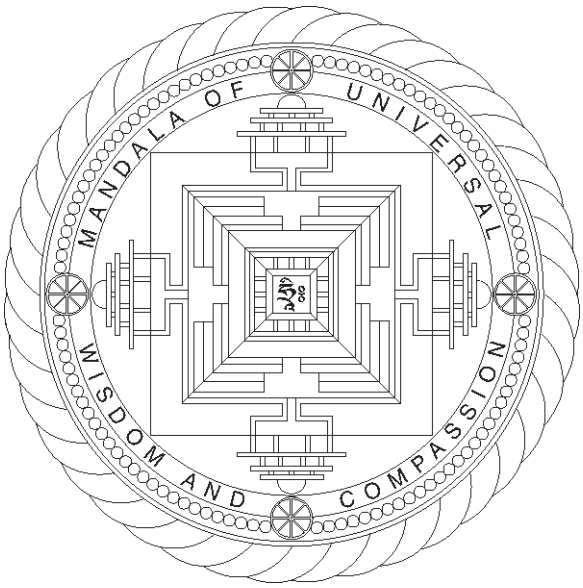
Discovering BUDDHISM

Awakening the limitless potential of your mind,
achieving all peace and happiness



Wisdom of Emptiness
Required Reading

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Further required reading includes the following texts:

Virtue and Reality, by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand, *1997 gold edition* (pp. 647–706) *or 2006 blue edition* (pp. 593-648)

Heart Sutra: An Oral Teaching, by Geshe Sonam Rinchen

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The Wisdom of Emptiness

by Denma Locho Rinpoche

In the most profound school of Buddhism, the Middle Way Consequentialist school, just what is emptiness or the ultimate truth? It is this: that in fact nobody or nothing, anywhere, has anything that inherently makes it what it is. Nothing has its own personal mark.

Everything exists simply through language, through ideas. The absence of something, the total absence, the total not-being, non-existence of anything that is not there through the power of language and thought is shunyata, emptiness, the ultimate truth.

When one talks of an ultimate truth, of emptiness, one has a focus; one is looking at objects and finding them to be totally empty. What one is looking at and finding to be empty is very important. The identification of things first becomes an important thing to do because the ultimate truth isn't something immediately apprehensible by our senses, we just can't see it. We have to arrive at it through our thought processes, and in order to do this we have to use reasoning. This reasoning takes as its point of departure certain things or bases, so we must identify these In the first instance.

Let's start by trying to identify what are classically the most important of these bases, the five aggregates or skandas. In the *Heart Sutra* it says, "He looked and saw that the five aggregates are empty of inherent existence." So if you don't know what these five are, how can you look into the ultimate truth of them?

The five aggregates are: a great heap of physical things, a great heap of feelings, a great heap of discriminations, a great heap of created things (Sanskrit, samskara) and a great heap of awareness. So then, one has heaps, aggregates, and these locate living creatures.

Let's take the aggregate of physical things, which can be further broken down into the external objective physical things and the internal subjective physical things. Sights, sounds, smells, tastes and sensations are the external or objective physical things in this great heap of physical things, while the five senses are the subjective or internal physical things.

The second heap is that of feelings. What are feelings? They are the experiences one gets out of things: pleasant experiences, neutral experiences and unpleasant ones.

The next heap is discrimination, which is defined as that part of the mind that functions to identify particular things as what they are.

The fourth aggregate of created things has most of the non-associated created things. It's a catch-bag for everything not included in the other four heaps.

And what is the fifth heap? This is all our awareness or consciousness or thoughts. This is generally looked at as sense-based awareness coming from a thinking mind.

One can only focus on the reality of emptiness when one has seen the size, the dimensions, of what one is refuting or denying. The Tibetan saint Tsongkhapa said, "Anything that is produced from conditions is never produced." You can unpack this apparent paradox in this way. What you are saying is that nothing is produced as something that is independent; nothing is produced as something that is there under its own power. That's what you are trying to demonstrate.

For example, a seedling isn't produced as something there under its own power, as something that is inherently what it is. Why? Because it is produced from causes and conditions. That's how you break down the meaning of the statement to formulate it as a reason for the hidden meaning, which is emptiness, to come clear to the mind.

Lama Tsongkhapa writes in his famous *Praise to Dependent Arising*, "What is more amazing, what better way of expressing a reality has ever been found? Namely that anything that depends on conditions is empty."

There are many different reasons a person can use to come to understand emptiness. But here we meet with the king of all reasonings "dependent arising" because being produced or arising dependently is the reason for everything's emptiness. Using this reason, one avoids the extreme of nihilism, because dependent arising shows something is there; nevertheless, because it is a reason that shows emptiness it also removes eternalism.

As the great Aryadeva said, "Anyone who gets a view into one reality gets a view into all realities." What he is saying is that if one plumbs the depths of reality of anything, one doesn't need to go through the whole process again with another object. Just bringing to the mind the reality you've seen in one object or person, and turning the mind to another, you will look at its reality as well.

That's why every one of our sadhanas without exception starts with the mantra that means "OM, this is purity, all dharmas are pure, I am that purity." Before doing any sadhana one brings to mind this fact of the ultimate reality of emptiness.

Colophon:
Denmo Locho Rinpoche, the ex-abbot of Namgyal Monastery in Dharamsala, India, taught for two weeks at Root Institute in Bodhgaya, India December 1995. Here is an extract. Translated by Ven Gareth Sparham.

The Two Truths

by Denma Locho Rinpoche

I have been asked to give a talk on the two truths: the conventional or surface level of truth and the ultimate truth. Looking at it one way it seems as if I've already finished my teaching because there are just these two words: conventional and ultimate, and that's finished! But in fact these two truths subsume within them all of Buddhism, so there is more to talk about than you'd find in a huge beak.

I ask all of you in this special place of Bodhgaya to bring up within you a special motivation. Every living creature, no matter who they are, are living creatures seeking happiness. At the same time they seek happiness, they are unaware of the cause of happiness, so call up this motivation: that to relieve them from their unhappiness, I must myself achieve all the wonderful qualities, all the excellence of an enlightened state, in order to teach them how to free themselves.

Living creatures, just like ourselves, are defined by seeking to avoid unpleasant, suffering situations, and seeking to place themselves in happy situations. Animals, from insects on up, have knowledge of methods to immediately remove suffering, they have this intelligence. The human being differs from the animal as they have the intelligence to take into account a much greater time span. They can begin to do things to alleviate states that they will otherwise experience a long time in the future, for example, getting a good education so we can find a job, making money, and living well in the future. At this point we are talking generally; spirituality hasn't entered into the discussion at all.

If one performs wholesome deeds, one's future will be in a happy state. If one has performed unwholesome deeds, one has set down the causes to find oneself in a state of woe. Spirituality then enters the thought process of a human being contemplating a future that goes beyond simple death.

Everything that the enlightened one spoke of leads back to the understanding of the two levels of truth. (This doesn't mean there is no third truth, for example the Four Noble Truths and so on, so you can have sub-divisions.) Since you have two levels of reality, you have to have something being subdivided, or categorized in two categories.

So you can ask yourself, "What is being sub-divided?" and the answer is knowables or objects of knowledge (Tibetan, *she-ja*). Here, a knowable is simply something that is existing. To exist means to be knowable, and to be knowable means to exist.

For example, I could have the idea of antlers on a rabbit — it could come up in my mind. I could fabricate this awareness, and in that sense rabbit's antlers are something known but they certainly don't exist. [The problem] here is that when you equate things that exist and things that are known, they are

known by [a valid] awareness but not by [just any] awareness. In other words I could get out of this difficulty by saying that, true, rabbit's antlers are known by [a particular person's] awareness, but this doesn't necessarily mean that they are known by awareness!

Ultimate truth, *paramarthasatya*, if you take the [Sanskrit] word apart is this: artha refers to that which is known; parama refers to that which knows its object, that is, the mind of a high spiritual being; satya means truth. It is truth because that which is known is true for that which knows its object, the mind of the high spiritual being. Therefore ultimate truth, an ultimate thing that is true.

So what about this other truth, the conventional, surface level of truth: how does one come to understand this second of the two truths if the ultimate reality is understood in this way? This is *samvrtisatya*. Samvrti is total covering up, and covering here means ordinary awareness covering that which is real. Here again satya is truth, but truth for an ordinary awareness. In other words, all the things that are true for ordinary minds like our own that are taken as real by them, are conventional truths. Therefore truth for an ordinary covering mind.

In the scholastic tradition we say that anything that is known will always be included in one of these two levels of reality. Anything not covered by these two levels is beyond the sphere of what is knowable. There is a deep logic here, that these two categories, the two truths, are an exhaustive description of all that there is.

Here is how it works. Truth and lie go together, don't they? If a person makes a statement that mirrors reality, then that statement is true. However, a statement not mirroring reality is a lie.

The ultimate level of reality is mirrored in the mind of awareness that knows it, in a way that is not lying. This necessarily brings out the situation that all conventional truths are lying to the awareness that knows them, about the way they appear. Similarly, ordinary things appearing to ordinary awareness must be said to be lying to that ordinary awareness. You are, by removing that truth, positively showing the truth of the awareness of the ultimate. That ultimate, appearing to an awareness that knows it is not lying to that awareness, is the suchness of things, the ultimate reality of things. So you have one being necessitated by another in a see-saw like fashion, and from that account you can extrapolate out to show that it is a statement that is exhaustive of all knowables, of all that exists. [...] This reasoning takes as its point of departure certain things or bases which are the five aggregates or skandhas upon which we impute a false sense of a permanently existing "I".

Colophon:
Taken from Tse Chen Ling Center's *Buddhism 101* collected teachings. Original text is unknown. Reprinted with permission from Tse Chen Ling Center.

Seeking the I

by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

All the problems we encounter in samsara: the cycle of repeated death and rebirth, have their source in the ignorance that grasps at things as though they were self-existent. Our situation in this cycle is similar to being trapped in a large building with many rooms and doors, but with only one door leading out. We wander hopelessly from one part of the building to another, looking for the right door. The door that leads us out of samsara is the wisdom that realizes the emptiness of self-existence.

This wisdom is the direct remedy for the ignorance which is both cause and effect of clinging to self, and which believes the self or 'I' to be inherently and independently existent. In other words, the I appears to be something it is not: a concrete, unchanging entity, existing in its own right, and our ignorant mind clings to this mistaken view. We then become addicted to this phantom I and treasure it as if it were a most precious possession. Wisdom recognizes that such an autonomously existing I is totally non-existent and thus, by wisdom, ignorance is destroyed. It is said in the buddhist scriptures that to realize the correct view of emptiness, even for a moment, shakes the foundations of sarnsara, lust as an earthquake shakes the foundations of a building.

Each of us has this instinctive conviction of a concrete, independently existing 1. When we wake up in the morning we think, 'I have to make breakfast,' or, 'I have to go to work.' Thence arises the powerful intuition of an I which exists in its own right, and we cling to this mistaken belief. If someone says, 'You're stupid,' or 'You're intelligent,' this I leaps forth from the depths of our mind, burning with anger or swollen with pride. This strong sense of self has been with us from birth—we did not learn it from our parents or teachers. It appears most vividly in times of strong emotion: when we are mistreated, abused or under the influence of attachment or pride. If we experience an earthquake or if our ear or 'plane nearly crashes, a terrified I invades us, making us oblivious to everything else. A strong sense of I also arises whenever our name is called. But this apparently solid, autonomous I is not authentic. It does not exist at all.

This does not mean that we do not exist, for there *is* a valid, conventionally existent I. This is the self that experiences happiness and suffering, that works, studies, eats, sleeps, meditates and becomes enlightened. This I does exist, but the other I is a mere hallucination. In our ignorance, however, we confuse the false I with the conventional I and are unable to tell them apart.

This brings us to a problem that often arises in meditation on emptiness. Some meditators think, 'My body is not the I, my mind is not the I, therefore I don't exist,' or, 'Since I cannot find my I, I must be getting close to the realization of emptiness.' Meditation which leads to such conclusions is incorrect, because it disregards the conventional self. The meditator fails to recognize and properly identify the false I that is to be repudiated and instead repudiates the conventional or relative I that *does* exist. If this

error is not corrected it could develop into the nihilistic view that nothing exists at all, and could lead to further confusion and suffering rather than to liberation.

What is the difference, then, between the false I and the conventional I? The false I is merely a mistaken idea we have about the self: namely, that it is something concrete, independent and existing in its own right. The I which does exist is dependent: it arises in dependence on body and mind, the components of our being. This body-mind combination is the basis to which conceptual thinking ascribes a name. In the case of a candle, the wax and wick are the basis to which the name 'candle' is ascribed. Thus a candle is dependent upon its components and its name. There is no candle apart from these. In the same way, there is no I independent of body, mind, and name.

Whenever the sense of I arises, as in 'I am hungry,' self-grasping ignorance believes this I to be concrete and inherently existent. But if we analyze this I, we shall find that it is made up of the body—specifically our empty stomach—and the mind that identifies itself with the sensation of emptiness. There is no inherently existing hungry I apart from these interdependent elements.

If the I *were* independent, then it would be able to function autonomously. For example, my I could remain seated here reading while my body goes into town. My I could be happy while my mind is depressed. But this is impossible; therefore the I cannot be independent. When my body is sitting, my I is sitting. When my body goes into town, my I goes into town. When my mind is depressed, my I is depressed. According to our physical activity or our state of mind, we say, 'I am working,' 'I am eating,' 'I am thinking,' 'I am happy,' and so on. The I depends on what the body and mind do; it is postulated on that basis alone. There is nothing else. There are no other grounds for such a postulation.

The dependence of the I should be clear from these simple examples. Understanding dependence is the principal means of realizing emptiness, or the non-independent existence of the I. All things are dependent. For example, the term 'body' is applied to the body's components: skin, blood, bones, organs and so on. These parts are dependent on yet smaller parts: cells, atoms and sub-atomic particles.

The mind is also dependent. We imagine it to be something real and self-existent, and react strongly if we hear, 'You have a good mind' or, 'You're terribly confused.' Mind is a formless phenomenon that perceives objects, and is clear in nature. On the basis of that function we impute the label 'mind.' There is no functioning mind apart from these factors. Mind depends upon its components: momentary thoughts, perceptions and feelings. Just as the I, the body, and the mind depend upon their components and labels, so do all phenomena arise dependently.

These points can best be understood by means of a simple meditation designed to reveal how the I comes into apparent existence. Begin with a breathing meditation to relax and calm the mind. Then, with the alertness of a spy, slowly and carefully become aware of the 1. Who or what is thinking, feeling and meditating? How does it seem to come into existence? How does it appear to you? Is your I a creation of your mind, or is it something existing concretely and independ-ently, in its own right?

Once you have identified the I, try to locate it. Where is it? Is i**t** in your head...in your eyes ... in your heart ... in your hands ... in your stomach ... in your feet?

Carefully consider each part of your body, including the organs, blood vessels and nerves. Can you find

the I? If not, it may be very small and subtle, so consider the cells, the atoms and the parts of the atoms.

After considering the entire body, again ask yourself how your I manifests its apparent existence. Does it still appear to be vivid and concrete? Is your body the I or not?

Perhaps you think that your mind is the I. The mind consists of thoughts that constantly change, in rapid alternation. Which thought is the I? Is it a loving thought ... an angry thought ... a serious thought ... a silly thought? Can you find the I in your mind?

If your I cannot be found in the body or the mind, is there any other place to look for it? Could the I exist somewhere else or in some other manner? Examine every possibility.

Once again examine the way in which the I appears to you. Has there been any change? Do you still believe it to be real and existing in its own right? If such a self-existent I still appears, think, 'This is the false I which does not exist. There is no I independent of body and mind.'

