before in the group, there was nothing of this teaching mentioned.” He means the thought training teaching. So Sharawa told Chekawa, “What is the benefit of explaining this? There is no-one who can practice it.” That’s what Geshe Sharawa said to Chekawa. Then Geshe Chekawa made three prostrations to Geshe Sharawa. In the house where he stayed, the owner of the house had the text, so first he made three prostrations then he took the text out, then he checked *The Jewel Rosary* written by Nagarjuna and he saw exactly what Geshe Sharawa said the quotation, those two verses of Nagarjuna’s. He saw it exactly there.

Then he stopped, he gave up other thoughts, other works. Then he completely concentrated on this thought training. He spent a total of fourteen years in different places, training the mind in this thought training, in the presence of gurus, virtuous friends. Then he got incredible experiences.

Then he thought, "Now it makes meaningful that I sold all my property in gold, and business, and that I slept under the rug." The piece of rug, what you cover on the horse. Not this thing that you ride on but the cloth you put on the horse's backside?

*Student:* Saddle?

*Rinpoche:* Saddle sleeping bag. [RL GL]

I think what he's talking about is he sold all his property into gold and he offered the gold to his teacher, the virtuous friend, to receive teachings. I think that's what he saying. He thought, now it becomes worthwhile that I, I sold all my property in gold before and then I slept under the horse's saddle. What is it called? [RL GL] Rug?

*Student:* Saddle-cloth.

*Rinpoche:* Saddle cloth, piece of carpet, in Tibet they put piece of cloth they put on the horse then they put [GL] then they put the saddle, like that. So he sold all property and become very poor and even sometimes he slept by using the horse-carpet. [RL GL] He is saying that even though he experienced much difficulties now it became worthwhile.

Geshe Chekawa handed down the lineage of this teaching specifically to his disciple call Tse Chilbuwa. He received all the oral teachings, all the basic scriptures, all the complete oral teachings on thought training from Geshe Chekawa. Tse Chilbuwa handed it down to Lha Chenpo Lungu Wangchuk. Then from there to, again the teachings has been handed down from Lha Chenpo Lungu Wangchuk to Sakya Sonam Gyalchen.

There are also the other thought training teachings, commentaries on the seven points of thought transformation written by great bodhisattva, Tongme Sangpo. They are thought training teachings which have been handed down from Ranpa Kadingpa. Then the lineage of those teachings is received from the great pundit called Gyaljop Palsang.

When Kadingpa received the teachings on the seven points of thought transformation, the commentary with experience, he took this commentary from Lama Tsongkhapa who is embodiment of Manjushri. There are different traditions, the oral teachings of training in the thought of enlightenment. So when Lama Tsongkhapa gave this teaching on training in thought of enlightenment, he gave teachings according to the famous Indian pandit Shantideva, a very highly realized great bodhisattva. Lama Tsongkhapa gave Geshe Chekawa's thought training teaching.

Anyway Lama Tsongkhapa received the lineage of this oral teaching. From Lama Tsongkhapa, from his followers to my root guru, whose holy name is Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo. Then from him the teaching has been handed down to my guru who is incomparably, unimaginably kind, who is the holder of the whole Buddhadharma, whose holy name is His Holiness Ling Rinpoche, the elder tutor of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. From His Holiness Ling Rinpoche then I have received it. I received but I forgot. [GL RL] I hope I can remember!

So usually this teaching of thought training is presented according to Shantideva's teachings, Shantideva's basic scripture, because Shantideva's basic scripture about thought training, that is the basis from where Geshe Chekawa quoted the thought training teaching. So that's just a very brief history of the lineage lamas and the qualities of the oral teaching.

Now in order for devotion to arise for the oral teaching, it's mentioned the particular benefits or the qualities of this teaching, this oral teaching by mentioning the specific, the particular functions, what this thought training teaching does.

The words from the root text:

Just like the diamond, the sun, the medical tree, the meanings and the basic scripture and so on should be known.

Maybe it's more comfortable this way:

The meanings of the basic scripture and so on should be known as the diamond, the sun and the medical tree. The explosion of the five degenerations is transformed in the path to enlightenment.

These are the verses from the root text.

Why should the meaning of the scriptures be known as a diamond? How is it like a diamond? It is without question that complete jewel ornament, the diamond can relieve a person from the poverty. And it can give whatever the person wishes.

By saying the diamond, it means the person can get whatever other things he wishes.

Even a small particle of it, which is not complete ornament, can control all the special ornaments made of silver, gold and other jewels. And that small particle of diamond doesn't lose its name "the jewel diamond." It can release the person from poverty.

So like that example, if you actualize in the mind the entire teachings of the training thought of enlightenment—what will be explained afterwards—that is without question. Even if you only actualize the meaning of one part of the scripture, it doesn't lose the name "bodhisattva."

Actualizing the meaning of even a part of scripture is like the gold ornament, that controls the Hinayana arhats who completed Hinayana path, who have achieved nirvana, namely the self-controller and the listener and announcer who are like the special gold ornament. They are completely controlled. Besides that it relieves from all the poverty of samsara. By having actualized the meaning of even one part of the scripture, it dispels all the samsaric suffering.

So I think I'll stop here.

## WHAT DHARMA IS

In order for the action of listening teaching to become Dharma, first of all the mind has to become Dharma. How to transform the mind into Dharma—whether the mind is Dharma or not depends on whether the mind is possessed by attachment seeking the pleasure of this life. So if the mind is possessed with the attachment seeking only the pleasure of this life, then mind is not Dharma.

Therefore it is necessary to transform the mind into Dharma by renouncing the attachment seeking only the pleasures of this life. Such as by remembering that I may die, it is more definite that I die in this year, in this month or in this week, more definite that I die than not dying, even today. So therefore what can benefit at the death time is only Dharma, nothing else can benefit. Your own body, material possession, even friends, surrounding people cannot benefit at the death time.

Then even if our action becomes Dharma by the action of the mind, body and speech becoming Dharma it is necessary to become the path to attain nirvana. It is not enough just to become Dharma, it is necessary to become path to the ultimate happiness, the path to liberation.

What hinders our Dharma becoming path to liberation is again by attachment in the samsaric perfections and happiness, by material enjoyment. Like practicing Dharma only for the purpose to be born as wealthy person, having perfect material enjoyment or to be born as king or to be born in the realm of the gods, such as the sura, asura beings in the future lives. That attachment seeking the samsaric perfection in material enjoyment, happiness like that disturbs one's own Dharma from becoming the path to liberation. Therefore it is necessary in Dharma to become path to liberation. It is necessary to renounce, to not be possessed by attachment, seeking the samsaric perfections, material enjoyment and happiness.

That is not enough. Even if our Dharma becomes the path to nirvana, that's not right, we cannot be satisfied with just that. There are numberless sentient beings who have been kind all the time to us, and as they are devoid of happiness. As they are constantly suffering, I must achieve enlightenment in order to enlighten all the kind sentient beings. Therefore even if our dharma becomes a path, it is necessary to become the path to enlightenment, to release all the sentient beings from suffering and lead them to enlightenment.

Think, "therefore I am going to listen to the profound oral teaching of training the thought of enlightenment to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the sentient beings."

This is the principle method for the fortunate ones to attain enlightenment of the fully knowing mind; this is the door to enter the Mahayana path, well expounded by great highly realized propagators Nagarjuna and Asanga. The profound teachings which contain the infinite knowledge of Dharma, it contains the essence of the infinite knowledge, that the great bodhisattva Atisha has and that the Dharma king of three worlds, the great Lama Tsongkhapa has. This contains all the essence of the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha without missing. And all these are set up for the graduated practice of one person to achieve enlightenment. And this is the sole path through which all past, present and future buddhas have attained enlightenment. It is their heart practice. It has been their heart practice.

So brief outline all this, the thought training teaching.

## THE FIVE DEGENERATIONS

Yesterday I talked about the explosion of the five degenerations. "Explosion" isn't right. If the five degenerations exploded it is good! [GL] That is what should happen but it does not happen. That is what should be exploded, that's what should not exist. I put it the wrong way; I put in completely the opposite. [RL] Here, the five degenerations come, but instead of "coming" I said "exploding." [RL GL]

How strongly the five degenerations come is like strong water flood, incredibly strong water flood, so strong it destroys a whole city, it takes away all the buildings. All the buildings are destroyed, not having so much control. Like when the dam—you know, where you store water—is broken, when the wall is broken, the water is so

strong it flows out and it destroys the whole city. Like that, this is the expression of how the five degenerations come. I think it is translated in the book *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* as flourishing—the five degenerations flourishing is transformed into the path to enlightenment. Correct? The five degeneration flourishing is transformed into the path to enlightenment. I think that should be correct.

And then one word yesterday: even a particle of diamond jewel doesn't make it lose its name. For instance, if this bell is broken into pieces it wouldn't hold the name, bell. It would lose the name, bell. Only if it is complete like this then it can receive the name, bell. But a diamond that is broken still exists as a diamond.

So now the sun, how the meaning of the basic scripture should be known as the sun. Whenever there is the sun, there is no place that a shadow can cover it, there is no time or place where the sun can be covered. While the rays of the sun are rising, there is no place the shadow can cover it. Likewise, it is without question, if you have actualized the complete oral teachings of the training of the thought of enlightenment, even if you have only actualized one tiny part of them, there is no place in the mind for the shadow, the darkness, delusions, the self-cherishing thought that arise from the ignorance grasping the I as truly existent.

So the sun is an example to the realization of bodhicitta, the realization of the thought training, showing the realization of bodhicitta cannot be disturbed by the delusions. When the bodhicitta is actualized in the mind there is no place in the mind for the delusions.

[Break in tape.]

It is necessary again to cultivate the pure motivation of bodhicitta. The oral teachings—the training the thought in enlightenment, the actions of the whole graduate path to enlightenment. In order to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all kind sentient beings.

I have counted all five degenerations, but when I was thinking it was similar to the Tibetan saying about Tibetan man counting donkeys. He was traveling to one country and he had many donkeys. So he was counting his donkeys, but one donkey was always missing; he never counted the donkey that he is riding on. [GL] One donkey was always missing [GL] He could never find it; he could never figure out what happened. So it's similar to that example.

I was telling what happened before. I heard there were also dust rains. One time not so long ago, you might have heard, also in Russia there were incredible huge hailstones, like rock, dropping, many unusual things happened, very inauspicious things. Also in many other countries.

## MEDITATION ON DEATH

First to motivate. What has caused me, from beginningless previous lifetimes until now, to still not be free from samsara from the suffering realm? What is it that makes me waste my whole life, that doesn't allow me to practice Dharma purely. It is the evil thought of the worldly dharma—the attachment seeking only the pleasure of this life.

So therefore in order to destroy this I am going to practice the meditation on impermanence and death in order to receive enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind sentient beings.

How to do the meditation, either here or in your own country at your home, is to bring the future death into the present, as if it is happening now. You can think it is happening now, like visualizing being in a hospital or a car accident. All of a sudden your breath, which was so strong, stops, like that—either that or all of a sudden you

got some heavy disease or something like that. Then you think the shape of your body changes. Always think it is like this. The body is wrapped with white cloth, all the relatives come round and cry, and everybody is upset or something like that. They put the body in the box and take it away to the cemetery. Then the priest is saying prayers. Things like that. It is put in the box and flowers are placed on top of the box. Each month, each week, the parents come to give flowers. Things like that. The picture of the person is left on the box. You should think of your own picture left on the box, things like that. You know much better than I, so you meditate. [RL GL]

You make your own life. Meditate like this. Bring the future death into the present as if it is really happening, like that. This is really very, extremely useful. It's one of the most powerful meditations on impermanence of life and death, to realize the meditation on impermanence of life and death quickly, to control attachment quickly.

[Break in tape.]

## LECTURE 17

### MOTIVATION

In order to listen the Mahayana teachings about the training thought of enlightenment, which is the essence of the graduated path to enlightenment, it is necessary to cultivate the pure motivation of the bodhicitta. Also, for the present action we are doing now, to not only become Dharma, but also to become the cause to attain enlightenment to benefit all the sentient beings. There are numberless kind mother sentient beings who are devoid of happiness, temporal happiness, ultimate happiness and even devoid of temporal happiness and constantly suffering, so since I have the possibility that I can make them have all the happiness and be devoid of all suffering, I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings. Therefore I am going to listen to the profound Mahayana teachings.

The listening object is the oral teaching training in the thought of enlightenment which is the method for the fortunate one to attain enlightenment and it is well expounded by great, the highly-realized propagators, Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching which contains the essence of the infinite knowledge of Dharma, what Atisha and the King of Three Worlds, the great Lama Tsongkhapa has. Just like butter is the essence of milk, the butter is what is taken out of milk, like that, this teaching contains all the essence of the 84,000 teachings from the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha without missing anything. All this is set up for the graduated practice of one person to achieve enlightenment and this is the sole path through all past, present and future buddhas have received enlightenment. So, just giving a very brief commentary on the oral teachings of the thought training.

As I mentioned yesterday, in the actual body, the precious oral teaching has two outlines: first meditating on the preliminary subjects, and then the graduated training on the thought of enlightenment, which is the actual body.

### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: THE PRELIMINARIES

So the words from the root text of the Seven Points of Thought Transformation.

First practice the preliminaries.

The precious thought of bodhicitta can't be attained immediately, like popping candy in your mouth, all of a sudden. First you need to do preliminaries.

Without meditating on the fundamental, the preliminary subjects, the precious bodhicitta cannot be actualized. Even to make cup of coffee or even to make one candy the person has to make much some effort to actualize it. Even to make coffee there is a process. You have to get water, you have to put it in the milk and coffee and the coffee has to come from a shop, so you have to buy it. So even to make coffee there is long graduated path. Also to eat one candy there is also long graduated path. Like this. So, what are the preliminary practices. If one has to actualize the preliminary meditations, what are those?

[Break in tape.]

...meditating on how the body which has received the eight freedoms and ten richnesses, the body which is qualified with the eight freedoms and ten richnesses, how that is difficult and how that is highly meaningful.

Then, meditating on how this life doesn't last long, and how it is in nature of impermanent life and death. Then, meditating on the actions, cause and result, karma. Then, meditating on the shortcomings of samsara, like you tried to meditate on last night, in order to make yourself free from samsara, the suffering realms.

So, you see these four things are like these preliminary meditations. The realization of these preliminary meditations is the base and the stronger, the deeper the understanding of these basic meditations you have, as that much your mind is trained in these preliminary meditations, your mind is that much quicker to actualize the relative bodhicitta and absolute bodhicitta.

As Lama Yeshe has instructed on this, so this time, just a very brief explanation on the graduated path of the lower potential being, down to the impermanence life and death, then bodhicitta, the rest of the thought training teachings, without need to explain the shortcomings of samsara in the discourses.

Also, usually one problem is that if I continue it doesn't get completed, it doesn't leave much time for the following teachings, so I planned, sort of to do like that.

#### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: PRELIMINARIES, SETTING UP THE ALTAR

From here, down to the training the absolute bodhicitta there are two practices. One practice is the practice of the actual session, [and the other is the] practice of the break time. How one should be at the beginning of the actual session, what is the actual body and how one should complete. So the, there are six dharmas of preparation, these six methods handed down from the great bodhisattva Atisha's guru, Lama Serlingpa. The teachings of these six methods came from that.

The first thing is cleaning the meditation place. The very first preparation is cleaning the meditation place. I am not going to explain how one should clean all these things in detail. I am not going to give that; I am just going to go through the six outlines. Beautifully, perfectly setting up the altar, in a perfect way, as it is explained in the teachings. The statues, the figures,

the paintings, the figures of Buddha, whether it is statue or painting, then the stupas, then the text which signifies the Buddha's holy speech and the stupa which signifies the Buddha's holy mind, the Guru statue such as Lama Tsongkhapa's. There are examples like that, for the main or root guru, things like that, there are bodhisattvas and the protectors, also one has to set up according to what is explained in the teachings, the way to set up. Then cleaning the place and performing offerings are both method to collect merits, and methods to purify the negative karmas, the delusions, very, extremely useful methods.

Then, after that, beautifully decorating the offerings without deceit. That means the water bowl offering and any other offering, flowers or anything—whatever other offerings there are.

Without deceit means straight. It has two meanings. One is, placing the offerings in a straight direction. Of course, if it is a round table, you can make round offerings, but it's kind of ugly and you don't receive the karma of presenting it beautifully. The important meaning of "without deceit" is to not make the offerings with a nonvirtuous motivation, with the evil thought of the worldly dharma, seeking pleasure of only this life. That offering is poisonous. Actually it doesn't become a pure offering, because what makes the offering pure is having a pure mind. So, beautifully decorating the offerings without deceit. That has a great meaning. Even the title explain how to make offerings to become pure Dharma. Then, without explaining much, like that.

Like sort of, without being possessed by the motivation of attachment. [RL] Like, thinking, "Oh, today my teacher is coming to my room, or my Dharma friends are coming, so I have to make a beautiful altar and then they will say what a good meditator I am, how I make such beautiful offerings every day and my room is always so beautiful. I must be a wonderful meditator.

But if the person is doing every day something like this, but normally the altar is full of dust and the water offered in the bowls has been there for years! And you can see the water has dried, so little water is left in the bowl, or the bowl is rusted. However, with such motivation, if one does with such motivation that is possessed by evil thought of worldly dharma, that doesn't become pure offering, pure Dharma.

I think it's pipi time.

#### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: PRELIMINARIES, VISUALIZING THE MERIT FIELD

After this, clearly visualizing the object of refuge, the merit field, the object you rely on in order to be saved from the sufferings of the lower transmigrator being and the sufferings of samsara, human beings, sura, asura, like that, from the bondage binding oneself to blissful state of peace. This is the object you ask help from, for guidance, to pacify the hindrances of actualizing the path and to quickly actualize the path, the objects of refuge and the merit field. The merit field with all the buddhas and bodhisattvas. The Buddha and the Dharma, what is shown by Buddha, the Path, and the Sangha, the attainers of the path—these are called the "merit field" because we plant merit in them just like we can plant seeds in an ordinary field, and receive crops, or enjoyments we can receive from the field, and from that we can make our life happy. With this, we can guide ourselves from suffering, we plant the seed of virtue, the merit in the field of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. We plant the seed of virtue, merit, and then from this field, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, from this field, we receive all the temporal happiness, all the ultimate happiness. Therefore, all the Buddhas are called the merit field. From whom do we receive all

our virtue? It is from the field of Buddha, also Dharma and Sangha, who are the attainer of the path. This is just very generally talking about this.

So, by planting the seed of virtue in this holy field, we receive all the temporal happiness, all the ultimate happiness, anything what we wish. Therefore all these holy objects are called the merit field. It has great meaning, it has great taste, when we call it the merit field. It reminds you what you can do with it, what you can get from it, what it can do. I think I won't explain much about it.

So therefore it is extremely important to plant the seed of virtue in the merit field, to try to plant as much as possible the seed of virtue. The seed of all the temporal and ultimate happiness and perfections. As we have the chance to cultivate the seed of the virtue, the cause of all the temporal happiness and ultimate perfections. As we have freedom to cultivate, we can plant how much we want, we can even plant all day and all night, we can plant the seed of the all the temporal, ultimate happiness perfections all the time. With a normal field of crops, how much you wish to continuously receive, how much you want to plant all the time, to cultivate the different crops and to receive the different enjoyment and continuously receiving from the field, there is no freedom.

From an ordinary field, from an external field you can get a crop twice in a year, at the most three times a year. No matter how much you wish to receive the enjoyments continuously from the field, there is no choice to receive and there is no choice to plant all the time as you wish. With these holy objects, the merit field, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, even without needing so much physical effort, burning and all that, without needing to harm all the creatures in the field, without needing to feel many physical difficulties, as you wish to receive continuously all the temporal and ultimate happiness and perfections, you have the freedom with this human rebirth to continuously plant the seed of all the temporal and ultimate happiness and perfections.

Like this, even in one hour, even in one minute, while we have such freedom, incredible, so easily that we can plant seed of all the happiness, all temporal and ultimate happiness, all the perfections. Without using the freedom, just leaving it out, that is a great, incredibly great waste: greater waste than wasting the external field. Even if you have a field, a property field but you have never used it, never cultivated it, and it becomes a mountain, afterwards the field becomes mountain, full of rocks, with lots of other plants growing. Not cultivating, not planting seed of temporal and ultimate happiness in the holy field one hour, one minute—this is a greater waste than even whole life not planting the crops, just leaving it. Because even if your life is happy, by receiving the enjoyments from the field, that happiness is not caused by the field, it is not born from the field, is not born from the dirt, from the rocks; that happiness you experience is caused by your own actions, by virtue.

And the virtue is received by depending on the holy field, the Buddha. On this point, later on in the part when you read the teachings on refuge, which has the elaborate explanation of refuge, how Buddha guides the sentient beings, in that part you can understand how all virtue is received by depending on the merit field, the Buddha. The answer is contained in those explanations.

#### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: PRELIMINARIES, THE SEVEN-LIMB PRAYER

Then, making offerings through the seven-limb practice. At the beginning of each session, in the afternoons . . . [away from microphone] Pardon . . . ? Oh I see! Oh I see! Oh I'm sorry. Oh, the offering of seven branches in practice. Then, offering the mandala. I also explained a little bit briefly before, before when I introduced the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha visualization, how important to visualize the holy object of Buddha.

If you want your meditations to be successful, to quickly experience, then it is important to depend on the guidance of Buddha. If you want to quickly actualize the path, to attain enlightenment, especially if you want to quickly achieve all the preliminary meditations and especially the bodhicitta, relative bodhicitta and absolute bodhicitta, if you wish to quickly experience all these meditations and to quickly achieve enlightenment then that depends on collecting extensive merits, with great effort, with great continual effort, and purifying unimaginable obscurations, negative karmas, like that. So it depends on how continual and how quickly one purifies, one makes purification and collects the merit.

So, making purification and collecting merits, for that reason there is need to perform [set up] and altar and to visualize.

Then, the essential, the seven-limb practice, offering the seven branches of practice, if you want to collect the merit and purify, that is the principal method to collect the merit and make purification.

Each different practice becomes a remedy to each specific delusion, besides also purifying other delusions, negative karma. Each one also purifies specific negative karmas, specific delusions, and it is the remedy, the medicine for each different delusion. Then by making practice of each of these offerings, the seven branches of practice, you also receive different results from each practice.

Maitreya Buddha, the future coming Buddha on this earth, quickly achieved enlightenment by continuously practicing the offerings of the seven branches. It is explained in the teachings that all seven limbs are needed. If any of the seven parts of a horse cart are missing, the vehicle can't function; it cannot bring the person to the place he wants to go. So like that, if you don't practice the seven limb, the offering the seven branches, you cannot attain enlightenment.

Like that, it is so much emphasized in the teachings how it is extremely important to practice to quickly actualize the path.

#### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: PRELIMINARIES, THE MANDALA OFFERING

Then, the mandala offering is one of the most powerful methods to collect merit. It is a specific method. Besides purifying all other delusions, all other obscurations, the specific delusion it purifies is miserliness. It is a very powerful remedy, a medicine to cure the disease of miserliness, attachment.

Generally there are four ways of making a mandala offering: the outer mandala offering, inner mandala offering, secret mandala offering then the mandala offering of voidness. There are different four practices of making mandala offerings. If you do not understand the fundamental meditations and haven't received the Vajrayana Highest Yoga Tantra initiation, whatever different practice of mandala offerings that can be practiced is the outer mandala offering and inner mandala offering. One who understands shunyata can also practice the mandala offering of absolute nature, of voidness.

The outer mandala offering is as it is contained in the prayer, in the beginning of the course book. It is explained how to make the offering, visualizing the place and then the four great continents, eight small continents, then at the center is Mt. Meru, where there are the categories of the sura gods living. At the top is the Realm of the Thirty-three, the city of Thirty-three, in Tibetan, *tsa-sum*. The asuras are situated down below the mountain, with four categories of Mt. Meru up above the ocean, and four categories of asuras being situated on the surface of the water, at the edge of the water, where the ocean stops.

Then the question is, why can't you see Mt. Meru? If there is Mt. Meru, if there are other continents, why can't we see them, why can't you fly to those continents? You can't see these realms of the sura and asura, Mt. Meru, and those other human continents. The reason you can't see them is because you are blocked by karma. If you have karma to be born there, then you can see them. Either you have to have psychic power, like those previous arhats who could travel from one continent to another. With psychic powers they could fly on the sun and moon, sometimes they take other sentient beings when they have war, when kings were fighting in India.

One time there was a big fight in the Brahmin caste called Shakya. Why we call the Buddha "Guru Shakyamuni" is because when Guru Shakyamuni Buddha took the form of birth, took the aspect of like birth, at that time he took the caste, he was born to the parents whose caste was Shakya, so that's why it is called Shakyamuni.

So, one of his disciples, Maudgalyayana, one of the sixteen arhats who has incredible psychic powers, one time there was a big war, all the Shakya caste were to be completely killed by another king, I don't know remember the name of that king. So, Maudgalyayana tried to save some of those people of the Shakya clan. He took them with his psychic powers—I can't remember exactly—I think it was the sun. However it was their karma to die. Because Shakyas have collective karma collected in previous lifetimes to die in that same year, in that same time, even though they were not killed by other enemies, even though the arhat tried to save them, because the karma, they couldn't be saved, they couldn't escape from death. Because their karma was ready, so they were dead.

So either with the psychic power, like those arhats, you can travel there, or if your karma is ready, then you can be born there. It's similar in your own house, sometimes even the material things just in the front of you, you can't find, even if it is there all the time, you don't find, just simply talking. Even in your house, even in your house you have the material there, you search for in the whole house, sometimes you don't find. It doesn't mean it is not there. Those are also by karma, those also by karma.

Then you blame other people, "Some friends came, they had a cup of tea and they went. They hung around my room; they must have taken it" You completely believe, because you didn't find it, so only way you can see is that they have taken. You are sure somebody must have taken it. Then you see, even their faces look black. Before you saw them as beautiful but now you don't see them as beautiful. Simply talking, like that example.

The question about Mt. Meru and the other continents is like this.

One thing is that, why this continent's sky is blue? This southern continent has blue sky. Eastern continent has white sky, western continent has red sky, the northern is yellow. There are different skies like this. Why this southern continent has blue sky is because the side of the mountain that faces our continent is formed of lapis, the jewel lapis lazuli, and the brightness of that reflects in the water, it turns blue, also the sky becomes blue. In other words, the light and the brightness of the lapis lazuli makes blue color. For instance, if you have water bowls in your house, the light strikes the water and you can see the reflection on the wall, white. However, things like that. This is one explanation Shantideva gave, how it is true, why the water is blue.

I thought a little bit meditation, but I think there is not much time, so it can be done tomorrow.

## RESPECT FOR DHARMA OBJECTS

You need the motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings.” In order to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all other sentient beings, I must follow this graduated path to enlightenment, therefore I am going to listen to the teachings, the essence of the graduated path to enlightenment, the oral teaching of the training of the thought of enlightenment. As I remember now, Dharma text which shows the path, if it is not respected. The reason why you should respect the text, because it contains the teaching which shows the path, path to enlightenment, the teaching that is contained there guides you and makes you pacify the sufferings and actualize the path to enlightenment.

So conclusion is that it guides, it contains the method which guides you from suffering. As the Buddha's holy speech, transformed in the form of letters and guiding sentient beings from ignorance, from suffering by showing the path and guiding the sentient beings. Therefore you should respect the Dharma text and not put it on the ground or on the floor, on the dirty place. You should not yourself sit on the cushions but put the book, the Dharma text on the dirty floor, without anything underneath, or put your feet on top of it or use it as a cushion underneath. When there is nothing to use underneath, then, you use Dharma text as a cushion, or carry it with the cushion or carpet or things like that. If you do any of these things, it is psychologically damaging to the mind, psychologically it effects the mind, it damages the mind. How it damages, it pollutes the mind, it causes the mind to become more foggy, us, to not have clear concentrations. Even though you try to meditate, easily after five minutes you meditating you fall asleep. Normally you don't fall asleep easily, but if you start to meditate, then sleep comes, after few minutes it comes, your mind is in the concentration of sleeping, without choice.

Things like that can be difficult to understand. It's the same thing with the holy objects, figures of buddhas, paintings or even statues. Even if it is not a complete statue, even if it is just a head, or a few lines of drawing, each figure has great significance, signifying the knowledge of the Buddha, the knowledge that the Buddha has achieved. So, like that, it psychologically it damages the mind and even if one tries to listen to the teachings, your mind cannot comprehend, you easily forget what is experienced. Without question it is my experience. That is without doubt. So, you don't only receive pollution from food or from factories. Similar, the reason why normally when somebody gives teaching, they sit on a higher place, on a throne. Thorn or throne? It can be similar! Sometimes I feel it's a thorn. My own experience is, I like much better to sit somewhere down there. When in puja, sometimes I think how very comfortable it is to sit down there, in the very last line. Sitting on the throne is not comfortable, but the reason is to respect the teachings.