Then mentally disintegrate your body. Imagine all the atoms of your body separating and floating apart. Billions and billions of minute particles scatter through space. Imagine that you can actually see this. Disintegrate your mind as well, and let every thought float away.

Now, where are you? Is the self-existent I still there, or can you understand how the I is dependent, merely attributed to the body and the mind?

Sometimes a meditator will have the experience of losing the I altogether. He cannot find the self and feels as if his body has vanished. There is nothing to hold on to. For intelligent beings this experience is one of great joy, like finding a marvelous treasure. Those with little understanding, however, are terrified, or feel that a treasure has just been lost. If this happens, there is no need to fear that the conventional I has disappeared—it is merely a sensation arising from a glimpse of the false I's unreality.

With practice, this meditation will bring about a gradual dissolution of our rigid concept of the I and of all phenomena. We shall no longer be so heavily influenced by ignorance. Our very perceptions will change and everything will appear in a new and fresh light.

> Closely examine the objects, such as forms, that appear to your six consciousnesses, analyzing the way in which they appear to you. Thus the bare mode of the existence of things will arise brilliantly before you.

These lines from the *Great Seal of Voidness,* a text on mahamudra by the First Panchen Lama, contain the key to all meditation on emptiness. The most important factor in realizing emptiness is correct recognition of what is to be discarded. In the objects appearing to our six consciousnesses there is an existent factor and a non-existent factor. This false, non-existent factor is to be discarded. The realization of emptiness is difficult as long as we do not recognize *what* the objects of the senses lack, i.e., what they are empty of. This is the key that unlocks the vast treasure house of emptiness.

But this recognition is difficult to achieve and requires a foundation of skillful practice. According to

Lama Tsongkhapa, there are three things to concentrate on in order to prepare our minds for the realization of emptiness: first, dissolu-tion of obstacles and accumulation of merit; second, devotion to the spiritual teacher; and third, study of subjects such as the graduated path to enlightenment and mahamudra. Understanding will come quickly if we follow this advice. Our receptivity to realizations depends primarily on faith in the teacher.

Without this, we may try to meditate but find we are unable to concentrate, or we may hear explanations of the Dharma but find that the words have little effect. This explanation accords with the experience of realized beings. I myself have no experience of meditation. I constantly forget emptiness, but I try to practice a little dharma sometimes. If you also practice, you can discover for yourselves the validity of this teaching.

Colophon:
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Non-duality

by Lama Thubten Yeshe

During the summer of 1977, Lama Yeshe visited Madison, Wisconsin and stayed at the home and center of his teacher, Geshe Lhundup Sopa. While there he gave six weeks of teachings on Maitreya's Discriminating between Relative and Ultimate Reality (Dharmadharmatavibhangakarika) *from which the following is a brief extract. Maitreya's root text is a dynamic, meditative approach to the profound view of reality, emphasizing the non-dual nature of all existence. In the following selection, Lama Yeshe comments on some central ideas from this text and offers an introduction to non-dualistic thought.*

There is no purpose or value in studying this subject merely for intellectual stimulation. That would be a complete waste of time. The knowledge contained in Maitreya's teaching is incredibly deep but only worthwhile if pursued with the proper motivation. Unless we engage in this study for the purpose of eradicating our psychological problems we would probably do better to spend our time trying to make coca-cola; at least then we could quench our thirst.

We have all probably heard a lot of gossip about mahamudra meditation. 'Maha' means great and 'mudra' means seal. If I have a government seal no one impedes or harasses me. When I have an official government seal on my passport I am free to go wherever I choose. The seal of mahamudra is similar, but here we are talking about a state of mind that is beyond our ordinary dualistic view of existence. This is the great seal that sets us free from the prison of samsara. Mahamudra itself is non-duality. It is the absolute true nature of all universal
phenomena, be they internal or external.

What is meant by the term 'non-duality'? All existing phenomena, whether deemed good or bad, are by nature beyond duality, beyond our false discriminations. Nothing that exists does so outside of non-duality. In other words, every existing energy is born within non-duality, functions within non-duality, and finally disappears into the nature of non-duality. We are born on this earth, live our lives and pass away all within the space of non-duality. This is the simple and natural truth, not some philosophy fabricated by Maitreya Buddha. We are talking about objective facts and the fundamental nature of reality, neither more or less.

If we are to achieve the realization of mahamudra it is essential to develop skill in the art of meditation. But to meditate properly we must first listen carefully to a faultless exposition of the subject matter. This will give us an accurate and precise understanding of the aim of meditation. If we have a clear intention of putting such explanations into practice in meditation, *then* merely to hear the teachings becomes a powerful experience instead of some kind of superficial intellectual 'trip'.

To understand that the dualistic mind, lost in false discriminations, is the source of beginningless and endless suffering for oneself and others is to have a truly valuable insight that will profoundly change the quality of our daily lives.

The dualistic mind is, by nature, contradictory. It sets up an internal dialogue that has forever disturbed our peace. We are always thinking, 'Maybe this, maybe that, maybe something else'—and soon. Dualistic thinking perpetuates a conflict within our mind. It causes us to be agitated and deeply confused. When we know that this confusion is the result of a mind conditioned by the dualistic view of reality, we can do something about it. Until then it will be impossible for us to come to grips with the problem because we have not correctly identified its true cause. It is not enough merely to treat symptoms. It is clear that we must com-pletely eradicate the source of problems if we are to become truly problem-free.

As our understanding and knowledge of mahamudra deepens we shall come to realize that the way things appear to us is simply a projection of our mind. For example, it's not a question of whether Madison, Wisconsin, exists or not, but whether the *way* in which we perceive Madison exists in reality or not. It should be clear that this is not the same as the nihilistic assertion that nothing exists. We are simply seeking the correct view of reality.

To clarify this point further we can investigate the fantasies we project upon our friends and the people we live with or meet every day. Our dualistic mind superimposes an attractive or repellent mtsk upon the presented image of everyone we meet, with the result that reaction is of desire and aversion arise which color our attitudes and our behavior towards this person. We begin to discriminate: 'He is good' or 'She is bad.' Such rigid, preconceived attitudes make it impossible to communicate properly with even our close friends, much less with the profound wisdom of an enlightened being, or buddha.

If we persistently investigate the inner workings of the mind, we shall eventu-ally be able to break through our habitual over-concretized mode of perceiving the universe and let some space and light into our consciousness. In time we shall have an insight as to what non-duality actually is. At that time we should simply meditate without intellect or discursive thought. With strong determination we should merely let the mind meditate single-pointedly on the vision of non-duality, beyond subject/object, good/bad, and so on. The vision of non-duality can be so vivid and powerful that we feel we can almost reach out and touch it. It is very important simply to mingle the mind with this new experience of joy and luminosity without seeking it by analysis. We must realize directly that non-duality is the universal truth of reality.

In directing our mind along the path of dharma it is best not to expect too much too quickly. The path is a gradual process to be negotiated step by step. Before one can follow practices that bring a quick and profound result there are prepara-tory practices that must be done. Lama Tsongkhapa, for example, strove very hard for the realization of shunyata, or emptiness, but met with no success, in spite of being a renowned teacher with many disciples. Finally Manjushri, the embodiment of perfect wisdom, revealed to him that he must make a retreat in order to purify his mind-stream completely of all gross and subtle delusions, as well as their imprints. Tsongkhapa then withdrew to a cave, where he did three and a half million prostrations as well as innumerable mandala offerings and other preliminary purification practices. As his thought-stream became purified, his understanding of emptiness began to deepen. This transformation continued until he finally achieved full awakening.

It is helpful if we understand that the realization of non-duality has many levels or degrees. From the philosophical point of view there are two Indian schools of Mahayana Buddhist thought: the Chittamatrin or Mind Only school and the Madhyamaka or Middle Way school with its Prasangika or Consequentialist

sub-division. Both of these schools agree that the dualistic view is deceptive and there-fore not ultimately true, and both assert that non-duality is the absolute nature of all things and *is* ultimately true. Though the Mind Only and Consequentialist schools agree on these points, their understanding of what is meant by non-duality varies somewhat.

From Consequentialist point of view the Mind Only doctrine presents a helpful approach to conventional truth but does not accurately describe the absolute hue nature of reality. In other words, they state that the Mind Only view of reality is still tainted by superstitious beliefs. Despite this, even the Consequen-tialists agree that if we are able to realize the Mind Only view we are qualified to practice the profound methods of tantric yoga and reach unimaginably high levels of understanding.

What we should know is that the Mind Only school contends that all objects of the sense world are simply manifestations of mental energy and do not exist externally at all. According to the Consequentialists it is more correct to say that the existence of all things *depends* upon recognition by an imputing conscious-ness. Both schools attach great importance to the mind's role in determining the way in which entities arise, but the higher Consequentialist school says that to assert that there are no external phenomena whatsoever—that there is nothing other than mind—is an error. Such a view deviates from the true middle path that transcends all extremes.

The Mind Only meditators destroy the dualistic view by seeing that all objects in the field of the six senses are no more than mere projections of our mind itself. All relative phenomena arise and disappear like the bubbles in a glass of Coca-Cola. In this analogy, Coca-Cola corresponds to the mind itself while the bubbles arising within it are all relative phenomena perceived by the six senses. Can the bubbles in Coca-Cola be separated from the Coca-Cola? No. Therefore, as they are not separate, they are non-dualistic. When a deep understanding of this pervades our consciousness, the foundations of samsara are shaken.

The Consequentialists transcend dualism by realizing that both subject: mind, *and* object: the sense field, are illusory and empty of self-existence. Subject and object are mutually interdependent: they cannot exist independently of one another. For this reason the Consequentialists do not agree with the Mind Only position that mind itself—as the source and substance out of which all relative phenomena arise—has true, inherent self-existence. According to the Consequcn-tialists, all phenomena, including mind, are empty of even the slightest trace of self-existence.

The fully awakened Lama Tsongkhapa, in his work *The Heart of Perfection,* explained that first we must master the Mind Only view because from that elevated position we can easily progress to the highest, most sublime view, that of the Consequentialists. It is for this very reason that Maitreya Buddha explained the Mind Only doctrine. It is the bridge we rely upon to cross over from a completely materialistic outlook to the transcendental view of reality which is beyond all extremes.

When I expound subjects of this kind, I try to avoid being too philosophical— dwelling on 'Mind Only says this,' 'Consequentialists assert that'—especially when we are dealing with such subtle and penetrating texts as this one. Generally speaking, this teaching by Maitreya Buddha is considered to be a Mind Only text; however, it is not necessarily confined to a Mind Only interpretation. This entire text also lends itself perfectly to a Consequentialist explanation of reality and the two levels of truth. It is essential to know these two levels of truth well because when we successfully reconcile them we arrive

at a true understanding of things *as they actually are,* and become free of all suffering and its cause.

I would like to go over this point once more. Each phenomenon has two characteristic qualities or natures. One is its relative appearance, its color, shape, quality, texture, and so forth. This is termed 'deceptive truth' because it appears to exist independently of causes and conditions. In terms of this level of truth we discriminate subject and object, this and that, and soon. Even though all phenomena, internal and external, partake of this relative nature, they neverthe-less arise, exist and pass away without ever departing from the sphere of non-duality. The second level of truth is the non-dualistic, absolute nature of things, which spontaneously co-exists with all phenomena.

Phenomena themselves and the absolute nature of phenomena, have distinctive qualities; they are not the same thing. All phenomena simultaneously possess a relative or conventional mode of existence as well as an absolute, true nature, which is non-dualistic. Certain energies come together and produce a relative phenomenon. Its relative mode of existence is dualistic, and appears in terms of a subject and object relationship; yet all things arise within the space of non-duality.

Relative phenomena (dharma) are like bubbles. They are the dualistic vision of the dualistic mind. Therefore they are not truly existent or real. Absolute, true nature (dharmata) is non-dualistic. It is, therefore, real or true. Though relative phenomena and the dualistic vision do exist and function, they are not ultimately true. That is the point.

When we say that all relative phenomena have the nature of non-duality we are not saying that all existence is emptiness or absolute truth. All relative existence is *not* absolute truth. Relative phenomena are not absolute phenomena. But every existing energy, whether relative or absolute, has the characteristic nature of non-duality.

I want to explain this further. When we contemplate non-duality the dualistic vision should disappear. Therefore, we can say that non-duality is absolute nature. But can we say that *all* non-duality is absolute nature? No. Why not? Because, although all phenomena partake of the nature of non-duality, we do not have to perceive non-duality itself in order to perceive conventional reality. My head, for example, has the nature of non-duality, and yet we cannot say my head *is* absolute truth or emptiness. In order to apprehend my head you do not need to apprehend non-duality. Yet a doubt may persist: 'If my head has the characteristic nature of non-duality why then, when you apprehend my head, do you not apprehend non-duality itself?' Because there is the veil of dualistic mind between you and my head.

It may become clearer with another example. Which is the more pervasive, the population of the United States, or the population of Madison, Wisconsin? The population of the United States includes the population of Madison, but the inhabitants of Madison do not pervade the population of the entire United States. *Non-duality* is like the population of the United States, and all relative phenomena are like the inhabitants of Madison. All relative phenomena are embraced by non-duality, because they arise within the space of non-duality; all relative phenomena demonstrate non-duality.

To conclude, in order to understand non-duality we have to understand empti-ness. We can say therefore that non-duality is emptiness. But all the bubbles of relative phenomena, though they themselves are ultimately non-dual, are not emptiness. Relative and absolute truth do not pervade each other, but both are pervaded by non-duality. If we can understand the distinctive characteristics as well as the

non-contradictory natures of these two levels of truth, we can gain freedom from even the subtlest delusions of mind. There can be no stronger motive *for* study and meditation than this.

Colophon:
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How to Meditate on Emptiness

by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Monday, 5 September

First we will recite one round of the mantra *OM MANI PADME HUM*, so that the practice will become effective for the mind. Generate the thought of having the ultimate good heart in the mind of oneself and all other sentient beings.

You came here to learn something, to participate in the meditation course so as to develop something, to do something for the mind, seeking the method to develop mental peace. Thank you for that. I feel rejoyfulness.

We all came here desiring happiness, not desiring suffering. All human beings are the same in this. All variety of creatures and all the diverse human beings with different colors and appearances, all are the same—desiring happiness and not desiring suffering.

All creatures seek happiness; they are seeking it day and night, keeping busy. Those birds living in the bushes (you know, the noise that we hear from them) and also the butterflies—so busy. They are all the same—desiring happiness, not desiring suffering. The creatures that live in the water and those crawling on the earth, those ants that are so fast, working so fast—they are all running, seeking happiness.

Even the human beings on this earth are seeking mind peace, externally. They are not seeking mind peace by developing the inner factor of the mind, the good heart. They are only seeking it externally.

A person who has material wealth might have some material comfort, physical comfort, but because nothing is done to change the mind from the bad thoughts which bring confusion to the mind, even though there is some wealth, material comfort, because they have so much depression, fear and worry in the mind, that person is so overwhelmed by mental suffering that even the physical comfort is not felt. The physical comfort is not felt because of the mental suffering. You see, since you don't change the bad thoughts and develop a pure mind, the good heart, it disturbs even physical comfort and enjoyment.

You have so much wealth but because you have so many problems sometimes you might even wish, "Oh, if I were a cat—how wonderful it would be!" Thinking that there would be no problems then, no relationship problems. Some people even wish, "If I were a beggar, not having any of the wealth that I have now, then I would have no problems, no danger'" Someone of very high rank, such as a king or president might wish, "Oh, if I were a beggar like those beggars on the streets—how wonderful it would be! How happy I would be!"

Wishing to be an animal or something like that is because you are not aware—just because you do not see that they have problems it does not mean that they do not have problems. It is just that you are not aware of them, you have not checked up well enough.

Also, trying to obtain wealth, education, these things, or studying for thirty or forty years since you were a child, all this is not used to make the mind pure, it is not used to develop the good heart. Because it is not used for that purpose, no matter how much work, no matter how much education there is, life becomes more confused than before. There is no change in the mind. What is supposed to happen is greater peace of mind but that does not happen. One is more confused than an uneducated child.

Therefore, it is incredibly important, so important, that to gain happiness in everyday life, peace of mind in everyday life, you transform the mind—have less envy, less anger, less dissatisfaction, jealousy, pride, ill will and ignorance. Without changing the selfish attitude, the anger, dissatisfaction, ignorance and those things, there will be no peace.

All these problems—the depression, feeling up and down, all these things, all the fears, the nervous breakdowns, or that one has committed suicide—even no one else tried to kill you, you kill your- self, you become your own enemy—all these problems come from your own unsubdued mind.

There are twenty secondary unsubdued minds, however, the root is the three unsubdued minds of attachment, anger and ignorance. All suffering, all unhappiness come from these unsubdued minds. These come from the very root—ignorance not understanding the absolute nature of the mind, being ignorant of that. Not understanding the absolute nature of the I, so not understanding how the I exists.

How the I appears

You can see what it is like, this ignorance that holds the I to be truly existent. In our everyday life, from morning until night, each time that we do different activities, even now, each time that you think of yourself, you label I, an I is labeled on the aggregates. That labeling of an I is like labeling one's own name, whatever one's own name is, as it has been labeled by the parents. I is like that. Each time that other people see you, they label your name on your aggregates. Each time that you label I, it is merely labeled on these aggregates—just as other people merely label you when they see your body, or like when your parents gave you your name, or when other people talk about you. All this is merely labeled.

The I that appears to exist, as though it were real, is only that label, that is all. But the I that is merely labeled on the aggregates does not appear as though it were merely labeled. It does not appear as it is, it appears as though it existed from its own side.

The I that is merely labeled on these aggregates appears as though it were not merely labeled on these aggregates, but as if it existed from its own side, not being dependent on the aggregates, but independent, and existing from its own side. Not being dependent on thought which labels and not being dependent on the name, but existing in its own right.

This ignorance, the conception, the thought that completely clings to the belief that the I that appears to exist from its own side is one hundred per cent true—this is the ignorance that holds the I to be self-

existent, clinging to the I as being truly existent.

All the confused minds, the dissatisfied mind and anger, arise from this ignorance. And all life's other problems come from these confused minds. It not only makes your own life a problem but also makes you create problems for others, for other sentient beings. You disturb others, not letting someone who is peaceful and enjoying life have peace.

(Short break followed by a short meditation)

Finding the I

Think how the I appears to us to exist, and how we think of the I and label it.

So, now for the experience! Just think of the I, of yourself. Don't think about the general I, about human beings in general, think about yourself, your I. Think, 'I'.

Now, if you feel that there is a subject, a meditator, an I that can be found, that looks as though it can be found, a real I, then concentrate on that and at the same time, let a part of the mind be aware of your own body, all the things that are inside your body—the skin, the flesh, the bones, the ribs... Especially think about the chest part, the lungs, the heart and all the inside details.

First think, 'I'. You try to feel an I that can really be found, one that is really inside here, especially from here down (Rinpoche points to the chest) from the neck to the heart in a kind of darkness, not clear. Then, when you have seen this I, let a part of the mind be aware of all your inside, searching for where that subject I is. Check on the heart, then after that check in the head, the ears, the nose, the brain and maybe inside the tongue. Also go inside the hands and legs, be aware of how the body looks inside. Check inside and think, "Where is it?"

At the very beginning you should not think, "Oh, that does not exist." You should think that the I can be found.

You see, the result is this: that you cannot find the I. Even though it looked as though it could be found in the beginning, when you searched in detail—nothing. In the beginning it looks as though the I can really be found but once you start to search—it disappears. You cannot find that particular place, in that area where you always believed it to exist.

You cannot find it in the legs, you cannot find it in the head, neither inside nor outside. But definitely there is an I—that gets tired, that has leg pains, that wants to go out, that wants to sleep. There is definitely an I that meditates, that is unhappy, that wants to be happy, that wants to drink cappuccino. There is an I but not that I—isn't it strange!

Maybe someone might have found it somewhere. Did anybody find it?

Tuesday, 6 September

When we recite the mantra, you can visualize Chenrezig above your head and above the head of all

other sentient beings—each hell-denizen (narak being), wandering spirit (preta), and animal being. Pure nectars are flowing from Chenrezig's heart purifying them. It purifies all obstacles to the teachings becoming beneficial for the mind, effective for changing the mind, beneficial for the meditations and, mainly, beneficial for changing the mind to bodhicitta. All the obstacles to following the path to enlightenment and developing bodhicitta are purified.

First you think about the sentient beings here in this room, then about all the rest.

When we think about the existence of great compassion towards all sentient beings and training the mind in great compassion, it should be easy to understand that it is possible to develop this in your mind. In our everyday life, we have compassion towards others, towards some people towards some animals. Sometimes less, sometimes more. It is the nature of our mind that compassion sometimes goes up, so it is the nature of our mind that we can develop. For sure, it is possible to have the complete realization of having trained the mind in great compassion towards all sentient beings.

There is an I that we normally believe in as being something real inside. It is something somewhere in the heart or in the chest that we normally think of as 'me'. When other people criticize, when they treat us badly, disrespectfully, when people do something to us, we feel a real I that hurts. "He gave *me* harm," "He treated *me* badly." We feel a real I somewhere inside there saying, "He helped *me*," or "He gave *me* harm." An I that is real, that exists from its own side, something there inside the chest, difficult to find.

Did you search for the I? Did somebody find the I?

Student : If I had to find the I, then I would say that maybe it is in the brain.

Rinpoche : You are not obliged to find it! It is not a commitment. You have to check whether it can be found or not! (laughing)

Student : When I closed my eyes I could feel the I, but when I was looking for the I, I was not able to find it.

Rinpoche : That should be done more and more! First you check down to the feet. When that is finished—what is the result in the mind? The experience, the result that came, you check that. Check how the I appears to you, then if the mind is distracted from that, again you bring it back, you look for the I.

If I close my eyes maybe it is more effective. Then I look at the I and again check how the I appears, then search again. It is very good to do this alternately so that it becomes clearer and clearer. That way it helps very much to see clearly the object of ignorance—that while there is no such I existing from its own side, the I is empty of existing from its own side, still it appears to exist from its own side. Clinging to this appearance is the root of all the suffering, all the confusion.

So this method helps very much to perceive more clearly the object of ignorance, the hallucination, the illusive I, the I that is empty and that we have to realize as empty. Believing in this I creates all the problems and suffering.

Was he saying that he found it in the brain?

Student : If I had to find it I would say that it was in the brain.

Rinpoche : Actually, I had not finished what I was going to say. It is like having to find a snow lion in Italy, or if it were compulsory to find a billion dollars in this room! He is not obliged to find a billion dollars in this room!

If he thinks it is in the head then he should not just be satisfied that it is there, he should check. He should not be satisfied with that. That is the problem, that is our problem—if we believe it is there we should search if it is really there. Just believing it is there and leaving it at that, being satisfied without checking if it is there—that is the root of our confusion in everyday life. That comes from not following wisdom, it is the problem of ignorance. (laughing) So the I can be found in this room? Yes or no?

Student : It is possible to find it anywhere. Maybe, only you can find the I. You will find the I when you reach enlightenment.

Rinpoche: Tell Renaldo, don't you think that you are here in this room?

Student : With the body you can be here but with the mind you can go everywhere.

Rinpoche: That is similar to what was said yesterday by Salvatore. So your body is here. And when you think of India, is your mind in India? In the Indian tea shops?

Student : Maybe, it is possible. It is difficult with my mind, but Rinpoche's mind has more qualities and possibilities to go out of here.

Rinpoche: My mind got stuck here.

Student : Is the sense of I that we have, related to the gross mind?

Rinpoche: Yes, that is right, think of the gross mind. George, can the I be found in this room? Can the I be found on the body?

George : I cannot be found in this room.

Rinpoche: Oh, I cannot be found in this room?

George : I is not findable in this room, it is not findable anywhere.

Rinpoche: The I is not findable in this room? So, George cannot be found in this room?

George : You should use the word 'exist' instead of 'findable.'

Rinpoche: What is the definition of findable?

George : Findable means that it is some place.

Rinpoche: I mean, you find the watch there on the table. You find the watch, you see the watch on the table, then you find the watch because the watch is on the table. So you have found the watch in this room on this table. You have found the watch—that's right isn't it? So, George is findable

George : In that sense he is findable.

Rinpoche: So I is findable in this room?

George : In that sense, yes.

Rinpoche: I is findable in this room? Okay, is I findable on the aggregates?

George : In that sense I is findable on the aggregates.

Rinpoche: Is I findable on the aggregates?

George : In that sense, yes.

Rinpoche: So I can be found on the aggregates? Okay, where is it? (laughing) So it is similar—can the table be found on the table?

George : We use it generally saying the table can be found in the room. In that sense the table can be found on the parts. But not in the sense of finding a self-existing table.

Rinpoche: I am not talking about a self-existent table, we are just talking about the table. Can the table be found on the basis of the table?

George : In that sense the table is findable.

Rinpoche: Yes, I am not talking about self-existent at all. Can it be found?

George : Yes, it can be found in the room, yes it can be found on the parts.

Rinpoche: Now the table can be found on the basis of the table. Okay, where is it? Point it out! (laughing) The table seems to be burning because George is pointing at the table very carefully and keeping at a distance. Can the I be found on the aggregates? Isn't that supposed to be unfindable?

George : In English we use the word findable to mean existing. When you ask if it is findable in the room, do you mean is it existing?

Rinpoche: Yes.

George : It is existing in relation to the parts, so we can say it is on the parts in answer to the question, "where is it?" It cannot be found in the other sense of pointing it out in a substantial way.

Rinpoche: You cannot point out the table on the substantial one? You cannot point it out? You did point it out! (Laughing) You did point at the table. You pointed at the substantial one. Isn't that substantial what you pointed at? Is it non-substantial?

George : I am pointing to the collection.

Rinpoche: So the collection is what? You are pointing at the collection saying that that is the table?

George : No

Rinpoche: Then what else?

George : I am saying that the table can be found, so it exists there in a sense of existing in relation to that. It cannot be found elsewhere. It cannot be found here (points to the meditation hall). In English we could say in a loose way that people can be found here. What I don't mean to say is that it is findable, that this is the table, that there is something that is the table.

Rinpoche: There is something that is the table? So the collection is the table?

George : No.

Rinpoche: You are not pointing to the collection? Then which one is the table?

George : The collection is not the table.

Rinpoche: So you are not pointing at the collection? Then to point at the collection and to say it is the table is wrong! Are you not pointing at the collection of the parts?

George : As the table, no.

Rinpoche: Then what are you pointing at? You are not pointing at the parts, you are not pointing at the collection, so what are you pointing at?

George : In a conventional sense, if we ask if there is a table, then there is a table. If we ask for an example of a table then we point to this (George points to the table).

Rinpoche: Okay, then when you want to tell Siliana something, for example, but you can't find her and then she suddenly appears—you point to her as Siliana. It's her aggregates that you are pointing at, isn't it?

George : We do talk that way.

Rinpoche: So you do point at her aggregates'

George : We do.

Rinpoche: Yes, (laughing) so it is the same thing. You are not pointing out particular parts of the aggregates, are you? So it is similar with the table, you point to the collection of the table, the collection of the parts of the table.

George : We say it like that, but in English....

Rinpoche: Isn't it like that? Isn't it correct?

George : When you say that you can find Siliana there, in English it implies that there is something findable.

Rinpoche: Okay, is Siliana not findable? I am just asking these questions so that you people can think about it.

Student : May I ask a question? Briefly, what is the difference between the I and the mind?

Rinpoche: There is a big difference. What is his name? Salvatore? For example, are Salvatore and Salvatore's body different? You know, Salvatore is not Salvatore's body, there is a big difference like that. The mind is formless, colorless, different from the body which is the object of the sense of I. So nobody can see Salvatore, the I. I and Salvatore are the same thing.

Salvatore: If the I of Salvatore is formless, so is the mind.

Rinpoche: Can anybody see the I, Salvatore? Salvatore is formless? Okay, then Salvatore does not need dinner tonight. He does not need breakfast, lunch, dinner. He does not have to go by car.

Salvatore: I can eat, I can also stay without eating.

Rinpoche: When the time comes for breakfast, lunch or dinner, then Salvatore does not become mind, at those times Salvatore takes form but otherwise he is formless. I like that very much. I think that is smart.

Salvatore: What is the difference between the I and the mind—and Salvatore is not included in this question! It is a question for everybody, not just Salvatore.

Rinpoche: As I mentioned in the beginning—you heard the words "merely labeled"? Okay, that is what it is. The I is the possessor of the mind and body, the aggregates, but it is merely labeled on the aggregates. Sometimes there is a body, sometimes there is no body, just the mind, however, the mind is the possession and the I is the possessor. However, the mind that we believe to exist from its own side is, in fact, only mind, there is nothing other than what has been merely labeled on that.

Student : I find that there was one kind of grasping when I was a young girl and another when I was an older girl. There is always the same way of grasping but I feel that I have many I's, I don't always have the same one. Is there a valid way to make these different I's the object to be identified?

Rinpoche: You mean different I's from young time and so on? In normal daily life when you are not

searching for the I or using logic to examine the way that it exists, there is something that appears and that you cling to as being I. Think about that. Ask yourself what it is like.

In general, it is like this: there is the appearance of a real I, a truly existent I, something that looks as though it can be found, as though it is there inside the body. Also, when somebody criticizes you, you think, "Is he telling me?" With anger, with the excitement of anger you point at the chest. Or, when some terrible thing happens you hold your hand at the chest saying, "Oh my God"' and so forth. You hold your hand at your heart. Sometimes you also point at your head as well, but mostly at the heart.

When you point at the I, you don't point like this (Rinpoche points to the head), you point like this (Rinpoche points to the heart). When you talk about thinking you point at the head, but you don't point there when you say, "Is he telling me?"' I think in normal life this expression explains through gestures the ignorance of true existence: the I that is merely labeled is appearing as though it were not merely labeled, as though it existed from its own side, and the person completely clings to that as though it were real. This is shown by the outward gesture of a person hitting himself very strongly here at the heart. For them, the I appears to be real, truly existent, completely truly existent.

The merely labeled I

The I still appears to experienced meditators but way inside the heart there is the understanding that on these aggregates there is no I existing from its own side at all. It is like seeing a mirage. If someone who is walking over hot sand has a definite understanding that there is no water at all, then when they see a mirage, the mirage still appears as though it were water. That is similar. An experienced meditator has a definite understanding that there is no I existing from its own side at all, but the I that is merely labeled and under the control of name still appears to him as though it existed from its own side. The point is that he does not cling to it, just as the person who sees the mirage does not cling to that as being water. Like that.

Also, there is the thought of the mere I, for example, "I'll eat," "I'll drink," "I'll go to the market," "I am going to sleep." There is the thought of a mere I even when one has not realized the meaning of egolessness, the absolute nature of the I—that I is empty of true existence. If this thought is wrong perception, it means that "I think," "I eat," "I walk," all this does not exist. It means that it does not exist. That means that you have reached the state of nihilism. But, of course, the thought of a truly existent I, eating, sleeping, etc., that is hallucinated, wrong conception, because that truly existent I does not exist. The I that does the eating, sitting, etc. does not exist.

It is good to relate this to your own experience. Try to understand this from your own experiences. It is so worthwhile to study or to gain understanding. Our ignorance of this is the reason why we are not yet free, why we have not yet achieved liberation from samsara.