Since Guru Shakyamuni Buddha it has been like this. When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was giving teaching to his followers, he put himself on the throne. After Guru Shakyamuni Buddha passed away, his teachings had not been recorded, there are no texts in those times, so thousands of arhats thought that the teachings might get lost, so the bodhisattvas, the arhats, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's followers, they had a big meeting, many thousands of arhats. Then, one of the arhats who had so much teachings in the mind, who has received so much teachings, explained. So, all the arhats doubled up their robes and piled them up and he sat on that and explained the teachings. So this is mainly to show respect for the teachings. It is not for, not for elegance or to show pride. Even though I do not deserve to sit on throne like this, it is just to respect the teaching. It is important to understand, because we want to make the mind happy, and we want to purify the pollutions, we want to purify the ignorance, so there is no reason to add more ignorance, to develop more ignorance, we obscure more the ignorance. So, psychologically it damages like this.

## LECTURE 18

### MOTIVATION

I must achieve enlightenment in order to guide all the sentient beings from suffering and lead them to enlightenment, the highest the blissful state. In order to receive enlightenment, without depending on, without actualizing this graduated path to enlightenment, there is no way to receive enlightenment. So, to be able to completely actualize the whole graduated path to enlightenment depends on listening and understanding the teachings and actual meditation or practice of the teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment. So, therefore I am going to listen to the teachings of the gradual path to enlightenment, the oral teaching of the training in the thought of enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings, Oh then, it is necessary to feel at least like this. This is the method of the fortunate ones who received the omniscient mind, enlightenment, which is the oral teaching, training in bodhicitta, the door of the Mahayana path. It is well expounded by the great highly realized philosopher, Asanga. It is a profound teaching which contains the essence of the infinite knowledge of Dharma that the highly realized bodhisattva, Atisha and the Dharma King of the Three Worlds, the great Lama Tsongkhapa have. It contains the essence of 84,000 teachings without missing one. All these are set up for the graduated practice of one person's enlightenment. This is the sole path through which all past, present and future buddhas have received enlightenment.

So just, giving a, just a drop, just very brief commentary on the teachings. The, meditated on the, so these teachings two things, the graduated ... the before training the Bodhicitta which is actually ..... meditating on the base, the preliminary practices. So before, oh then they are like this. What to do at the beginning of the session the you know, what preparations, you know, how to do, you know, how to begin the session. Oh then, the actual body, then comes, you know, actually the, meditation... then actual action, you know, actual action, then, what to do at the end, completion. So, how to begin the session, what is the preparation, oh then the, in order to make the, in order to make the actual action, the meditation practice to be successful, to not occur, to not occur any hindrances and to be, to be, yes know, to be instant, to be, to receive the realizations instantly, in one second, in one second as the person wishes. Anyway, to not occur, you know, hindrances and to be successful, however, to receive the realizations in one second, that I am joking, but, however to not occur the hindrances and to be, you know, to have successful meditations. So there are six preparations like this.

### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: PRELIMINARIES, THE MANDALA OFFERING (CONT.)

Yesterday, I stopped at the mandala offering part. The external mandala, outer mandala, if you read the meaning of the prayer, if you just visualize it, as you see in the drawing. This drawing is flat, if you visualize like this, the visualization becomes as you see on this cloth, just roughly on this water you have to visualize this time is the round. It looks like the eye.

The short mandala prayer, “*Sa zhi po kyi jug shing me tog tram*”, if you visualize it as in the translation, remember the meaning of that prayer, what is translated, that is outer mandala offering, just visualizing what is there in that shape. “*Sa zhi*”, the base, painted with scented incense and strewn—strewn? Ah yes, strewn—strewn with flowers, adorned with Mount Meru at the center. This is not right. The colors are not right. It has a different color. She drew each side with the same color, but the side that faces you should be white. When you offer a mandala, east is in front of you. There's two ways to start, either east you visualize east, you are offering mandala, in the front of the merit field, or either, front of you.

One is for purification, offering here is east starting here is for purification and offering here, that is for receiving realizations. So however, it is same meaning, but east is there! East, south, like this, and west and north. So, this side, Mt. Meru's face should be white, silver color. It is adorned with Mt. Meru and the four continents and sun

and moon and this is, this is visualized in the pure field of Buddha. By visualizing in the pure field of Buddha, I offer. So, because of this offering may all sentient beings enjoy in this pure field of Buddha.

This is the meaning what is contained in this short prayer that we chant “*Sa zhi pö kyi jug shing me tog tram*.” Even if you just visualize what is contained in this short prayer, that is outer offering. First visualize everything as it is there, then visualize all the continents, all the realms, all the place of the sentient beings, in the pure field of Buddha. Then, having great enjoyments. Not having ugly places. Like deserts, full of thorns or red rock places, kind of hot places, very, very extremely hot, or then kind of extremely cold—undesirable places where sentient beings suffer, you transform them into the pure field, into the beautiful field, then you make the offering to the Buddha. The sentient beings are living there, enjoying in the pure realms.

Then, the next prayer is extremely beneficial for the mind. Maybe, we have time, pipi break.

#### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: PRELIMINARIES, THE INNER MANDALA

If we visualize the mandala offering as beautiful as possible, you can visualize it as pure realm, having the highest quality of enjoyments. Then, it is very good for the mind, psychologically it helps the mind that has too much miserliness, too much attachment in the material possessions. That mind is you know that mind is uncomfortable mind, or that is suffering mind. So, the objects of the miserliness, the objects of attachment, as best as possible, the greatest quality as you can, visualize them. Then, if you offer if you renounce, completely dedicate from the heart all to the merit, to the holy objects, to the merit field. From the heart you offer to the merit field, then that is practice, without being attached, without being miserly, from the heart offering, making complete determination, offering like this to the holy objects, the merit field. This is the practice of renouncing attachment.

It is method to diminish and control attachment and miserliness. When you completely determined, completely decided in the heart that what you offer is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's, it is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's. Think, it is no longer mine, it is no longer mine. After you offered your own body, material possessions, you know, in that mandala, all you material possessions what is there, everything, all the great enjoyments, what is in each continent, the realm of the gods, where they have incredible great enjoyments, material possessions, jewels, unbelievable. Like the king of the suras, even one of his earring, , if all the jewels on this earth were put together and if it is compared to the value of that, they could never compare to the value to his earring, even just one ornament. So sincerely offer like this.

Like for instance, if you have an object that you are incredibly attached to and you completely decide to give it up to somebody else, because you are attached, your mind is unhappy, very unhappy, very unhealthy. Each time you remember this then, you mind absorbs in it, your mind you know strikes in it, like a thorn going into the flesh. Your mind goes inside, strikes into it. When you completely decide to give to someone, the mind not wanting to give it up, wanting to keep it and physically giving it. Not like something you do without choice, but sincerely from your heart you completely decide to give it to that person.

After you had given it, there is no that clinging, there is not that miserliness, that clinging unhappy mind. That unhappy mind is not more anymore. The mind become so quiet, the mind become so quiet, quiet from that miserliness, the unsubdued, unhappy mind, the sticky mind, the mind which sticks to the object from that attachment. The same thing to the person, you have a similar mind. It makes the mind happy; it makes the mind very quiet. There is that realization; it makes the mind very quiet. You can feel the mind empty of the fullness of the miserliness. This is the effect you get when you make offerings, you make charity, when you have completely decided; you receive that effect, that benefit, that calmness right away in your mind.

This is the essential method for controlling and diminishing miserliness and attachment, this is the purification. Doing this mandala offering is a powerful method to purify the unsubdued mind of miserliness and attachment. As you don't have any possessions, any body, any material possessions, you don't have clinging to those objects, so it helps to stop anger arising. Many times we develop anger, pride, jealousy—those minds—because of attachment to our body, our material possessions, absolutely believing "This is mine." Completely clinging to our body, our friends, our material possessions, the surroundings, completely clinging, thinking "This is mine, this is really mine, this belongs to me. Nobody else can use it; nobody else can have it."

As there is clinging like that, when somebody else disturbs you, taking your possessions, disturbing your friends or surroundings, using something of yours, you get angry, you think it's terrible. You think it's terrible this can happen, it's incredible, and anger and the other unhappy minds arise. So, by renouncing the clinging mind with this practice of the mandala offering, it helps stop those other disturbing negative thoughts arising. This prayer you say is extremely useful because you renounce the minds that all the problems of your life come from.

In the second prayer that we often say, "*Dag gi chbag dang mong sum kye waii yui*," "The objects of my attachment, hatred and ignorance." "*Chhang*" means "attachment," and hatred, ignorance arise. Then "*Dra nyen bar sum lii dang long chö chä*," "Friends, enemies and strangers, my body wealth and enjoyments." "*Dra*" is enemy, "*nyen*" is relative or friend, and "*bar*" is indifferent person, "*lii dang long chö chä*" is our body and material possessions, that includes also virtue. So these are the objects we need to renounce. The enemy is the object from which our anger arises, the friend, body, material possessions are the objects from which our attachment arises, and from the stranger ignorance rises. As we haven't renounced attachment, anger, ignorance, as we are keeping these three poisonous mind here, when we meet these objects, we suffer, we suffer between these objects, between these three poisonous minds, we get tortured.

Tortured, all problems come. All the problem arises from that. That's why in this prayer the second verse is "*phang pa me par bül gyi leg zhe nä*" "Without any sense of loss, I offer this collection." Like, while you are eating ice-cream, when you are so thirsty, so hungry, while you are eating ice-cream, and all of a sudden a beggar comes and asks for ice-cream, asks to give her that ice-cream that is in your hand, before you have a bite. With much anger, you wasted a hour to get this ice-cream! Then, all of a sudden here is a beggar who asks for the ice-cream that is in your hand. What do you feel in your mind? While you are so hungry and so thirsty, at such a time as that, you know, a beggar asks this of the ice-cream in you have in your hand, just the moment before you are going to have a bite.

Your mind will suffer, isn't it? It doesn't want to give, deep from deep, deep from the heart you know, it doesn't want to give. "I must have this. I must have this. You know, "for me?" "I must have this for my happiness; I must have it. How could I think of giving it to him!" These thoughts, "I must have it..." and "for my happiness," this is what we keep in deep of our heart, very inside, very deep, this is what we have in our heart. Having this miserliness, it is difficult to separate away from this object, from this image object, from this small object you know. It is very difficult to separate away from this, you find very difficult. Without feeling like that, deep in your heart, this is what, "*phang pa me par*" means—without any sense of loss. You don't feel if you give it to him you lose your pleasure.

So, without miserliness, please grant me blessings and release me from the three poisonous minds, right away, right away. Right this second. By dedicating the object like this, by offering like this, it helps to diminish the confused mind. This is a very straight, psychological method. After it is offered, it belongs to the Buddha, so how dare I think I can possess it myself with my clinging and attachment.

We normally don't say the inner offering mandala in the courses. The Tibetan prayer is not here, but even though Tibetan prayer is not here the phonetics, still you can visualize, the first one, "*Sa zhi po kyi jug shing me tog tram*"—that is outer mandala offering and this one is inner mandala offering. This is very good, very good for the mind. You just offer what it says there, by transforming in the pure realm, like this, you offer. Then, when you offer the inner mandala offering, your whole body absorbs in the mandala and transforms in the mandala, then you offer. So, this is the way to visualize in the meditation.

This is very good also to control, the remedy to the attachment to the body. If you have too much attachment to your own body, you can practice this. Here in the book it says "our" but that should be "my." "My skin is transformed into a golden fountain, with a golden base. My blood is transformed into an ocean of nectar." The blue part is the ocean, in the center between those golden hills and the continents, the blue, that's supposed to be water. That is not water but it shows, that there is water between there, the Pacific. "My flesh becomes beautiful garlands of flowers. My hands and feet, my forelimbs are transformed into the four great worlds, four continents. Upper and lower parts of the limbs, the upper and lower parts of two arms and two legs, become the four continents.

Each limb makes two pieces, so there are eight; they are transformed in the eight small continents. "My stomach is transformed into Mt. Meru." So, you can have big stomach! "My head is a beautiful place." The top part, the palace of the king of the suras. "My eyes are transformed into the sun and moon. My heart is transformed into a beautiful jewel." I think this jewel is on the very top of the palace, on the roof there is a top, like you can see in the churches, some kind of point, like that. Spire? Yah. You can also see this on the top of the temples, on the roof. So, your heart is transformed in that top jewel.

"My inner organs become beautiful possessions and enjoyments." All the piece, the intestines, lungs, all that is around are transformed in a beautiful possessions which has great quality, very high enjoyments for human beings and for the sentient beings. This is inner mandala offering, You can also practice, visualize like this. So, before, when your body absorbs, after you finished making outer mandala offering, then your body absorbs to this, then it is transformed, then you offer. I think that's all.

#### THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: PRELIMINARIES, THE SHUNYATA MANDALA

The secret mandala and those other mandalas, secret mandala only can be practiced by somebody who has received a Highest Yoga Tantra Vajrayana initiation. Then, if you want to make the shunyata mandala offering, it is like this.

If you visualize a rock, a piece of stone, it wouldn't mean anything to your mind. The simple way is to think like this, if you want to practice the mandala offering of shunyata, then think, "I myself and the mandala offering, the object that I offer, you think, in my dream I offer the mandala, in my dream I am making the mandala offering." So, like this, this is the shunyata mandala offering. So this shunyata, practice is so easy! You just remember your dream, that's all. Oh then like this, if you can concentrate well, if you can feel that I you are making the mandala offering, as if you were dreaming making a mandala offering it helps. In that way, even though you don't know the terms of shunyata, even though you don't understand shunyata, even though you don't really feel anything, even though you just see the words, "shunyata" or "voidness" whatever, if you concentrate well, it is very effective, it shakes you truly-believing conceptions a little bit, it moves them a little bit. It touches it a little bit.

It doesn't mean that you don't exist, that I'm trying to prove you don't exist; that what you offer doesn't exist; that the object of offering doesn't exist. It's not saying that. Of course there is something there, something of

you, something of the mandala offering. What you believe is there, that there is a holy object that you believe is there, there is something which does not exist. So I think the mandala part is that much.

If you want to receive realizations quickly, then the mandala is one of the most important methods to bring realization quickly. This has been experience of all the great meditators who actualized the path, this graduated path, such as the Lama Tsongkhapa by making billions of mandala offerings, in such a cold place. Tibet is extremely cold, much colder than here. The cold you feel here in the open is nothing. Living in a cave, not eating, as he lived an ascetic life, completely renounced the worldly life. His mandala offering, the materials that he used for his mandala offering was not silver, not brass, nothing like that. It was just a flat stone. It was not extremely smooth like grass, and on this flat stone he offered the mandala, so many times like this, then he meditated on the graduated path to enlightenment. That's how he received the realization of shunyata, by making so many mandala sufferings. And there are many other stories of many other meditators that, how they have received realizations by making many mandala offerings.

One time when there was no rain, Atisha's disciple, Kadampa Geshe Dromtönpa was advised to make mandala offerings every day, so many times, and when he did, from that time he received realizations and rain fell so easily.

Then after the mandala offering, making request from the deep of the heart to all the holy objects of the merit field, asking all the lineage lamas for the realizations of sutra and tantra, for all the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment. Usually, there is an elaborate visualization, visualizing the lineage lamas and all the different aspects, the buddhas, like this. So usually in the courses, as that is very difficult to visualize the many different aspect of the buddhas like this, all the lineage lamas like, so we visualize in one embodiment, one essence, the essence, the aspect of the Guru, in Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's aspect, but the essence is all the lineage lamas, the gurus, and all those other different aspect of buddhas, the deities the bodhisattvas, the protectors, we visualize like this. So, this is the sixth preparation what, how to do at beginning of the session, which is the method to pacify the hindrances and to make the meditation successful. How quickly you can actualize the graduated path to enlightenment through meditation practice depends on how much effort you make in the six preparations. Who doesn't, who doesn't care for these six preparation, who doesn't have any understanding, who just has intellectual understanding of meditation, their mind is very dry, like a rock, like a stone; it is not like soft soil, where you can plant a seed and it can easily grow. It is like rock, it is like iron, the mind is like this, so it is very difficult to fertilize, difficult to grow anything from there, difficult to grow realizations.

## OFFERING FOOD

So, we are going to meditate on the practice of transforming eating food into virtue, the nonvirtuous action of eating food, transforming it into virtue, in order for even eating food to become the method to purify and collect merit.

So, first, you visualize in the front of you, maybe you can visualize the whole pot that is there in the kitchen! And then you transform the pot transform into an incredible large jeweled pot, a clean jeweled pot the size of the Earth, incredibly large. Then, the food is transformed in nectar, which has a blissful taste, and the color of liquid of silver.

This is actually what you offer but, before thinking this, you should visualize the whole food that is in the pot you know, that is in the plate, you visualize that first.

Then think of this piece of vegetable. First check your motivation, first check your motivation for the food here in front of you. Check your motivation, check the mind. If there is attachment, wanting to eat only for your own happiness, then think like this, “If I eat this food with attachment, that makes me to be born as a preta. If I eat the food with anger, that makes me to be born in narak. If I eat the food with ignorance that makes me to be born as foolish animal. So therefore I shouldn’t be attached, I should not eat the food with anger or ignorance.” Again check up the, again check up the mind. If there is self-cherishing thought, wanting to eat the food for your own happiness, only for your own happiness, check within your mind.

If there is the self-cherishing thought in the mind, then think like this, “Even for this piece of vegetable, so many creatures have died, have been killed, they have suffered, and people have worked very hard. So, even for this piece of vegetable I have received, so many sentient beings have experienced suffering and difficulties, even going through death, being killed.

And even just for one grain of rice, first of all, when the land is fertilized either by a cow or a buffalo working or by machines, so many creatures were killed; there was so much incredible suffering. And other animals, buffaloes and cows, suffered in the hot sun, burning the skin, pulling things, with much hunger and thirst. Then, people worked very hard and experienced much difficulty.

Then, this grain of rice also came from another grain of rice; it is the continuation of another grain of rice, and to get that previous grain of rice, so many sentient beings also suffered and were killed. Likewise, *that* grain of rice also came from another grain of rice, and so many sentient beings suffered like that.

Like this, unimaginable numbers of mother sentient beings experienced incredible suffering, an incredible number of them getting killed, just for this one grain of rice. So, who finally eats this plate full of rice, only me. How dare I eat this food that has been obtained from the suffering if so many sentient beings for my own happiness alone. This is such a selfish motive.

Then, by thinking this the self-cherishing thought become less, it becomes less strong. So think, “I must make that action of eating most beneficial for all the sentient beings, especially the sentient beings who suffered for this.”

Then you transform the food in jeweled pot and nectar. Then think, “In order to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings, especially the sentient beings who suffered for this, I am going to make offering to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.”

Then visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha at your heart, lotus and moon seat, radiating, formation of light.

Then you say, you repeat this prayer, thinking that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is so pleased by taking the nectar, you repeat the prayer:

*Dag sog khor chä tshe rab tham chä du  
Kön chhog sum dang nam yang mi dräl zbing  
Kong chhog sumpo gyün du chhö pa la  
Kön chhog sum gyi jin lab jug par shog.*

OM AH HUM OM AH HUM OM AH HUM

[Rinpoche says each phrase and the audience repeats.]

So, when you take food, constantly if you think, visualize, making offering to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha each time, if you can concentrate like this, then each action of eating food becomes a virtue, the cause of receiving enlightenment, as it is possessed by, held by bodhicitta.

[Dedication prayer.]

## LECTURE 19

### MOTIVATION

Try to cultivate pure motivation like this, thinking, “I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings, the numberless, kind mother sentient beings who are devoid of happiness and constantly suffering. So attaining enlightenment depends on listening and understanding, actualizing this graduated path to enlightenment.”

So think, “Therefore I’m going to listen the oral teachings of training the thought of enlightenment, which is the essence of the graduated path to enlightenment, for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings.”

The listening subject is the oral teaching on the training of the thought of enlightenment, which is the door of the Mahayana path. For those fortunate ones who attain enlightenment, the omniscient mind, it is a very profound realization, the thought of the highly-realized, the propagators, Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is a profound teaching, which contains the essence, the infinite knowledge of Dharma that Atisha, the great bodhisattva Atisha and the Dharma King of Three Worlds, the great Lama Tsongkhapa. It contains all the essence of the 84,000 teachings without missing, and is the sole path through all past, present, future buddhas who have attained enlightenment. Just to offer a very brief commentary, such like that, a drop from the ocean. As it is in the outline, the meditating on the preliminary subjects, the meditation subjects, in order to train the mind in those two bodhicittas, relative and absolute bodhicitta, in order to actualize the two bodhicittas is the actual body of this teaching.

### PERFECT HUMAN REBIRTH

So, there are three ways to meditate on the usefulness of the precious human rebirth, which is perfected in eight freedoms and ten richnesses or enrichments. There are three ways to think about how this can be made highly meaningful: how it is highly meaningful to obtain temporal happiness, how it is highly meaningful to obtain the ultimate happiness and how it is highly meaningful, even in a short time, even in one minute, second, like this. I briefly explained yesterday, like this.

Since we people in the West like very much to go on to beautiful places, beautiful mountains and beautiful, beautiful, beautiful parks, to have vacations, the perfect place to go for vacation, for holiday, is the pure field of a buddha.

If you can go in to pure field of a buddha for holiday, for vacation, then you can have real vacation, you can have real holiday. Otherwise any place that normally people go for holiday, compared to a pure realm, is such an ugly place. Where you’re going for vacation is ugly, and it doesn’t help to relieve the confused mind. So, if you’re competent, you should try to go in those pure realms where there are bodhisattvas and buddhas to have your picnic.

It is also easier to attain enlightenment with this precious human body, with this human body that's born in this southern continent. Why it is much easier to attain enlightenment than with other bodies, in the realm of the gods and in other human beings' continent? Because bodhicitta is easier to actualize with a human body, bodhicitta is easier to actualize than with the those other human bodies, when bodhicitta is actualized it is stronger, when it is actualized with this human body it is stronger. To attain enlightenment is easier, and especially to practice Vajrayana, which is the profound, the quick method which attain enlightenment in one short life.

That is something that there's no possibility at all to do with other human beings' bodies, with the body of the gods. It is impossible to practice tantra. Only in a body, such this the perfect human rebirth, the precious human body which has eight freedoms and ten richnesses, which is born in this continent, only this has the chance, only this body can practice tantra, Vajrayana.

Therefore even if you wish to attain enlightenment in just this next life, it is possible, it is definitely possible. Why is that? Because from your side, you have received this precious human body which has the eight freedoms and ten richnesses, and also the teaching, the profound, quick method to attain enlightenment in one life hasn't degenerated. This teaching has not degenerated yet; it exists in the experience of the minds of the highly-realized gurus. In previous time, the method came from India, but nowadays it is in the hand or it is in the mind of the Tibetan Lamas, it exists with the experience of those highly-realized gurus.

The method is not degenerated yet, it exists. Therefore, there is a possibility to try to practice this quick path to enlightenment. Then, there's no question if we can't practice, why we can't achieve enlightenment by practicing the Vajrayana path. There's a potentiality, even from the side of the body, there's not that much incredible difficulty in the material enjoyments such as the great yogis, whose holy life stories you've been hearing, such as the great yogis, Milarepa. Many of those great yogis and Indian pandits, all those great numbers of Tibetan lamas, the great yogis attained enlightenment in one life, many followers of Lama Tsongkhapa, even the eight disciples of the great yogi Milarepa have attained enlightenment in one life.

There have been many, such as the great yogi Milarepa. He was living an ascetic life, not only living purely in the Dharma, not having even a tiny smell of the evil thought of worldly dharma seeking the pleasure of this life. Besides mentally it is like this, not having even one day's food in the cave, not having even the whole arrangement— breakfast, dinner, lunch, all these things—not having even one day's food. He didn't even have a cup of tea to drink in the cave, just living many times on nettles, nettles mixed with water.

From his life story you might have heard that one time some robbers came who steal from the great yogi Milarepa's cave, but they couldn't see anything in the cave to steal. They were checking round what things he had and then when Milarepa was making the soup, cooking the nettle, nettle mixed with water. So they asked, "Where is your pepper? Where is your salt?" He put some more nettles in and said, "This is my salt." Then he put some more nettles in and said, "This is my pepper."

When he was living in the cave, his body, the outside, was ugly, not like our body, very shiny, very fat, very fat and shiny-looking, which shows we eat very good food. The external appearance of his holy body was kind of blue looking, outside kind of skinny and outside people might think he lived his whole life in starvation, kind of easy to be blown away by wind.

So even though he didn't have any material possession, he didn't have even one cup of tea in the cave, but the surprising thing, the wonderful thing is that he attained enlightenment in one short life. So, why is it not possible with us?

So, the precious human rebirth which has eight freedoms and ten richnesses is highly meaningful, in even a short moment.

## THE BENEFITS OF SAYING REFUGE AND BODHICITTA PRAYERS

Just for example, when we say the refuge prayer at the beginning of the session, “*Sang gyä chhö dang tsbog kyi chhog nam la / Jang chhub bar du dag ni kyab su chhi?*” [“*I go for refuge until I am enlightened / To the Buddha, the Dharma and the Supreme Assembly*”], the first two lines mean taking refuge in, relying on the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and asking them to guide you. Then with the last two lines, “*Dag gi jin sog gyi pä sö nam gyi / Dro la phän chhir sang gyä drub par shog*” [“*By my practice of giving and the other perfections, / May I become a buddha to benefit all sentient beings.*”], you are cultivating bodhicitta. This is also the dedication, because you are saying, “because of these merits may this happen in this way.” So on one hand it is the bodhicitta motivation and on the other it is the dedication.

Even in this short time, when you say this prayer just one time, even if you don't repeat it three times, even just saying it one time, if your mind is not wandering, if your mind is concentrated on the meaning of the prayer, even in such a short time, with the hands prostrating like this, meditating on the meaning of the prayer, “May I attain enlightenment for the benefit of all kind mother sentient beings because of these three times' merits. For that reason I will cultivate bodhicitta.” Even in such a short time, even in such a short moment, if you are concentrating on the meaning, if one is, you know, remembering the meaning of this prayer, or if one is meditating, remembering the meaning of this prayer, you collect infinite merit. Without much effort, you have easily gained infinite merit, good karma. Then, when you repeat it three times, you collect three times infinite merit, it becomes that much purification.

We tried to meditate the other day, the day before yesterday in the afternoon on the short prayer I repeated three times. That is what it contained, that is from this prayer.

Actually, this short prayer, this one verse, contains refuge cultivating bodhicitta and all the preliminary meditations, from the meditations on the guru practice, and perfect human rebirth, from there to karma, which is the graduated path of the lower intelligence being, and from there, from equanimity, the meditations on the samsaric sufferings, evolution of samsara, the twelve links, the three higher practices, the path and all these, the graduated meditations to bodhicitta.

The part of the meditation on the evolution of samsara, the realms of samsara, the sufferings of samsara, such as the four noble truths, these meditations are the graduated path of the middle potential being. Then, the graduates meditation that leads to bodhicitta is the graduated path of the higher intelligence being. All of the path is included in this short prayer, this one stanza.

I think I'll stop here. Then, if you want to go for a pipi.

So it is very good when this prayer is recited to not let the mind wander, but to meditate on the meaning of the subject. So, just, in just in that two or three seconds, you have meditated on bodhicitta, you have planted the seed of bo, the principal cause of enlightenment. In just even two or three seconds, like that, if you meditate on the subject of this prayer. I would think even more than that.

[Break in tape.]

... even of you spend your whole life until the time of death, or practicing kundalini, or the whole life meditating on that kind of thing. You don't need even one birth, besides not seeing a human being, you don't even see one bird, even one ant. Your whole life is completely in the retreat like this, even in the cave.

Even if you think, "I am practicing tantra" even if you don't know any other meditation, if you don't know much teaching, don't know much Buddhadharma, don't know much meditation, I would think just one second remembering this subject, just meditating the meaning of this prayer, the benefits of this prayer, the advantages, can never compare to the advantages even if you meditate for a hundred or a thousand years keeping silent, or practicing tantra, all these things, possibly becoming completely skinny, torturing yourself, all your teeth falling out. Then what happens after you die? The result is you can't take even have a human rebirth. You either take a sort of animal body, full of hairs, with four legs or you are born in the naraka realms. It is difficult to even receive a good rebirth, as you are not trying to control the disturbing negative thoughts which produce negative karma.

However, even if you don't know so much about other meditations or Buddhadharma, if you know this meditation—just this much—I think it is extremely worthwhile, extremely worthwhile. Then, if even you spend your whole life just meditating one these subjects and you don't know any other different types of meditations, if you don't know the graduated path to enlightenment—even if all you do your whole life then is meditate on this all the time, repeating it again, again—I think that is extremely, extremely worthwhile. It makes life highly meaningful, highly beneficial, without question. It makes your life beneficial to each sentient being. Your life is dedicated to each sentient being.