Student : Can I ask something else? When we point to the heart, sometimes we have such a strong experience of an I that we can even get physical pain. When we meditate, how can we use this physical experience of an I in the chest? It seems physical. Do we have to meditate on that to find something?

Rinpoche: No. (laughing) That is the same as before when I said that it is not a commitment to find one million dollars in the room when the room is empty of that.'

Even if you have realized the absolute nature of the I, even when you see that the I is empty of true existence, still you need to do the analytical meditation. You need to develop wisdom by seeing the appearance, the thing that appears to be truly existent. You have to discover that it is empty.

You see, it depends on the individual level of mind. I am not asking Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, "Please, you meditate on shunyata, please meditate to see the I as empty of true existence." Do you understand what I am saying? You don't ask Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to search for the appearance of the truly existent I and to find out that it is empty. Buddha does not need effort, training. That is all. It is the individual.

Relate these things to your own experience, for example, when you have a child. After the baby has come out the parents look for a name. They label that name on the aggregates. In the very first second that thought labels the name "Milano" on that child, on the aggregates, that is the thought of the mere Milano. It does not cling to Milano as being truly existent. Then, after that, because of our habit from beginningless past lives of seeing things appear as truly existent and clinging to that appearance, gradually we forget that Milano, or Claudio was merely labeled on those aggregates. You forget that in the beginning this name was merely labeled. You are not aware of that any more. You forget and the Claudio that you have merely labeled on the aggregates appears as though it were not merely labeled but completely existing from its own side, without depending on the parts, on the body, the aggregates and the person's thought that labels a Claudio, a Milano, or whatever it is called on those aggregates. The Claudio appears to exist completely from his own side, completely independently. So whenever the parents or other people see him, they think of him existing in this way.

It is the same when other people who did not know him before are introduced. Somebody says, "This is Claudio." Then in that very first second, the thought that labels Claudio does not cling to Claudio as being truly existent. Then, gradually Claudio does appear as truly existent and they cling to that as one hundred per cent true, a completely independent Claudio existing from his own side. So now you can see that the appearance and the reality—how Claudio actually exists on those aggregates and how Claudio appears to exist—are completely contradictory. Not similar.

Then you can use this example. From this example you can understand how Claudio is merely labeled. Without Claudio's body, his aggregates, even if there is the thought which labels Claudio, does Claudio exist or not? No.

You see, even after Claudio was born, if the parents still have not labeled Claudio, even though his aggregates already exist, before they have labeled Claudio, Claudio does not exist. Do you understand? So then one day they decide to label Claudio on the aggregates. The body and the aggregates exist and they decide that what looks best on him is the name Claudio (laughing). That is why they call him Claudio. That is all, there is no other Claudio besides that. That is all. We have to be satisfied that on what the parents merely label as Claudio, Claudio exists. There is nothing more, nothing else to find. No other Claudio. We have to be satisfied that having merely labeled Claudio on those aggregates there is a Claudio existing. Then whatever he does: when he sleeps—Claudio is sleeping. If he eats—Claudio is eating. We have to be satisfied just with what is merely labeled on the aggregates. Otherwise, there is no other Claudio eating, sleeping, etc.

On this body, on these aggregates, the parents merely labeled a Claudio—that's all. That is the only way

that Claudio exists, do you understand? That is all. So now you can see, there is no Claudio at all existing from its own side. You should relate that to your own name, then to your I. You should meditate like this.

The appearance, the way we look at it is that there is a Claudio existing from its own side, not merely labeled. We do not see a Claudio that we have merely labeled but one that is completely existent from its own side. So the way Claudio appears to you and the actual existence of Claudio is completely contradictory. When we look at Claudio what we should actually see, the appearance, should be according to the reality. But we don't see that. The problem comes from that.

Wednesday, 7 September

Recognizing the refuting object

Visualize Chenrezig on the crown of each being in this room and on the head of all the other sentient beings, purifying all the problems. *(Everyone recites mantra)* OM MANI PADME HUM.

Think that Chenrezig is inseparable from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, so as to bless the mind, to transform the mind. Then Chenrezig above your head and above the heads of the rest of the sentient beings absorbs and blesses their minds, becoming oneness. Visualize that you transform your mind, that you generate the three principal aspects of the path to enlightenment and also the graduated path of generation and accomplishment, cutting off dual view, the impure view.

As well as the different thoughts of I that were mentioned yesterday, there is also the intellectual thought, learned through doctrine, thinking of the I as truly existent. Not only can you have a spontaneous wrong conception, but also philosophically, intellectually, you can posit the I as truly existent. There is also a thought like this.

Yesterday, I used the example of Claudio. We think of Claudio as being not only that which has been merely labeled on the aggregates—how could it be that he were only that? We feel that there must be something else. There is the conception inside of something else, a real Claudio—how could a merely labeled Claudio work? There must be a real one, otherwise how could he exist?

When we talk about and when we hear the words "merely labeled Claudio" our mind is thinking, "How could that do the work, how could that exist and work?" "How could that harm or benefit others?" We feel that there is not only that, but something else as well, something more than that. That "something else", that "more" is what does not exist. The object of that conception is empty. That Claudio is empty. That is the refuting object.

Not being satisfied with the merely labeled Claudio, we think that there should be something else, that there should be more, a Claudio that is more than just merely labeled. But all of those other objects that you believe to be Claudio are the refuting object. They are the refuting object that is empty but that you have not yet realized as empty.

It is the same thing in relation to the I. We think that there is more than just the merely labeled I. You agree that the I, "Zopa", is labeled. You agree with that, it is obvious that it is dependent on the

thought labeling. You cannot contradict that but you feel naturally that there is not just the merely labeled Zopa, that there is something else, something more than that. That something else, that I, that Zopa is what is empty, an hallucination. That is the I that you should realize as empty.

There is the I which does not exist and the I which exists. The one which we believe to exist does not actually exist and that wrong conception of an I is the root of samsaric suffering.

For somebody who has meditated on shunyata, who has realized the truly existent I as empty and recognized the refuting object, the truly existent, independent I, that meditator does not need particular conditions to be able to see the emptiness of the I, the absolute nature of the I. He can see the refuting object, the truly existent I, vividly and clearly, at any time. He is able to see the I which exists and the I which does not exist, he is able to discriminate between the appearance and the reality—to see what exists and what does not exist.

For us, who have not realized the absolute truth of I, who do not recognize the refuting object, the I which does not exist, and who cannot differentiate between the I which exists and the I which does not exist, when we meet particular conditions we have a strong sense of an independent I. When we are excited, very happy, like having found a million dollars when we were penniless, or when some disaster happens, like at the start of a car accident—when a drunken driver is driving and you are so scared that something is going to happen! Or when you are in danger, somebody is shooting, or you are in danger of falling down, at those times you feel "now some danger is going to happen." Then you feel an I that is not dependent on the aggregates, neither on the body, nor the mind, on nothing, just completely I, an I which exists from its own side.

That I is the object of ignorance. Ignorance does not think of the body or mind as objects, it sees only an I existing from its own side. So as that appearance of a truly existent I rises strongly, great fear also arises—fear that something is going to happen to this real I, that this real I is going to fall down, or that this real I is going to get hurt, that some big danger is going to happen to it.

Also, when we are excited and happy this I gets inflated, like when you blow up a balloon: first it is small, then as you blow it gradually becomes very big. Through the condition it becomes stronger.

Experiencing emptiness

In those situations, when there is the strong appearance of a real I existing from its own side, that I is what is called the independent I. The way that it appears and the way that we cling to it is as though it were independent. It appears in this way and one clings to it as 100 per cent true. So you see, when we realize that this is empty, when by relying on the teachings of experienced gurus one realizes with the wisdom of having listened to the teachings that this I is what is invalid. Then with the logic of dependent arising, knowing that this is in fact empty because it is dependent arising, and checking with the sevenfold logical reasoning, the four point analysis, you can see this I which appears to exist from its own side, the "real" I that is completely empty.

You see that this I is completely empty, just there, right there, it does not go anywhere - just right there it is void. There where it appears to exist it is actually completely empty. At that time you see the absolute nature of the I, you have realized this.

As I said the other day, when the I appears here (Rinpoche points to his chest), when it looks as though it were there, then just simply leave one part of the mind aware of the body and search for that I—where is it? That way it is possible even with just a simple meditation that somebody who has much merit, many impressions left from past times, to see the absolute nature of the I, that it is empty.

At that time the meditator experiences that the I, the subject himself, the doer himself does not exist—completely does not exist. The meditator feels that the I does not exist, that it is lost. Actually, there is no way that the I, that I, can be lost, no way that it can become non-existent because always there is the stream of consciousness, the continuity of consciousness that never ceases. So there is no way that the I can cease, that the I can become non-existent. But the experience of the meditator is that the subject himself does not exist at all.

That experience comes from our habit in beginningless past lives of seeing appearance and reality as all the time mixed. We see the appearance, the truly existent I that exists from its own side, and the I which is merely labeled, which is empty of existence from its own side, as mixed. It is our habit to mix them and then completely believe in the appearance of the truly existent I.

When one sees that the object of ignorance, the truly existent I is empty, then even though the I does not cease, it is not lost, still the meditator experiences it as lost, as though it did not exist. This shows that the I does not exist at all from its own side. It is a sign of that.

The experience at that time is that the I one believed to exist, that one held as something really precious, is completely empty. Something that you always grasped, that you always held on to, that you did not want to go away, that you held as very precious—without choice it becomes void.

It is like a magician giving you a million dollars: you hold on to it and feel that it is so precious, then while you are holding on to it, as so precious, it disappears from your hand. That is the same kind of thing.

When one experiences this, if one does not have an extensive understanding of shunyata, one has not done extensive study and only has a half-hearted understanding, then fear can arise. For a person who has not done extensive listening, it is like a small child riding on a horse—they feel fear. At that time fear arises from the heart because you feel that you are losing something that you believed very precious—the I.

For a person who has much intelligence and has done extensive listening, it is like a grown-up, a trained person riding on a horse—there is no fear, only happiness. When the horse runs faster it is more enjoyable, much happiness arises. It is like a person finding a precious treasure that she has been waiting to find for a long time.

(Short break)

When we have such an experience as this, if fear arises, one should not stop the experience. Even though you have been saying "truly existent," repeating what is written in the teachings, debating, and reciting the words "truly existent" that are given in the teachings, still when you come to the actual

meditation experience and recognize this lack of a truly existent I, it is not like anything you had thought of before with intellectual understanding.

The actual experience is different from that.

When you have this experience you might feel that you have been following a nihilistic path. It depends on how much understanding you have, but you could really feel as though you had been following the path of nihilism. Dependent on whether your intelligence is lower or higher that thought could arise. But it is not true. That thought does not take into consideration the complete realization. You should let the experience happen, you should go through the fear.

Even if a person believes philosophically, through doctrine, that the I does not exist, even if the person talks about it intellectually, actually that person is still saying all day, "I am doing this and that," "I am happy," "I am unhappy," "I want this and that." (Laughing) The person shouldn't be saying anything at all. If the I does not exist, the person should never even have these thoughts, they should stop completely. But because his consciousness exists, the base consciousness exists, there is no choice—the I has to exist.

In our experience thoughts are coming all the time that "I want this and that," "I want to do this and that." Even if a person thinks intellectually that there is no I, what he says and his experience are completely contradictory. If someone says bad words to that person, pointing out his mistakes, then you can check whether the I exists for him or not. (Laughing) If the person is intelligent, if she has some merit and watches her own mind, then her experience tells her that definitely there is an I because those bad words hurt.

In Australia some years ago, in a place called Noogee during an Australian course, I had been talking for three or four days about the I, and there was one man, not a young guy, an old man, who I think had understood that the I does not exist at all. In a field close to that place there was a pool with dirty water, not clean water, and one day—it was cold weather—he took off his clothes and jumped into that water. Then he felt so cold that he realized, "Oh, there is definitely an I"' He could not bear it any more in the water. (Laughing) Before he was just not aware because there were no bad conditions.

So, you see, if you have an experience like this you shouldn't stop there. You shouldn't leave it at that. It is so important, extremely important that you carry on, that you develop that experience. It is so important to develop that experience by realizing the absolute nature of the I, by seeing the absolute nature of the I, by seeing the I which appears to be truly existent as empty of being truly existent from its own side, by seeing that it is dependent arising and merely labeled on the aggregates by thought. Through realizing this, there is liberation, there is the cessation of problems, there is the cessation of samsara. If you do not realize this, if you don't see the I which appears to be truly existent as empty of being truly existent, then there is always samsara, there are always problems. So it depends on that.

It is very important to do this meditation every day, so that again you reach the state of emptiness and when your mind gets distracted and the truly existent I again appears you use the logic, you try to see that I as empty.

Developing your experience of emptiness

Also, one should understand the meditation techniques used to develop shamatha, tranquil abiding, the meditation techniques used to cut mental scattering and mental sinking, these two thoughts that come from attachment. One should study and one should understand those things, the meditation techniques, the methods to cut off these two. Then one should apply those meditation techniques and one should meditate one-pointedly on emptiness. If the mind is distracted, then again you should check to see that distraction as empty. One should practice shamatha on the object of emptiness and in this way develop the wisdom realizing emptiness.

You must do that every day of your life no matter how busy you are. Cut out the small unimportant things. You must carry on the meditation continuously, otherwise you may have some experience but then if you don't continue, the ignorance and wrong conception will come back again.

It is similar to a person who does retreat or practices Dharma for some time and then after some time gives it up, they lose their energy for it; either they feel nothing is happening or they are discouraged and they give up practicing, then the mind becomes as degenerate as before, the same problem as before. So it is the same thing if you give up this meditation, the thought that clings to the I as truly existent comes back again, it gets stronger again, then after some time it is difficult to get back in touch with that experience and to have that experience again.

After continuously meditating on emptiness, as seven days or fifteen days go by, you see more and more things as illusory. The definite understanding of the I and of other things as being empty of existence from their own side gets stronger and stronger, and as a result you see more and more things as illusory. Even though the I appears to be truly existent, you realize that it is completely empty, that it is completely invalid. Even though the I appears as truly existent, you have the definite understanding that the I is empty of being truly existent.

It is like the example I mentioned yesterday of the mirage: there is the appearance of water but there is also the definite understanding that this appearance is empty of being water, the appearance is illusory. In the same way, one sees the I as illusory and realizes that it does not exist in the way that we perceive it to exist—as a truly existent I, existing from its own side.

The appearance of things as being truly existent is a subtle obscuration that comes from the impression left by the disturbing thoughts. Until you reach enlightenment, this appearance of things as truly existent is there. It is there all the time until we cease all subtle obscurations, except when the meditator is in meditative equipoise on shunyata. At that time only, no separation exists for his mind. It is like pouring water into water, all such objects are dissolved.

Correct view

This is very important. As soon as you realize the I which appears to exist from its own side on these aggregates to be empty of existing from its own side, when you see that the whole I is completely empty and non-existent from its own side, that there is not the slightest piece, not the slightest atom of I existing from its own side on the aggregates, when you see this I as empty, then the result is that without choice you get a definite understanding, way inside, that no matter how much you say the I does not exist there is a powerful experience of an I existing on the aggregates under the control of

name. It is so powerful, such a strong experience that I exists on the aggregates under the control of name that it's as though you don't have any freedom at all. So before you realized this you saw the I as existing one way on the aggregates and now you see the I as existing in another way on the aggregates—you see that there is no I from the side of the aggregates but that there is an I on the aggregates existing under the control of name.

So, you see, as a result of this definite understanding that the I does not exist from its own side, there comes the understanding that the I exists on the aggregates under the control of name. It is not that the I does not exist at all but that the I exists on the aggregates dependent on name.