It is said in the teachings that even if you do purification for hundred years with other methods, without training in meditating on the mind of bodhicitta, compared with even an hour's session meditating on the graduated path to enlightenment, especially bodhicitta, which is far more meaningful? Which one becomes more meaningful, this one session meditating on bodhicitta or the one hundred years practicing those other purifying methods? The one that is more meaningful is the one session practicing the graduated path with bodhicitta. This has been much more meaningful than the other one practicing purification without mind training in bodhicitta.

This is greater purification. You do much more purification, if you do one session meditating on bodhicitta then doing a hundred years doing purification with other methods.

Also it is effective for the mind when you think of the meaning of this prayer, when it comes to the point of the sentient beings, "I'm going to receive enlightenment for the sentient beings," if one can think, as I mentioned before, the sentient beings who are migrating, who are wandering in the six realms and constantly suffering. This is contained in that, but if you can remember this, it is just like watching at the movies, like a flash, if you can remember all the sentient beings who are suffering the six realms. By remembering that, compassion arises so that your motivation of bodhicitta becomes stronger.

Also, it is said in the teachings *Entering the Path to Enlightenment* written by the great bodhisattva Shantideva,

If you even think of the benefits of working for the happiness of all sentient beings without missing one out, the merits are far greater than making offerings to all the buddhas, without question.

Similarly, Maitreya says in the sutra *The Teaching of the Beautified Tree*,

The benefits of a person who simply thinks "I am going to cultivate bodhicitta for the benefit of all sentient beings," and prostrates with palms together, is much more

extensive than the virtuous action a person creates by having extensive offerings filling the universes equal to the number of sand grains in the ocean filled up with all the seven precious jewels and makes these offerings to the number of buddhas equal to the number of sand grains of the ocean for eons.

So the person who puts his palms together like this and simply thinks “I am going to cultivate bodhicitta for the benefit of all sentient beings,” this benefit of this is much more extensive than that other virtuous action, of making that extensive an offering to that many buddhas for that many eons.

#### EVEN ANIMALS WORK FOR THE HAPPINESS OF THIS LIFE

Perhaps if you check up how many people are practicing, you can understand how long it can last, how quickly it will be degenerated. You can understand by checking the number of people who understand and who have actualized or practiced the path. It is a small number and the number is decreasing of those who have a perfect understanding of the whole path and who have realized the path. Even though the number is getting smaller, even though it is difficult time, but from your side, from your individual side, if you try to practice, if you try to understand then it will benefit other sentient beings and it can benefit the teachings to last. It gives opportunity other sentient beings to receive the teachings, to understand the teachings.

No matter how much a person is an expert, no matter how much a person is skillful in obtaining only the happiness of this life, just how brave he is to take care, to save his life from dangers caused by other sentient beings, that person is no higher than the animals.

In order to protect his own life, he kills other sentient beings, human beings and, non-human beings, sometimes by being diplomatic, by playing political games with different means, sometimes in a violent way, sometimes in a peaceful way, going around, using many different ways to destroy others, in order to obtain his own happiness of this life. That is not the meaning of being a human. Even if the person is so brave having killed millions and millions of people, other sentient beings, that is nothing; that is not the meaning of human life. Even animals do that. The tiniest animal, an ant, can kill a very powerful animal like an elephant. A tiny worm can get in the lung or heart and can kill a human being like that. One tiny animal such as ant, by going into the stomach of such an incredibly powerful animal as an elephant, can kill the elephant.

Then even cheating each other, playing political games, even animals are expert in this, non-human beings are expert. Like if you just watch a spider, how he puts his web outside and he himself hides somewhere and then an animal comes there on top, and he comes out and eats it up. He hides in the corners. So they are very expert in regards obtaining the happiness of this life. Just to get food each day, they are also very expert. They are also expert protecting themselves.

When I was a child, I remember many times I disturbed the spiders. I was supposed to read the texts when I was with my teacher, from early morning, sunrise, when the light starts to come, from that until night, whole day, except for pipi time. [GL RL] Then pipi time was maybe sometimes three minutes—two minutes for Sherpas—I think three minutes, before breakfast. But when the teacher was going out, so instead of reading the text then I played with the spiders. [GL RL] I threw pieces of paper, pieces of wood on the web so the spider came out. He came out but he can't recognize whether it's an animal or not. I think it tried to bite it but it's not something that he could eat. So he tried one or two pieces then he dropped it out. [RL] So I have so much negative karma to purify. [GL]

Then also if you watch what happens between a cat and a mouse, if you just watch and think. Then the cat is just trying to obtain the happiness of this life; just to get his food he is doing his own work. He walks without

making a noise, very quietly and he hides in some corner and is ready to jump from the corner. He checks up, the mouse might be somewhere here, it will come out through either this hole or that hole. Then it spies all the time in the corner. Then when the mouse comes out, you know, then. They also play political games like this.

Then also the same thing, many wild animals do like this in the forest.

In regards collecting materials for the happiness this life, there are many animals who are expert collectors, like collecting things for next year, for the happiness of this life.

Just if you look at the flies who make honey. Bees! I am sorry. That was a great mistake. [GL RL] Bees. Bees, they are skillful. we human beings depend on them, on their help, to eat the honey. They also think, they also have also this idea, very deep in the heart, "my happiness," you know, "I might be hungry, I might be in trouble next year, in the winter time." They have also same idea as we have, thinking about future, thinking to solve the problem in the future. So then like this, in the summer time they collect honey, with much effort, to eat in the winter when there are no more flowers. There are many things like that.

So it is with similar human beings who only think of the happiness of this life, who collect many material possessions, who spend so much; it's the same thing. They are similar to the mouse who is also an expert in collecting material possessions. They also collect jewels, they also collect precious things. They collect food to eat in the winter time. They save things, not eating it all at the present time.

There is one plant, one sweet plant. It has a sweet taste but different from raisins, maybe sweeter than raisins, I am not sure whether it is in the West. If you have in the West, it is very good to put in cakes or in bread. It's a plant that grows in Tibet, from the ground, I think it's underneath the ground, it's not on top. So this mouse, call *torma* in Tibetan, eats the seed plant and they collect all these things and put them together, put them altogether, maybe in one or two places. So that is saved to eat in the winter time, in other times when there is no other food. So, when people walk on the ground, when the ground is soft, their feet goes down, then they know there is this food, this seed that is collected by the mouse. So they take it out.

When I first saw this, I thought the people had bought it, but it wasn't that. I asked them what was it like before or how you prepared it. There are no branches or anything. The last part is cut, this part is cut, only the middle part is left and there is no dirt; it's clean already. It's always clean, no dirt. It's ready to eat. So people they get one plate or two plates like that.

And also mice are very expert in regards to giving harm. If somebody gives harm to them then they know how to give harm back, even after one month, three months, even if it takes a long time, even if they can't give harm right away. Maybe the mouse was swept out of the house. Then after some time comes back, and then if there is food in the storeroom, he eats it. If you have things in the safe, if there is food in the safe, things which he can bite and destroy, he clears the safe. If you have precious things in a wooden box, he bites this. Even if he can't open it, he bites through the bottom or from the top, whatever he can, makes a hole, gets inside then some things he eats and whatever he can take he does and, things he can destroy he does. So, they can give revenge back. Even after taking long time, they don't forget, they don't forget, you know.

Three years ago, I think, in my room there was a mouse. Maybe two mice, they made nest even under my bed. And I think one of the monks, I think a tall monk, was instructed by Lama Yeshe to not leave the mouse there. I think with a stick, he tried to kick the mouse out. Before they were not disturbed, they were just sitting around and then after that what happened, after some time, they took revenge. One day I went to the cupboard. There is some clothes in the drawer, and there was one thin robe, this thing called a *zen*, that one of the nuns called

Max bought me to wear in the West, or something, in a hot place, one very, very thin one. It was folded and it was just left there a long time. One day I went to take some clothes there and this robe was folded there, it was bitten by the mice. It was folded like this, very nicely folded, up and down like this, and he made a hole straight from there down to the end. So you see, when it was folded many times, by making hole like this then it can have many holes when you stretch it out. But he never moved, he never disturbed anything, any of those other old clothes, you know. So I thought this is an expert; he is very wise, according to what ordinary people are like in the world, people who can give harm back. [GL]

There are many fantastic stories of mice, many examples.

One time in Tibet, there was a great Kadampa Geshe, a great meditator, called Kalungpa, who never laughed, who never smiled, who never laughed in his life. Only three times he laughed in his life. One of the things that caused him to laugh, in his cave there was some mice going round, kind of keeping themselves busy, so while he was meditating he would just watch what they were doing. Then there were three mice and there was a crack between the floor and the wall. What they were doing, they had stolen a turquoise from a family, from a box where they put jewels. Then they transported it at their home. The turquoise might have been quite big. They were trying to manage to transport it, one mouse goes up there to the other side, the other mouse lay down, and they use him as a bridge, then this mouse comes after to push the jewel on the back. So even though they are the dumb animals, they are so skillful in obtaining just the happiness this life, they are so skillful. So that made him to laugh once. [GL] Usually he meditates on the impermanence all the time.

There are so many examples, stories of animals that are very interesting. There are many things animals can do that the human beings can't, methods just to obtain happiness this life.

Just as a person is capable of doing a job, just to live, just to complete each day life, to obtain the means of living, even the animals, the monkeys, the elephants, all those animals in the circus are the same. There are dancing animals, elephants. Elephant are difficult animals to teach, but they also have jobs. They can do anything like human being does, in the circus, dancing different ways, according to music. They can do many things. What I am saying, any of these means, however, is just working for the happiness of this life. That is not the meaning of the human life, because even the non-humans, animals can do.

#### ONLY VIRTUE MAKES LIFE MEANINGFUL

...how to make the life meaningful. In the West people are so curious. They think just to walk on waters, or if a person can fly, then it's like being enlightened. If the person can fly then it's more than enlightened. Enlightened, buddhahood, the person who has achieved buddhahood doesn't make sense to the person. If you say this person can fly, this person can walk on the water, then wow! They think much more than having achieved buddhahood. That is an extraordinary life.

Flying, it's nothing surprising, because there are so many numberless creatures flying in space. Mosquitoes fly. Mosquitoes who bite can fly. Numberless creatures fly. If you look in the space in summertime, numberless creatures having luminous bodies. Many people curious, worried about not seeing light. "I don't see light, how terrible I am." Even worms can see some. You can see fish who produce electricity, blue fish. In the zoos they have tiny blue fish which produce electricity and also at night time you can see flies that have light. They don't have a machine to produce light but they have light. [RL] They have light along with them and that they can see enough. But even if a person has light, that is nothing. Even if he can fly, all these things, nothing of these powers is the meaning of this human life.

We flew numberless times. The experience of flying is nothing new; we have experienced flying numberless times, by taking those animal bodies, the different animal's body, we flew numberless times. We have light in the body numberless times.

Even if you have psychic knowledge and are able to remember past and future or you can read other people's minds, even if you can see very far things, can understand other people's languages without needing to go to school, without needing to be taught, even if you can understand the previous causes that were collected of things like famine—even if you have all the five psychic knowledges, this still is not the meaning of human life because we have all experienced this numberless times in previous lives. And even having one-pointed concentration which lasts for how many hundreds of years without any distraction is still not meaning of this human life.

Creating virtuous action is the meaning of human life. Creating virtuous action is the meaning of human life but it's still not the highest or best meaning of human life. The best thing, the highest meaning of human life is year by year, month by month, week by week, day by week, trying to leave the impression, training the mind in the three principal aspects of the path of the graduate path to enlightenment, and also training the mind in the graduated path of the Mantrayana, of tantra. By leaving an impression on the mind of this path, then leading closer and closer, day by day, week by week, leading the mind closer and closer to the three essences, the three principal aspects of path to enlightenment and the Vajrayana.

And even if you can't do so many of those things, even if your mind is incapable of doing all these, the thing that makes the life most meaningful is training the mind completely on concentrating on the thought of enlightenment, bodhicitta.

For instance, the way of leaving an impression each day to making the mind closer to the principal aspects of path and the Vajrayana graduated path to enlightenment, how to lead the mind closer to that, is every morning, first doing the direct meditation on such a short teaching which contains the essence of the whole path. With purification, then concentrating on the meaning of the subject. In such short time you have moved the mind that much closer as you leave that much impression on the path, actually that much. This one of the best methods to make life meaningful in that day. It becomes meaningful. This is one of the main methods to quickly attain enlightenment.

I think I'll stop here.

Then my suggestion is this. Since you don't have time to do all the meditations every day, since it is difficult to spend so much time in studying, meditating and things like that, without working one very good thing to stop each year becoming useless, meaningless, is to make retreat on the lam-rim, retreat on the graduated path to enlightenment. Make a retreat on the teachings you have received, each year, for either fifteen days or if possible one month. That is excellent, or even at least one week. Then during that times as much as possible try to train the mind in bodhicitta. In that way then all the money you have saved by working very hard, exhausting the body and mind, by spending the money for the retreat or taking teachings, it becomes so worthwhile that you have been working, that you have been going through the difficulties of working. Even if you have the intention like this when you work, to collect the money to practice Dharma, even your work becomes very good, it becomes Dharma.

Visualize the nectar, with Guru Shakyamuni Buddha at the heart. "I am going to meditate in order to receive enlightenment for the benefit of all the sentient beings."

[Chanting.]

[Dedication.]

## LECTURE 20

### ANGER BLOCKS OBTAINING PERFECT HUMAN REBIRTH

Even when you have collected virtue, and think, “I have collected much good karma, I have collected much virtue, I have meditated for years and years. I have been meditating five years ago. I have been meditating seven years.” Like this. Even if you think like this, “I have collected much virtue by keeping precepts,” even if you think like this, “I am good, I am not bad, because I have been keeping precepts, I took ordination many times. I meditated for seven years, how can it be possible?” Even if you think like that about the virtue that has been collected if you check up like this, [it can still be destroyed].

If I mention this quotation from the great bodhisattva Shantideva’s teaching, we can understand from this.

The charity of offering to those who have gone to the blissful state which has been collected for thousands eons can be destroyed in one second by anger.

The great bodhisattva Shantideva said this in his teachings. He also said,

If one second’s negative action can cause you to be reborn in the unceasing narak state for eons, then no question that you will be unable to migrate to the realm of the happy migrators by the negative karma that has been created since beginningless previous lifetimes.

Remembering this quotation, this teaching is extremely beneficial, extremely effective for the mind, to control the disturbing thoughts, and in order to constantly create good karma.

If you get angry at a very new bodhisattva, let alone a higher bodhisattva then the good karma you have collected for thousand eons can be destroyed. If you get angry at a sentient being who has a higher realization than you, so much good karma that has been collected for long time, for thousands of eons, for many hundreds of years, depending on level of the other person’s mind, gets completely destroyed. It gets completely destroyed, like this. Even though those merits are dedicated, it makes it to not experience the result of those virtue, it delays it for thousands of eons, for two or three eons, even though it is dedicated. By anger arising, it postpones for that length of time experiencing the result, depending on whom you get angry with, if other one has higher realization than oneself.

This second quotation, generating anger and heresy like that to holy beings, such as one from whom one received initiation or from whom one’s guru, things like that, generating anger and heresy creates incredible powerful negative karma. Even one single of the action of having anger results in being born and experiencing the sufferings in the worst state that’s called the unceasing suffering state, to be experienced for one eon. From that negative action, generating anger or heresy for one second.

Normally, we don’t know who is a bodhisattva and who is not a bodhisattva. With our limited knowledge, from outside looking, we cannot discriminate the level of the person’s mind. Looking from the outside, we cannot discriminate. Because outside looking is the vision of our own mind. It’s the vision of our karma, it’s the

vision of our own mind, our own karma. Therefore, we see other sentient beings according to our karma, how purely we see other sentient beings depends on our karma.

There is so much to talk about on this point; there are so much stories to explain the point. Just like a photographing a scene badly, if you make a bad film, then when you project it onto the wall, what you see looks bad. What you see there is what is recorded in the film. You can't see better, you can't see something different there. You can't see something better, that person in the film having better actions, a better life on there, what the person is doing is not recorded on the film. If what is on the film is that person stealing, then all the other good things that person does is not recorded, meditating or making charity or something. That film is like karma. Our karma is like this film.

[Break in tape.]

We don't know who is a buddha, who is not a buddha, who is a bodhisattva, who is not a bodhisattva. We cannot judge except if one has the mind power, psychic knowledge in order to see the level of other person's mind. Therefore, now we check up, one month, one day, in one week how many times we get angry, one month how many times we get angry, one year how many times we get angry, like this, by checking, then we understand, we can see clearly, like this we can understand, we can see how many virtues there are or not. So therefore it's extremely important to be careful with other sentient beings, even if it's an animal. Even if it's not a human being, we has to be careful. As we cannot see the level of mind, outside we cannot judge as we see, so it's extremely important to control the anger.

The cause of a perfect human rebirth is moral conduct, charity and prayer like this, but check up. Even without talking the precepts, just even let's say taking one precept, not killing. How many people in the world are living in just that one precept, not killing. It's such a small number, an incredibly small number. People who are not living in the precept of not killing, it's an incredible number, an unbelievable number. This only talking in this world. An incredible, unbelievable number, like this. Checking outside like this, checking relating one's own life also, then even you can think you took ordination many times, then also many times also it wasn't taken purely or it was broken, things like that. Then, as I just mentioned, it was destroyed by anger arising.

Even the virtuous actions that was done, was not so powerful, not perfect. Not perfect. And then any nonvirtuous actions collected by yourself, most of them were done so perfectly, just purely, perfectly, with motivation, with the action, the goal, the rejoicing, "how good it is that I have killed! How good it is that this morning I have killed ten mosquitoes in my room who was disturbing me." Then feeling much happier. "I have killed all these." After killing one life, one fly, feeling great happiness in the mind, "How fantastic, that's what is needed, that is what is needed!" Things like that.

If something, some bad thing, some catastrophe happens to your enemy, happens in his life to somebody you feel jealous of, you think how good it is, you feel so happy, how good it is, you know, clapping your hands. Maybe you dance also! [GL] Some people do. Some people have parties if the person they dislike very is killed or dies or something. That's how nonvirtuous actions are done so perfectly, with rejoicing, but this doesn't happen so much with the virtuous actions.

Even if there is virtuous action that has been collected, it is not enough powerful at the death time to receive a perfect human rebirth after this, right after this, it is not enough powerful. But nonvirtuous actions are very powerful.

Some of these you can understand. One way to check up, is all the animals who are under the water. In the depth of their heart, in their mind is “my happiness;” they are only concerned with the happiness just this life. Thinking this is the most important thing, they keep themselves so busy, running up and down, trying to find a place to escape from fears, from the danger of other animals, trying to find food to eat, trying, too busy, so busy seeking food, things like that. So busy running up and down. With attachment, with the attachment seeking the pleasures of this life. Then same thing, you just watch again the same thing with the animals that you see on the ground, the same thing.

Watch one city, just visualize, like you see on television. If you just watch, for instance, your city, if you just watch all the people, those who are so busy by flying in an airplane, so busy flying in the space, so busy going in the water, so busy going on the road in the cars, so busy in the shops, just watch the whole thing. And watch their mind. Just watch all their minds. So again, the same thing you can find, in the depth of their hearts there is only the thought of the happiness of just this life, just this one life. That is what is in the depth of their hearts, all the time only concern for the happiness of just this life. To obtain this aim, keeping so busy doing different things, in the house, flying in the space, going under the water, in the cars, doing all kinds of different works to obtain just this aim, whatever the person can think of.

The works of this life are done with attachment seeking pleasure of this life. So now, especially with this last one we can see how difficult it is to receive the perfect human rebirth in the next life. Whether it is difficult or easy? From this, this is the answer to the previous thing. This is the answer to the question why it is extremely difficult to receive the perfect human rebirth. Through these examples and even through numbers, even the number of human beings are so incredibly few, while others are so incredibly many, so it is incredibly easy to be born [non-human].

You see many couples who want to have a child very badly. They do whatever they can, seeing doctors and whatever has to be done, they manage so many ways, but they never get a child. They try so hard with all the methods they can think of, what the doctors and others suggest, but nothing happens. This is the answer to that question, the question why human beings numbers so incredibly small and number of others so large and so easy to be born.

What is the thing that makes you waste this precious human rebirth? What makes it difficult to receive the perfect human rebirth again and what disturbs you from receiving ultimate happiness, to receive nirvana, to receive enlightenment, why? Because, as long as your mind is in the evil thought of worldly dharma, then it doesn't allow any place for the mind to renounce samsara. It doesn't allow you to have a place for the mind renouncing samsara, this realization. The mind renouncing samsara depends on receiving the mind renouncing not only the suffering realm but also the causes of the suffering realm, the cause of the samsara, delusion, disturbing negative thoughts, such as attachment. That is what has to be renounced; that is the most important thing what has to be renounced, attachment. So, if there is the evil thought of worldly dharma lives in your mind, there is no way to receive the mind renouncing samsara. So, you can see now how the evil thought of worldly dharma disturbs receiving the mind renouncing samsara. That's how it blocks you receiving ultimate happiness. Because mind renouncing samsara, that is the door of the path to nirvana. It is impossible also to attain enlightenment, because without receiving mind renouncing samsara you can't achieve bodhicitta.

How it disturbs both temporal happiness and the practice of Dharma, it disturbs creating the cause to create virtue. Like for instance, even the person is trying to live in the precept, the evil thought of worldly dharma makes you to have concern for the happiness of this life, so the evil thought of worldly dharma obliges you to not care about breaking the precepts. Even if you only feel it a little bit, it disturbs your meditation. Even if you want to meditate, even if you try, even if you sit down for one hour, it doesn't let you meditate, it cause many

other thoughts to arise, such as attachment and other disturbing negative thoughts, by remembering the wrong object, you know. There are many examples like this.

I think I'll stop here.

## THE EIGHT WORLDLY DHARMAS

[Break in tape.]

[Even if you meditate with the wish for reputation] at your house or another friend's house, again it doesn't become pure Dharma. "If I meditate like this, with closed eyes, then those friends who see me, who will pass through my room, will think I am great meditator. They will think how good I am, 'thinking I really know meditation.'" Again, you are clinging to the happiness of this life, reputation. Again the meditation doesn't become Dharma since you meditated with the evil thought of worldly dharma.

Even teaching Dharma, even teaching meditation, this only the form, the action which looks like a pure action, which looks like a Dharma action. Just like this example that from morning until night that makes whatever you do—eating food, making *kaka*, *pipi*, coughing, working, reading, anything action that you do—every single action what we do, what makes it to not become Dharma, what makes it to not become virtue? That is as we have already talked about, we have already discussed how, we have already meditated, with your own life, how the whole life has been spent, lived for this the evil thought of worldly dharma.

So, you see, what makes the whole daily life, all actions, all daily life action that ... it, even though one doesn't meditate, even one doesn't talk Dharma, or even one doesn't make offerings, kind of saying prayers, one doesn't do, but any other, even one doesn't do but the daily action what the person normally does, by living in the home, in the city, normal action what he does, the whole thing can become Dharma but, can become Dharma, can [pause] playing music, dancing, making business, whatever it is, can become Dharma. Can become Dharma, can make the life meaningful. But why it doesn't, you know, why it doesn't become Dharma? Why all become nonvirtue? That is ... what [pause] what is the thing that doesn't let you, that doesn't let us, all these actions to become Dharma, that is by the evil thought of worldly dharma.

At night time, when you clearly check back from the morning, you find all the actions were done for the evil thought of worldly dharma, just as the evil thought of worldly dharma wants. So that's how actions become nonvirtue. That's how life is wasted. That's one how one day, one month, one year, your whole life has been wasted like this. So it is so clear, like this.

So that's the evil thought of worldly dharma disturbs all your actions, blocking them from becoming Dharma. It disturbs like that. Even if you try to practice Dharma, it disturbs them, making them not become Dharma, making them nonvirtuous actions. So that's how it disturbs ultimate happiness, temporal happiness of future life, even this life.

This is one way to check up. This is one way to see the shortcomings of the evil thought of worldly dharma, to see how it is harmful it is. Check this, since you were born until now, each problem that you have experienced in the family, with other people, with yourself, even with yourself alone, if you carefully checkup the root of each life problem—not checking outside, but checking inside, checking the mind—when you start to experience the problem, when you start to get involved in that problem, think "What kind of mind do I have?" The mind which starts to experience the problem, what was that mind that I had? What type of mind? If you check like this, you will find for sure there is the evil thought of worldly dharma there, letting you to experience the

problem. The evil thought of worldly dharma has arranged the problem. You can find this, as you check each problem.

All the worries, all the sufferings that we experience with material possessions, not having material possessions, not receiving material possessions, not getting enough money by working, things like that, protesting, making strikes, then all the worries, sufferings, by receiving criticism from other people, by hearing unsweet sounds, sounds that bothers you, undesirable sounds. When you meet unhappy situations, again the mind is feeling depressed, upset, feeling so much aggression. In the factory, if the machine is stopped, is broken, so today there is no money or the things you need to receive in the factory to keep the production going on—oil or things like that, what makes the work go on—if that is stop for one week, if there is some kind of strike or if something happens, then again mind is down, your spirit is so down, on the earth; it's the end of the earth. You are so upset, you come back home with an incredibly nervous, shaking hand, shaking body. Even the body is shaking like this. Even the nerves will be shaken out, all the veins out, with much sweat on the top of the nose, on top of the forehead, like this. [RL] So nervous. Having incredible worry if one week or two days if you don't work. You won't starve for several years; there is enough to last. Perhaps you might die after one more month, you know, but the incredible worry there is, you can't relax, if there is no work.

If you know how to meditate, if you know the teaching, then you can see this as a fantastic opportunity, a time to meditate, a great opportunity to meditate. You don't have to worry. The mind can be more happy because you have more opportunity.

In Switzerland, there are many Tibetan people, about one thousand Tibetan people there working in the factory and there are also some monks working in the factory, as well as many Westerners working in the factory. So I think some strike or something happened, I am not sure, and maybe one month or one week, I am not sure, somehow there was no work and all the other people were screaming, "There's no work! What to do?" All kinds of noises they made. So nervous, so much aggression. But this married lama, he said to the other monks there, "I am extremely happy, I am so happy. [RL GL] I wish we had longer for such an opportunity as this." [GL] That is because of different mind. Because that person knows how to make life happy; that person knows the teaching, a little bit Dharma, there is a great opportunity. That person's mind can be more happy having something to meditate. Just an example, this lama in Switzerland who works in a factory.

The lama who talked like this, the one who felt so happy like this, he thought how silly the other people were being to be so upset and so worried. Even one day not having work they were also extremely upset. What I am saying all these things, all these worries of not receiving material possessions, that is caused by the evil thought of worldly dharma. It is so clear how all this aggression, all these worries came from the evil thought of worldly dharma because by receiving criticism, by not receiving material possession, by meeting an unhappy situation, because the person has so much clinging, because there is great expectation to the pleasure of receiving material things, praise, reputation from other people. There is so much clinging to reputation; there is so much clinging to meeting a happy situation, to hearing good sounds.

Similar like this, with a wife or husband, as there is so much clinging, incredible clinging, then there is that much worry. So much clinging on one hand and so much incredible worry on the other hand. If you go shopping, if you go little bit outside, if this husband goes a little bit outside, from the home, goes to far places, goes for parties, she has so much worry for the one who goes outside. "Oh, I must lose him." Always that worry that she might lose him, so much worry in the mind. That is because there is so much worry to lose him and he will be taken away by other people, used by other people. So much worry to separate.

It sometimes happens that the wife or husband did not come back in the night time, ran away with somebody else, all of a sudden flew to some other countries with someone, with your husband or with another girlfriend. Then unbelievable worry in the mind! That is because there is that much clinging to the person, the pleasure of being with i. There is that much clinging so therefore that much worry comes. Usually, all the fears, doubt, all these things come, if something actually happens, before there is so much doubt, fear like this, when it happens, incredible unbelievable pain in the heart. With all these things it is so clear, it is so clear, if you just remember, examine our own experiences, how all these problems of life are caused by the evil thought of worldly dharma, all these aggressions, all these things. It's so *clear*.

So that is one way to understand, to face, to control the evil thought of worldly dharma. One way is to think of the shortcomings, how it disturbs temporal happiness, ultimate happiness, how all life's problems, all the worries, everything, how it is caused by the evil thought of worldly dharma. It is true, remembering, thinking of this, meditating like this, understanding this, this is the method to save, to control the evil thought of worldly dharma.

The more you understand how harmful it is, the more your mind gets that much more strength to control, to face the evil thought of worldly dharma. Just like the diet, the food, which makes you get sick, the more you feel that what is harming, more you know how dangerous it is, the more strength you get to protect yourself from that danger. Like this, same thing, you see. You don't even want that thing which makes you get sick, that poisonous plant or that food, you don't want even around in your room. Like that, if you find in the room there is something, a poisonous plant, right away you see, you throw it out, far away. Just like that, you get same sense, energy to control the evil thought of worldly dharma.

I think pipi break.

[Break in tape.]

## CONTROLLING DELUSIONS AND SELF-CHERISHING

Renouncing self-cherishing, cherishing others, that is what has to be practiced. After realizing this you can exchange oneself with others. You can do that for others, you can exchange oneself with others.