So there are two things to be understood: that the I is empty of existing from its own side on the aggregates, and that the I exists under the control of name on the aggregates. You see these two together and at that time you have realized the subtle dependent arising. Of the Four Schools, this is the Prasangika's dependent arising.

When you have this experience of emptiness combined with an understanding of dependent arising, that means that the emptiness that you have realized is correct. Otherwise, if you don't see the merely labeled I and the emptiness of the I together, unified, then that means something is wrong with your meditation on shunyata. You might believe that you have had the realization of shunyata, but it was not the realization of shunyata according to the Middle Way point of view. It was wrong.

Thursday, 8 September

Developing your experience

Once you have had an experience of shunyata it is extremely important to continue with the meditation. This experience does happen. Some people have planted many seeds, many imprints of shunyata from past lifetimes, so when they hear teachings this time, or when they do a little meditation and they have accumulated much merit and done much purification, then they have this experience again. This is possible even if the person has not done much study or listened to many teachings or even heard the teachings exactly.

Such experiences do happen to Westerners. I have met some students who have had this experience but as they did not have a complete explanation of the teachings, the complete graduated path (lam rim), even though they had a little bit of experience of shunyata, they didn't know what to do.

Then if the experience is not continued, it is like a person who at the beginning has a good understanding of the teachings and is able to practice controlling the mind, but then after some time stop—their mind becomes very stubborn so that any teachings they read or hear do not change the mind, it becomes very difficult to change the mind.

If a person has some experience but does not continue with the meditations then, after some time, the mind becomes very stubborn and it is very difficult to get back that experience. The mind becomes very unsubdued, very hard, it is difficult to reach the same understanding as before.

This is not only true of shunyata but of any experience of the meditations. For example, there is the

thought that this perfect human life qualified with eight freedoms and ten richnesses is so precious, that it is highly difficult to find again and that the life span is very short, death can happen at any moment. By doing the analytical and one-pointedness meditation, this thought, this experience, can be developed from small and become stronger and stronger, so the feeling becomes more and more real that death can happen at any moment. So it is extremely important to continue with any experience.

Even if you have realizations, if you don't continue to develop them they will degenerate. It doesn't need so much effort as before but still you need to continue. If you do not continue then, maybe in one week or in one month's retreat you develop that much experience but by not continuing your mind just becomes the same as before, it degenerates again. You generate some experience then it is disturbed again, then after some time you again generate some experience, then again it is disturbed, so your work never gets finished.

Some of us now, for example, have the thought that the happiness of future lives is not so important but that the happiness of this life, these few days, this week is important, more important. We do not have much fear about what will happen in future lives. We do not have much feeling for the sufferings of future lives or the happiness of future lives.

It is said in the great commentary on lam-rim by Lama Tsongkhapa that when this thought has changed from the depth of the heart, when we have realized that it is important to make preparation for the happiness of future lives and this life appears very short to the mind, then the comfort of this life does not matter, it is so short that it does not matter, it is not so important. When one has developed such an attitude, the complete opposite of the previous attitude, then at that time, these few days, whether rich or poor, comfortable or not, whatever, it does not matter so much. The long run is more important. When the attitude is completely changed then, as Lama Tsongkhapa said, this is the realization of the graduated path of the lower capable being, but he also says that this should be stabilized. It is said frequently in the great commentaries on lam-rim that this realization should be stabilized. This is very important.

Identifying the refuting object

Yesterday, we were talking about the I that we have to realize does not exist, the I that is hallucination, that does not exist, that is the refuting object.

I heard that normally in the West you label as the "emotional I" that I which seems to be there and very real from its own side when you are angry or when you are happy or in a terrified state. Even though the person does not know that this I is empty and that he has to realize it as empty, still the person calls it the "emotional I."

Another way of recognizing this I is by searching. For example, you use the four point analytical meditation or just search for the I, then after you have gone right down to the feet and there is nowhere left to be checked, no space left to search, but still you see an I, a real I somewhere inside, that is the I that has to be realized as empty. Even you have searched everywhere and found no I on the base, still there appears to be an I somewhere inside and that is what has to be realized as empty.

It is similar when you check to find where the rosary is. You check everywhere and cannot find it but

still you see a rosary that appears to exist from its own side. That is the refuting object, that is what you have to realize that the rosary is empty of.

When we talk about the truly existent I, the refuting object, which we have to realize as empty and we think about reincarnation or the continuation of consciousness, it looks as though the I exists on the consciousness from its own side. But when we concentrate more on the body, the body is going somewhere, for example, to Milano or somewhere, then it looks more as though it were on the body, as though there were an I existing on the body from its own side. That I is what we have to realize is empty.

Some people can recognize the refuting object without having to use outside objects as examples. Others may find it easier to first recognize the refuting object on outside objects. For example, on the different colors, especially colors that are very bright. That is very easy for some people.

First, an experienced guru gives you teachings on how to recognize the refuting object, then, with this understanding, if you check the appearance and your view, it is like having the picture of a person that you want to find, the picture of a thief, for example, you can recognize that person, you can find him and throw him out! (laughing)

On this blue cloth, for example, there appears to be a blue cloth existing from its own side—that is the refuting object. As soon as you recognize this on one object, then look immediately at the I and you will recognize that it appears to exist in a similar way. Then it does not take much time to destroy the object of ignorance, to see that the object of ignorance, the I that appears to be truly existent, is empty.

Once you have recognized the refuting object on some outside thing, then even without using logic, like the sevenfold analysis, as soon as you look at the I you can recognize the I that appears to be truly existent. Then, concentrate one-pointedly on that I and at the same time have the idea that this I is what is empty, that is what the teachings say is empty.

While you are concentrating right on top of this I that appears as truly existent, your mind should be aware that this I is empty. Just continue like this, being aware that actually this I is empty. Concentrate one-pointedly on that, not letting the mind be distracted but thinking all the time that this I is actually empty. Then it will become empty, right there. You will see the truly existent I as empty.

Many lamas, such as His Holiness Ling Rinpoche, also say that the refuting object is the base and the label. A carpet, for example, is both the base of the carpet—the form, the colors and everything that makes up the carpet—and the label "carpet" that is put onto that base. These two things appear to be mixed, but that is the refuting object.

When a person who has not recognized the refuting object looks at a watch, they cannot differentiate between the label "watch" and the base on which the watch has been labeled. They cannot differentiate between these two things because they appear as a oneness, as mixed. Or if that person sees a table, the base of the table and the label "table" appear as mixed, so the table is inside of these two. The table is contained in that mixture of label and base.

For us, anything that appears to our senses has the appearance of being truly existent but these are all

objects to be refuted.

A person who has recognized the refuting object, who has realized that the I that appears to be truly existent is empty of true existence, that person does not see the refuting object, the base and the I, as mixed. But before one has recognized the refuting object, the base and the label appear to be completely one.

So first of all, a person who hasn't recognized the refuting object sees the base of the table and the label table as completely mixed. They cannot differentiate at all. Then, after they have recognized the table that appears to be truly existent, the refuting object, their view changes. Whatever they look at appears in a way that is different from their past experience, as though it were a new thing, a different thing. There is still the same form and the same color but it appears in a completely new way, different from before.

It is like seeing something that has been put on the table. The person who has recognized the refuting object sees it as one can see the cloth that has been put on this table. On the table there is a table that appears to exist from its own side. After a person has realized the emptiness of the table, the base and the label no longer appear as oneness, as mixed.

We should do meditation! You don't have to close your eyes, just look, see whether you can differentiate between the base and the label. Just look. Whatever you are looking at is the object of meditation. Check whether you can differentiate or not. Check the appearance, whether you see these two things as mixed or as unmixed.

Unmixed. Unmixed. Unmixed. There is a base table, on the base there is a table. On the base of the carpet there is a carpet.

Think of a watch, for example. When everything is put together it functions and is the kind of base that is labeled "watch" by worldly thought. What you see first of all is the base, not the watch. What you see first of all is the base and because the base has a certain shape and function people call it a watch. They agree that it is a watch.

So, having labeled this thing "watch", you are satisfied that there is a watch on the table. You are satisfied that, "I am seeing a watch." You feel satisfied with just that. If you check, then you see that the base of the watch is not mixed with the label but that there is a watch labeled on that base. You can look at that watch to find out the time or you can fix it but the watch that you use to find out the time, or to sell, or whatever, is the watch that is merely labeled.

Now we are all sitting on a cushion, so if you were to ask yourself what you are doing, you would say, "I am sitting." This I that is sitting is the one that appears to exist from its own side, that we really believe to exist from its own side. We don't think that the I that is sitting is the merely labeled one, we believe that it is an I that really exists from its own side. This is what we believe. This is how it appears to us.

So, now you can check. Ask yourself why you say, "I am sitting." Why? The answer is this, "Because my aggregates, the body (there is no question of the mind sitting or standing because it is not a physical

thing), the body aggregate is sitting." That is the reason. That is all. Just only that. There is no other reason at all for saying that "I am sitting" other than that the body aggregate is sitting.

If we have accumulated much merit and recognized the refuting object, then just by using this reason, "I am sitting on this cushion because the body aggregate is sitting," it is possible to see that the I that we feel inside here, that appears to exist from its own side, is empty.

Because it is not true! Because this I that we feel here is not true—it does not exist. So, you see, although in the beginning it may look as though it is there, when you apply this reason you see that it is not there. This is the proof, the sign that this I is false, that it is empty.

If I were real

If this I that we feel inside as though existing from its own side were real, if it were true that there is an unlabeled, independent I, then if this I were sitting, the next time that you stood up, the I would still be sitting, or if your body were outside—having coffee or tea, or making peepee—the I, your real I, would still be sitting on the cushion!

It is similar when we stand up. After sitting we have to stand up (laughing), then we think, "I am standing up." Okay? We label this "I am standing up" for no other reason at all than that the body aggregate is standing. When the body aggregate is walking you think, "I am walking." You label on the body that is doing the action of walking "I am walking."

When you are walking or standing up, there is again this I, that appears to be unlabeled, not merely labeled—an I that appears and that you believe to be doing the action. If you check up, if you are sensitive enough and have enough merit, then you can see that if this I were true—the I that does the sitting and walking and appears to be not just merely labeled—if it really existed, then even after your body, the body aggregate had sat down, this I would still be standing.

Why? Why would the I still be standing? Because it is not dependent on this body, it is not merely labeled. It is not dependent on the aggregates, it is not dependent on the activities of the aggregates that are sitting and standing. So there would be an I that was eternally standing, an I that was eternally sitting, an I that was eternally making peepee, an I that was eternally sleeping, an I that was eternally eating pizza, and so on. But the way that the I appears to us completely contradicts this. It appears to us as though there were a truly existent I standing, a truly existent I talking, etc. and we also believe in that appearance. The I that appears to us and that we believe to be independent and not labeled, is in fact, dependent and merely labeled.

Dependent arising and the refuting object

It is easy to understand dependent arising and the refuting object by using the example of flour. When you mix flour with water and you make it long like this (Rinpoche indicates the shape of the bread with his hands) it becomes French bread. I think, normally, everywhere people like this, they like that shape—French bread. Then, when you take the flour and water and you make tiny long things, after it has been made into that shape, on to that is labeled "noodles". Then, you can make it into spaghetti and label it "spaghetti". Then, you can make momos or those things with holes inside—"tortellini". So there are various different things that you can do with it, and when it has been made into different shapes, then

people agree in general what they are going to call it. Then, when you see these things you say, "this is bread," "this is tortellini," etc. By putting something on top of the mixture of flour and water—some mushrooms or tomatoes or fish or cheese—then it is called "pizza".

The shopkeeper who makes cakes and all these various things labels a name on them, and the people who buy these things see them in the shop and also label—"Oh, this is cake, this is spaghetti, this is pizza." They label the name on that particular shape and they buy it. Like that. This is all dependent on the particular shape. Those cakes and breads are all dependent on their particular shape.

In fact, the person who made that particular shape labeled the name on that and the people who buy label on that. Like this—dependent arising, dependent on that particular shape.

But the shopkeeper, even though he labeled all these different things on these particular shapes, still he is not aware that they are merely labeled. He thinks that all this spaghetti is existing from its own side, the pizza is existing from its own side, this cake is existing from its own side—unlabeled, not merely labeled, not merely labeled by him. He believes that everything completely exists from its own side.

People who come to buy from that shop, even though they have in fact labeled everything, still they are not aware. So the customer sees the things and says, "Is it the best pizza?" or whatever. He himself labeled the noodles, the spaghetti, the pizza and so on, but he thinks that this spaghetti or pizza or whatever, completely exists from its own side. For him the bread that he sees, the piece of bread that is there, completely exists from its own side. The jam completely exists from its own side. The candle, an unlabeled candle, completely exists from its own side. Like this. So, what it actually is and how it appears to us and we believe it to exist are in fact completely contradictory. This appearance and belief is something which does not exist at all. The person has merely labeled all these things.

It is the same with money. Paper money is labeled a different number of lire according to the number of zeros. It depends on the number of round figures whether you call this 1000 Lire or 10,000 Lire or 100 Lire. People who give money label the number of lire according to how many figures there are, On that they label, "I am giving 100 lire." And the people who get the money, who take it, label on that, "I am receiving 100 lire." As soon as you see the base you label "100 lire", but in fact it is merely labeled. The person who gives has merely labeled, the person who takes has merely labeled. That is the reality of how that 100 lire exists on that base, on that paper. But for the person who is giving, it does not appear as merely labeled lire but as unlabeled Lire existing from its own side. And the person who takes it, even though he has labeled this 100 lire, still it appears to him not to be merely labeled but as existing from its own side. For him, the 100 lire exists from its own side.

You see, it is merely labeled. If you check this paper to find out where this 100 lire is, you cannot find it. If you check for this 100 lire, it cannot be found. But definitely you can go into a shop and get 100 lire worth of goods by giving them this. One has to be satisfied that on this paper with this design there is 100 lire that is merely labeled. If there were no 100 lire existing on this paper, then you could not get 100 lire worth of goods.

What exists is what is merely labeled and you can use this, you can buy things with it. If the 100 lire did not exist on that base, then if you went to the shop and got some peanut butter or some cakes, and gave them this (Rinpoche holds up an empty piece of paper), then the people might think you were

crazy "(Laughing) You might have to go to a mental hospital!

It is the same with the bread. The bread is merely labeled on a particular shape after this has been put together. This is how it exists. It exists on what you have labeled, so you can eat bread, you can fill up your stomach and stop your hunger, or you can sell it. The bread that exists on that particular base is no more than what has been labeled, merely labeled. When one sees that base, one is satisfied that one has bread. When one eats that shape, one is satisfied that one is eating bread. One says, "I am eating bread."

In the same way, the I is dependent. Whatever the I does is dependent on the aggregates. "I am sitting, now, because the aggregates are sitting." "I am standing, now, because the aggregates are standing." "I am speaking because the aggregates are doing the action of speaking." When the aggregates are performing the action of sleeping, it is labeled, "I am sleeping." It is like this.

When one gets up in the morning, the aggregates are getting up, so "I am getting up." From morning until night, getting up and going to be, all the time we think, "I am doing this, I am doing that." "I am happy, I am unhappy,"—depending on the mind, the base. All this is merely labeled.

Similarly, since birth, since the consciousness took place in the mother's womb, on the fertilized egg, until death, sometimes the mind is happy and sometimes the mind is depressed, unhappy. Sometimes there are mind problems, sometimes physical problems—all these things, the whole thing from birth to death, all this is merely labeled.

There is no real I being happy or unhappy, having relationship problems or this and that. There is no real I being depressed, not having a job, and so on, all this is completely empty of how we believe it to be and how it appears to us. Completely empty.

Suffering. Suffering. Suffering. The real I existing from its own side that is unhappy—unhappy to live with one person or happy to live with one person—all this is completely empty. The I that appears to us and in which we believe is, in fact, empty on these aggregates, it is all hallucination.