In order to be able to do that, it is not enough just to be able to speak of the shortcomings of self-cherishing but you should really recognize, really feel just like how an ordinary person feels with the enemy, the other person who gives you harm. Just as an ordinary person thinks, recognizing that as the enemy and then there is no thought rising to help, not one single thought rising day and night to benefit that enemy. Day and night, all the time having only the thought to destroy, to make him non-existent, all the time having the thought to control him, to destroy him. By using many methods you destroying him completely, just like that. Just like that. Just like this, you should figure, recognize, you should feel like this self-cherishing is the worst enemy.

Even when you travel to different countries there are all the fears and doubts. I might get sick or get hepatitis. Even the room you stay in and the food you eat. There might be mosquitoes there or insects that will cause you disease, that will bite you. The food you eat might make you sick. All this is caused by the self-cherishing thought.

Also having so much suffering to receive a bad reputation from other people. Worries about being unable to develop the relationships with the people you like. Or fears you won't be able to control, to destroy the enemy. all these kind of problems are caused by the self-cherishing thought that is living in our heart.

The previous Kadampa geshes, the followers of Atisha, had ways of controlling delusion, the self-cherishing thought. For instance, the Kadampa Geshe Ben Gungyal says, the way to control delusion, the self-cherishing thought is by holding the pointed spear of remembrance at the door of the mind. By holding the pointed spear of remembrance at the door of the mind, think, “If he ties me, I will tie him. If he releases me, I will release him.” In other words, if he controls me, if he is becoming powerful, if he is becoming stronger, you have to become even stronger in controlling him. This is talking about the self-cherishing thought. “If he ties me, I will tie him. If he releases me, I will release him.” When he does not control me, I don’t have to control him.

[conversation with students] [RL]

“If he, the self-cherishing, releases me, I will release him.” This is the way how those highly realized bodhisattvas, the Kadampa geshes control delusion, the self-cherishing thought, like this.

Guarding the door of the mind is like the police, like the military who are spying for the enemy, always standing at the gate, constantly aware, just waiting for the enemy. Constantly aware what is happening around there and waiting for the enemy, by carrying guns. As soon as the enemy comes, the enemy’s face shows up at the gate, right away at the same time, they shoot him in the head, right away they shoot him in his brain. As soon as he shows, they shoot the enemy. Otherwise, if you are not quick enough, if you are slow, if you get late then the other enemy, the enemy, the other enemy he makes the defense. Before you destroy him, he destroys you.

Similarly, the Kadampa geshes are constantly aware what’s happening, aware of their own mind, all of their mind, all the time, what’s happening. They are constantly aware and waiting, constantly waiting, just like the example, that military who are standing there, completely concentrated, waiting for the enemy, to destroy him. So like that, they are constantly waiting. Whether the delusion arises or not, whether the self-cherishing thought arises or not, they are constantly waiting. And then as soon as it arises, in a second, just like the military who carries guns or knives, the powerful, sharp weapons, to completely destroy the enemy, just like soldier ready to shoot, as soon as self-cherishing or delusion arises, they use the meditations like the weapon, like a sharp weapon. What the Kadampa geshes do is this. All of a sudden, like powerful, sharp weapon, the powerful meditations, they remember, the pointed spear of remembrance of the meditations, the remedies, the meditations.

As soon as the enemy, the self-cherishing thought arises, the pointed spear, the remembrance of the meditation, right away they put it into the heart of the enemy. All of a sudden, without delay, remembering the meditation, which is like the pointed spear, in that way they destroy, they control the self-cherishing thought, the delusion.

That’s the way they try to control the self-cherishing thought, the delusion. “If he ties, I will tie him, if he release me, I will release him.” That means, if the enemy, self-cherishing thought does not arise so much, does not control me so much, there is no need to pay so much attention to that. If it arises strongly then there is need to pay much great attention to that, just like the soldier spying, waiting for the enemy. So that’s what Kadampa Geshe Ben Gungyal says.

If there is so much, incredible delusions coming up, just like the flood, just like waterfall and controlling you like this, at the same time what you should do, without letting delusion completely control you, strengthen your mind, just like if the enemy are using powerful bombs to destroy your own forces, then you also will have to use the powerful bombs. So, instead of being discouraged, work to strengthen your mind, then use the powerful weapons, bombs to destroy others. With the delusion it’s the same thing, you should have many different weapons, the meditations, the techniques, to destroy the delusion.

## THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION: GIVE THE VICTORY TO OTHERS

By trying like this, that is the way how you can control the self-cherishing thought, such as the evil thought of worldly dharma and all those other delusion. And one highly realized bodhisattva, Langri Tangpa, I think whose story I mentioned, as Geshe Langri Tangpa said, “I will offer the profit and the victory to other sentient beings.” Why? Why should you give the profit and the victory to other sentient beings, why? Because what you want is happiness, perfections. Why? Because all the good things, all the good things, all the perfections come by depending on kindness of sentient beings. Actually, what he is saying, try to give the victory to sentient beings, because all the good things are received by depending on them. He says ‘he’ meaning one sentient being, but it means all sentient beings.

So what this Kadampa Geshe is saying is you give the victory, the profit to other sentient beings, because of you! What *you* want is happiness. What you wish is happiness, what you do not wish is suffering, so, all happiness comes from where? All happiness, all the good things are received from the kindness of the sentient beings, by depending on the kindness of the sentient beings. Sentient being means all sentient beings, every sentient being. So if it is all sentient beings, that includes also one sentient being, that enemy, what you think of as “my enemy.” By depending on that, all the good things come; they are received by depending on kindness of that sentient being.

If you think, “I don’t have to give my profit and victory to others; it doesn’t matter if I receive happiness from them, it doesn’t matter. I don’t want happiness, I don’t want happiness. I don’t care of temporal happiness, it doesn’t matter whether I receive or not.” However other sentient beings are kind. All the past, present, future, happiness, all the perfection is received from that sentient being.

Because of that, you should give profit and victory to that sentient being. Even if you yourself don’t care about happiness, if you want to help the sentient beings, sometimes there is the thought like this arising, questioning, why profit and victory should be given to others, doesn’t matter even because I have received happiness from him, so I must give profit and victory to others. If the question, this question arises then, if you wish to enlighten all the sentient beings, to release them from all the sufferings, to do that even you don’t care to receive your own happiness but to do that you have to achieve enlightenment. You have achieve enlightenment, you have to actualize the whole path, so that depends on sentient beings.

So, “Without taking the profit and victory to yourself, then you give it to other sentient beings. And take all the deceit and the blame on oneself.”

Here, Kadampa Geshe Langri Tangpa is saying that you should take all the deceit and blame on yourself. Why? All the harm and all suffering comes from cherishing oneself. So this teaching advises, Geshe Langri Tangpa advises that this is the main thing. This is the main point why we should exchange oneself and others. That’s the terms we use, “exchange oneself with others” so it’s easy to get the wrong idea. Usually the way of thinking, you don’t have to call, I am robot or I am tree, I am flower or I am food to eat, I am Nepalese king. [RL] I am a buffalo. It doesn’t mean you have to be called like this. And point out that buffalo and say “that is me.” [RL] “The buffalo’s tail is my tail, the buffalo’s ear is my ear,” It’s not saying like this. “The buffalo’s foot is my foot.” It’s not saying like this. Part of explanation on this will come afterwards.

As I mentioned yesterday briefly, this is the way to think. Not just calling like this, not recognizing like this. This is the main point, his advice is this. This is the main point why, instead of cherishing yourself, you cherish others. Exchanging oneself and others means changing the thought, changing the object you cherish. You keep the thought of cherishing but the object changes. Instead of cherishing yourself and, renouncing others, you

renounce yourself and cherish others. This is what is called exchanging oneself with others. The term I use, exchanging oneself with others. But it's not like the example of buffalo, changing one for the other.

It's not that the money he has in the bank is mine and the money in my purse is his. You can go to spend it, if it is like that. You have all this money. [RL] And make him surprised. [GL] So this advice, this is the main point. Because all this harm and sufferings comes from yourself, therefore you renounce yourself. Because all happiness, all perfections come from other sentient beings, so you cherish others.

From beginningless previous lifetimes until now, because of cherishing yourself and renouncing others, by this mistake still you have not attained enlightenment. You haven't actualized bodhicitta, even though numberless sentient beings have attained enlightenment.

## THE ADVANTAGES OF THOUGHT TRANSFORMATION

However, the conclusion is that it's very good to remember this advice of the Kadampa Geshes during meditation. It's very clear and very effective for the mind to control the self-cherishing thought. The conclusion is the shortcoming of self-cherishing thought is the base of all other delusions. Even if the three times' buddhas, the past, present and future buddhas, explained shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought for eons, it cannot be finished explaining, there's no end.

If you train your mind, just like this given by the Kadampa geshes, controlling the self-cherishing thought by remembering the shortcomings, in that way it is just like pouring cold water on water that is very hot, water that is boiling and making so much noise. When you put cold water on top of that it, all of a sudden it calms down quiet and become relaxed. Like when you have incredible pain in stomach that you can't stand, by taking the medicine, all of a sudden the unbearable pain which makes you want to scream, it completely disappears, then you feel extremely comfortable. It happens to the mind like this. As one controls the self-cherishing thought, the mind, there is incredible peace, realization in the mind.

Without training the mind by taking oral teachings such as this oral teaching of thought training, then even if you have received a billion initiations, even if you have studied Dharma your whole life, with the self-cherishing thought which all the delusions constantly arise from, in your life there is no peace. Because of delusion and self-cherishing thought, all other delusions arise, and you cannot relax. You always becomes the servant to the self-cherishing thought, to delusion. There is no peace in your mind. Even though you know all the Dharma, even though you have an intellectual understanding of the whole Dharma, even though you have studied your whole life, there is no text that you don't know, that you can't say by heart, and you have received billions of initiations, as long as there is no change in the mind, there is no change in the mind through practices such as this thought training, there is no peace in your mind.

You have to control delusions, the self-cherishing thought. It's like you've caught a flea in your hands and you can't just open your fist or it will jump out, you have to keep it confines until you know how to get rid of it. You can't let it get through your fingers. (Maybe if you have fat fingers it's a little better.) The same thing with delusion. You have to control it, confine it.

If your mind is changed like this then it's very easy for your mind to become oneness with Dharma. Then all the Dharma practice becomes very successful and there is no more hindrances in the Dharma practice. Even if you're living in the city in a country where there is no teaching, where you can't hear even one word, once your mind is changed like this then the mind becomes oneness with Dharma. All the Dharma practice becomes successful. Otherwise if the mind is not changed, whatever you do, any education, any knowledge, whatever that is name, what you call education, even if it's the Dharma knowledge, instead of becoming a remedy to the

delusion, it becomes a friend to help delusion. If you don't try to change your mind, just intellectual understanding, knowledge, education, becomes no use.

But now meditate on the verse from the root text. Cherishing others is the practice, by thinking of the benefits of it. So the verse from the root text is:

Meditate on the great kindness of all. By meditating on the great kindness of all the sentient beings, including your own enemy, then you see other sentient beings in the aspect of the deity. Then you can exchange yourself for others. In that way bodhicitta is easily actualized.

## LECTURE 21

### MOTIVATION

Before listening to this course, it is necessary to cultivate the pure motivation of bodhicitta, thinking that I am going to listen to the oral teaching, training the thought of enlightenment in order to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings. The listening subject is the oral teachings, training in the thought of enlightenment, which is the door of Mahayana path and it is method for the fortunate one to receive enlightenment. It is expounded by highly realized propagators Nagarjuna and Asanga, profound teachings which contains the essence of the infinite knowledge of Dharma, which the great bodhisattva Atisha and Lama Tsongkhapa has. It contains all the essence of the 84,000 teachings and all this is set up for the graduate practice for one person to receive enlightenment. This is the short path by which all past present and future buddhas have received enlightenment.

So to offer just very brief explanation on the commentary of the teaching, the oral teaching. The subject is the preliminary meditation which you need to actualize before actualizing the graduate meditation to train in the thought of enlightenment.

### RENUNCIATION

So what makes the precious human rebirth that we receive one time highly meaningful human life? What makes it meaningless?

In order for the whole action of body, speech and mind to become Dharma, even if you try to practice Dharma what disturbs it so it doesn't become Dharma is attachment seeking the happiness of this life. If you wish to constantly make the precious human life always meaningful, all the time day and night, the best thing you should do, the best method, is trying to control this attachment seeking the happiness this life. This is what is called renouncing attachment, seeking happiness this life. This is what is called renouncing this life. It means that, even if you are living in the city, even if you are living at home, doing the same work that a person normally does, your mind is still living in the practice, renouncing the attachment seeking the happiness this life. Even though you are not overseas, even though you are not away from the home, with all the property, with all the family, with all the children, with everything around, your mind is living in the practice renouncing the happiness of this life, then you are renouncing this life. You are a pure Dharma practitioner.

There happened many kings in previous times, disciples of Nagarjuna, kings who had everything round, all the perfect surroundings, all the material possessions, so much population, everything is around, doing the same work but the mind is living in the, the mind is living in pure Dharma practice, by renouncing the attachment

seeking happiness of this life. There have been many kings like that, disciples of Nagarjuna. Nagarjuna has instructed his disciple, one king, "If you are attached to the happiness this life then if you do the work seeking reputation, material possessions or things like that, you will get many problems. The best way you can guide the population, the best way you can benefit the population, to not receive any problems from the population, is to renounce completely reputation, material possessions, the whole thing, the happiness of this life, then you can do great beneficial work for the population. And by renouncing attachment, seeking reputation, material possession, things like that, in that way you will receive reputation, in that way you will receive admiration, respect, everything. It's the best way to benefit the population."

For also those who are living in ordination, what is the most harmful thing that makes you lose all the precepts—even the five precepts, even the eight precepts, even the 253 precepts—what is the thing that disturbs, what is the thing that makes it difficult to receive the precepts? That is so clear. What makes it difficult to keep the precept is because of the evil thought of worldly dharma that is living in your heart. This makes it difficult to keep the precepts. Even while you take ordination for your whole life then after sometime there is danger, you find it difficult to keep them. There comes a point and it becomes difficult and your mind starts to change. Because the evil thought of worldly dharma is stronger than you. Your own strength is small, the power of the evil thought of worldly dharma is strong so that's how you find difficult to keep the precepts. What makes you lose, what makes you unable to keep the precepts is this.

There is a Kadampa practice called the "ten innermost jewels." This is the basic practice they use to live their life. The basis of spending their life is the ten innermost jewels.

It is extremely important that those who are living in ordination, called a monk or a nun, to understand these ten things and try to keep these ten things as a base of your life, like the foundation of the house. Otherwise, as you do not try to control the evil thought of worldly dharma, from many sides, from inside, from outside, thousands and thousands of hindrances to Dharma practice arises. So if you practice the ten innermost jewels, the basis of the Kadampa's life, that makes it simple to distance the mind from the problem, simple to distance from the confused mind, not being controlled by evil thought of worldly dharma, simple to renounce the worldly mind. So that's how a monk's or nun's life become simple compared to their previous life.

## REMEMBERING IMPERMANENCE AND DEATH

Otherwise, even if you become a monk or nun, even if you have entered into this, there are still so many problems. The same as before, there are so many problems, one after another like this, because you didn't make the life simple so therefore same as before so many problems arise, and as before, up and down, if you don't try to control this evil thought worldly dharma. The best method is to constantly remember the impermanence of life and death. Just like great yogi Milarepa said, with his experience,

After meditating on the impermanence of life and death, after I realized the impermanence of life and death, everything I did became Dharma.

He's talking from his own experience. Before meditating on and realizing the impermanence of life and death, when you don't practice meditating on the impermanence of life and death, you do not find any time to practice Dharma but you find so much time to do meaningless actions. There is plenty of time to do meaningless actions but it is so hard to find time to practice Dharma. It is like this. But after you have realized the impermanence of life and death, there is no time to do meaningless actions; it's very hard to find the time to do meaningless actions, to create negative karma. You don't have time to create negative karma, meaningless actions. There is no time to work for happiness this life. Now you can only find time to practice Dharma.

Normally, in the West, people say it is difficult to practice Dharma because there are so many things around. Usually the hindrances to practicing Dharma are not so much to do with outside things, is not so much to do outside things, but it's mainly to do with your own mind. Whether practicing Dharma is difficult or not is mainly a question of your own mind; it mainly depends on your own mind, not so much on outside things actually.

If you have realized the impermanence of life and death, no matter even if you are in the West where there is everything going on, living in the city, living in the center of the city, like the center of New York, the center of London, where there is everything happening, where you can see everything around. Wherever you are then, if the evil thought worldly dharma is controlled by having realized the impermanence of life and death, there are no hindrances where you are. Wherever you go, you don't have difficulty, you can easily practice Dharma. Also whatever you do easily becomes Dharma.

After that, once you have realized the impermanence of life and death, I think there is *real* happiness there, real happiness of life is there. Real happiness of life is there. Why? Because after having realized this, you are cut off from the root of the whole of the life problems, completely. You are cut off from the root of the life problems. So you see, I really think there is the happiness of the life.

Also, going back to West, it helps to energize to realize the meditation, to realize meditation. It strengthens the mind by seeing the problem. It helps because I feel without meditating, without experiencing the impermanence of life and death, there is no way to stop the life's problems. But after you have realized the impermanence of life death, you dare not work anymore for the evil thought of worldly dharma, you dare not work anymore for that. You dare not do any more meaningless actions. So, even though the work you do is same as you were doing before realizing the impermanence of life and death, even though the work is same, but after having realized the impermanence of life and death, you no longer work for the evil thought worldly dharma, so the whole work easily becomes Dharma, if you do it for the happiness future life, if you do it for other sentient beings. Also, after having realized the impermanence of life and death, cherishing others is also very strong. The mind is purer; it is easier to dedicate the actions for the sake of other sentient beings.

I think, first I think pipi break.

It's extremely important. If you don't know the purpose of meditating on the impermanence of life and death, why the meditation is done, if you don't recognize the reason, then what happens is you get fear or the thought of not wanting to meditate on impermanence of life and death arises. By making a meditation on the impermanence of life death, the thought of not wanting to meditate anymore arises. If that thought arises, in your mind, you don't know how to meditate on the impermanence of life and death. If you get a thought not wanting to meditate any more on the impermanence of life and death, that means you don't know how to meditate on the impermanence of life and death. It's not because of the meditation. It's because you don't know how to meditate on the impermanence of life and death. Not knowing why, you don't really like to meditate on impermanence you don't see the point really clearly why you should meditate on the impermanence of life and death. You don't clearly see that it is method to cut off life's problems. to control the attachment.

If you know how to meditate on the impermanence of life and death, no matter how much you meditates on it, the stronger and stronger the wish arises to meditate more and more on it. Even though you experience fear, the wish to increase the fear arises, the wish to realize it quickly arises, the wish to make the meditation still stronger than before arises, instead of regretting it. When your mind is in such a state, that means you know how to meditate on the impermanence of life and death. That means you know the reason why you should meditate on the impermanence of life and death.

If you don't know the purpose of meditating on the impermanence of life and death, if you don't know the point, that's the same as somebody in the West who has never met the Dharma, who knows nothing about the Dharma but who is afraid of death. It is similar to that. It is just the fear an animal has about death, It is similar to that.

Outside people, people in the West who know nothing about Dharma, who never met Dharma, who do not practice Dharma, for them remembering death is only remembering death; it is no use. It's only the cause of fear, no other use. Why? Because they have no method. Because there is no method, remembering death only increases the fear of the death, there's no use. If there is a method to prevent suffering at death, then there is a point to remembering death, there is a use. In order to attain that method, then there is a point to remember death.

There is a big difference between a person in the West who has met the Dharma and one who hasn't. If you have met the Dharma, you have method. You see the other people who haven't met the Dharma and it's like this. Usually in the life they do not think so much about death, they try to put it off, to ignore the death as much as possible. Then unexpectedly, one day, when the death happens, all of sudden, when that person experiences the process, in that condition, there is unbelievable worry. Incredible worry, experiencing the suffering of death, so much. So when they have the worry of death, all these things, so much at death time, there is no life left to do anything, then at that time having fear and worry, there is no use. For outside people who do not practice Dharma, it is normally like this.

For a person who practices Dharma, before actually experiencing the danger to life, death, ahead of time, by constantly remembering death, by meditating on death and then by controlling attachment, you don't get under the control of the evil thought worldly dharma. You not only obtain work for the happiness of the future life, for yourself and other sentient beings, not only that also by the way you obtain the work for the happiness of this life, without expecting it. You receive the happiness of this life without expecting it, by renouncing attachment. Even in this life it is like this. Especially in your mind you make preparation not have worry when actual death comes, to not have mental or physical suffering at the death time. To have freedom at the death time, to have a happy death. To have a happy death, to have freedom at the death time.

Like this, you guide yourself, you guide yourself. Even if you experience the danger of this life, there is nothing more dangerous than the death; it is the greatest danger of this life. Even though you experience this, you make yourself capable of guiding yourself. By practicing Dharma, you are making the preparation for death earlier, to not experience suffering at the death time and to easily receive the rebirth of the happy transmigratory being after death. Without any doubt whether or not you will be born in the lower suffering realms, you are able to guide yourself. This is more important than anything else. This is the most important thing. There is nothing more important than this, because this is the dangerous point. Experiencing death is, this is the most dangerous point. This is what ends this life. This is what to finishes this life, so that is the most dangerous point. This is the point at which you can go up or down; you can rise up or fall down, so this is very dangerous point. There is a choice not to fall down into the realm of the suffering transmigrator, not to trip up into the realm of the suffering transmigratory beings, not to fall down. Death is time where there is danger. Death is the point that decides whether you go up or fall down.

Therefore preventing that danger of falling down has to be arranged before experiencing the death, during the life, while you are alive. When you are experiencing death, it is finished, life is finished, so there is no time then, the mind is not capable. Even when you are sick, even when you have a fever, even when you have a headache,

a toothache, you can't meditate at that time. Even when you are sick, it is difficult to meditate, so of course it's out of question when you are experiencing the death process. It is extremely difficult.

Generally in the world people have no idea when there can be a war, and atomic bomb destroying the whole city, the whole house and everybody inside it. They're not sure which year, which month. They're not sure but there is a fear that it might happen and so they build a place underneath the house and they make arrangements to be safe, before the danger happens. So, even though they are not sure when the danger will happen, they make preparations beforehand. When we see somebody doing that, we normally think of that person as a skillful and clever person.

Therefore, even if you are not sure, even if you are doubtful whether there will be future life or not, it is still worthwhile to make preparations for death. Even if you don't believe, even if you are not sure whether there will be future life or not. Just like those other examples I just mentioned, like many of those example that people do, even they are not sure they make arrangement beforehand, so here to make preparations for death, to make preparations for the happiness of the future life, that is extremely important. Even if you are doubtful whether the explosion of an atomic bomb will happen or not, but death is for sure. Death is for sure. Nobody can say, nobody can foresee that they will never die. Even if somebody says, "I will offer the whole world, but please don't die, please don't die, please live, please never die, please never die," even of somebody asks, "please don't die for long time. Please don't die this year, you must live, you have to live, you cannot die this year." Even if somebody asks, "I will offer the whole world if you can put signature guaranteeing that you will never die in this life, [GL] even this year." Perhaps you might put your signature because you are craving the whole world, but deep in your mind, deep in your heart, if you check up, [GL] I'm not sure. Maybe the person thinks that he wants to own all the possessions in the world before he dies so he puts his signature guaranteeing he won't die that year, but maybe he hopes the person giving him all the material possessions will die this year before he does so he won't be able to complain.

Death is for sure, death is definitely going to happen. So even it's worthwhile to make preparations for other dangers, for dangers of this life, such as sickness, such as other things, it is worthwhile to make preparations for things you are even not sure you will experience or not, then why not make preparation for the death, the one thing that it is definite you will have to experience?

The point I am trying to clarify is this, the reason for meditating on the impermanence of life and death fits into talking about evil thought of worldly dharma. There is another thing, another reason.

For the explanation before, for a person who does not practice Dharma, who knows nothing about Dharma, the fear of remembering death has no use. But if you practice Dharma, even if it is only an intellectual understanding of Dharma, by meditating on the impermanence of life and death, when that fear arises, you use that fear as a tool, you use the fear as weapon to destroy the evil thought worldly dharma, you use this as a tool to obtain the happiness of this life and of future life. You use the fear to stop the fear. By meditating on impermanence life and death, even if the fear arises, that makes you practice the intellectual understanding of Dharma you have, to put it into action. In that way, you use the fear to completely cease the fear caused by delusion. That's why living in samsara, there is always fear of samsaric suffering, because of the cause, the delusions. You use the fear to completely cease the fear. How? By completely ceasing the delusions, through practicing Dharma. Through practicing Dharma, by remembering to practice Dharma, how? By remembering the impermanence of life and death. So there is a big difference. Therefore you should know how to meditate on impermanence and death. If you don't, then your mind gets confused. A person who doesn't know the medicine is medicine, a person who thinks the medicine is poison, there is danger. Even if the correct medicine

is given to him, if he thinks it is poison, he will throw it out without taking it. It happens. Not recognizing that it is the most powerful medicine to stop the disease, life's problems, the disease of the mind.

But even if you don't really practice Dharma, even if you know nothing about karma, nothing about any meditation, but just have an idea about some Dharma, if you know what can benefit at death time, what can benefit for the next life, by remembering death, that makes you practice Dharma. Even if you have an intellectual understanding of the whole of Dharma, the whole of sutra and tantra, the whole thing, if you don't remember death you don't practice Dharma. Even with all that understanding, you spend your whole life just working for happiness this life. Not remembering death, then even if you remember Dharma, you cannot practice. "No need to rush to practice Dharma. Oh, I can practice Dharma after I have everything, after I have a beautiful apartment and have ten children." I am just joking. [RL] "While I'm having a good time, there's nothing to worry about, everything is around." Like that you postpone doing Dharma practice. Even though you think practicing Dharma is good and you have to do it, but one year you don't get the opportunity to practice Dharma, the second year he don't get the opportunity to practice Dharma, the third year he don't get the opportunity to practice Dharma, like this, the next year, the next year, like this. Twenty years pass, thirty years pass, fifty years pass, life just passes like that.

Even if you try to practice Dharma, because of not remembering death, what you practice doesn't become pure. It doesn't become pure because of the evil thought worldly dharma. Actually, I have already mentioned those examples before, so no need to repeat.

Even if you practice Dharma, that does not become pure Dharma, why? Because the intuitive thought that always rises, "I am not going to die, I am not going to die, I am not going to die, I won't die today. I won't die today, I won't die in this year." Like this constantly, having this intuitive thought all the time in the heart, all the time. "Because of this, because of this, I am not going to do, I am not going to die," so all the time, completely believing, "I am going to live." Because of this, your Dharma practice does not become pure. Because of believing, "I am going to live long, I won't die, I won't die," this conception of permanence allows the evil thought of worldly dharma to arise. So whatever you meditate on, it doesn't become pure, it doesn't become pure.

Many times we say this. "Oh, I won't die." Many times we say with certainty. "Oh, I won't die in this year, I won't die today, I feel it. I feel I am not dying, I am not going to die, I feel it. I feel it. My intuitive mind, I am not going to die today. I feel it, I feel it." Right now, if you check up, right *now* if you just think of your own mind, whether it is thinking that "I am going to die today," whether your mind has doubt or not. Without remembering the impermanence, without the intellectual understanding, just the usual conception what is already there, if you just check up, try to recognize that, what you have that right now, "I won't die today. I won't die, I won't die, definitely I won't die during this course." [GL] "Definitely I will go back to my home." Right now if you check up, the conception is there, but can you trust this all the time? Can you trust this conception of permanence, the conception that you get up in the morning with, the conception that you go to bed with. You go to bed with this conception. With this conception you get up in the morning. "Oh, for sure I am going to live, for sure I am going to live and do this, do that, do this." You make a list.

But can it be trusted? Can you really rely on that? This thought, this conception of permanence, this continues until the second of the death. Somebody who is going to die in a car accident today, in the morning when he gets up, at breakfast time, when he goes to market for shopping, for sure he expects to come back and to have a fantastic lunch or something, to have beautiful time. This conception that "for sure I am not going to die," this continues until the accident happens, until the second that death happens. Therefore, there is nothing to trust.

Even if we get up with this conception in the morning, there is nothing to trust. This is wrong a conception that we cannot rely on.

If you don't remember death, you constantly create negative karma, you don't observe karma with body, speech and mind, you never make preparation at the death time so therefore you never purify. The thought to purify negative karma never arises, then so what happens when you die, besides during the lifetime you makes yourself evil, creating much negative karma, not only that, at the death time you die with great fear, with great upsetness. If you have not purified your negative karma in the life, then at the death time, because there is so much attachment—to the body, to material possessions, to family and things like that—there is so much incredible worry, unbelievable worry. Even though we are not dead, usually in our life we have worry about separating from parents, from friends, so of course at the death time, you are completely leaving everything. Therefore, there is unbelievable worry; you feel you are leaving all, completely separating from everything, from people and possessions.