Like this, from beginningless samsaric lifetimes up to enlightenment, all this, "I am suffering in samsara," "I achieve liberation," the whole thing is merely labeled on these aggregates. It is all in accordance with the aggregates, whether the aggregates are free from obscuration or not. It is dependent on that.

Everything, all objects of the senses are merely labeled, like the examples that I gave of bread, flour, etc. All of this is dependent arising—dependent on the base and the thought labeling.

In fact, it is like this: you stay in the merely labeled city of Milano, in a merely labeled house, and you live as a merely labeled family with a merely labeled husband and a merely labeled child—in fact, you are both merely labeled parents. Then, you eat merely labeled food, you go by merely labeled car to the merely labeled office and do the merely labeled job. You get angry with the merely labeled enemy, and attached to the merely labeled friend Then, you get money from the merely labeled employer and you go to the merely labeled shop and buy merely labeled food and merely labeled clothing. In the same way, you have a merely labeled body and merely labeled stomach ache or merely labeled ear pain, so you go to the merely labeled doctor and take the merely labeled medicine.

So, in fact, that is the reality!

Now, how it appears according to our wrong conception is that: you have a truly existent body, which does not exist. You go to see a truly existent doctor, who does not exist. You get truly existent medicine, which does not exist to recover from a truly existent disease, that does not exist.

Similarly, you are living in truly existent Milano which does not exist, with a truly existent family which does not exist, doing a truly existent job which does not exist, getting truly existent money which does not exist, from a truly existent employer who does not exist, to go to a truly existent shop which does not exist and buy truly existent food and clothing which does not exist.

The conclusion is that if we do not recognize our wrong conception and wrong belief of how things exist, then we cannot realize the absolute true nature of reality. Then, one's problems of this life and of future lives never cease.

So you should do the meditation as I have explained it, relating this understanding to your own experience.

Friday, 9 September

(Discourse is preceded by a Chenrezig purification meditation.)

Meditation tips

This meditation, practicing awareness of dependent arising, is very, very good. It is extremely beneficial.

This morning we did a short meditation particularly related to the action of walking, a walking meditation. Whatever you are doing, whether you are sitting or standing or eating or whatever, think "The only reason I say that I am doing this is because the aggregates are doing this action." We are "sitting", for example, because the aggregates are doing the action of sitting.

At the same time as you are asking these questions and giving answers watch the I. Watch the self. Be continuously looking at the I.

By doing this we become more aware of the I that we believe in as truly existent, the emotional I. Normally we don't see that this I is empty of being truly existent. We do not understand this. It does not appear to us in any other way than as truly existent I. so, when we say "I am walking" this I that is walking appears to be truly existent.

When we apply the reasoning, "I am only doing this because the aggregates are doing this action," even if the I does not become completely empty, it becomes sort of invisible, thinner. Okay?

Applying this reasoning helps to make our strong feeling of an I flimsy. This helps when you watch the mind again. And when you look at the I again without checking you see it differently from before, as more real, existing from its own side.

Then you do the same thing again: question and answer and checking on the I so that it becomes more invisible. Then afterwards, when the mind is distracted, you look at the I again and recognize more and more how it exists as truly existent. This appearance of true existence that we are normally not aware of and that we believe in all the time, becomes more visible.

We can relate this meditation technique to whatever work we are doing, using it to recognize the refuting object, the I that is illusion. By doing that, you realize the absolute nature of the I.

This wisdom realizing the absolute truth is the one which eradicates true suffering, the true cause of suffering, disturbing thoughts, karma, the two obscurations. So, meditation on dependent arising is very helpful even if we don't realize shunyata. Being aware, practicing mindfulness of the I as dependent arising stops anger, attachment, jealousy and ill-will from rising. It stops these negative thoughts and stops negative karma, so in the long run it offers great peace for all future lives.

Even if you think that you have serious problems, by meditating in this way your problem that was so serious and made you believe "I am the only one in this world having problems" becomes no problem. It is not a problem any more, you see it as nonsense and yourself as childish. It may be something that makes you cry or makes you laugh (laughing) but you recognize the wrong conception.

It is like being married to an illusory husband. When somebody takes the illusory husband away you are so confused, much anger and jealousy come. You arrange many things that will harm the person towards whom you feel jealous and angry; you go to court and all these arrangements. Then, after some time, you discover that this was just an illusion, just illusion. It does not exist at all, even in name (laughing); you see that all your effort was just complete nonsense, wasted. The I is exactly similar to this—the illusory husband is an example of the I that you normally cling to.

So, it is very good to repeat this meditation. If you are capable and aware, then practice the meditation of dependent arising when you are eating and talking. The more activities you do, the more you meditate. For a person who is not distracted, the more activity there is, the more he has the opportunity to improve his realization because he is meditating at the same time.

If you cannot do this, then keep silence when you are eating and meditate on the I as dependent arising. And do the same thing when you are walking, cleaning, etc.

This practice is especially good when somebody starts to criticize you or treat you badly. At that time, if you can do the meditation on the I as merely labeled on the aggregates, then it helps very much to stop the mind from being disturbed by other people's words. Your mind is not hurt. Depending on the level of your mind and how strongly you can think of the I as merely labeled, the hurt is much less than at other times when you believe in the I as truly existent.

There is a particular practice called "slaying the ego"—*chöd*. Its purpose is to easily recognize the refuting object, the truly existent I, so that one can realize emptiness.

To practice slaying the ego, chöd, it is best to go outside to some terrifying place and invoke the spirits. You purposely create the conditions that will make you terrified and bring fear, making the emotional I arise. But for this, you have to go to a place that is terrifying and where you can easily feel fear.

That is one way of slaying the ego, but actually when you are staying at a center or with your family, whenever you are with your enemy—the main point is to be with your enemy, somebody who bothers you, who criticizes you—when you are in front of the enemy, that is the best place for chöd. Then you don't need to blow the thigh bone to invoke, the enemy comes to you without your needing to ask and whenever you see them the emotional I suddenly comes up very strongly. They tell you your mistakes: you are not doing this or that, you are doing this wrong or you are doing that wrong, like this. Then there is much fun happening in your mind, much movie, much scenery.

When you see the person who criticizes you, who dislikes you, suddenly the emotional I comes up strongly. At that time you should look at the I appearing as truly existent and think "He is harming me, the 'truly existent' me."

If you go out to practice chöd, it is explained that you should create the conditions for fear to arise easily.

Here at the center when you are associating with other people, there are those who criticize you and complain. If you watch the I, if you plan to recognize the refuting object as in chöd and use the logic such as dependent arising to see the truly existent I as empty, then the same achievement comes— you realize shunyata. Here at the center there are many times when fear comes and many times when you are so happy. If you go to another place it is not certain that fear will arise, it may not work.

I think the enemy is unbelievably kind, so good. He offers the best service for slaying the ego. If somebody wants to realize shunyata, then the enemy helps to make the emotional I rise, the I that is illusion. The enemy is completely against the selfish attitude, completely against it. He is so incredibly precious that you cannot finish explaining— he helps to cut off the selfish attitude.

I think actually the enemy is the best friend. He gives enlightenment swiftly.

(Short break)

When we do meditation on shunyata and we do the four-fold analysis using different reasons to see the object of ignorance, the truly existent I, as empty, after we have used logic, if there is still something left, if somewhere inside there is an I left: the observer, the examiner, the seeker; if the I is left way inside and appears to be truly existent, then that is not meditating on shunyata. Even if you are not seeing any substantial thing, you are not meditating on shunyata. It is like looking at space, like looking through the window into space.

In that kind of meditation you are still clinging to the I as truly existent. You are meditating on the I as an illusion but still thinking that it is true. After you have used the logic, when you place the mind on emptiness it should appear as though the I does not exist; the seeker, the self does not exist.

That is why one great yogi, Changya Dorje, advised, "You don't need to seek the I. What you have to seek is yourself." He is saying that you don't need to seek the I as an object—you the subject seeking I the object. That is what this great yogi is saying. You don't need to seek the I as an outside object, what you have to seek is the seeker— that means the refuting object, the I, the truly existent I. You are seeking that in order to realize it as empty.

Normally, as I mentioned yesterday, the I that is merely labeled on these aggregates appears as though it were not merely labeled from its own side and you cling to that appearance. It is similar with the aggregates, they appear to us as though truly existent and because of this so do all the five sense objects. The formless and the touchable objects, everything appears to be truly existent and we cling to that.

So you see, according to how things appear and we believe in them, all our life is illusory! Our whole life—happy or suffering—is all a complete hallucination. You remember, yesterday, that I gave many examples of how things are merely labeled, how things exist by merely labeling. In reality, that is how things exist, how everything exists.

Evolution of samsaric rebirth

With this ignorance holding the I as truly existent as one meets with different objects different delusions arise. When one meets desirable objects attachment rises, with undesirable objects anger rises, and with indifferent objects ignorance rises.

With regards karma, there is no way that an action performed with anger and ignorance of true existence can be virtuous. It cannot be a virtuous compounding action, only a non-virtuous compounding action. But the karma of actions performed with attachment and ignorance of true existence can be virtuous and non-virtuous.

This can be related to the evolution of samsara where so many problems come from. In our case, at the time of death, before this life, the virtuous positive result manifested, so we were born as human. The compounding virtuous action comes from practicing moral conduct. This can be done out of ignorance or attachment. Then the virtuous compounding action leaves a seed on the consciousness.

There are many details about karma. I am not going to talk about these details.

Amongst the virtuous actions, there are different kinds of virtue: there are virtuous deluded and non-deluded actions. Then there are immovable actions which are virtuous. Immovable karma causes birth in the state of the four stable concentrations. With regards movable karma, there is virtuous and non-virtuous.

One example of movable karma is a person who has created much negative karma in this life and that karma is very strong at the time of death. By the power of the lama who has high attainments, tantric realizations, and also, of course, by the power of his karma, even if he is in the process of being born in the realm of the suffering transmigrators the consciousness can be transferred while he's in the intermediate state. He may have the body of an intermediate state being that would lead to an animal or preta rebirth but still the consciousness can be transferred to the upper realms or maybe also to a pure realm. There are also other examples.

So in the past life one did virtuous moral actions, such as practicing moral conduct, things like that, making prayers to receive this human body, and that left seeds, the potential, on the consciousness. Then whatever the rebirth was just before this, whether it was a human being or a suffering transmigratory being, at the time of death the seeds ripened.

So much karma has been collected, it is uncountable. There can be so many virtuous and so many non-virtuous karmas. So at the time of death, if there is so much karma to be experienced, so many potentials of karma, then how is the rebirth decided?

It is like this: when you plant a seed in the garden, which one will grow first? It is quite similar to a garden. Whichever seed has more minerals, more perfect conditions, that will grow first. Amongst all these karmas there are many virtuous ones and many non-virtuous ones. Whichever is stronger, heavier, that will ripen first and bring the rebirth.

If all these karmas are equally heavy, which will be experienced first? Whichever is closest to fruition, that will be experienced first. If those karmas are all the same, being equally close to fruition, which karma will be experienced first? The one which is more habitual, that will bring the result first.

If those karmas that are habitual are equal, which will bring the result first? Then, it is like planting seeds for flowers, whichever is planted first will sprout first. Of all these karmas, whichever was created first, that will be experienced first. (First does not only mean in this life.) Amongst these karmas, whichever was accumulated first will bring the result first.

So whatever rebirth we may have had just before this life, at the time of death it was the virtuous karma to be born as a human being that was strongest and ready to be experienced.

The potential of the virtuous karma is experienced because of the two disturbing thoughts, craving and grasping. An example of the difference between craving and grasping is when you go shopping. First you have the intention to buy something, the desire to buy it, then if you are able to afford it and you like it you put your hand in your pocket and make the determination to get it. The stronger desire to get it is the grasping. It is these two, wishing and desiring the human rebirth, that ripen the potential for human karma.

When the karma is ready to be experienced, like a child that is ready to come out of the pregnant mother, one is reborn into the intermediate state of the human being. When the time for staying in the intermediate state is finished you find a place to be reborn and the consciousness transfers to the fertilized egg.

There are seven results to be completed: *rebirth*—the consciousness taking place on the fertilized egg is one result. Then, *name and form*. Name means the formless aggregates, the aggregates of feeling, the compounding aggregates and recognition. They are formless so they are called name. Form is the physical part which can be seen by the eye. Name is the other formless aggregates, not including the consciousness. Then the *six sense bases* are actualized. After that there is *contact*. After contact, as a result *feeling* is actualized.

Rebirth occurs when the consciousness takes place on the fertilized egg. Rebirth is not when the baby comes out.

All these have been experienced. *Rebirth* has already been experienced, *old age* is being experienced, so of these seven results the only one left for us to experience is *death*.

The conclusion is that as you can see now, we have created this human condition. The fact that we suffer from hunger and thirst, hot and cold, that we have to worry, that we keep the body so busy, that we have to study for many years to take care of our bodies and that we have to be busy day and night, all these problems come from having taken this samsaric rebirth and this was created by oneself.

Conclusion

You remember now that over the last three or four days I have been talking about the ignorance of true existence and the truly existent I? We talked and meditated on this. You see, the reason why we have created this samsara, this suffering realm, is because we have been following this ignorance of true existence, clinging to the I that is empty of true existence as though it were truly existent. That is the whole mistake.

So now you can see how harmful it is, this ignorance that clings to the I as truly existent. This is our greatest mistake, it is the very root of our problems.

Now you can see how incredibly important it is to work day and night this year, this month, this week, even today, within this hour, within this second to cut off this ignorance, to realize the object of ignorance as empty.

All the other things that we normally worry about and think of as important are nothing, they are lost in comparison.

PLEASE MEDITATE ON SHUNYATA.

Please meditate on shunyata.

(Dedication)

Colophon:
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Mahamudra

by Lama Thubten Yeshe

FIRST DISCOURSE

Good morning. I'll try to energise you, since it has become more cold.

Now, the subject we are going to do in this meditation course is one of the most advanced teachings in Tibetan Buddhism. So we are, myself and all of us, fortunate, we share with each other and on our own some kind of understanding. And hopefully we also shall become mahamudra as Atisha did. Atisha is a great successful yogi, Atisha is Buddha. In the Tibetan Point of view, Atisha is a Buddha or enlightened one. He is successful in his mahamudra. He discovered mahamudra.

So Atisha Centre, this is auspicious by the name, Atisha, and also Atisha Centre energy comes from an Australian Atisha, a man who is not Buddhist but his heart is Buddhist maybe. So he offers such for us and he is a successful man isn't he? So I hope all this successful energy around us is evidence to prove we also can become a successful man, lady, gentleman. Okay—possible.

And also I feel, in order to bring Buddhism to this country one has to work closely with the student, this is important. Have close communication. So far, up to now we build up fundamental teaching, most students have heard the "Graduated path to enlightement" maybe ten times, they must be tired now. Yes. They think "We listen so much to those teachings, we always hear renuciation, bodhichitta, bla bla bla bla. Oh, this is old for us".

Okay. Now, as you know, one of the beauties of the Buddhadharma is the gradual, gradual path to enlightenment, the gradual development. Shakyamuni Buddha, his experience, he set up such a way philosophically, maybe twenty stages or ten stages—you've heard of it. This is the beauty of Shakyamuni's teachings.

Human beings, we are at the moment limited. But still we can see: I can go this way. Seeing through the limitation concepts and the limitation view to the limitless view or universal view... this gradual process is very unique—I think the unique Buddhist character. So you see, practising Buddhadharma is not something where you change your name and colour and putting on a label, an artificial label. It is our development, our transformation.

For that reason, Buddhism sets up such a way, clean clear: this is the foundation, this is the preliminary, this is the main part, this is the result. So clean clear, intellectually comprehensible and possible to do, to act. That's why I think in Buddhism we feel we are not lost, we have the key to approach enlightenment. We are fortunate.

Preliminaries to Mahamudra

Now the preliminary for the mahamudra teaching; I shall be speaking traditionally. I cannot avoid it, I have to explain the gross levels to you.

Traditionally the **first thing we teach is taking REFUGE**, you know that one, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, I'm sure you understand. Taking refuge most students I'm sure they don't like to hear that one. But it is important. When you know taking refuge, you change attitude. So you go beyond normal attitude. Normal attitude is me grasping on the chocolate or the apple all kind of momentary, transitory pleasure, isn't it.

We are always taking refuge—"Oh today I'm really down, I like to go to the beach". So you jump in, try to be a fish, play with the fish, you know. That's one way of taking refuge isn't it. Then you decide if you eat so much chocolate, chocolate, chocolate, nyum, nyum, nyum and ice cream, ice cream, ice cream, nyum, nyum, nyum—try to satisfy and the reuslt is very famous round one. If you don't mind becoming such a famous round one, eastern people don't mind it you know, but in the west it is a big deal isn't it? Those are means of taking refuge.

Practically speaking, taking refuge is so important. You should change your attitude, change your attitude: it is unimportant, unworthwhile, transitory pleasure. Seeing that character you can eliminate ambition, the driving force of the grasping mind. So taking refuge is very important.

You understand more of what taking refuge means now. The reason I tell you, all new people I like to know: what taking refuge means in the Buddhist point of view. I'm concerned sometimes for new students—more concerned.

That is enough for the preliminary teaching on taking refuge.

And then **actualising BODHICHITTA**. That is what we teach second: bodhichitta is being totally open to other people. But not superficial: it is completely seeing the ultimate human potential besides the relative situation of a human being—so open. That is the enlightened attitude—we call it in sanskrit bodhichitta.

Perhaps you people may say "Oh bodhichitta is a wish, a wish—all mother sentient beings become enlightened, that's just a wish". You feel that way maybe. You feel sometimes that way? No, no, no, that's wrong. Bodhichitta is more relaxed—not the emotional "I wish, I want these people to become enlightened, aaahaaaaaah". No, bodhichitta is not that way, emotional; not upset you know. I know sometimes western students are very serious, they feel unbelievable urgency, such need for the living beings. so they become so emotional you know sort of oh bodhichitta, bodhichitta!

Bodhichitta is easy going, much wisdom: you open your heart to all living beings and live that way as much as you can. For having bodhichitta is the enlightened experience. I have found this. You have a huge space, you open a huge space in your consciousness you know. So your consciousness becomes sort of universal. So I think that is the enlightened experience. So very powerful. That's why if you remember Atisha, he said The door of meditation or the beginning of meditation is observing one's own attitude, one's own motivation". Atisha is very practical isn't he, Atisha is super practical.

For door the connotation is that the door of meditation is the beginning, examining your own thought patterns andattitude or motivation, whatever you call this. It is a very simple thing... what happens is when you have universal reality, universal aim and destination, you see: the enlightened attitude is you seeing some sort of universal realisation.

In our life we have conflict sometimes, and small things we make big don't we? We are ladies and gentlemen, human beings, it seems we try to make small things big things, and you know we bother each other. It's unimportant, inimportant, when you see universal reality and universal realisation and destination—such small things. Like in Bendigo's jungle, do you care when some tree falls down? Do you care or not? No, some big tree has fallen down—oh, who cares, isn't it. Alright, so this is my example. When you have such universal view, small things are unimportant.

You can say relatively right, wrong, yeah—but still conventional, relative; the conventional Australian right when you move to Singapore can be wrong. I think you know what I'm saying. This small right and wrong has very little value. So bodhichitta is very important. Don't think bodhichitta is some kind of religeous attitude. No, it's completely scientific, the growth of insight, reality you know, inner reality. You cannot avoid this. Now, that is enough for bodhichitta.

Then the **third of the preliminaries we call VAJRASATTVA practice**. Vajrasattva practice is in the Tibetan tradition considered a very important point, very important. All the Tibetan traditions have this practice, not only Gelugpa or Kargyupa or so on. No discrimination. Now Vajrasattva is the deity, the emanation of Vajradhara or Shakyamuni Buddha—or all Tathagatas. However, his aspect is totally pure energy.

So when we practise and emanate, this is very powerful to destroy the reaction of the negativity of the dualistic mind. So powerful, and we practise, okay.

Then each of these preliminary practices seems to purify one particular negative energy. They are needed because, first of all, in the ocean of our consciousness are contained so many different aspects—chicken aspect, pig aspect, snake aspect; these symptoms. So for these particular problems we do need somehow a sensitive way to eliminate them, like the different preliminary practices. Particularly Vajrasattva.

This is considered the most powerful antidote. Even can purify if you break the tantric root vow. Is possible. I'm sure, some of the old students heard that if you break certain vows, there is no way out. Sounds like that , you see, sounds like that. Sometimes such words are necessary but for the western mind words are taken so seriously. Sometimes words are not flexible. I hear this should be this way—so I'm scared now. I'm breaking my vow, no way out. I have to go to hell. Well , this is the condition. You see, Buddha explains very clean clear that no way out corresponds to our own individualistic situation. The same as the person who has sunk into the ocean—like if I sank into the ocean, no way out, unless you people quickly pick me out. I tell you, I don't know how to swim, but that does not mean I have no potential does it? I do have potential but at this time, in my circumstance, there is no way out.

So tomorrow you have to teach me how to swim.

Now the Buddhsit attitude, it doesn't matter how big is the thing you did or how much you are confused; sin or negativity, it is possible to totally eradicate it, absolutely possible. Now to eradicate; the negativity is still like a cloud isn't it—like a Bendigo cloud. Sometimes you say oh, this is impossible. You feel that way sometimes, like when it's raining heavy, you feel heavy. But that is the psychological symptom.

In the Buddhist attitude, every situation is the psychological symptom. Every situation, if this has negative energy, if you reverse, contest the energy it would be burned, like if the cloud is there with normal sun shining the cloud is burnt up. That is enough, I want you to know, that is enough to purify negativity by actualizing positive energy. Work that way. No more.
Any kind of negativity is still relative, still transitory, still has impermanent nature, changable nature, so recognise this. So you put in contradictory nature of wisdom power and eliminate, this has no space, burn out. That way purification works.

A very important thing for us all, to recognize that any kind of heavy negative energy we create is possible to eliminate. This is very important. If you can't see this then practicing Dharma becomes very weak, very weak. The point of practicing Dharma is to eradicate the confusion or negative energy isn't it. So we should have always this recognition.

For example: Hitler in the western world we know is most sinful. I'm talking about common sense, I'm not talking of the partisan Jewish view but generally, we consider he is most sinful and killed unbelievable numbers of human beings but, in the Buddhist point of view, maybe Hitler has or will become enlightened before us. Possible, possible.

For example, we are here, I don't think we killed any human being in our lives. Maybe we killed some birds or mosquitoes or something. But the famous Milarepa, he killed all his mother's enemies one day, you know his mother had many enemies in the village. To show his mother's son's power one time he made black magic and he killed eighteen or so of his mother's enemies. But that life he became enlightened. That's a good example. I'm not trying to tell you that to kill human beings is very important, but that is encouraging isn't it, for me it's encouraging. Milarepa, he is super you know, he did samsara super, he did liberation super. So I feel a human being is capable of destroying all this solar system—you know what I mean, all the negativity, and is able to lead all these universal living beings to enlightenment. It is possible. So therefore the human being is a most precious thing.
This purification is the third, remember.

Then **fourth is what we call GURU YOGA**. Practicing guru yoga.

This is also an important one. As a matter of fact since we are presently incapable of dealing with the ego, egotistic mind, Guru Shakyamuni shows how -to help, how to eliminate and also shows a close way to identify oneself as the enlightened one.

Practicing guru yoga means, in Tibetan terms, making yourself closer with your own guru. It means you become one with the guru. Nyang Jor is the Tibetan name: "Jor" means making close. So this is important.

In Tibetan Buddhism, all human beings at a certain point reach completely one, universal understand-

ing. Buddhahood or enlightenment is all human beings, all living beings. At a certain point reach completely one unity, one totality, complete. No dualism. When everybody reaches that ultimate reality there is no contradictory nature. There is no dualistic flashing. So practicing guru yoga means we unify our consciousness with the enlightened guru Shakyamuni or the enlightened one, the Tathagata. We are unified, instead of thinking, my guru is higher; Shakyamuni is higher and I'm just self-pity, I'm the impossible one. I'm the impossible guy. Should not think that way. Okay.

However you know that in Tibetan terminology, *guru* means there is relative and also absolute.

The relative guru can communicate through the relative world to show you how to act, how to find your own totality. The true sense absolute guru is our own wisdom, our own clarity. That you can see is true. I mean all of us, maybe students receive the same teaching, same instruction, but with completely different understanding. Some reach the corner, some reach the centre, and so on.

Practically speaking, the relative guru can do very little. But your wisdom guru, your clarity, can do a much more powerful thing. So this way, practicing guru yoga means coming to listen to your own true guru. We don't listen to our own guru normally. We don't listen. We only listen to garbage talk. We don't listen to any wisdom. Even if some wisdom comes we just reject it.

These four are the preliminary teaching of mahamudra.

So this time, most old students have had this kind of teaching. Therefore I'm not worried about it so much. Some students come here to listen to this teaching and practice the Guru Shakyamuni yoga. Quite possible, isn't it? Simple. In the twentieth century we have to go quicklyon the path to enlightenment' I'm joking. I don't want you to worry. But I don't want to be outrageous also. I want you people to understand what the Tibetan tradition means—how to work in the Tibetan tradition.

Mahamudra

Now, the main body of the mahamudra. In sanskrit "maha" means *great* and "mudra" we translate as *seal*. You say, if you lend me $100 then we make a paper and we make a seal, say okay. And next year I have the obligation to pay back. So you make this paper, make a sort of insurance not to be lost. So, similar.

Now this seal is not some artificial seal, made in a factory. This seal is existent into all universal phenomena, including us. This means universal reality is the seal. So whether you accept, whether you deny it, that is the way it is existent. It's like if I say "I don't believe there is earth, I don't believe there is sun and moon, I don't believe there is space". And you say—yes there are. "No, I don't want to listen." You understand, this is foolish isn't it. So if I reject, I don't accept anything, sun, moon, space, they are still in the space aren't they, even though I reject them. I am sitting in the rays of the sun, even though I reject. I am on this earth even though I reject it. Okay. This is my example. The universal reality is like a seal—there is no way out. Equally, all existents, organic, non-organic, permanent or impermanent; any levels of existence are of the nature of non-duality, the nature of non self-existence.

Concerning the mahamudra. Actually the Tibetan terminology of mahamudra can be many different ways. Sometimes we have paramitayana mahamudra and sometimes tantrayana mahamudra. There are

many different ways to describe mahamudra. Each has a different sort of meaning. Those terms, the paramitayana mahamudra and tantrayana mahamudra, both explain universal reality, shunyata.

So I don't want you to worry if maybe this time I don't teach the tantrayana aspect of mahamudra. I don't want you to worry. Because in fact, the paramitayana way of explaining shunyata has no distinction from the tantrayana mahamudra way of explaining. No distiction - because it is still explaining non-duality. The words are different sometimes also like "uma", the middle view, is called "mahamudra" in the Gelugpa terminology, and sometimes the Nyingmapas are giving the "dzogchen" and others are something like the "cho ying". They are giving it different names, but as a matter of fact they all talk of the same universal reality.

First of all: Buddha Shakyamuni said something like "Not seeing anything is the perfect seeing"—sounds a little bit strange doesn't it? "Not seeing anything is the perfect seeing." "Not looking at anything is the perfect looking." My goodness. Not sure? Sounds strange doesn't it? Not looking at anything is the perfect looking, perfect you know. You see, that's why mahamudra is strange. I want you to know, it is a strange thing that you have to learn.
These words the Tibetan learned ones or meditators consider very super profound. They talk about experience of universal reality, the experience of non-duality, the experience of mahamudra.

Let's say Tibetan monks come to the western world, their students open their sense perception to the western world like this you know—so the students mean well, mean they would share their pleasure experience. Taking a Tibetan monk to the beach to say look, how beautiful. The Tibetan, he sees only rocks and the mountain. How beautiful here. On the mountain you can't see fish; here you see so many fish without clothes. Okay, I think my example is going so far away now. You see, seeing these things it's sometimes too much isn't it? So the not seeing is the perfect seeing. Remember before, not perceiving the dualistic phenomena—that is the perfect experience of seeing. Not looking to the dualistic complex situation but having the experience of non-duality is the perfect, perfect view and perfect looking.

Experiencing non-duality

Now let's talk about that experience. So what happens is, when each of us experiences the mahamudra instead of that ordinary experience, dualistic phenomena no longer operate. So by knowing, non-seeing the dualistic puzzle, is seeing perfection and unity, totality. So, since we recognize that kind of experience and the realization we more integrate, rather than putting ourselves into some disorder atmosphere. That's why we need tremendous renunciation—then at a certain point we are flexible, we let go, certain things we let go.

The mahamudra teaching is teaching the universal reality of shunyata. Old students have heard many times of shunyata—well, then this is not much different you know. Mahamudra is not so much different. But the particular mahamudra characteristic is emphasis on how: how to experience shunyata. How to experience shunyata rather than explaining what is shunyata—communicating?

The mahamudra has a sort of technical integration into the experience of shunyata. That's why mahamudra teaching is considered very powerful. In the ancient time of Lama Tsongkhapa and Atisha they would not teach it publicly, to teach it was very special you know, rare, to only rare students.

Also, there weren't any books with the particular title "mahamudra". It was sort of hidden, just an oral teaching for a long time. Then lately it was given the name "mahamudra" and written as the root text of mahamudra in the Gelugpa tradition by the Panchen Lama. I'm sure all of you heard of Chokyi Gyaltsen. And this root text is translated already into English a Tibetan Library work—it is available isn't it? Okay, so you can see, by reading that text you can see some of the value of mahamudra. So I'm going to teach basically what is taken as the fundamental teaching, then try to go into the experiential teaching. We try, we doing.

Also, this time; normally we get, when I received this teaching with the oral commentary it lasted about one month. I received it continuously and also at that time explanation of the lineage of mahamudra. At that time, maybe I was 21 or 22 or 23 years old, the Chinese said "go away" and some of us came to India, okay. So for my experience, at that time I gained great inspiration through that lineage. I felt it sort of more real, when they experience such—they are human beings, they reach such a point, higher realization, I felt I must do too. So I became ambitious you know. You understand, it really gave a sort of inspiration is possible, it can be done that way.

This teaching, the teaching of mahamudra, comes from Shakyamuni Buddha, passed through Manjushri and so on. Or another way, passed through Vajradhara to Vajrapani. And through them to Nagarjuna, also Chandrakirti all the way down. There are many, many lineages. And also, from Tilopa, the Indian Mahayana saint, to Naropa, Naropa to Marpa. And also from an Indian saint to Atisha, and Atisha again to a Tibetan saint and from there to Lama Tsongkhapa. This is the long sort of lineage.

However now, in all these lineages the yogis, they reach enlightenment in this life. They became enlightened by practicing the mahamudra. And also, this is the longest lineage—the most close lineage. Lama Tsongkhapa. He communicated directly with Manjushri in receiving mahamudra, the technical meditation experience. His experience he passed to his chief disciple: **like we call Khedrub-je, Gyalwa Ensapa** and so on. Many, many, many Lamas you know passing this teaching. All those yogis, considering Tibetan people, they wrote texts and their life stories which in the future can be translated into English. We consider all these yogis reached enlightenment in one life. By practising mahamudra; we say all of these reach the Je lu tse ten ler, something like that: Tibetan mythology words.