There is incredible worry, with fears coming out. At the death time, there is also so much pain, all sorts of physical pain, screaming, and also then because of the incredible fear, pipi and kaka coming out in the bed. Also at the death time, a person screams a lot, saying all kinds of things, like a crazy person, moving his hands. Even if he can't see, he moves hands, like this. Even if he can't communicate, can't talk, he tries to say something, but it is not clear, because his tongue becomes short in death process. His feet move about; his face looks very fearful, very fearful, very unnatural.

Many people die in so much physical pain. Not only that, they have karmic visions, like when you take drugs, and see all kinds of things, very fearful things and they get very scared. The person sees karmic visions of all kinds of fearful things happening around and hears all kinds of fearful sounds, sounds of killing or beating, so many things being destroyed, like a whole bunch of people around, fighting or trying to kill each other. The person hears all kind of sounds and sees all kinds of things like fearful beings, human and animal, in the form of protectors, maras, with all kinds of weapons, killing and destroying.

As he dies, a person can scream so much, "I am suffering this, something is coming, I am going, I am this, doing this and this." People around him think he's crazy. People are around, the nurses, the family, can't see anything at all but for that person it is real, in his view it is real. Just like a person who takes drugs and sees all kinds of things that other people not on drugs can't see, for the dying person, this is real. At that time, there is no way for him to think what to do, how to stop the problem; there is nothing that has prepared him for death.

And also, sometimes blood comes from the mouth and nose and ears and he faces such incredible fear of fear of dying. When person dies, his mouth is open and his eyes roll back. Some nurses in America told of people who drink a lot of alcohol in their lives dying in incredible fear, screaming a lot at death time, incredible fear, unbelievable fear.

Then one time in Tibet this happened. A leader of a country, when he was dying, was screaming so much, saying that so many people they were beating him, attacking him. Screaming so much like this. Other people couldn't see this. All the people in that country came at his body and beat him and attacked him so much. The reason why he got such a beating was because in his life he created the karma, he tortured so many people in his life when he was a leader. Because he did not purify his negative karma, at death time, that meant he was going to born in the realm of the suffering transmigratory being, such as a narak being. The signs already started, even before the mind had left the body, the karmic visions had already started. Even though there were no other people there, in his karmic visions he was being beaten by all the people he had beaten in his life.

There are many similar many stories like this.

Also in Dharamsala Geshe Rabten, who is our teacher, the one who meditated in Dharamsala, he went to see a man who was dying and who was screaming so much saying he was being attacked, having so much incredible fear. So what happen is when they checked up his life story, how he lived the life in Tibet when he was at home, he killed many sheep, so therefore this was the sign he was going to be born in the narak.

There are many examples, also good examples! There are many positive examples. An example of a good death was an old mother, a beggar, begging in the city. She didn't know any Dharma, but what she normally did was recite the Compassionate Buddha's mantra OM MANI PADME HUM, only doing this. She lived on the street, not owning anything, no material possessions, no car, no television, nothing. When she died, she didn't die in a house, in a beautiful house, in a beautiful, comfortable bed, but in the street. But what happened at death time, so many beams of light came from her body at death time; incredible signs happened at death time, other people cried, even though they believed she was a completely ignorant beggar. There were also many signs like this, for somebody who does good things, practicing Dharma.

### THE DISSATISFACTION OF WORLDLY LIFE

As a child you are dependent on your parents. Your life is playing, then you go to school and have to learn things. Then a certain number of years, thirteen or fourteen, you spent at school and university and the main aim is to make yourself competent, to look after yourself. As a child, you need your parents to look after you, but you do this to be self-supportive. However, this is to obtain the happiness of this life.

You go to school, you go to university, you spend many years studying there. After that, you have to work to obtain what you need for living. After you have the degree, you become a professor or you become different things you want to be. If you have the opportunity to complete the degree and do everything you want, you get a name that you want to get.

Then the result of those many years studying is what? To find job. So that you can make this life happy. This is the result of working many years, finding job after studying, with this degree. Then after having achieved all this, you find a job. Sometimes it's difficult to find job even if you have received all those degrees. You can't find it right away.

Then even when you find a job to take care of yourself and no longer be dependent on your parents, still you only do the job, living the life like that, having a property, a family, what you think of as the best. This is the best happiness that can be obtained, living that situation of life; this is what you think of as the best. This is what you try to obtain.

### THE DISSATISFACTION OF WORLDLY LIFE: OLD AGE

Then after some time, the people in the office don't accept you because of your age. Because you are getting old, you don't have the capability of the body and more; you can't work as hard as before. Then you have to, what do you call it? Resign. Retire. You have to retire. Oh, retired, I am forgetting, you see. Retired. "I am retired now," that means [RL GL] showing something is about to close. Check what this means, "I am retired." That means there is not so much life left. I am retired. When one is called that.

However, then you live on a pension. Usually it is very hard living on a pension. Sometimes you don't get time to live on pension because you die before you get it. [GL] Many times, you don't have chance to live on the pension. If you collect the money after working for many years, then you live on the pension.

You no longer capable of working in a factory as before, but you are still capable of going to supermarket, supermarket with the stick. [GL] By relying on a stick, even the body shaking, you are still capable enough to just go to supermarket, get things what you want, food, clothes and so forth, and then come back. If you can't carry them you put those things in the cart. Like that. If you're a very rich person then maybe you have servant going to help carrying things. Normally it is like this.

Then in the holidays, the whole day, you just watch through the window outside the house. The young people are busy, busy going up and down, with much excitement, with much upset, so busy and sometimes very excited, going up and down, completely concentrating on something. Completely concentrating on something and also running for that. Cars passing away up and down, but you just watch. You just watch. Otherwise sometimes when you get so old also you get bored looking, because looking so much. You have looked so much in the life.

When I was going to old folks home in America, in Wisconsin, Madison, one student who lived there a long time, Laurie, she found job there in the old folks home. I wanted very much to see it because I heard about such things, so I thought I would be very useful for meditation on the suffering of old age, the lam-rim meditation on the graduate path to enlightenment, the suffering of old age. And of course now I'm experiencing it but also to see. [GL] If I see with my own eyes then it is more terrible, more suffering. Then you see, it helps the mind to knock on the door, to tell oneself, "Now you, there are sufferings like this in samsara, so how can you always wander in samsara, taking a samsaric body, experiencing suffering like that again and again?" To persuade oneself, to remind oneself. However, we only went to see the worst parts, we didn't want to see the better ones. This is not so interesting. [GL] So, we're after the worse sufferings.

First we saw the men who couldn't speak. They were having breakfast; it was breakfast time. Each one was in a wheelchair, with a table in front. Some can speak very slowly and they spoke a few words and many of them can't speak, just like they're dumb and deaf, like that can't talk, can't hear. Sometimes keeping the head on the table, like that. Just like... it doesn't matter, I won't give any example.

Then, we went to see the women's part, there many of them, the body was just like wood, like a piece of log, put it there on the bed, like that. There is no control, no moment, the body has to be moved by a person. The body is so incredibly, unbelievably skinny, all the veins are outside. And then, some have different diseases, they have different kinds of the mental diseases like I have [GL] repeating the same words again and again. [GL RL]

One was 103, something like that. She had just received a card from the president, the previous one, Nixon? Nixon [GL] whose life example is just exactly like the lam-rim meditation. [RL GL] This morning, the six sufferings that I mentioned, at the end of the high one goes down. [GL] So then like that, that's exactly meditation on lam-rim. Like this like example is completely remembering lam-rim meditation, like that. [GL]

So she spoke a few words somehow. Anyway like this, without talking much, these nurses have incredible patience. I have really great sympathy and rejoicefulness at their incredible great hard work, incredible patience. You need so much incredible patience. A person who doesn't have patience wouldn't do that, dare not do that. A person who is very nervous, who doesn't have any patience at all, who is so much hung up with his own happiness, wouldn't do that work.

There was one old woman, she kind of works somehow, I don't know. She was in a wheelchair and she made a phone call there on the wheelchair. I think she missed the family and she made like phone call, I think to her daughter, she made phone call, "Hello, how is everything there, how are you?" something like this, she said. The

other one said, "How are you?" And other one, she said, "is it okay?" or something like that, she was saying on the telephone. Then, I think that is experiencing the result of karma. So then like this, saying over and over "How are you."

One lady was saying things like, "We came to see here," and she said, "Oh, yes, right, there's lots to learn," she said, "There is lots to learn here" at the place, where they were. So the staff introduced us to her, saying we came from where Mt Everest is and she said, "It's extremely far." [GL]

Then also one lady we met downstairs, she was a missionary. She was saying, "We tried like this but this is not the best solution, we tried like this but it's not the best solution." That place was extremely helpful, extremely healthy for the mind.

Then after some time, day time you look through the window, they watch like this. In the morning, after the sun comes up they come outside, on the chairs, outside the door, then sit and watch the street, all the different things that are happening. If there are companions, an old mother or old father, then they talk something about life, maybe something about their children. They talk and sit on the chair like this and then after some time they go inside the house. Then, before the sun goes down, they come out again and sit on the chairs.

If a Tibetan lay person didn't have work, if he could live on a pension, he would be extremely happy. Life would be unbelievable, extremely happy because there are lots of things to do, lot of things to make the life happy, to make the life meaningful. They have the worry of not finding enough time, not having time to do what they want. If they have chance like this that they can live on pension, then even if it is possible, even they can spend time practicing Dharma, reciting mantras or meditation, things like that. Even they don't know much Dharma, like you do, even they don't know all these meditations, even just refuge prayer, just a small understanding that the Buddha has such power, knowledge like this, to guide themselves, that can help at the time of death. Having lamas talking, hearing the texts, the teachings from those who can read letters, it can help at the death time and future life. Even if they know one mantra OM MANI PADME HUM, even one mantra, whatever they know they recite, the little Dharma what they know, they try as much as possible, making prostration, making offerings, reciting mantra, making meditation, whatever little what they know, they make time to practice.

Many people, even in business time, if there is no actual work, even in the shops they recite mantras, they say prayers, then they try as much as possible, especially morning and in the evening. Like this they do.

So, if they had such time like this to live on a pension and didn't have to work, their life would be extremely happy. Full of things to do with their life, very happy. And even if the death happens, they have some idea what can be done, what can help at death time, to not worry all these things, what can save from sufferings of the lower realms.

When I check up, those people have no opportunity to recite even one mantra, to collect merit by reciting even one mantra in one night, let alone doing meditations, all those things. Forget about that. While they are capable in their body, sometimes they go from this house to the park and sit on a chair all those hours. After some time then they slowly come back. After some time, they can't even do that. They can't even go to supermarket, going outside to pass the time. They can't do it. Then, after some time, they can't even go to the toilet. Then, it's time to go. There is no helpers, sons, daughters, helping. Usually in Tibet the sons and daughters take care with so much incredible respect. When the parents are in trouble they respect, they help so much, remembering the kindness. It is not so much like that here. People don't help each other, nothing. They are completely left out. The sons and daughters enjoy doing their own things for their own life, completely concentrating on their own

life. Sometimes maybe they go to the old folks home. When a person goes to the old folks home, that is sort of like dying, another way of dying, of leaving the house, like dying.

## REMEMBERING THE DEATH PROCESS

Then one day, death happen. Life ends and there is dead. When death happens, then there is nothing to do. No matter how much fear there is, how much worry there is, then no method. Without method, the mind is completely ignorant of Dharma. At that time, at death time, even if you feel about by karma, during your life you don't believe at all reincarnation, just believes in one life completely, but at the death time, there is no time to make preparation. Even if you worry at death time, it's finished, there is no time, no method, there is no time. Even the person feels that by karma. At that time, the mind full of fear and worry, and suffering, all the things. At death time, seeing all the karmic visions, the fearful karmic visions around you, hearing all kinds of fearful sounds, the mind full of worry, fear, in such a state, in such a state mind has to leave the body. That can happen. Such an experience of death can happen to you.

When death happens, it happens like this. "Now, now I am dying. Now the person who is called Zopa is dying." If I am me, "the person who is called Zopa." "I am dying now, I am dying, now I am dying." Kind of very tired, very exhausted, very tired mind, very upset, extremely upset, seeing all of life like a flash, from birth time until now, whole life just passing, having vision of the whole life, like you have dream. In that time, the whole life, how many apartments you had, how many friends you had, all the enjoyments, whatever you did, just like last night's dream. Essenceless: just like last night's dream, in a flash everything comes, appears. Like this, the mind is so upset.

One knows oneself is dying, the breath is double, breathing out stronger and very little power to breathe in. The breathing out is very strong with a very strong noise. One person who saw another person dying can remember this. Breathing out so strong with much noise, breathing in is so weak. And all the time thinking "What can I do, what I can do? What can I do?" Keeping the family busy, worried, crying, nothing else to do, nothing else to do. Yourself is crying, also other people crying, then making busy, even at that time, doctor who was invited leaves. That time is out of the hands of the doctor. At that time there is no method, even if the mind is extremely upset, even if there is great fear. These things can happen at any time, can happen to you. Today, at any time it can happen.

At that time this body is called a corpse. Then this body is called a corpse. To your name the word "dead" is added. Your name has additional name, dead. If it is my name, Lama Zopa is dead. Zopa is dead. Zopa, then after that the word "dead". With the name, "dead." The corpse is taken to the cemetery and left.

The consciousness is in the lower realm. It has left all the family, left all the material possessions, the house, all the thousands of clothes, thousands of cars, whatever there is, the jewels, the ornaments, everything is left there. You left all those material possessions, those surroundings, completely separated. All the family is left there, crying. All the family is left there in the cemetery crying, all the relatives.

Then after some time, your material possessions which you cling so much, this is mine, this is mine, that is mine, or you try to take care, you put in a box, you fight with people who come to steal, who try to fight. This is mine. At that time, the material possessions belongs to someone else. It is someone else's material possession. Then someone else is wearing your clothes.

This can happen at any time; it can happen at any time. This year, this month, this week, today—it can happen at any time, you're not sure. It can happen at any time. Whether your business is finished or not finished it's ended by death. Even if your case is in court, whether it is finished or not, it's ended by death. Even if you're

taking medicine it's ended by death, whether you have finished taking it or not. Even if you are making business, whether you receive profit or not, it ends up by death.

Even if it is a happy life, even if it is not happy life, it's the same, it is ended up by death. Even if you study, whether you finish your study, whether you not finish the study it is ended in death. Whether you have finished collecting material or not, at that time it is ended up by death. Then your living will, thinking in case you might die, whether it is finished or not, whether it is completed or not, whatever you wanted to say, it is ended by death, before completing what you wanted to say. At that time, the whole thing, the whole worth of this life completely ended up totaled, like you make number, you make total, one billion dollar, you know, something like that. The whole thing is totaled at the end, how much you are busy this life, it is ended up by the death.

When death time happens, when death time happens, when what it is called death happens there is no greater fear than death in this life, there is nothing more difficult. Death is the most difficult thing in life, there is nothing more difficult than this, than you experience in your life.

So like this therefore, therefore as I said before, planting feet by thinking of death, by remembering all the time, you feel the great danger what is going to happen, by remembering this, by keeping this in the heart all the time. Then it is necessary to not let yourself always be under the control of the disturbing negative thoughts, the evil thought of worldly dharma. Practice Dharma without being lazy. Practice Dharma as much as possible.

If you can observe your karma, the essence of Dharma practice is observing karma, so observe karma as much as possible, however difficult it is, no matter how difficult it is try to observe. Such as taking the one day ordination has incredible unbelievable benefit. There are many things, reciting mantras, there are many things, all kinds of different methods, there are things, making meditation on graduate path to enlightenment, meditating on bodhicitta, there are many things like this you can do.

This is something that you can do to not feel upset at the death time, to not to be upset, to have no doubts. Not to have difficulty at death time, at least you should try to make this. This is the meaning of life, the purpose why you are born as human being.

I think I'll stop here.

I thought to give some mantras maybe to recite or to remember at death time, some holy names of Buddha, which protect from rebirth in the lower realm, but I think perhaps in the afternoon session.

*Student:* It's already afternoon.

*Rinpoche:* You have your mantra, the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha mantra. [GL] In case you die, if you die before lunch. [GL]

## THE MEANING OF SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA'S MANTRA

Reciting Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's mantra has great benefits. Reciting once has the power to purify the nonvirtuous karma produced by disturbing negative thoughts that you have collected in 40,000 previous lifetimes. Reciting it just once has power to purify all that nonvirtuous karma, which would be the cause of the suffering all the problems that would be experienced in this life. Even though you have experienced so many problems in this life that does not mean that all your nonvirtuous karma collected in all your previous lifetimes has been used up. The resultant suffering of the previous negative karmas is not finished yet. However, reciting this mantra has the power to purify the negative karma that has been collected in 40,000 previous lifetimes.

Without question, if you recite the mantra with the motivation of bodhicitta, the special thought of enlightenment, it purifies so much of the obscuration and negative karma that has been collected in previous lifetimes. It is impossible to talk about all the benefits of the mantra.

Leaving aside purifying all the negative karma we have collected in one life, to even purify one negative karma, even one nonvirtuous action—the cause of problems and suffering—even if we can purify one nonvirtuous action completely, making it impossible to bring a result, that is extremely good.

Say, we get cancer, a disease that is so difficult to cure. We have to see so many doctors, and it is so expensive. Even after spending many hundred thousands of dollars, and having great difficulties, it still doesn't get cured. We see how when we get it is so difficult to cure. By remembering this, it's something that we should be happy to stop, to purify the cause of the sufferings. If we purify one nonvirtuous action, all the various suffering results of that one negative karma are stopped; they never have to be experienced again. We especially don't have to experience them by taking the body of a lower transmigratory being. Purifying that one thought stops that terrible result.

Therefore, purifying negative karma, the cause of so much suffering, actually should be extremely enjoyable. If you think when we experience the problem, how difficult it is, how unbearable it is, then to stop its cause, to purify its cause so it can't happen again, of course it is something that we are so happy to do. If we can use different methods to purify even one nonvirtuous action, that is really very good. So it is something that we can be happy to purify. The negative karma collected in one life, or in two or three lives, three lives, in 40,000 or even 84,000 lives—if we think of the numberless previous lives that have happened, and also the nonvirtuous actions, karma, produced with the delusions, then to be able to purify all this is a cause to feel so joyful.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's mantra is TAYATA OM MUNI MUNI MAHAMUNIYE SVAHA.

TAYATA means "like this." It is my understanding that it can mean Guru Shakyamuni Buddha has got the knowledge, the freedom, "like this." Then comes the mantra.

OM contains the infinite knowledge of the buddhas. You can think of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or all the buddhas, it is the same thing. Just that word OM contains the infinite knowledge of their holy body, holy speech and holy mind. Just to achieve the meaning of what is contained in OM is to complete the whole gradual path to enlightenment.

The first MUNI means freedom or control. It refers to any person having freedom from rebirth in the realm of the lower transmigratory beings. By control over delusion and karma, they never have to experience the body of the lower transmigratory being.

The second MUNI means having received complete freedom from samsara, from the cycle of taking a samsaric body again under the control of delusions and karma. The person is completely free from that.

MAHAMUNIYE means "great control." Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is completely free from the bondage of being bound even to the state of great peace, of nirvana. If you are bound to the blissful state of peace, with self-cherishing thought you cannot attain enlightenment quickly for the sake of all sentient beings, to work for other sentient beings. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is completely freedom from that.

There is also another meaning of this mantra, where the first MUNI refers to being free from the ignorance grasping the I, believing the I to be truly existing.

SVAHA means, “may the blessings take root in the field of my mind.” That means the whole path to enlightenment. “Blessings” means to achieve all Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s knowledge, enlightenment. To achieve that you have to attain the whole path, from beginning to end, so here we are asking that the blessings—the root of the path, the whole graduated path to enlightenment—be rooted in the field of our mind.

And SVAHA also has the meaning of the infinite knowledge of the holy body, holy speech and holy mind of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

Now, for a short time we’ll meditate.

## LECTURE 22

### DEATH IS CERTAIN

If you don’t remember the meditation on impermanence and death, you cannot practice Dharma purely. If you don’t remember this then also you can’t control the disturbing negative thoughts. If you wish to practice Dharma, if you wish to control disturbing negative thoughts, the source of the whole of life’s problems, it is necessary to meditate on impermanence and death again and again. The best thing is actually realizing impermanence.

Death is definite. There hasn’t been one sentient being on this earth, one human being who has not died. The very first original human being had to die. There is nobody alive who has always been alive. It’s impossible to find anybody who has been living without dying. Even in our present experience, many of our friends and people around us are dying, gradually. Just like a water bubble. Even the family group is like this. That shows that death is definite. It also shows it can happen to us. We know something like that can definitely happen to us. That’s how death is definite.

Also, there is no place to escape death. How many huge rocky mountains we surround your body with, even made from diamonds, even if we put them around us to protect us, we will still die. We cannot stop death. There is no place in samsara where we never experience death, where we can escape death.

No matter how powerful our body is—like a tiger, an elephant or a snow lion—we can’t escape death. This is hard to understand because I don’t think there are snow lions in the West. However, no matter how powerful we are, like a snow lion or elephant, how pompous-looking, we have to die, we have to experience death, we cannot prevent death. There is no medicine which completely prevents the death, which means we never have to experience death. That’s how it is. Death is definite to experience, so therefore we must practice Dharma.

Not only that, we can’t add to our lifespan at all. For instance, even for a person who can live for one million years, that million years depends on a certain number of years, those years depends on a certain number of months, those months depend on a certain number of days, those days depend on a certain number of hours, those hours depends on a certain number of seconds. So it is certain, even if a person can live for a million years, there are only so many seconds, which can be counted. Based on that number of seconds, that lifespan is labeled one million years. As soon as he is conceived in his mother’s womb, right from that first second of time, each second is finished so quickly. Just like that sound of the watch hand or the big clock that goes slowly, [GL] the sound of small watch, each second ticks past so quickly. Just like that, there are a certain number of seconds

and it is incredible how quickly it finishes. Each second of that life finishes so quickly, each second that person's life gets shorter and shorter, from the day he was born, it becomes shorter, shorter, shorter. Life becomes shorter. Each second that person is getting closer and closer to the death.

So, if you check up like this, even a person who lives one million year is nothing, is nothing. Every second finishes and his life becomes shorter and shorter, shorter, shorter, like this. So when you check the details like this, clearly if you try to see it's not long. If you don't check up, if you just think of a million years, it feels kind of very concrete, a real million years. Just like that example, the same thing is happening to our own life.

We can all guarantee that we won't live for a million years, we can all put our signature on that, right away, without one single doubt. Even a hundred years is beyond us. How long we might live is normally sixty or seventy years. Very few people live to eighty. That is rare.

We are just not sure how long we will live. It can be years. Maybe it's twenty years. If we're fortunate, it may be sixty years. Let's say that we might live for fifty years from the time we are born. Those fifty years have a certain number of months. How fifty years happens is because of certain number of months. That certain number of months has a certain number of days. And that has a certain number of hours, a certain number of seconds, like this. So this fifty years, from this moment until death, there are certain number of seconds. This quickly, spontaneously finishes. It does not stop. Life becomes shorter and shorter without stopping. Life becomes shorter, racing towards the death, without stopping even for a minute, even for a second. Every second without stopping, we are coming closer to death, and life is becoming shorter. This race to death does not rest even for a minute, for a second. Just like the second hand on the watch goes fast, the sound of each second of the watch hand, like that. As it finishes, each second of our life finishes. As quickly and spontaneously as this, and we are getting closer and closer and closer as the seconds finish.

We are constantly, *constantly* running towards death. *Constantly* running towards death. Just like the criminal who is put in a police car and they are driving him towards a place where he is to be punished, where he'll be killed. From the first second the car leaves his house, each second he gets closer and closer to the place where he'll be killed. Our life is exactly like this—just like the criminal in the police car. But still that car can be stopped. Maybe if the person shot the police and escaped. We can't escape.

This meditation time, relate this to your life. Meditate on how life is continuously decreasing in every second. Relate your life to the time, the sound of seconds of the time, relate your life like this.

If you throw stone in the air, the stone will drop back down on the ground, without stopping even a second. As soon as it finishes climbing, it constantly comes down, getting closer and closer to hitting the ground. Think that this also relates to our own life. We are like the stone falling down from space, come closer to the ground.

If our negative karma is not purified, making us to be born in a realm such as the animal or narak realm, just like the stone falling, think of yourself like the stone falling down, closer, closer, falling down, closer, closer, closer to the suffering place, the narak beings, the hot burning iron ground. Like the stone falling, coming closer, closer, closer, closer like this, to fall down there. As long as the negative karma to be born there is not purified, it is like this. A person who is definite to be born in those realms, who is not going to the purify negative karma to be born there, as each second finishes, he is a second closer to the naraks. So also meditate like this. This is very effective, this is very powerful way to control the negative mind. The reason for this is that death will definitely happen.

Then also think of dying without having the chance to practice Dharma while you are alive. Each day, each hour, each minute, each second closer, closer to the death without practicing Dharma, without having the opportunity to practice Dharma. Even though you have the opportunity. Each day, each hour, each minute, you are getting closer to the death, but you don't practice Dharma.

If your lifespan is sixty years, half is spent in sleeping. At night, normally you sleep, so half your life is finished in sleeping, only part of the daytime life is left. During your childhood you did not have opportunity to practice Dharma, so that part of your life has finished. This is gone.

At the present you have the opportunity to practice Dharma. You have met the teaching and you have the opportunity to practice Dharma but even so, even in one day, the time you spend practicing Dharma is so little and time you spend doing meaningless actions is so big. Like this, you can figure out in a year, not just the present but in the future, how many years you can practice Dharma. Even if you might live, it is difficult to say whether you can practice Dharma continuously. Even if you live a long life, it is difficult to say you will always have the opportunity to practice Dharma.

## REMEMBERING IMPERMANENCE AND DEATH

[Break in tape.]

[Dreaming that gold is stolen under the influence of drugs] ... when the power of the element of the drug is gone away, then person recognizes that is just a dream. The incredible worry that he had, that his gold was stolen, that was childish, that was a useless worry, a childish, useless worry. So, that makes him laugh, when he recognizes the great worry he had before, believing it was real gold and it was stolen, then afterwards when he remembers, when he recognizes that it was not gold, that makes him laugh. All the great confusion, the worry that he had before is completely cut off, it completely disappears. It makes him laugh that he was worried about real gold. It was crazy, it was childish.

Like that, it is good to meditate on impermanence and death, the same thing like that you can see with worldly problems that you believe are great problems. Just like this you see that it is childish, useless.

I think pipi break.

When you have great anger, when you are getting angry or when you are in situation where there is danger for anger to arise or you have incredible great confusion, with attachment, also pride and many other things, where there is danger to create negative karma or while you are creating negative karma remembering like this, remembering impermanence and death like this, it is extremely beneficial, very powerful like this.

Let's say, for example, if you are very angry to a person, maybe he has stolen your money and there is danger to create negative karma by getting angry, there is danger of creating many other negative karma. Things like that. To harm him, things like that. This is just an example. Think, "If there is such danger like this then which is more definite, that I die today or don't? Is it more definite that I die today, more definite that I die in this minute. It is more definite that I die in this minute. So if I die in this minute, all of sudden if I die with this anger, it's more definite that I will be born in naraka. It is more definite that I get born in naraka." Visualize at the same time what you remember of the naraka, visualize the suffering places, the karmic suffering place of the naraka beings.

Visualize the karmically created suffering place, the cold place or the hot suffering, the red-hot burning iron base, the ground. Think, "If I die this minute, that is the place where I will be born and suffer." As you are

seeing the suffering place while you going to be, when you will suffer, also think in this large pot of hot water being boiled, you even can hear the noise, the water bubbling, boiling. Remember like in the hotels, not only hotels, many times the animals that we eat for food, we use for food, we put in a pot of boiling water, while it is boiling so incredible, we can't put even our finger in it, we put a living animal in it. Visualize like that. "That is place where I am going to suffer in that life, like another country, like that. This is the place where I am going to suffer. Why? Because I am creating negative karma now. I am creating negative karma now. So if I die now, where will I be born? This is the place where I am going to be thrown." Like this you visualize. It is very effective to not just think this but first if you can to visualize it. It is very powerful.

Then after that, put the question to yourself is good. Do I want to be born in those suffering places? Do I want it? Question yourself. I don't want. The answer comes without question, without question. "I *don't* want it. So therefore I should not create the cause. If I don't want this, I should not create the cause, negative karma."

Anyway, whether or not that thief steals your money, it is more definite that you have to be separated from it anyway. You leave the money, the material possession leave you, you leave them. It is more definite to happen. It is definite to separate. The same thing as this is example with the stolen money and the person whom you are so angry with, it is the same with the person you are incredibly attached to. Besides there being no reason to be so angry, there is no reason to be so attached. "That person will not always live with me. Right at this moment, it is more definite that I will separate from her and she will separate from me. It is more definite that I will leave them, to have separation, that is more definite."

To separate is definite what is going to happen. It is more definite than not separating from her, than not leaving her. It is more definite that you leave them. "Therefore, because she will be leaving me or I will be leaving her—we won't be together forever—what's the point of becoming attached? What's the point of getting angry." Like this, especially when you remember the naraka, especially if you have visualized the suffering places, at that moment your anger goes away. Your unbearable anger, that is like putting water on the fire. While the flame is coming up, if you put water on it, it stops. So like that, like that big flame which can cause much danger coming up, by putting water on it, in that minute, it is completely destroyed. That is exactly what happens. Like that, you can control anger and the same thing with attachment.

After you strongly think like this, exactly like this, remembering the result of negative karma and remembering that separation is more definite, then the incredible anger disappears, right after that it disappears, because you don't see it. Same thing with attachment, it disappears. Because you don't see it, after thinking this you don't see the point why you should be attached, you don't see the point, you don't see there is a purpose to get angry, you don't see. Therefore the confusion goes away.

If you practice like this, if you remember like this, when you have confusion it definitely benefits. There is definite benefit. If you don't practice, if you don't meditate, then there is no way to receive the benefit of doing the meditation of remembering impermanence and death. If you practice, definitely you can receive the benefit. You control the disturbing negative thoughts. Like this you can familiarize yourself with the practice without problems.

Remembering the impermanence and death, it is extremely important at the beginning of Dharma practice, to purely practice Dharma. For the Dharma you practice to become pure, it is extremely important to remember even at the beginning, even to continue, the pure Dharma practice it is important to remember it. Even to accomplish your Dharma practice, to attain enlightenment, it is extremely important to remember impermanence and death.

By remembering impermanence and death, you practice Dharma. Remembering impermanence death is the method to practice Dharma before coming to death, before coming to death. So then, at the death time, even if you experience death at that time, your mind is extremely happy at the death time. You can die with great happiness. Instead of great worry, incredible suffering, you can die with great happiness.

You should make preparation to not suffer at the death time. Even if you can't make to not experience death—which means separating the mind from the body—even if this cannot be prevented, this cannot be stopped, what you should stop before experiencing death, you should stop to experience of suffering at the death time.

The best thing, the best thing, that is to escape from the death.

The great yogi, Milarepa, says,

Because of fear of death I escaped to the mountains. Now I have realized the nature of the mind, emptiness, so even if death comes I have no worry.

If possible the best thing in your life is to be like the great yogi Milarepa, who escaped from death. Even by remembering impermanence death and practicing Dharma, that is the best thing. Even if you cannot do that much, at least when death comes you should make yourself not feel difficulty of experiencing death.

Then at least, the preparation you should do is to not feel upset when the death comes, to not have worry. That is the lowest thing you should do, what we should prepare, by remembering impermanence and death and by practicing Dharma.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha became completely free from the cycle of the samsaric suffering, the cycle of death and rebirth completely. He received complete freedom from that by remembering impermanence and death. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha realized the four noble truths. What made him to realize the four noble truths is by remembering impermanence and death. When he was living in the palace, he saw samsaric suffering, old age, he saw a person dying, a corpse being carried. When he was in palace he saw this through the four gates. After this, by this cause, he saw the nature of samsaric suffering. By remembering impermanence and death he realized the four noble truths.

The great yogi Milarepa received enlightenment in one life also by remembering impermanence and death. Many of these great yogis who achieved enlightenment in one life, such as many of those Kadampa geshes, followers of Atisha, so many of them completed the graduated path to enlightenment, all that was also by first, at the beginning, remembering impermanence and death.

Even if you have collected much negative karma, before experiencing death, remember death without being lazy, and purify your negative karma as much as you can. Like this, practice Dharma. Practice Dharma and then, when death comes, you don't have to be scared, you don't have to worry. If you can make preparation before the death in this way, this is what is called competent person, a skillful person, a wise person.

The main thing is at this time, this is the one time you have received the precious human rebirth, you should try to receive a better and better rebirth. Once you have received this, where there is great opportunity, so many possibilities, you should try to receive a better and better rebirth, in order to become closer and closer to enlightenment. It is like a heavy rock that you have pushed up to almost the top of the mountain. This time you have received a precious human rebirth is like this. If you fall into the lower realms it is like letting that heavy rock slip and it slides all the way down to the bottom of the mountain. It is so difficult to push it back up again

after it has slipped down. If we fell down, we would have incredible difficulties, many lifetimes of creating good karma, until we came back up. Again, if we fell down, it is extremely difficult, it's like the rock that sinks under the ocean, it is so difficult to come back up. This is how difficult it is to come up back to the realm of the happy transmigratory being. If you just watch the example of the chickens I mentioned this morning. In everyday what karma they create. If you just watch the animals, if you just watch a dog, if you just watch a bird, if you just watch, you can understand how difficult, how impossible it is to create good karma. From this you can understand how difficult it is, even for a human being it is difficult. Even if the person has met Dharma, even if the person knows the teachings, knows Dharma, it's difficult to receive a human rebirth again in the next life, so it is out of question for those beings born as lower beings to quickly be rebirth in the happy transmigratory being, it is extremely difficult. Unless you can make preparations now to receive another rebirth as a happy migratory being, not even a perfect human rebirth but just as a human being, then your life is completely wasted, completely empty. It doesn't have any meaning at all that you are born as a human being. It doesn't make any difference whether you are born as that or as a mouse. If you don't create any good karma to receive another human rebirth after this life, it becomes the same.

As a human being, to be able to practice the Dharma and prepare for another perfect human rebirth by creating good karma, that is not surprising to me. What is really surprising is after leaving a human body and taking the body of a lower realm being, a naraka or a preta or an animal, where there is no possibility to create any good karma at all, that somehow any being at all manages to again attain a human body, that is so surprising to me.

Check the possibilities of creating good karma, whether there is the possibility to practice Dharma as a nonhuman being, who can never understand the meaning of the teaching, who constantly has only delusion and constantly creates negative karma. How much possibility, how much opportunity is there to practice Dharma? For a nonhuman being, it is almost impossible to practice Dharma, to create good karma. With a human rebirth, because of this perfect human rebirth, having met teaching, there is so much possibility. So of course if you don't receive a human rebirth after this life then it is silly, very silly, completely foolish, stupid. While you have the incredible possibility like this, completely wasting it and, after having taken this beautiful body like this, using this to create the karma to have a body with thousands or being born as dog or chicken in the next life, that is really foolish. There is nothing more foolish than that, there is nothing more crazy than that.

Death is definite, it is definite to happen but that is not the reason you should worry about death. It's not just death, the mind separating from the body, it's not only that. The main problem is what comes after. Even after the body has disappeared, the mind does not disappear, the mind continues after death. At the moment you don't have the freedom to receive a perfect human rebirth because you haven't finished creating the cause. So you can't be sure what body you will receive. This is the main problem, what comes after death.

The mind ceasing at death time, the consciousness disappearing at death time—this is the object of nobody's knowledge. Nobody with a clear, undeceptive, non-deluded mind has ever seen that the consciousness ceases at death. It continues. In the same way, it has never been anybody's knowledge that any person has never died. Since this world began, there has never been a person who hasn't lived forever, who hasn't had to die. There isn't one person who has been existing from the first eons when the first human being started to live on the Earth, there is no one sentient being you can point out. So, this shows clearly that death is definite.

Even in your own country, even in the city where you live, many people die each year, each month, each day. Sometimes in New York they put in the newspaper how many people died; they have a list in the newspaper who died in that week. This is very good for person who meditates on impermanence. Even in one day many people die.

Think of the people you have known in your life. Probably, many of your friends have also died. Many times this is our experience. Just recently a friend was doing something, was planning something, just recently you talked with her, you stayed with her, you went for picnic, and she spent much time planning things to do things in the future. But, today she doesn't exist anymore. You cannot communicate with her, there is nowhere to see her. This has been everybody's experience, many times. While they are walking, while they are doing something, all of sudden unexpectedly they are told that a friend, whose name is called Fred, is dead by accident. One day that friend is doing something, having a vacation, then suddenly he is drowned near the beach somewhere.

People you see every day, people you have contact with, suddenly, from being busy doing something, suddenly they are dead, like a water bubble. On the surface of water you see many water bubbles, but they so easily burst, first one and then another, bubbles disappearing all over the surface of the water, and you can't know which will pop first. You can't tell.

I think there is some devil inside, in my heart! [RL]

So, exactly like this, this exactly how it happens, how it happens around you, to family and friends. That person is dead, that friend dead. You believe that they're going to live long, for a long time. You believe that they are going to live a long time. When you see them you never have any idea that he will die soon. He is very strong, he is very healthy, he is working very hard, eating well, you never had a thought that he might die after a month, you never have a suspicion. You have the complete belief that he will live for long time, you will see him again and again.

Also you make plans with many friends, to go on pilgrimage together, to have a vacation together, maybe to do meditation courses. Sometimes, even after one hour someone tells you, or you receive the telephone call, all of a sudden the call comes, it's about somebody deceased, an accident or a fire danger or something. So like this, it's not sure. In the same way, so far you have been hearing about your friend dying, so far it's been your own turn to hear they are dying. One day, just like water bubble, unexpectedly, just like it happened to other friends, it will happen to you, unexpectedly, any time, any hour, any minute. Doing something and not finishing it. Drinking coffee, even though the coffee is not finished yet, while you are drinking it, even before having a chance to finish that one cup of coffee.

So one day it will be other people's turn to hear that you yourself are dead. If it is me then "that crazy young monk called Zopa, the boy Zopa, he is dead." [GL] One day, it will be other friends' turn to hear that. One day also, you will be like a water bubble, puff like this. In your own family, four or five people, however many people there are in the family, who will go first, who will leave first, who will leave the family first, who will separate first? It's not sure. It can happen quickly, and the one who leaves first can by you.

I think I stop here.

So the conclusion is, therefore the only thing is Dharma. So Dharma should be practiced right now because death is not sure when it will come.

## LECTURE 23

### BEING KIND TO THE ENEMY

There are two things, the thought of seeking work for others and thought of seeking enlightenment. In order to see the object sentient beings, for whom you work, in aspect of beauty, of the two things, the shortcomings of self-cherishing thought and the benefits of cherishing others, the self-cherishing thought is what has to be avoided and cherishing others is what has to be practiced. This is the second thing, the benefits of cherishing others.

It is said in the root text:

Meditate on the great kindness of all.

As I mentioned yesterday afternoon and I repeated again this morning, just trying to make it clear, the meditation is seeing the kindness of the sentient beings, how numberless other buddhas, bodhisattvas and arhats have actualized the path by depending on the kindness of the sentient beings. So one way to think is like that, that other beings, buddhas and bodhisattvas and arhats actualized the path by depending on kindness of the sentient beings.

So without need to repeat it again, when you make the meditation on the benefit of cherishing others like this, it's not specifically mentioned in the text but it is extremely important when you visualize to include this life's enemy and keep him in front of you. If you want you can sit him on a throne in front of you, in beautiful a place, a beautiful, comfortable seat, have him sit there. [RL GL] I am joking. If you want, you know.

It's the opposite of what you want to do with the enemy. You want to give him harm, you don't want to give anything. It's good training, giving lot of things to the enemy you dislike.

One of my teachers, Geshe Rabten, one who was abbot in the Tibetan monastery in Switzerland, when he receives people who criticize him, who complain about him, Geshe Rabten makes a very delicious lunch. [GL] He makes Tibetan food, *momas*. [GL] People who go to Tibetan restaurants know momos. [RL] Whatever is there in the kitchen, whatever is possible, he makes very delicious food, makes good offerings, with tea and food. He makes many offerings to people who complains, who criticize him.

For normal ordinary people in the world, who do not practice thought training, when somebody criticizes you, then you criticize back with anger. Then you meditate on the bad things about that person, on what bad things you can say about that person, what mistakes that he did. [RL] If you can't find something, you exaggerate, you make a story up. I think many Western people do this. If it is a person who you dislike, you make up all the mistakes even though he didn't do them. "He did this and that," you know. You make up a long story. Normally people do like this, they try to give harm, by criticizing, by harming or by fighting.

Practicing thought training, such as Geshe Rabten Rinpoche does, what he does, that's really practicing. Remembering the kindness of the person who criticize you, how kind he is. Instead of getting angry, having compassion and love, and you offer things, especially, you can invite to your home, or even if he comes, instead of screaming to him. "Why on such and such a day did you talk to me like this, did you criticize me, I didn't do like that," then making another long story, and then the other person saying, "I didn't do, he did that and he did this..." [RL GL] Instead of saying that, maybe you can thank him very much, saying it is extremely kind that he

talked to you like that. [GL] You bow down your head. This can be done. You can respect the person and remember the kindness of the person who criticizes you.

In that remembering the kindness, it gives you the opportunity to practice thought training. Otherwise you don't practice thought training. You don't practice patience, you don't practice thought training. So use the opportunity to practice thought training. So remember the kindness like that. That's very worthwhile object to respect, to bow down. You can even make a prostration. [GL] It doesn't have the sense of making a prostration to Buddha, Dharma, Sangha; it doesn't have the same sense, which means taking refuge to be completely free from samsara. It doesn't have to be like that.

It is worthwhile object to respect, for his criticizing, for his doing those things and giving you the opportunity to practice thought training like this. By remembering that kindness you can offer tea, offer lunch. That's very good, instead of the mind becoming uptight. When the person comes into the house your mind is uptight, your face becomes black, your face takes a dark aspect, showing the nature of the mind through the face, through the body. You can't actually see the mind but you can see the mind through the body, the nature of the mind, personality of the mind. Your mind is uptight, unhappy, until that person has left home. That is no use; that is only suffering.

There is one monastery in Swayambhunath, down below the stupa, not all the way down but on the hill where the car stops, there is one monastery down below. There is a very highly realized great lama there, that one is the previous great yogi Marpa or Milarepa, or Naropa, Tilopa, who has completed the experience of the whole Vajrayana path, whose holy name is Serkong Rinpoche. Western people have translated it from the "mad saint;" the original translation is "mad saint." [RL] Mad. A yogi but crazy! [GL] That isn't what the translation is. The Tibetan term is *Drup-tob*, meaning having attainments, but this gets translated as "crazy saint." *Drup-tob* means like arhats, saints, who are completely free from samsara, such as bodhisattvas, who don't have the self-cherishing thought, who have the attainment of bodhicitta, the higher bodhisattvas, who are close to attaining enlightenment. Ordinary people see this as a sort of crazy aspect. Some of the things these beings do can't be understood by ordinary people, even those these beings are close to enlightenment, so they are called crazy.

[The next section is too poorly recorded to transcribe.]

.... Instead of harming back, trying to please the person, instead of telling police and putting him in prison, all kinds of things, trying to please him by remembering his kindness.

The most important I was going to say to you is that the Serkong Rinpoche who is at Swayambhunath, whose holy name I just mentioned, actually is embodiment of the great yogi Milarepa's guru, Marpa. So, no need to hear other stories of this Rinpoche.

## MEDITATION ON THE ENEMY

So, it is extremely important to visualize the enemy in front of you. If you don't have an enemy, if you can't find an enemy, if you can't think of a single person, in case you don't have enemy, [GL] if you don't have an enemy what can you do after the meditation session? [GL RL] You need somebody to be an enemy. Even if you can't find a present enemy [RL] there are so many numbers of enemies we have had in our life, so you can remember last year's enemy, you can remember the previous enemy who gave you harm. Remember that. Remember that. Or if you don't see him as enemy, that enemy that changed, became friend by now, all the enemies become friend by now, like this you can visualize, you can create an enemy, if you don't remember specifically, then you visualize a person and then as he is criticizing, that he is telling you all the mistakes you have done. Then you visualize like that you the person complaining about you.

Normally when you remember other people who gives you harm, who criticizes you, the more you think about it the more anger arises, stronger and stronger and stronger. Normally, when we think of a person who gives us harm, then we see that person more and more as the enemy. Create the person giving you harm like this, thinking of the terrible things that we dislike, the worst things. Think that this person is giving these worst things to us, by criticizing us and so forth.

Then visualize your father and mother and friends back side, with the enemy in front. In the teachings, usually the friends are friend is front and the enemy back side but I just put the enemy in front and the friends back side. And the parents like this, and all sentient beings around like this. You sit the enemy in front so it is very good to meditate on, to point out, how he is a precious holy object. It's very good when you do the meditation on this, the benefits of cherishing others. Meditate like this.

[Break in tape.]

## ENLIGHTENMENT IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT THE ENEMY

So that's how the bodhicitta is actualized, by depending on all the sentient beings, including the enemy. Then the Mahayana path, the bodhisattva's path, such as the five paths, the ten levels, the six perfections and four methods to ripen the minds of other sentient beings. Also the Vajrayana path, all these are received on the basis of bodhicitta. Now we understand very clearly that bodhicitta is received by the kindness of all sentient beings, that's very clear, including this enemy. So now all these buddhas' five path, ten levels, the Vajrayana path, all these perfections, the bodhisattva's six perfections, the four methods to ripen other sentient beings' mind, all these things are received by depending on sentient beings, including this enemy. The result, enlightenment, is received from sentient beings, including the enemy.

So the Buddha's infinite knowledge, holy body, holy speech, holy mind, whose knowledge cannot be finished explaining at any time, all that is received from sentient beings, including the enemy. All the buddhas' intuitive, unceasing, works, which equal the infinite space, that is done for other sentient beings, all that knowledge is received from these sentient beings, including this sentient being, the enemy.

So now you see all the numberless bodhisattvas and numberless buddhas have actualized the path based on this.

Before mentioning that, also think of the arhats. After thinking of the whole Mahayana cause and result, enlightenment, everything is completely received from this sentient being, including the enemy visualized in front. Then after thinking those numberless buddhas, how they receive their path from the sentient beings, then think of the arhats. How did it happen that the Arhats actualized their path to become arhats. Without depending on sentient beings, there is no way. They have actualized the Hinayana path, received nirvana, by listening to teachings, by listening to the teachings from Buddha. Buddha was born from a bodhisattva and bodhisattvas are born from bodhicitta, and bodhicitta is born from sentient beings. You can see clearly, how bodhicitta is received by depending on sentient beings. If you think the fundamental realization of bodhicitta, great love, great compassion, which is received by meditating on sentient beings, that's how the bodhicitta is actualized from the sentient beings. So now you can see completely, even the arhats, their nirvana, the whole path they completed, it all came from the kindness of sentient beings.

It is impossible without depending on this enemy, without depending on this it is impossible. It is impossible to actualize any of these paths, impossible—the Hinayana path, Mahayana path, the Vajrayana path, nothing is possible. It is extremely important to understand this point, how it is dependent on each sentient being. Actualizing the whole path, all this ultimate happiness, how it depends on this sentient being.

As it is said in the great bodhisattva Shantideva's teaching, all the offerings, all the offerings offered to the one who has a loving thought, that is also the qualities of sentient beings. A loving thought means loving kindness. It's not the same as what you normally say, "I love you," not that one. "I love you," then after, if you wait a few hours then... [RL GL] You can wait. [GL] All the offerings offered to the one who has loving thought that is also the qualities of sentient beings. How much offering that is offered to one who has loving thought or even just thought of loving kindness, that is also the quality of sentient beings. It is very good to think about what he's talking about. Let's say, without talking about sentient beings, just talking about this front enemy, without depending on him, is there a way to actualize great compassion?

You see, it's like this. The meaning of great love, the meaning of Mahayana love is love without excluding one sentient being, without leaving one sentient being out. That means all the sentient beings—including this enemy—who are devoid of temporal happiness and who are devoid of ultimate happiness, the great blissfulness, enlightenment. This is the object of love. So, the person sees the sentient being devoid of temporal happiness and devoid of ultimate happiness, great blissfulness, enlightenment. What they wish is happiness but they are devoid of this happiness. Seeing this, by realizing this, then you think, "I must, myself, make all sentient beings have all the happiness. I myself must make each and every sentient being have happiness—those who are devoid of temporal happiness, have temporal happiness, those who are devoid of ultimate happiness, have ultimate happiness. However the main thing is the sublime happiness, enlightenment. This I will make sentient beings receive by myself." This is the way of meditating on Mahayana love.

The arhats, the followers of the Hinayana path, have love, infinite love, they have infinite love but the Mahayana love is not only having the love, not only having the love to each and every sentient being, not only wishing each and every sentient being to receive happiness, not only that but "I will, I shall," making the determination in the heart, "I shall make all sentient beings receive all this happiness by myself." That is the way to meditate on this Mahayana love. The object of this love is each and every single sentient being, including the enemy. Then aspect of love is wishing them to have happiness.

So it's also like this with Mahayana compassion. Arhats, those followers, have compassion, but with Mahayana compassion, the object is all sentient being, each and every sentient being, including this enemy. The aspect is wishing sentient beings to be devoid of suffering. This is the aspect of the Mahayana compassion. This is the general object and general love is like this, pure love. With compassion, the object is all sentient beings, like general love, but the aspect of compassion is wishing all sentient beings to be devoid of suffering.

I am not sure whether it is real compassion if your friend wants to renounce attachment, but if you don't let him renounce attachment out of what you feel is compassion for him. With Mahayana compassion, the object is all sentient beings and the aspect is wishing all sentient beings to be devoid of suffering. So with Mahayana compassion, seeing each and every sentient being does not wish suffering, and feeling unbearable the suffering that sentient beings are experiencing is, feeling it is unbearable. Feeling unbearable, other sentient beings' suffering is just like your suffering, is much more than your own suffering, feeling very unbearable, feeling very unbearable the sufferings other sentient beings are experiencing.

Besides wishing sentient beings, including this enemy, to be devoid of all the suffering, having determination in mind, the strong thought, "I must make the sentient beings to be relieved from all the sufferings, by myself, by myself." Having thought like this, feeling unbearable, feeling the suffering of other sentient beings is more unbearable than your own sufferings; it is like your own suffering. When you have such a thought, feeling how incredible, unbearable are the sufferings they are experiencing, just like one's own suffering, that thought is the Mahayana compassion. Mahayana compassion. On the other hand, wanting to make the sentient beings have all the happiness, "by myself," like this, just like this—you want other sentient beings to have happiness more than you want happiness for yourself—that is Mahayana love.

So Mahayana love and Mahayana compassion are generated, are received by depending on the object, sentient beings. If there are some sentient beings left out, some you dislike, if your compassion is not for *all* the sentient beings, if your love is not for *all* the sentient beings then it is limited compassion and limited love—its object is not *all* sentient beings. So it doesn't become Mahayana love and Mahayana compassion, great compassion, great love. This is the fundamental cause from which bodhicitta comes.

So now you can see bodhicitta is received from each sentient being, including the enemy you dislike visualized in front. This point is extremely important. If you can see this point clearly, how it depends on each sentient being, then the rest of the other things are easy understand, how all the happiness, the whole path, all the realizations, depends on sentient beings—all that is very easy to understand. If you don't understand clearly this then how much we talk it's difficult to feel it.

So I'll just try to finish this quotation.

Shantideva says,

How much offering that is offered to the ones who have the thought of loving kindness, that is also the quality of sentient beings.

What he is talking is this. What makes bodhisattvas receive all these offerings, to become the objects of sentient beings' prostrations, that is not received only from buddhas and bodhisattvas. It is received from the kindness of sentient beings. They receive all these offerings, why? Because they couldn't attain bodhicitta without attaining the thought of loving kindness. And without depending on sentient beings, they wouldn't attain love, the thought of loving kindness, and so they can't actualize bodhicitta. Then there is no way they can become bodhisattva and buddhas, and so there is no way that they can receive offerings from sentient beings and

become the objects of prostrations and offerings. So receiving offerings and admiration, prostrations, all these things, that is because of the sentient beings, that's the qualities of the sentient beings.

One way to think of it is this. You purify negative karma, the cause of the suffering, by depending on holy objects, buddhas and bodhisattvas and arhats. You purify your negative karma, the cause of sufferings. And also, by depending on them you make purification, you collect merit. You collect merit with these holy objects, by making offerings, by making prostrations, by admiring, and so you actualize the path. Having the opportunity to do all this, to purify and create merit by prostrating and making merit, to actualize the path and be free from all suffering depends on taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, freeing you from rebirths in the lower suffering realms. Entering the teachings relies on you taking refuge in the holy objects, the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, including the bodhisattvas and the arhats.

But without sentient beings, including this enemy in front of you, it's impossible to actualize love and the compassionate thought and therefore to attain bodhicitta and become a bodhisattva. Therefore, without sentient beings there is no way you can have holy objects and without holy objects there is no way you can purify the cause of your suffering and collect the merit to actualize the path, to enter the teachings by having refuge. To not be born in the lower realms, to be free from samsara, there is no way all these things can happen without depending on each and every sentient being, including this enemy. There is no way.

So you see, each time when you collect merit, each time when you purify each negative karma, there is no way to receive this opportunity without depending on this enemy in front of you. There is no way without depending on the kindness of this enemy. No way, it is impossible. So you see, all these great opportunities of ours to be able to do like this, to collect merit, to actualize path, all these things, that is due to the qualities of sentient beings, it already is received from these sentient beings, including this enemy in front. Checking like this you can see how extremely kind all sentient beings are, including the enemy in front of you, this person who gives you harm, who you discriminate as an enemy. That is really a precious holy object.

### THE ENEMY IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN A UNIVERSE OF JEWELS

Even a whole universe filled up with jewels, a whole universe filled up with jewels, which is more precious? Which is more precious, that a universe filled up with jewels or this enemy in front of you who gives you harm, whom you discriminate as enemy. Which is more precious?

Normally, ordinary people think a jewel is so precious it is silly to destroy it. [GL] One jewel, one piece of jewel, to put in a ring, the person will think, "Oh, this is extremely precious." He will keep it in a big box, then a small box [GL] with many keys. You know, one tiny jewel, so crazy, so incredible. Why? Because an ordinary person who doesn't understand, who hasn't met the Mahayana teaching cannot understand, cannot see the benefit. He can only see that he benefits from the jewel, that piece of jewel, that he can use to beautifully decorate the ring. He sees the benefit like that but he doesn't see the benefit of sentient beings even that much. However much value the jewel is, he sees that as far more valuable than sentient beings. Normally, this is how we look at things.

As long as you are thinking what I am talking, is meditation. [GL] If you are not thinking, if you don't concentrate, if you are not thinking even you are meditating, not concentrating in the subject, then even if you keep quiet, even you sit straight, it doesn't become meditation. So if you are concentrating what I am saying then that's meditation, especially if you are feeling, that is the best.

So therefore, even... [pause] [GL]

So a universe full of jewels, even numberless universes full of jewels, [GL] even if you have that much, you cannot develop patience. You practice patience with sentient beings, you receive patience depending on sentient beings and particularly the enemy, the sentient being who gives you harm. We don't receive patience from the jewel. The great, the loving compassionate thought of bodhicitta, that is received from the sentient beings, not from the jewel. You cannot receive loving compassion, the thought of bodhicitta from a jewel, from a material object. Even from the numberless universes full of jewels it is impossible to receive the loving compassionate thought of bodhicitta, the thought to achieve enlightenment, there is no way, no way. So, therefore, there is no way to receive enlightenment from the jewel, by depending on the jewel. Enlightenment is not received from the jewel. So, you see, you cannot receive the loving compassionate thought of the enlightenment from the jewel but you can receive it from this enemy in front. You receive this depending on the sentient beings, specifically the enemy.

Before I explained, all these numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas and arhats, the holy objects to whom we make purification with and collect merit from to actualize the path, to whom we take refuge, from whom we receive all our temporal and ultimate happiness—they all came from the sentient beings, they are born from the sentient beings, including this enemy. So this sentient being in front of you who gives you harm, his kindness is unbelievable, inexpressible. The kindness cannot be finished at any time, the kindness of this person who gives you harm, whom you recognize as an enemy, actually you can never finish explaining his kindness. The value of this one sentient being is unbelievable, by comparison the value of the jewel is lost, the value of a universe full of jewels, even if you had that much, that value of that is lost, when you think of the value of even one sentient being who gives you harm.

So, meditate like this.

First, the buddhas, bodhisattvas and arhats, how they came from the sentient beings. Secondly, the great opportunity of making purification and collecting merit, taking refuge, listening to teachings, to not be reborn in the lower realms, to be free from samsara, all these things—how that is again the quality of sentient beings. It is done with the holy objects, depending on holy objects, but basically it came from sentient beings, because all these holy beings came from the sentient beings. So. the benefits we receive from sentient beings, it is the quality of the sentient beings. Think like this.

Then again, check up like this. Again, meditate like this. Meditate like this.

Now it is easy to understand, once you understand the point. Concentrate on the enemy you dislike, whom you harm and who harms you, keep that in front of you. Then on the basis of that, you think like this.

## THE MOSQUITO IS THE CAUSE OF YOUR ENLIGHTENMENT

“All my past, present and future happiness, all the three times’ happiness, besides temporal happiness, all the ultimate happiness, everything, the whole thing I have received from each sentient being.” Visualize the mosquito whose body is kind of very ugly looking, kind of long legs, kind of ugly looking, as it comes on your body. You want to kill, you know, you don’t even want to see the ugliness of its body, and also because it harms you it is very undesirable. Also, it is good to visualize harmful creatures. Maybe it is different to think of the mosquito. I just changed from the person, I just changed it to an animal but it’s the same thing. It is useful to keep the object that we dislike.

So think, “The mosquito who is biting me here, who is taking my blood,” think, “all my past, present and future happiness, including the ultimate happiness, everything is completely received from each sentient being, including this mosquito.”

Now concentrate on this mosquito. Maybe you can visualize mosquito on your knee, on your leg, taking blood. Think, "How can I receive all this happiness," now, now checking, "how I have received all these happiness? That is by creating good karma, by creating good karma. My creating good karma is, that itself is how the Buddha guides me, that itself is the Buddha's holy action; my creating good karma is Buddha's holy action. I create good karma by understanding the teaching that is explained by Buddha. So the opportunity that I have to create good karma is because of the Buddha. It is received from the Buddha."

Now you check up, concentrate on the mosquito that is biting.

"The numberless buddhas are born from bodhisattvas, the bodhisattvas are born from bodhicitta. Without talking much, the loving compassion thought, bodhicitta is received from each of sentient being; it is received from this mosquito who is biting me now. It is received from this mosquito who is biting me now." So now you can see, now think, "So that's how whole my entire happiness is completely received from this mosquito." If you think like this, it is unbearable to kill it. It cannot drink all your blood, it cannot eat all your body; it just takes a small, tiny, tiny drop of blood, that's what he takes. But, you see, with incredible anger you want to kill this holy precious object, from whom you receive all your happiness, all your enjoyment, everything. Enlightenment, everything, completely, that is killed. You destroy, you harm as much as possible, as soon as you see it, you kill it.

So meditating like that is useful.

I stop here.

In fact it is like this with all sentient beings, it's just a matter that you don't realize, with ignorance you don't see how kind they are, how precious they are. So that's why we should cherish others.

Think, "Without sentient beings there is no way to become a bodhisattva, way to be born a buddha, no way to receive the teachings. There is no way that I can create good karma. There is no Buddha, no teaching like this, so there is no way that I can receive all my past, present and future, all the temporal happiness, all the ultimate happiness, there is no way that I can receive this. So all this completely it is received from this mosquito."

So meditate like this.

"Even I want to receive the Hinayana path, the mind renouncing samsara, or the wisdom of shunyata, all the five Hinayana paths that leads to nirvana, it has to depend on this sentient being, this mosquito. Again, for the same reason, who I want to receive nirvana and all these things, I have to depend on this mosquito. Buddhahood is received from this mosquito, bodhicitta is received from it, even if I want to attain nirvana, the whole path, the mind renouncing samsara, the wisdom realizing shunyata, all the five Hinayana path, I have to receive it all from this mosquito."

Then also, think like this. "By leaving out this mosquito, is there a way that I can actualize bodhicitta? The loving compassionate thought, the precious thought of enlightenment, is there a way I can actualize this, by leaving out, by giving up one mosquito? Not by giving up any other sentient being, but just by giving up this one sentient being, this mosquito, is there a way that I can actualize the loving compassionate thought of enlightenment? No way, no way."

“So from this sentient being, I can receive bodhicitta, I can actualize the whole five Mahayana paths, all the bodhisattva’s ten levels, even the whole Vajrayana path, all the realizations. This all comes from this mosquito.”

“Ultimate happiness, the complete cessation of all samsaric suffering, the cause of all the delusions, the disturbing negative thoughts, the cause and the result the suffering of the naraka, preta, animal beings, human, sura, asura—the whole thing comes from the sentient being, this mosquito.”

Feel how unbearable, how unimaginable the suffering of the preta is, how for five hundred years it can’t get even one drop of water, one drop of food. Such suffering of hunger. Think how incredible unbearable it is. Even if we don’t have dinner or breakfast, we feel so hungry. Even if we don’t have food for one day, we feel the hunger is unbearable. Feel this. Then there is toothache, how unbearable it feels to us. Even just a small suffering, when there is fever, is it comfortable or not? Think, feel it. Is it comfortable or not?

This is just talking of small things. A tiny stone hitting the face, how painful it is. Even just small scratch, such a tiny suffering. Like a naraka, a sword or knife going through the body or even human beings killing another, cutting the body to pieces, think whether that’s unbearable or bearable. Where does the complete cessation of all these sufferings, all these disturbing negative thoughts and results, the whole entire samsaric suffering come from? It comes from this mosquito. From this mosquito. This is how precious this mosquito is, how unbearably kind it is.

Think, “My attaining enlightenment also comes from this mosquito. When I become a buddha, having infinite knowledge of holy body, holy speech, holy mind, I can manifest for each sentient being, millions, millions of manifestations. With the holy speech I can do many different activities for even one sentient being. Similar with the holy mind. Think about many different things you can do, even for one sentient being. So think, when I become a buddha, with the infinite knowledge of a buddha’s holy body, holy speech, and holy mind, I can work for all the sentient beings without effort, incredible work which equals infinite space. All this knowledge of a buddha is received from this mosquito. Where does all this ability to show the teachings, all the way to enlightenment, to numberless of other sentient beings, comes from? From this mosquito.”

Think, “Actually the kindness of this mosquito is something which even the Buddha cannot finished explaining. So think, actually, even I give my numberless bodies, making charity of them to this mosquito, it’s nothing. It’s nothing. It’s nothing compared to the kindness that the mosquito gives me. It’s nothing.”

Also think, “The numberless times I have drunk the blood from this mosquito, how much blood I have drunk from this mosquito in previous lives is like infinite space. If it could be collected, it would fill the whole space, there wouldn’t be any space left, infinite space. The bones of this sentient being, this mosquito—not the mosquito bones but the bones of the body of the previous continuity of this mosquito—the bones that I have chewed, if they were piled up, they would fill the whole of space. The meat that I have eaten, if it could be piled up, it would fill the whole of space. The skin of this mosquito, this sentient being’s skin, that I have used as clothing, if I could count the bodies I have taken that skin from, it would be numberless.

“This extremely kind sentient being, this mosquito creates negative karma by taking each person’s blood like this. That is also caused by me. I led the mosquito to create negative karma because in previous life I did, I let him to create the cause of that. In my previous life I have created the cause, I harmed, taking blood from other sentient beings such as this sentient being. That’s why I am experiencing the result now. If I did not create the cause before, this sentient being would not create negative karma by biting me. I wouldn’t experience the result. So it’s my own fault.

“This sentient being who is extremely kind, from whom I receive all my three times’ happiness, ultimate happiness, everything, all my perfections—how dare I kill it? The precious holy object, from where all the buddhas, the bodhisattvas, from where all this is born, how dare I kill it? Besides not giving even it a tiny drop of my blood—how dare I kill it? This is completely a mistake. If I kill this, what I am actually doing is completely the wrong thing, destroying this base, this precious holy object from where I receive all my happiness.”

You can think like this. You can meditate on how all the three times’ happiness, including ultimate happiness, everything, is received from this one mosquito. This is just one example, with the mosquito. The cause of creating good karma, that is teaching received from the Buddha, the buddhas and bodhisattvas, bodhicitta is received from this mosquito. That’s the way to think of it. Then, specifically also think about all the paths. Think, actualizing all the Hinayana paths, all the Mahayana paths, actualizing bodhicitta, enlightenment, all the knowledge of buddhas, everything I receive is by depending on kindness of this sentient being. Again, think like this.

When you remember the kindness of the mosquito like this, even if it is biting you, even if it is taking your blood, maybe before there had been a little bit of anger—you wanted to kill it, you couldn’t stand it without moving hands—but when you remember the kindness like this, when you meditate like this you don’t even feel the pain anymore. Here you feel pain, but after you remember kindness, you feel great rejoicing, you feel happiness, because you see it as a precious holy object, you see it as extremely kind. You feel it is helping you to make charity, but helping it like this is nothing compared to this sentient being’s kindness. You don’t feel pain, you feel happiness. You feel a blissful comfortable kind of happiness.

#### ALL SENTIENT BEINGS ARE THE CAUSE OF YOUR ENLIGHTENMENT

This is just an example. You can make similar meditations with any other sentient being, with people who beat you, with other animals, with other sentient beings who harm you. That’s how we cherish others—this mosquito, as well as all sentient beings. Shantideva said in his teachings that you should look at sentient beings with more than your eyes, you should look at sentient beings with loving and sincerity.

Sincerity means without having a cruel mind, a mind wanting to harm sentient beings. With sincerity, sincerely, remembering their kindness. So when you remember the kindness of the sentient beings, the mind sincerely wishing sentient beings to be happy naturally arises, like a when a good son looks on his loving mother, seeing how incredibly kind she is, and how the mother looks on her son. Even when you look at the sentient beings with your eyes, you should look at them in form of loving and sincerity. Thinking, “By depending on these sentient beings, I become enlightened.” Thinking like that. It is extremely effective for the mind to remember this teaching, especially when other sentient beings give you harm. Think, instead of looking with an angry expression, with a cruel mind, look at them in the form of loving kindness. Even if the other person is stealing, beating, making wounds on your body, or scolding you with his speech, remember by depending on this person you receive enlightenment, you become enlightened. Remember like this. Remember the kindness, that you receive all your happiness from this.

Then, as soon as you remember this, your anger all of a sudden goes. Just like a water bubble pops, the anger disappears, your mind becomes quiet. If your mind gets changed, becoming quiet from a violent mind, at the same time your violent actions of body and speech change. Your violent physical actions and your hurting speech, your rude words hurting the other sentient being, as the mind calms, right away they stop. It’s extremely good.

Not reacting back with violence, keeping calm, makes the other person surprised and helps him change his mind and afterwards he learns from your example. He learns the benefits of not getting angry, of keeping the mind quiet, of trying to control the mind.

You can see how a farmer takes such good care of his field. This is where he receives all this benefit, so he has to plant well and tend the crops, fertilizing them and watering them. Then, he will definitely get a good harvest and he can enjoy his life. Seeing how important his field is, he takes really good care of it. It is so precious to him.

Another example, you can see easily and clearly the advantage of having a huge, real diamond. By selling it you will be able to experience so many enjoyments. And so, seeing the advantages of having this diamond, you take the best possible care of it, locking it up in a safe in your house where nobody can steal it. Similarly, in the field of sentient beings, if you plant the seed of the loving compassion thought of enlightenment, with the six perfections and the four bodhisattva methods for ripening other sentient beings' minds, you can attain enlightenment. You can then take the best care of all sentient beings, and so you see how important it is to take care. Just as a farmer takes care of his field, you need to take care of all sentient beings, as it is this field that you receive all the happiness, including enlightenment.

Sentient beings are the objects that you should take the most care of. Even if you have to give up your life for them, it is worth it. Giving up your life to save your possessions is utterly worthless, whether it's a universe full of jewels or a pile of garbage. The real objects of worth, the things that are worth giving up your life for, are sentient beings. These are the field from which all happiness comes, and therefore to see them as objects of great beauty and great preciousness is not unrealistic at all. They deserve your deep respect.

The great bodhisattva Shantideva said in his teaching because of that, the field of the sentient beings is the field of Buddha. Shantideva is quoting Guru Shakyamuni Buddha here. Attaining the bodhisattva's perfections, all the way to enlightenment itself can only happen by serving other beings. Similarly, attaining the realizations of the Dharma can only come through serving all sentient beings. Therefore, Shantideva says, if you can respect the Buddha, the Victorious One, why can't you also respect all sentient beings? Why not the sentient beings? The realizations you received through meditation it is not received only from oneself.

What the great Bodhisattva Shantideva is saying is that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha came from sentient beings. Where did the Buddha—who guides us from suffering, from whom we receive all our happiness—come from? He came from the field of sentient beings. So sentient beings are the field of the Buddha. Only though sentient beings did he develop all the qualities he needed to become a buddha, and so as you obtain the Buddhadharma by depending on the Buddha, you accomplish the practice of the Buddhadharma also by depending on sentient beings. Without depending on sentient beings you cannot obtain the Buddhadharma. So therefore, normally, as you respect and make offerings to the Buddha, thinking he guides you from suffering and you receive all happiness from the Buddha, why don't you respect sentient beings equally, seeing they are equally responsible for your happiness.

I think we'll stop here.

## LECTURE 24

### IGNORANCE AND SELF-GRASPING

Usually there is a word in the refuge prayer, “the merit that has been collected by me,” then the word from the side of the teacher, “the merit of my explaining Dharma” is replaced from the side of the disciple what has to be replaced is, “the merit of listening to this teaching,” it is dedicated or motivated in that way like this.

[Refuge prayer.]

[Long break in tape.]

... deep in our heart, my happiness is more important than any other sentient being's happiness, than any other sentient being, I am more important. If there is one plate of food, then thinking that I should get it, I should get it, I am more important, my happiness is more important than his. You don't intellectually say it but that is the feeling there is in the heart. You don't think that he should have it. You have a very strong mind in the heart, “If I don't get that I will lose my happiness, so I should get it for myself.” The self-cherishing thought is like that. Cherishing oneself more than others, you know, being careless of others, like that. And ignorance grasping the I.

For instance, right now, you're believing there is a real “me” here. Just now you are thinking, “I am writing, I am making notes. The real me is writing, I am writing.” Just that belief, “there is a real me.” What's your name? huh? Can I ask?

*Student:* John.

*Rinpoche:* John. “I am the real John.” That is ignorance grasping the I. Generally where the self-cherishing thought came from, from it is derived from, it is from the ignorance grasping the I, the ignorance believing in the truly existing I. It's just like mother and daughter. I think the self-cherishing thought can also cause to build up the ignorance grasping the I, just like the daughter is born from mother but again the daughter is married, if she gets child, she becomes mother to the daughter, if she gets another daughter.

The self-cherishing thought disturbs, prevents you from realizing the absolute nature and destroying the ignorance grasping the I. The self-cherishing also makes you have wrong view, causes wrong conception, incredibly wrong conception, believing things as truly existent, even intellectually. Because of having met the strong theory, the self-cherishing also causes you to have wrong view even intellectually. You accept the concept and even intellectually believe such as things are truly existent. Those also are cause by self-cherishing thought because in previous times you have created the karma with the self-cherishing thought to have such wrong views. Even though things are not truly existent but even intellectually, besides the intuitive belief, you believe it is truly existent. So there are different ways like this.

*Student:* [inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:* The real root of samsara is the ignorance, grasping the I, the ignorance, believing things as truly existent. That is the real root of samsara. And also the other ignorance also caused by that.

*Student:* You said *ma-rig-pa* of true existence?

*Rinpoche:* Yeah, the other *ma-rig-pa*. The delusions are caused by that.

*Student:* If one destroys the self-cherishing thought, it can weaken self-grasping but not... *[the rest inaudible.]*

*Rinpoche:* Just merely actualizing, itself, just by that alone cannot make this ignorance grasping I less, but bodhicitta for sure is a quick method, realizing bodhicitta is a quick way. Actualizing bodhicitta is a quick way to realize shunyata because that itself is method. If a person has that realization, that person makes incredible purification and collects incredible merit. So it's very easy, so quick to actualize shunyata.

But I wouldn't say, without any understanding, if you have no understanding, recognizing emptiness, nothing at all, just having the bodhicitta, just that alone would make it a little bit less.

*Student:* Once one really understood the nature of the world, wouldn't it be almost automatic to generate compassion and bodhicitta?

*Rinpoche:* That depends on the self; that depends on the individual. I would say that depends on individual. Like this example. There are many people in the world who suffer. Somebody can see that all the rest of the people are in so much incredible torture, having so much incredible problems and so much suffering, but that person himself is not involved in that. He's free and he has all the enjoyments, whatever he wants he gets, everything, all the enjoyment, whatever he wants. Despite everything around, and he alone is happy. He thinks, "Those other people are suffering but it doesn't matter, I am happy, I am happy," and he has so much attachment to his own pleasures that, to the pleasure he receives from those material enjoyment. He has so much attachment, he has so much clinging, he doesn't want to lose his pleasure, he doesn't want to lose it. The mind thinks, "I am happy, I am not suffering." And even though he kind of knows that those other people are having suffering but he doesn't care so much. This is a similar example. He doesn't want to lose the pleasure. He doesn't want to lose it in order to dedicate his life for others, to do something, to bear the difficulties, in order to guide others. So like that example, people who do like this, who have such minds like this. He doesn't feel the suffering of others so much, as a bodhisattva feels it.

*Student:* [inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:* Are there people like this, are there examples like this?

*Student:* [inaudible.]

*Rinpoche:* You don't understand that? Because I don't understand emptiness, that's why. I don't understand the emptiness! I am just joking.

It's giving an example. Okay? Food and kaka. Then that person while eating food, it's like eating kaka, you know. That is so clear. Food is not kaka. It's very clear. Poison is not medicine. Medicine is not poison. You are not your mother. Are you your mother? Are you your mother? Huh?

You are not your mother? Or are you? Okay, all right. Completely I believe, you are not your mother.

Okay. Then if you understand this that you are not your mother then that shows everything is not oneness. That is the example. Are you the German president? So you see, what you intellectually say and what you intuitively feel are opposite. It's contradictory to your own experience, saying things like that, "everything is oneness." Things like that, I am you and everything is oneness. You see, that is contradictory. If you don't check up with your experience, you don't see it's contradictory to your own experience, the intuitive experience what you feel in your heart. It doesn't happen together. Even your intuitive experience, what you intellectually say is contradictory to that, so unless you believe in like this, that only causes confusion to arise, it does not help.

First, if you think carefully about the intuitive way it is existing, in fact how things exist and how you experience them is contradictory. So by checking like this you can understand. Actually if everything is oneness, then why there should be problems? There is no reason why there should be problems, why we should be angry with each other, why there should be fighting.

In fact if it like this then where there should be, “this is your property” and “this is my property,” this would not happen. It’s about the meaning of human life.

### THE BENEFITS OF THE LAM-RIM

A Kadampa geshe whose holy name is Purchungwa asked Kadampa Geshe Tsengawa, “What would you prefer, the mind following the graduated path to enlightenment or having achieved all the five psychic powers, the eight realizations, the eight siddhis and the unshakeable concentration which lasts for eons. Which one would you prefer, just the mind following the graduated path to enlightenment or having all these five psychic powers, all these unshakeable concentration, all these eight siddhis?” Then Geshe Tsengawa answered, “I would much prefer even just thinking, even just thinking about how the graduated path to enlightenment is. Even just thinking this. Not even actualized it but just thinking about how it is. Why? Because so far what I haven’t experienced, experiencing the graduate path to enlightenment, but these five psychic knowledge, the unshakeable concentration which lasts for eons and all these things, I have gone through this experience numberless times.”

So this advice from these great meditators is an answer to our questions. So therefore, to be able to make a retreat on graduated path to enlightenment is, even if you can only make it for fifteen days or one month in each year, that is *extremely* fortunate.

[Break in tape.]

### THE BENEFITS OF BODHICITTA

One day a lama, a Rinpoche, came to see our holy root guru Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo and offered his realizations of one-pointed concentration that can last for years to Pabongka Rinpoche. Pabongka Rinpoche took the small bowl of *pak* in his hand and replied, “Your realizations can never compare to me eating this bowl of *pak*.” *Pak* is roasted barley flour mixed with tea, which Rinpoche was having for dinner. What he meant was that with the bodhicitta that he had actualized, even a simple act of eating when done with bodhicitta brings so much more merit than the most profound realizations done without bodhicitta. Every action becomes only work for sentient beings. So the benefit of the other lama’s realizations can never compare to each time he eats food, even eating one small bowl of food. He added, “If possible, it’s excellent if you can try like that.” Each action benefits all sentient beings in that way.

If you think, “Why it is highly meaningful? This doesn’t matter. I can do whatever I want in this life; there is no need practice Dharma. I have already received the perfect human body and in my future life I will receive the perfect human rebirth with the eight freedoms and ten richnesses, so I can practice in a future life, sometime in the future, with one of those perfect human rebirths. What’s the point of rushing?”

Then question comes, do you know for sure, do you really know, are you really confident that you definitely will receive a perfect human rebirth having eight freedoms and ten richnesses after this life? It’s not certain. It cannot be received without creating the cause. Even in external things this happens. If you don’t plant crops this year you cannot receive crops next year. Receiving crops next year depends on planting crops this year. Even external things are dependent like this. So, to receive a perfect human rebirth depends on depends on

creating the cause and the cause is purely observing the moral conduct and charity, creating charity and making prayers. It depends on this. You have to check up, whether you have created the cause or not in this life. If you have created the cause then you can receive a perfect human rebirth in the next life. If you have not created the cause then you can't receive it. So, the whole answer whether you will be born as human being or not, whether you will receive a perfect human rebirth or not, in the future life, the answer is within your own mind. The answer is within your mind. You don't have to ask somebody else. The answer is just within your mind. You can get the answer to that question by understanding the cause.

Whether you can buy a cake from a hotel depends on whether you have money or not. That is very easy to understand. If there is no money in the purse, there is no cake.

I think I'll stop here.

## LECTURE 25

### MOTIVATION

It is necessary to cultivate a pure motivation of bodhicitta, thinking I am going to listen to the oral teachings on the thought of enlightenment, which is the essence of this graduated path to enlightenment in order to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings.

Cultivating motivation is something to be practiced straightaway, it is not something waiting for future or something like that. For that reason, practice right away, right away transform all actions into the cause to receive enlightenment.

The listening subject is the oral teaching on the thought of enlightenment, the door of the Mahayana path, for the fortunate ones to receive enlightenment and is well expounded by the great highly realized propagators, Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is profound teachings which contain the essence of all the infinite knowledge of Dharma, that highly realized bodhisattvas Atisha and Lama Tsongkhapa have. And this contains all the essence of the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, all these are set up for the graduated practice of one person to achieve enlightenment and this is the sole path through which all the past, present and future buddhas received enlightenment.

To offer this very commentary, just a drop in the ocean, an explanation of this teaching. Then there are preliminary meditations which help to actualize the loving compassionate precious thought of enlightenment, to complete the whole Mahayana path to enlightenment, including the Vajrayana path.

Start by thinking that I am going to listen to the oral teachings in order to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings.

Actually here what to do at the death time, after bodhicitta then, after bodhicitta the oral teachings of the branches, the branches of the actual body, training the mind in bodhicitta. So part of those branches is transforming the bad conditions, all the unhappiness what you experience transform into the path to enlightenment. And then after that there are five powers during life and there are five powers to do at the death time. There are five powers that include the whole life's practice. The whole of life's practice is divided into five, the total life is divided into five. So the five powers of the life's practice and the five powers at the death time.

### DYING WITH A VIRTUOUS AND A NONVIRTUOUS MIND

Actually the whole meditation starting from the perfect human rebirth, the meditation on impermanence and death and sufferings of the lower realms and negative karma, all that and all the meditation on the samsaric sufferings, all the meditations on equanimity, all these graduated meditations on bodhicitta and also meditation on shunyata, all the things are actually methods to also benefit at death time. These meditations are the fundamental methods. These basic meditations that we have gone through are the fundamental methods to benefit at death time. All these meditations are the methods that control the disturbing negative thoughts, so they are the methods that benefit at death time.

Especially there are various different, very high, very profound Vajrayana methods to do at the death time. But before practicing those specific profound Vajrayana methods, you should remember how all the samsara is in the nature of suffering. One has to begin with this meditation, such as bodhicitta, shunyata, like that. The basic thing is you completely makes determination that you will die. Instead of thinking, I don't want to die, instead of thinking like this, you completely make the determination, then remember the meditation on impermanence and death and then remember the sufferings of samsara, how all samsara is in the nature of suffering. By remembering the twelve links, by remembering that there is nothing definite in samsaric happiness, perfections, surroundings, anything—nothing is definite. Nothing is definite, nothing can be trusted. Remembering those things, like the six general sufferings of samsara that I mentioned this morning. By remembering that then you see the whole of samsara is in nature of suffering. Then in that way you don't get attached. You don't get attached to anything. You don't get attached to your own body, you don't get attached to your surroundings, you don't get attached to material possessions, nothing. Then you will attain freedom. You attain freedom to be born in the pure realm by using the profound Vajrayana method, or either through thought training, the method which comes after, which I explain afterwards.

You don't even have to know the Vajrayana methods. If you have received the teachings on thought training then this is the main thing. If you are able to practice this, then it is without doubt that you can guide yourself from the rebirth of the suffering transmigratory beings to receive a precious human rebirth, to be born in a pure field of the buddhas. Then in that way, by renouncing attachment, by remembering the impermanence and death, then the suffering of samsara, you can renounce attachment. So in that way you get freedom.

At the death time it's extremely important. The main thing is to try to make the last thought, the very last thought, virtuous. What rebirth you will take after death so much depends on what thought you have at the death time, the very last thought you have when you die. If the very last thought is virtue, then it is no question that you will be born in the realm of the happy transmigratory being.

If the very last thought isn't virtue, if you die with nonvirtuous thought—if you die with anger, if you die with attachment, if you die with a jealous mind, with pride—even if you try to practice little bit Dharma and meditate little in life, death becomes nonvirtuous and that makes you be born in realm of the suffering transmigrator. So it is extremely important to make it virtuous.

At the time of death because of karma you can feel very cold. You crave heat so much, how good it is, wanting to be in a fire. Craving heat can arise like this. You think, "How good it is that, how fantastic if I can be in hot water." Sometimes such a thought can come because you feel very cold. To be in a fire or to be near a fire, craving, because you experience so being cold. Many times, you can see many people die like this. No matter how many blankets you put on them, they are freezing cold. There are many people I heard of like this. And craving so much the heat. If a person dies without remembering the lam-rim, without remembering this meditation, then he dies with so much craving for heat, that attachment is what causes him to be born in the hot narak sufferings at the death time. This is called craving and grasping. Grasping. Dying with this attachment, what happens right after that is to be born in the hot narak suffering.

Also at the death time due to karma a person can feel so hot. No matter whether all the clothes are taken off but still feeling so hot and the person craves coolness so much, right away to be in cold water, in a cold spring, in a river. With so much craving the strong thought arises, "How good if I could get some ice, to bite it." This is also craving. Usually normally when we experience these things, this is also craving and grasping. At the death time if this happens, if the person doesn't remember the meditation to control attachment, then if she dies, if her life ends with anger with the last thought craving, attachment, to the cold, wanting to be in cold water, that is the cause, that is what makes her be born right away in the cold naraka suffering.

Like that then, craving not wanting to leave this body, unable to make the determination to leave this body, clinging to this body. If you don't remember the meditation on impermanence and death and shortcomings of samsara, what is explained in the lam-rim meditation, how the whole of samsara is in nature of suffering, if you clings to it, not wanting to leave the body, this is the cause of samsara, this clinging to the body. So that's why we do so much meditation trying to see samsara is the nature of suffering. So craving, like grasping the cold or the heat, either feeling cold or hot, depending on that, then grasping like this.

So therefore, normally in daily life if you can remember, if you meditate, if you can train your mind in this lam-rim meditation, if you can remember again and again, then whenever you are in danger of death you can easily remember because the mind is well trained. So even if your body and mind are in a difficult situation—you are sick or something—you can still remember the meditation. That's how you can save yourself. By remembering the meditation then you can see the whole of samsara is in nature of suffering completely and all samsaric happiness and perfections is essenceless. Nothing is definite, nothing can be trusted, all samsaric happiness is in the nature of suffering. When you see this, there is nothing to be attached to, therefore you are free at death time. Your mind is happy.

It is also very good, it is extremely important to recite the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha mantra. As you think the benefit, it has much power to purify negative karma, depending on how perfectly you recite the mantra. If you can recite the mantra with a bodhicitta motivation then you know how to recite mantra. Just being able to repeat the words doesn't mean you know how to recite mantra.

## VAJRASATTVA

There is a deity called Vajrasattva. All the buddhas have taken this specific manifestation to specially purify the negative karma, and it is extremely powerful. There is a long mantra and a short of this Vajrasattva. The short mantra only has four words, only four syllables. This is extremely important if you want to purify negative karma very quickly, from all the beginningless previous lives, from beginningless time, by thinking "I have collected so much negative karma in his life, I did like this, I did that." If you want to quickly purify then it is extremely good if you can recite this deity's mantra.

By reciting this deity's mantra, the short one, twenty-eight times, late of the night, before going to bed, if you can recite this Vajrasattva mantra twenty eight times, it that stops however much negative karma you have collected in that day, it stops it from increasing. Reciting even just twenty eight times in the evening has the power to stop the negative karma increasing, becoming doubled the next day. It stops to increase, otherwise it will increase, day by day, month by month, year by year. If you killed one ant, if you didn't purify in eighteen days, then what happens is negative karma is increased, it will be increased 100,000 and another ten thousand, 1,393 or 300 or 100, I am not sure, in the mind coming 300, 92. It increases that much after eighteen days if it is not purified, becomes as heavy as having killed a human being right away, having killed a human being. The heavy negative karma becomes the same. So therefore if you recites this Vajrasattva mantra, even the short one at least twenty eight times, before going to bed, the negative karma collected that day stops increasing. Not only

that, it purifies all the negative karma that has been collected from previous lifetimes. So therefore if you can recite this every day, every night, then it is so incredible, so much negative karma gets purified. Even just by that, even if you don't know any other meditation, even if you can just do this until death time, even that makes life highly meaningful.

### PURIFICATION PRACTICES: THE THIRTY-FIVE BUDDHAS

Another method to purify is to make prostrations by repeating the holy names of the Thirty-five Buddhas. By hearing the name of one special Buddha at the death time then you don't get reborn in the lower realm.

If somebody wants to know, *Chom den de/ de zhin shek pa*, normally what we recite at the beginning is the same, *Chom den de/ de zhin shek pa/da chom pa yang tag pa gyal wa sangye*

*Student:* Do we have it in the book?

*Rinpoche:* We have *de zhin shek pa*. We usually have this but we don't have the main one. So instead of saying *gyalwa shakya tukpa* you say *rin chhen tsug tor chän la*. *Chom den de/ de zhin shek pa/da chom pa/ yang tag pa/ dżog pa/ sangye rin chhen tsug tor chän la*.

Instead of *yang gyal wa shakya tukpa* you replace *rin chhen tsug tor chän la*. You don't say *gyal wa shakya tukpa*, instead of that you attach *rin chhen tsug tor chän la chag tsal lo*. *Chag* means "I prostrate."

*Rin chhen tsug tor chän la chag tsal lo.* This is the special Buddha that especially guides sentient beings by saying just the name, his holy name, it has power at the death time to stop the sentient being getting born in the lower realm.

*Rin chhen tsug tor chän la chag tsal lo.*

Maybe you can repeat.

*Chom den de de zhin shek pa da chom pa yang tag pa dżog pa/ sangye rin chhen tsug tor chän la chag tsal lo.* [Repeated several times.]

### PURIFICATION PRACTICES: MILAREPA'S MANTRA

Then also the great yogi, Milarepa's mantra, this mantra if you recite and blow, even on bones of animals that have been dead for a long time, after reciting, then blow on that bone then that makes to remove them from that suffering realm, naraks, whatever they are suffering, and causes them to be born in pure realm, also to be born in the human realm. Even by reciting and blowing on the bones or the body, by that effect, by that power then it has benefit like this. There are many benefits explained by Milarepa himself.

Then same thing if you can remember that mantra of Milarepa at the death time, or even if you hear that mantra, then you gets saved, you don't get born in the lower realm. Then also reciting Milarepa's mantra, praying like that, then he himself said in the teaching that a person who always reads his life story, person who always hears his name, who recites mantra then, who always talk about his life story will be born in the pure realm of the buddha called *Ananga*(?). He said, "I will receive the person in the pure land, the person will see me in the pure realm. With his bodhicitta, even those who recite my name, even those who hear my name, to receive this benefit, the benefit of bodhicitta." So that's how there is the benefit.

Then if one recite the great Milarepa's mantra, it is like this

OM AH GURU VAJRADHARA HASA VAJRA SARVA SIDDHI PALA HUM *[Repeated.]*

Also when you have to eat meat, then that time you recite these mantras, these very precious mantras, they have incredible benefit. You should try to benefit that sentient being like that. In that way, even if you are drinking water, after reciting then you blow on it and with the motivation you pray for the sentient being, make the sentient being to be born in pure realm that way, whatever he is suffering now may he be released from that suffering right away and to be born in pure realm. If you pray like this, "May this, my mother sentient being, be released from suffering right away and immediately get born in pure realm." Then recite the mantra, such as the great Milarepa's mantra, and it can benefit like this. The same thing, you can recite if you see a person dying, like that. You can recite and blow.

In Italy close to our center, there's a cemetery. It's not a big cemetery like in New York [GL] a small cemetery. We stayed a long time reciting at each box—What do you call it? Grave? Huh? Coffin—at each coffin, each dead person, we tried to recite the Avalokiteshvara he six-syllable mantra OM MANI PADME HUM. We spent some time there, with all the coffins lined up, kind of in rows, like that.

[Break in tape.]

## OVERCOMING SELF-CHERISHING

When you try to receive the experience of the shortcomings of the self-cherishing thought and the benefits of cherishing others, then you meditates like this, thinking in many different ways, like remembering the kindness of the other sentient beings. You need to do this until you can exchange the object of your cherishing, until you are capable of exchanging the object of cherishing. Now the object of cherishing is just you yourself. By meditating on this many times, you can go from completely renouncing others and never caring about them and only cherishing yourself, but gradually one day through experiencing this meditation on the shortcomings of cherishing yourself and the benefits of cherishing others, it becomes completely the opposite—you cherish other sentient beings more than yourself and you completely renounce yourself, never caring about your own happiness.

When there is such an experience as this, when your object of cherishing changes, when that happens you have received the realization of exchanging oneself with others. Until you receives this realization you have to continue, you should continue this meditation.

Then after this in the profound Mahayana practice comes one of the main principal aspects of thought training. This is the main thing, which by practicing we collect infinite merit in such short time—by generating compassion, taking other sentient beings' suffering upon yourself and dedicating your body, possessions and merit to other sentient beings, including teachings and the nirmanakaya, the embodiment of buddhas. Dedicating like that. With the sentient beings dedicating these things by generating love. This is one of the main Mahayana thought training techniques. This comes after this. Then after this comes bodhicitta. The great will is included in with this practice. So after this then comes bodhicitta, wishing to achieve enlightenment.

Probably, I might have to go to India, to do something. [GL] His Holiness Dalai Lama's younger guru—who is the embodiment of the three times' buddhas, who is the root guru of myself from whom I received so much, from whom I received my first lam-rim teachings, whose kindness can never be repaid any time—His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche is in south of India, in a monastery where there are many Tibetan monks. He is giving teachings there which I haven't received before, Vajrayana initiations and commentaries. So at the moment I am

hoping to be able to attend that teaching, if there is seat in the plane. If there is no seat, if nothing happens, then I might come again in the evening session. If there is seat then this afternoon one of the teachers, one who is very well qualified, one who has perfect understanding of the Dharma, will come here to give talk on karma.

If I have to leave, you have a great opportunity to receive teachings from Lama Yeshe. That is a big difference. My giving talk is like a baby chick, making cheep cheep noises. [GL] All day making “cheep cheep.” It doesn’t make any sense. So, actually you are becoming more fortunate.

I could have explained briefly each meditation; every time in the course there are always brief meditations, which might be good for new people perhaps, maybe not so clear but perhaps, but there are many old students who come who always have to do the brief meditation all the time. They come again and again and they never get profit because nothing becomes expanded. So therefore that is the reason why I took some time like this, going slowly. One reason is like this. By thinking that if I explain in detail just one time then it is more effective for the mind, in different ways if one hears more of this meditation.

However, if now your mind is different from before the course, concerned about making preparation for happiness of future life, concerned about being free from future samsara, want to practice Mahayana teachings in order to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of other sentient beings, want to practice bodhicitta—if there is the slightest change in your thinking which wasn’t there in the mind before the course, then any thought that you have like this that has meaning. It has meaning that you attended the course, that you came, that you bore all the difficulties, the meditations, all these things. If there is no change at all, not one single change, if nothing happened, and your mind is just as before, the mind is perfectly left there in that shape, then I am not sure. (GL) Then that means the person did not take the course. [GL] The conclusion is, without talking much, the person did not take course, even if he or she was here, hanging around, that means he or she did not take course.

### CHENREZIG MANTRA

However, there is no time to talk much anyway. The conclusion, the main thing is to observe karma and try to practice bodhicitta as much as possible, to quickly actualize bodhicitta. One method to quickly actualize bodhicitta is to recite this mantra, Avalokiteshvara, but it depends on guide, by always meditating on the guru and Avalokiteshvara as oneness, by the guru being inseparable from Avalokiteshvara. Recite this mantra and pray, all the time looking to receive bodhicitta. Then, if one recites this mantra, this is one method which makes you quickly actualize, develop, bodhicitta. His Holiness Dalai Lama said also to the Tibetan people when he was giving teachings, if you recite this mantra it makes the mind better and better. Better and better means to receive bodhicitta, to increase compassion and love. That is what is called a better mind, a good mind.

I have been asked to give blessing of this mantra, so I will do this just for auspiciousness. Then I think, that is my conclusion. And the benefits of this mantra, there are some people who came to the mountains for the puja, the compassionate buddha, we did the long retreat, 900 million or something like that, we did retreat. That time I explained the benefits quite elaborately. So if some person has notes on that, if someone is interested to know about the benefits of this mantra, what it means, what it contains, you can ask, you can read the notes.

Repeat the mantra that I say. This buddha, Avalokiteshvara, is the embodiment of all the buddhas’ compassion to guide the sentient beings quickly to enlightenment by granting the realization of bodhicitta.

First repeat the prayer. You can visualize the guru in the form of Avalokiteshvara and think, I am going to take the blessings of the mantra in order to receive enlightenment, Avalokiteshvara enlightenment for the benefit of all the sentient beings.

[Group repeats prayer after Rinpoche.]

OM MANI PADME HUM

[Rinpoche recites several times then group recites together.]

Then make the food offering, nectar offering.

## THE KINDNESS OF SENTIENT BEINGS

If you do the meditation like this you can see very clearly. Since it is same thing that you receive all happiness, you actualize the whole path to enlightenment by depending on the Buddha, it's same thing that you are depending on sentient being, so just as you respect and make offerings to the Buddha, why can't you respect the sentient beings? Not only human being, you can even respect the animals, even it is a tiny creature, a fly. You can respect the Buddha who is precious, because you can receive that much benefit. The Buddha is precious because you can receive that much benefit from him, being releasing from suffering and receiving enlightenment. But in the same way sentient beings are all precious. You gain so much advantage from them; you receive all your happiness from them. And also buddhas and bodhisattvas are born from the sentient beings, from each sentient being, so therefore a sentient beings is an extremely precious object. It is never an object to harm. It's unbearable to think of harming one. Forget about killing, forget about torturing, by remembering all these kindness you have received, all these advantages you have received, it is unbearable even to beat with a finger, to even to give small pain by beating or hitting with the finger, even that is unbearable.

What pleases the Buddha? The Kadampa Geshe Langri Tangpa calls sentient beings the mother of the three times' buddhas. The Tibetan honorific word for mother is *yum*, the respectful word for mother is *yum*. He says *yum* is the mother of the three times' buddhas. He points out that the sentient beings are the mother from where the three times' victorious ones were born. By checking, like you meditated before, you can see this is true. Like that you can understand, each sentient being is the mother from where all the past, present and future buddhas were born.

When this Kadampa Geshe Langri Tangpa talks about seeing sentient beings, he uses the word *jal-wa* which is the honorific term for meeting. This is the term we would normally use when we talk about meeting high lamas, but just use an ordinary form for everybody else, but here he uses it for all sentient beings. This Kadampa Geshe refers to any meeting like that, calling it *dal-wa*, the meeting the mother of the three times' victorious ones.

Therefore think, "How dare I give harm to other sentient beings. Giving harm other sentient beings that is same as giving harm to myself. It is that uncomfortable, that painful."

Buddhas and bodhisattvas are only concern about sentient beings. Who they work for, who they are concerned about are only sentient beings. Bodhisattvas try to achieve enlightenment only to help the sentient beings. So therefore because of these reasons, how dare we can give harm to any sentient being, even one who gives us harm. That is like harming a bodhisattva. Their only concern is how to release sentient beings from suffering and how to lead them into happiness, day and night all the time. All their works is completely done for the sentient beings, so to harm a sentient beings, even one giving us harm, that is harming the bodhisattvas.

After they have received enlightenment, what are the buddhas concerned about? What they think of is only sentient beings. All their work is only to guide sentient beings from suffering and lead them to happiness.

Therefore harming sentient beings who gives harm to us is harming the buddhas. Is same as actually harming the buddhas. It is the same as if we harm the son we harm the parents who hold the son in their hearts. Day and night, all the time, they think of their one son, so if you hurt the son, you hurt the parents. Even though you don't actually physically see the parents, even though you don't hurt their body directly, but by hurting the son you hurt them because it is like their heart. It is the same thing; it's like the Buddha's heart. The sentient being who harms you is in the heart of the bodhisattva, so how dare harm him. How can we get angry at him, how dare we hurt him?

By taking care, by cherishing other sentient beings, you receive all the happiness. It is very good to remember the benefits of cherishing others. It is also very good to remember the nine points, the nine outlines, the benefits of bodhicitta that I explained before the meditation on bodhicitta. By renouncing other sentient beings then all the suffering arises.

It is said in the teachings that the happy transmigratory begins and the suffering transmigratory beings, their desirable result and undesirable result come from benefiting the sentient beings and harming the sentient beings. What it is saying is that all desirable results, happiness, is received by benefiting other sentient beings and all undesirable things, suffering, it received from harming other sentient beings. Also it is said in the teachings, the various sufferings that the naraka beings, animals and pretas experience come from harming the sentient beings.

Even though arhats are free from samsara, why they haven't receive enlightenment is because of cherishing oneself, not cherishing other sentient beings. Because of renouncing other sentient beings they haven't received enlightenment even though they have received the lower nirvana. Beings such as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, on the other hand, by renouncing oneself and cherishing others, have received enlightenment.

It is also good to remember that if any sentient being who harms you, the principal cause is your own delusions. Your own delusions from previous lifetimes becomes the principal cause and harming other sentient beings due to that principal cause becomes the co-operative cause. Because of that, your delusions from beginningless previous lifetimes are the principle causes and your harming become the cooperative causes.

Because of that, in this life, this life, this sentient being who has given us harm, by doing a violent action, by doing a wrong action, with bad thoughts, with negative karma, he is going to experience particularly the various sufferings of the lower realms, and the general samsaric sufferings, endlessly. They are going to suffer like this. That is caused by me. It's my fault.

Think, "I am throwing sentient beings into the lower realm," like when you throw a stone. "I am throwing the sentient being into the suffering realms."

Remember also Shantideva saying, remember this way is extremely beneficial. This is the Wheel of Sharp Weapons circling back on yourself. First, starting from your delusions and harming others, and then coming back full circle like this. This is one way you can remember it also. Shantideva says, "Persuaded by my karma, I have received this harm. By doing this, don't I make sentient beings become lost in the pit of the narak?"

This describes the whole process. Think like this. "My own delusions are the principal causes and doing harm to others are co-operative causes and then because of that other sentient beings giving harm to me. Their harm to me is the result of me creating negative karma so I have caused this harm. If I did not create that karma, they would not have given me that harm. If I had not created that karma of harming others, then they wouldn't give me harm, and they wouldn't have created that negative karma. Harming me is creating negative karma, and this is karma I let them create. So, I am letting them be born in the naraks. I am throwing sentient beings into the

narak, into the lower realms.” That’s what it is saying here. That’s the connotation contained here. “By making them harm ma, don’t I make sentient beings create negative karma that will result in suffering and so don’t I make them live in the pit of the narak? It’s a path. Sentient beings who gave harm to me, numberless times I have thrown them into the lower realms, I have let them to fall into the lower realms and suffer. I did this by creating harm to them. By that, didn’t I make sentient beings become lost in the narak pit, to fall into the narak realm and suffer there.”

Like this, you generate compassion. This is the way to generate compassion. Any sentient being who gives you harm, how to generate compassion? How to generate compassion? By thinking like this, automatically you generate compassion, instead of getting angry. There is no way for anger to arise when you think like this. With your own delusions harming others, because of that you let them to create the negative karma of harming to you. You let them create negative karma and you let them to fall into the lower realms. Therefore, if you think like this, instead of anger arising to other person, compassion arises. How it is only your own mistake. Like this meditate on compassion. Generate compassion, how pitiful it is.

I think I’ll stop there.

## LECTURE 26

### MOTIVATION

Cultivate the pure the motivation of bodhicitta, not only that I could receive the blissful state of peace, nirvana, that is making myself to be free from suffering. That is nothing surprising, nothing to be surprised about, that is not the great meaning of human life. There are numberless sentient beings who have been my mother and extremely kind to me, numberless times, and they are devoid of happiness and constantly experiencing suffering, so I must lead them to receive enlightenment. The cause to receive enlightenment is the graduated path to enlightenment, such as this graduated path to enlightenment, especially bodhicitta, therefore I am going to listen to the teachings, listen to the oral teachings on this in order to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the sentient beings.

The listening subject that is the Mahayana teachings, the oral teaching on training in the thought of enlightenment which is the door of the Mahayana path, is method for the fortunate ones to receive enlightenment, as it is well expounded by highly realized propagator Nagarjuna and Asanga. It is the profound teachings which contains the essence from the infinite knowledge of the Dharma that Atisha and great Lama Tsongkhapa has. This contains all the essence of the 84,000 teachings shown by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and all this is set up for the graduated practice for one person to achieve enlightenment. This is sole path through which all past, present and future buddhas can receive enlightenment.

In order to offer just a very brief commentary, an explanation on the commentary of the oral teachings, part of this specific subject that is the actual body, training the mind in bodhicitta. The benefits of cherishing other sentient beings, how sentient beings are extremely kind in many ways and they are the base from where we receive all our happiness, every single happiness and perfection, therefore we should cherish the sentient beings.

### CHERISHING OTHERS

Again, on the basis of yesterday evening’s talk, how do we generate compassion, instead of getting angry with any sentient being—animal, human or even spirits—who gives us harm? What normally happens when we get

harm is to get angry, to get nervous, to become evil, so how do we generate compassion when we are harmed? , How do we make our compassion stronger?

On that basis, to actually think like this is extremely good. “By that person harming me in many ways, but particularly by harming my Mahayana practice, he is only making himself worse. By doing this he only becomes the base to receive all the general sufferings of samsara and in particular the various sufferings of the lower realms. How pitiful that is!” The Tibetans call this *nying-je*, feeling compassion from the heart. How pitiful, what a pity. So like this, you generate compassion.

Also think, if a crazy dog bit you, eating a piece of meat from your thigh, what do you think? Instead of killing the dog, destroying it, giving it to the police, in the hand of the police, what do you think? Any sentient being, even a person who shoots you with a gun, who hits you with a knife, who cuts your body, how do you think? How do you practice? How do you use take this bad condition into the path to enlightenment? How do you transform this bad condition into the path to enlightenment? This bad condition can become a cause to create negative karma, by getting angry and letting all those disturbing thoughts arise, and thus ensure continuously suffer in the samsara. This is how it has normally been; this is the way it has been in your life, how you have been reacting when you receive harm. But you don’t have to. You don’t have to make it to become the cause to create negative karma, the cause of samsara. You can turn it around; you can transform this bad condition of other sentient beings harming you into the cause for actualizing the path to enlightenment. Instead of becoming the cause to feel upset, to feel unhappy, you can transform the other people’s harm into the cause of happiness, which makes your mind and life happy.

So, when somebody hits you, when somebody cuts your leg or arm into pieces, then what? What do you think? How do you transform the bad condition into a happy condition, the unhappy life into a happy life? So then think like this, “This sentient being who gave harm, he has been my mother numberless times, numberless times.” If you can remember the four kindnesses of the mother that you have already meditated on that, as I repeated this morning, it’s excellent to think that he has been kind numberless times, there is no number to it.

Think, “There is no number, is out of number, how many times I have eaten your meat, I have drunk your blood, I have chewed your bones, as a dog, a tiger or some other animal. I have chewed other sentient beings bones. Numberless times I’ve eaten your meat, I’ve drank your milk.” I did not mention this morning that milk came out of the kindness of mother! [RL] “How many times have I drunk your milk? How times have I chewed your bones, with a “cru-cru” sound?”

While a sentient being is harming, still harming you, you can meditate like this. Or even from afar, you can still meditate. “How many times have I put on your skin? How many times have I worn your skin? Remember that, like woolen clothes that you wear, taken by force, with pain, from the animal, from the sheep, often taken by killing. Many of the clothes that you wear, which makes you feel warm in cold weather, which pampers you, [RL GL] you get by killing an animal or by forcing it, by giving it pain. Many of your clothes have been received by killing animals, by them experiencing unbelievable, incredible, unbelievable suffering.

Even if a flea bites you, no matter how painful it is, it’s out of the question, it absolutely nothing compared to the unbelievable suffering when that kind mother sentient being is killed. It’s the same here. By them experiencing unbelievable suffering, you receive these warm clothes, this warm hat or warm whatever it is. So like this, “How many times have I put on your skin. There is no number. So it’s unbelievable, incredible. Then also all these things, if each one could be collected, piled up, there would be no space, there would be no empty space left. The entire area would be filled by each of these, from this one sentient being. It is numberless, how times have I kill them by giving poison, by shooting, by cutting the body into pieces while its alive and taking

the skin off. I have let the sentient beings experience suffer for such a long time in so many incredibly cruel ways, unbelievably cruel ways. So many times I have beaten them, I have robbed them, I have cheated them. So many times I have done so many harmful things to this one sentient being.”

Think, “So now, this is my turn. It has turned full circle, the karma is circling back on me. It’s my turn to suffer, it’s my turn to repay the kindness. It is my turn to repay the kindness, for what I have done to this sentient being.” Think like this. So think, “Therefore it is extremely worthwhile. It is extremely kind of this sentient being, this dog who has bitten me, who has taken a piece of my flesh. How kind to have taken a bit out of my thigh where I am so fat anyway!” I’m joking about this one! Especially in the West, people don’t like fat. I remember one day I sent a student to a butcher shop to buy some fat I needed for something and the butcher didn’t accept his money, saying nobody ever wanted fat anymore. However, I am joking.

So anyway, think, “This is extremely kind. How extremely kind it is, eating my flesh.” So then like this, generate compassion.

I think pipi break.

Then also generate love and compassion like you did in last night’s meditation, by taking on the suffering of other sentient beings and dedicating your body, your material possessions and merit to other sentient beings. This is also very good to practice when somebody harms you. Generate love and compassion this way. Generate compassion knowing he’s suffering by creating negative karma and following delusion, as I explained before, then love, knowing how he is devoid of happiness. Then you do this practice with sentient being who gives harm, which means you don’t have line them up so they have to wait until you finished the rest of your meditation session. [GL RL] They’re not sitting there lined up until you finish your meditation, not like this. No matter whatever he does, wherever he is, you just meditate, practice like this.

#### SHOWING PATIENCE FOR SENTIENT BEINGS WHO HAVE HARMED US

Then also think, “If I don’t practice patience on this sentient being who gives me harm, while he is giving me the opportunity to remember patience and to practice patience, if I don’t practice now, then when will I practice patience? When will I ever be able to complete the practice of patience? If I don’t practice now, when he helps me to practice patience, when he gives me the opportunity, when I will practice? When I will complete the practice of patience?”

You can achieve enlightenment only by completing the practice of patience. Without completing it, you cannot receive enlightenment. So think, “This is my teacher. This person who gives me harm is my teacher, my virtuous teacher. Why? Why? Why virtuous teacher? Because just as I receive teachings from my teacher, from my guru, I receive teachings on patience, on how to practice patience from this virtuous teacher, from this guru.” On that basis, you then practice patience. In the same way as a guru gives you the opportunity to practice patience, by explaining the teachings on how to practice patience, similarly this person who harm you also helps you practice patience as a guru helps you practice patience. If you practice patience based on this person’s harm then you receive received the virtue; you create virtue by the kindness of him harming you. Therefore, this is the same as creating virtue by following the teachings on patience from the guru. It’s the same thing here, and so he is also your virtuous teacher who helps you to complete the practice of patience. Think like this, “He’s my virtuous teacher who helps me complete the practice of patience.”

This last one is trying to see the harmer as a teacher, as a guru. You receive your virtue by generating the patience. Patience itself is a virtue, so this virtue is received by his kindness, so he is your virtuous teacher who

helps you complete the practice of patience. Also question yourself, “If I don’t practice patience now, when I will I practice patience, when I will complete the practice of patience?” Then like this, remember his kindness.

So that’s how practicing the six perfections, the six gone-beyond things, is also received by depending on kindness of sentient beings.

For example, you receive patience from the sentient being who gives you harm, not from stone or wood, not from yourself. So think this is very good. Think, “I like friends but I don’t like enemies. But actually, this enemy is kinder than a friend. Actually, this enemy is kinder than friend. A friend who doesn’t give me any harm, doesn’t give me the opportunity to learn patience. I don’t receive patience from my friend. Patience does not arise from the friend who does not harm me but who helps me. On the other hand, the enemy who harms me gives me the opportunity to practice patience and so patience arises from this enemy. So this enemy is really extremely kind.”

## MORALITY

So it’s the same thing with the paramita of moral conduct. Not taking of others’ lives, not harming others—it involves so many things to not harm other sentient beings. Not harming other sentient beings. If there are no sentient beings at all, there is not only no object to practice patience on, there is no object to allow you to observe moral conduct, to not take another’s life. If there are no sentient beings, there is no need to take the vow, and so no chance to observe the moral conduct of not harming other sentient beings. So like this, you have to receive the merit of observing moral conduct, not harming others, from sentient beings, from the precious holy objects, the sentient beings.

Then as well as moral conduct and patience then rest of them, charity, energy, concentration, wisdom, all the rest, all these perfections are received, by depending on the kindness of the sentient beings.

The sentient being—for example, the enemy—is the one who places enlightenment in your palm. The enemy, the sentient beings are the ones who gives you the enlightenment, who place enlightenment in your hand, your palm. So if you think like this, how the path, the six perfections, how everything that you have depends on sentient beings, you can see clearly how sentient beings place enlightenment in your hand. So it’s extremely kind.

## SEEING THE SENTIENT BEINGS AS GURU

Also, Kadampa Geshe Chekawa says in his teaching, “Whether it’s an enemy or friend—the object of the delusion, the disturbing negative thoughts—one who sees this as a virtuous friend (which means teacher) that person, wherever he is, is happy. This is very clear.”

Another way of putting it is this. The person who sees the object of delusion, either enemy or friend, as a virtuous teacher all the time is happy. The object of delusion can be anything, the object of attachment, the object of anger, the object of pride, whatever makes to pride, jealousy, many things like this arise. Then who can see them all the time as a virtuous teacher, as a guru, by remembering thought training teaching, that person is happy, wherever he goes, wherever he is, even if he is in the prison, even if he is in a huge, beautiful palace, even if he is in court where he is punished, where he is to be killed, that person’s mind is always happy, always happy. That person’s mind is always happy, so that person’s life is always happy. What makes that person’s mind unhappy, as we talked at the beginning of course, is the disturbing negative thoughts.

So by remembering this thought training teaching, by practicing, just as I have explained these things about how to generate compassion, when somebody gives you harm, besides not letting to delusion arise, you develop your mind, you make your mind better. You use these conditions, these objects of delusions, to make the mind better, to increase compassion, then love, bodhicitta, then patience, and many other points on the path. Besides controlling delusions and not letting them arise, it becomes a helper to actualize this path and to increase the realizations. So like that, as the disturbing negative thoughts are controlled, you see there is nothing which makes your mind unhappy. As there is nothing that makes your mind unhappy, so there is nothing that makes your life unhappy. So, there are no ups and downs.

And also it's very good to remember what great bodhisattva Shantideva said in his teaching,

“Just like having found a treasure at home, without obtaining with difficulties, the enemy became friend, who becomes a friend, the enemy who is friend, to practice the bodhisattva’s actions.” Maybe put it this way:

The enemy who is a friend for practicing the bodhisattva’s deeds, obtained without difficulty, like finding a treasure at home.

What the great bodhisattva Shantideva is saying is that if you go on purpose to find the enemy, you might not find him at all. “I want to find an enemy!” If you are purposely search for an enemy—“Where is my enemy?” putting advertisements in newspapers and television [GL] saying please come for party on such a day [GL] like people in the West do to find a good husband—then you maybe you can’t find him.

Even if there are many difficulties, if you try everywhere, hitchhiking all over the place [GL] still you can’t find the enemy. The enemy you have just received, he’s helping you practice the bodhisattva’s deeds. Another way of saying this is he’s helping you practice the bodhisattva path to enlightenment. What I’ve just mentioned before, this example, “I should like the enemy, just like the example of having received a precious treasure at home, without difficulty.” To obtain treasure, usually you need to go by ship, traveling for months and months, but this is without even leaving home. First you leave the home, all your family, then you go home, then you travel, then you go by ship, then you go to ocean, then go in the middle of the ocean and get the treasures by bearing the dangers of life, by making all this expenses, like that. But this is like a person who has found a treasure at home, without needing to go outside. You have received the precious treasure there, without needing to work for it, without need to bear difficulties to get it. Normally, if a person finds a treasure he is so happy, so why can’t you be happy when you have found an enemy without having to go outside to look for one, without traveling, without a lot of expenses. Therefore, you should receive that enemy as a friend because he helps you practice the bodhisattva actions, easily without any difficulty. Why can’t you be happy with this?

You can be happier, you *should* be happier meeting this enemy than having found a precious treasure at home. Why? Because the enemy helps to control the delusion, the enemy helps to actualize the Mahayana path, the bodhisattva path to enlightenment, but that jewel, that precious treasure that doesn’t have that value to help you. It doesn’t help in that way. So therefore actually you should be happier to receive the enemy.