Je lu means the "rainbow body". *Je* means the "rainbow", *lu* the "body"—rainbow body. The vajra body. According to Tibetan tantra buddhism if one practices the mahamudra one can transform one's physical body into the rainbow body, it's possible.

Now this possibility is maybe sometimes difficult for the western mind. Actually, it's not difficult if you educate yourself. For example, when you have a small experience of mahamudra what happens is you drop out of heavy concepts—Oh difficult, life is difficult, friends difficult, relationships difficult you know. And your body is difficult, hhhhhh you know—instead of feeling a transcendental experience of body, feeling the body is a sort of atom combination, a sheet sort of body. Depends how you look at it.

My point is, when you experience such a small mahamudra beginning you taste, somehow you drop out of the heavy concepts of one's body, speech and mind. So that way, somehow the squeezing, such bondage or such blanket is taken off. As a matter of fact, you feel your body is no longer caught in the atmosphere of the normal, normalization. So it is possible to transform these five aggregates of this

four-element body into the rainbow body. It is possible through the practice of mahamudra.

You can see, simply, in our life, if the mind is for some reason satisfied, for some reason your body becomes also, you feel light; if you are not satisfied then you feel heavy internally and externally.

How to receive the realization of mahamudra

Now, in order to receive the realization of mahamudra, one must develop concentration. And concentration itself is not enough. Lama Tsongkhapa says, "The samadhi is not enough, not enough to eliminate the concept of ego". It needs the samadhi to unify with the mahamudra experience; so we do need this unity of mahamudra and one-pointed concentration.

So practically, remember now, we do a little bit the breathing exercise, breathing meditation. This is a very important one. This is part of mahamudra practice. First of all, the mind should be neutralized in order to comprehend universal reality. We are sort of caught in some kind of dualistic corner so first we have to be taken away from the corner and be neutralized. Like for example in Tibet we say that the light or white cloth can transform to any color. Similarly, you understand, first mind should be neutralized in order to transform such experience. It is simple, you breath yet you don't think you are breathing sort of. From beginning breathing this way, breathing experience reaches a point where mind is neutralized.

Then slowly use the mind to watch your thought. Or maybe not " watching" in the usual sense. Language is a problem you see, when I say "watch" maybe you go like this (exaggerated watching)—Lama says watch, I'm watching. You understand. Don't use that watching. No, just like light, like sunlight. The sun doesn't have to say, "I'm shooting out light". The sun doesn't have a thinking process. No, it's just being. Same thing, in Buddhism, you observe your mind, you watch your thought, you watch your view of your thought.

I want you to understand, mahamudra is beyond speech, beyond words, remember, in terminology of Buddhism. Mahamudra is beyond words. Mahamudra is beyond growing. Mahamudra is beyond cessation. Mahamudra is only experience so whenever I talk words, people interpret them such a way and it becomes a problem. So don't you trust my words, my words are false words of my superstition. Buddhism thinks that way, you know. It doesn't matter how much I use words, still it comes from my conception. So you go, you touch such, then you go beyond the words.

Therefore, in the looking or the observing of the thought, then use just watching, let go. No intellect. Mahamudra practice emphasizes no intellect. Intellect is like an enemy at a certain point you know. Yet of course right now you are listening. You have to have intellect to do that. But the mahamudra sense is to go beyond intellect as much as possible. Then the real transformation comes.

So now, first we do sort of breathing meditation little bit.

How to meditate on mahamudra

Now, I'll talk about how we do meditation on mahamudra.

We begin: first we do yogic visualization of Shakyamuni Buddha, then you do little bit of mantra.

When you do mantra, at your heart there is something like this candle light, yellow light is at the center of your heart. Then you do *TA YA TA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNIYE SOHA*.

This mantra is like the electricity energy. It is vibrating yellow, red, yellow radiating light and purifying, automatically purifying all the impure concepts as you do this mantra, *OM TAYATA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNIYE SOHA*. This is so simple. This means "Conquer, Conquer, Great Conquer", okay. That way the egotistic mind is lessened. *MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNIYE SOHA* means to put the foundation in my heart. Such a realization of conquest.

That is good enough. You do this mantra and visualize in the space such saffron, radiant light of the body of Shakyamuni Buddha. You can see Shakyamuni Buddha you know. Shakyamuni Buddha is not something physical. The wisdom, omnipresent wisdom is manifest as a yellow radiant light body. Then you do the short recitation of mantra. Doing the mantra, sometimes you can emphasize the mantra on the heart, sometimes you can do it from Shakyamuni.

From Shakyamuni's crown, white light is flowing into your body through your crown chakra, burning out defilements and transforming your body as a white radiant light body. Then from Shakyamuni Buddha, coming from the throat chakra, red radiating light like laser light comes strongly and burns out the impure speech like telling lies or like nonsense talking blah, blah, blah you know, we do, is nonsense, almost our entire lives nonsense speech. This is burnt out and your throat chakra is filled by the blissful red radiating light energy. And also from Shakyamuni's heart infinite blissful blue radiating light comes to sink into your heart and destroy all phonetic thinking. Your entire heart chakra is filled by blissful blue radiating light energy.

After this, in the space in front of you, Shakyamuni becomes integrated, small: maybe as much as is comfortable for you. It can be small; also big is sort of still concepts. You know. But as much as you are comfortable. Shakyamuni sinks into you, coming through your shushuma (central channel); coming into your heart: becomes one.

Then, this has unified the Buddha and your consciousness, they become one. Contemplate on this experience and that moment let go, let go. Even if the dualistic object comes suddenly you transform again as Shakyamuni, you sink at the heart; again experience...

Now, we begin that way, okay. We are going to do that way. So I want you to consider this meditation course is the start: don't have only the attitude, Lama Thubten Yeshe is going to make you enlightened. No, this time you become Buddha, okay, you become buddha. "This time, in this atmosphere, this small church, I want to become enlightened, I want to discover mahamudra." So have strong determination attitude making this place conducive for the meditation—now everybody give as much as possible universal reality of non-duality to each other, to energize everybody. So this is retreat style rather than just intellectual feel. I want you to understand that way, so that our meditation becomes fruitful.

Searching for I

The fruit comes not from me: from you. I really respect our own Buddha quality. So that's why not only during the meditation and teaching sessions but even when you are eating, walking, all the time, is meditation. Very useful. Because in the Tibetan tradition you know, the Gelugpa tradition, when we

take mahamudra teaching we have to run to find the I. When our guru spoke to me he said "Today you have to go out to look at, seeking where is the 'I'," you know. So we had to go outside and look. That is tradition, you have to go looking outside when you are researching your I, is it existent or not. So for us, with very little time, when you are outside you are just watching. Okay.

To seek a concrete conception of I: existent or not. Inner, outer, when some situation comes is the I coming or not. Because, I think this tradition is very important, the experience of the ego. When we are describing it, it is intellectual, maybe you intellectually try to find out—he disappears. When you are relaxed you find him again. Like a thief; when you are watching he disappears, when he thinks you are not watching he comes out, you know. So that's why ego mind is so sneaky, so intelligent. So that's why please you do, in the session break time, you just check out, check out, no way is ego out. So you watch.

One time I remember, when His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche was teaching mahamudra and he told one of his disciples, one Lama: "You have to go to seek your I today". He thought it true, this Lama thought it very true you know, talking seriously to look out, to look for "I". He went all round the mountain, the mountain, the mountain, looking for his "I". After some time he was completely exhausted and came back. "I was looking so many places, I never found it." Okay. So you are successful. That's interesting isn't it.
So that's why not seeing is the perfect seeing isn't it. Remember. That should be that way. Okay.

I think thank you—sorry—now better we stop.

SECOND DISCOURSE

Now, first of all we have to check out the concepts of the ego and the view of the ego. We have to check out in order to realize the mahamudra.

Now practically, in order to do this we need to clean clear neutralize the mind. For that reason remember, the first thing, we explain such a sitting position. These things I don't need to explain. Normally, you people know the body posture already. And secondly remember, the nine-point breathing—these things we practice. By practicing this breathing, the mind will reach somehow the point, reach some clarity. So we contemplate on this clarity experience and then from there sort of move to investigate the wrong view of ego, how we perceive it.

It is like the Panchen Lama in the root text explains that one has to be like a fish. A fish moving without the ocean moving. Similar. When we investigate the such, the opposite of mahamudra wisdom, we need much contemplation without being distracted. So from the clean clear state of mind, then investigate without the unclear thought coming. This is a very important point, a very important point, the first beginning. Because if we don't understand the concept of ego and how we project the hallucination on the reality then our mahamudra meditation becomes Micky Mouse.

For example Lama Tsongkhapa says that when someone is afraid of having the snake near them and you introduce an elephant in such a way, big lalalala, this way; " But that is not there, you are deluding". You know, explain to me then, it cannot stop my problem because my problem is not the elephant is it? My problem is the snake. So we miss our point, that's why this is extremely important: make sure we

understand it is the ego holding the nonsense characteristic concepts which is the opposite of the wisdom of mahamudra. One has to know clean clear.

Let's say, the enemy is located east but you are shooting your gun to the west. That's a simple example. Most times we do exactly that. We do not recognize the reality of our problem. One has to understand that our problem is not the intellectual ego. Let's say: maybe you have conflict with the Buddhist intellectual ego, then you change to the Christian intellectual ego. You know, you can change such a way. But we are not dealing with this kind of problem this time. Even if that problem is solved, it does not knock out the root of the ego.

Now, this is a very important factor, for example all of you people also study so long about Buddhism and I myself study so long Buddhism, I try to study mahamudra too for a long time but somehow it is left as an intellectual trip and therefore cannot transform, cannot get rid of the ego.

That is the problem isn't it, because you miss something.

Even discussing with my student sort of "Ego is blah blah blah blah..." still this becomes an intellectual trip you know. So it's very difficult, extremely difficult to actualize. To knock out the ego is a very, very difficult thing.

Really, to know mahamudra one has to go beyond intellectual, it is true, I really think, but this is difficult. Most people, even learned Buddhists, like professors, they study all Buddhist texts you know, but even if you know all Buddhist texts intellectually you might never touch it. I was surprised you know.

I have changed my life too. First when I was studying I was thinking if one understands the total of this Buddhism, the idea, the philosophy, Madhyamika or everything, I thought one must sort of knock out ego. First I thought that, then I checked, checked.

That is not true. I realized my conception was not true. People learned the idea or philosophy or doctrine by the words, by the teachers, by these things but somehow nothing is in touch. Not gaining satisfaction, not stopping any problem of ego. It is possible. I was surprised, surprised. I'm shocked. Ah, poor boy isn't it? You must have some compassion for me.

That's why you see I feel the mahamudra teaching is in touch at the heart. We need some kind of skill to develop this, we need intellectually to develop some kind of skill. Then it is very easy. I think seems so simple you know, so simple. Sometimes with Buddhism, the teachers present Buddhism such a way, so difficult. That Buddhism is more difficult than samsara. You know what I mean.

The western people, they are already difficult enough—plus you see when we practice the Madhyamika, the philosophical Buddhism is so sophisticated actually, I feel it is very, very intellectual, very, very complex thinking. I mean, it is good, but it's still a mind trip isn't it? Sometimes sort of, it takes so much time, this intellectual field. I'm not criticizing, it is good but somehow if one does not touch one's own heart all these things are too much, a waste of time.

This is my point of view. It should not be difficult.

Now, Lama Tsongkhapa's view on looking, seeking the ego's projection is that it should not be a philosophical way of checking. It cannot be an intellectual way of checking.

Maybe I need a further example: I come to Australia, I teach Buddhism, then I tell students "You people don't understand the reality of ego's projection and that's why you are suffering. The reality of the ego's projection is yak. You have to know about yak, yak". They say "That's true, we don't understand, that is our problem".

Then you say, "Yeah Lama, you're right, we never know of yak, that's why we are ignorant, that's why we are suffering". Oh my goodness, isn't it. So I describe, yak is this, proportion is this, thin, much big here and having horns on the head and going only high on mountains, cannot go at sea level , cannot survive and how he make ka ka, how he make peepee, how he give milk. You know what I mean. I describe to you, so important. You discover this one and you become enlightened. Well, okay.

So Lama Tsongkhapa's point of view is that, first of all, that is not your big problem is it? And, secondly, I intellectualize, explaining this, this: this is a waste of time you know, waste of time. Okay, this is an example.

So now, one has to investigate one's own intuition ego. You know, simultaneously born ego. That point of view of oneself, that has to be investigated. Also, fundamentally we have to expect that anything perceived on our six sense consciousnesses you know, like eye consciousness and so on, is perceived dualistically. Everything is perceived as inherently self-existent. Everything. The minute you open your eye, it is totally perceiving in a dualistic and deluded way. No doubt, that is completely clean clear. Perceiving, the condition is having such ego and not experiencing the totality of mahamudra, universal reality of non-duality.

First of all: the way we are existent is, according to the great yogi Nagarjuna, the combination of the aggregates and giving a name. Giving a name itself is the reality, conventional reality. No more, no more.

The characteristic of ego mind is always dissatisfied with the concept that it is just a name, just labeled by the concepts, giving name. This is enough, this is enough so we have to let go but the ego mind, ego wisdom (better we use ego wisdom)—ego is so intelligent in some ways, can completely occupy, completely knock out our reality isn't it, normally. It is so skillful. This superficial aggregate of the body, a combination of the six elements—four elements earth, fire, water, air and then consciousness element and then space element we call the six elements; on the giving of a name, just a name attached, this combination is the conventional reality. Because the name attached on this combination comes from the conventional mind.

So the conventional mind, mind looking on this combination, then gives it a name. A label. That way, it doesn't matter how much you talk of the conventional reality or how much you hold it important, that way it is existent and no more, no more. What do I mean no more? I mean if you go further looking for each of the six elements, no way, no way can find.

In other words, "conventional" means itself is not absolute, phenomena themselves are not absolute.

Ego is holding the object as absolute—ego wants an absolute me, doesn't it, absolute I; to believe absolute I means you are holding an absolute I which is totally not existent, isn't it? There is no absolute I or six elements. There aren't, scientifically. So for this reason remember, in Buddhist philosophy if all phenomena are existent as ego mind believes then they all become absolute, with unchangeable character. This means the way of holding as existent by ego is tempting us to hold an absolute way. Ego wants that. For example when Melbourne becomes summer time, sometimes 100 degrees, the ego wants Coca-Cola to become absolute reality: coca-cola is absolute. You know, Coca-Cola is the absolute solution. That is totally wrong; such exaggeration to believe Coca-Cola is the absolute solution.

Coca-Cola is relative and conventional. It has artificial qualities, how can you say it is absolute. Okay. This example is similar. So the ego mind, anything perceiving phenomena wants this, there is no room for accepting something as it is, as it is. It has to go to something beyond the relative way of existence. I think so. For that reason, in the logic for the non-duality or non self-existence, Buddhism emphasizes interdependent phenomena.

We do know of interdependence, in some respect. For example like Scott you know. He is the six elements, the bunch of elements is here isn't it, we see it now. When we give it a name, this is Scott, we say "Scott". So there is some combination there, then we say the name Scott – this contact with our mind.

First of all: three important things—our mind and the name and then the conventional reality of his six elements. So using our superstition we think there must be some kind of reason we say Scott. Then that reason is superficial. There is no absolute quality at all, you know. So giving the name Scott, there is no absolute quality, just something which occurred, wind coming, then Scott coming: Scott. So this entire situation, all this is just interdependently linked with the concepts of the superstition mind and then just words, words people say, superstition they say; Scott and this bubble, all this is so interdependent.

This situation is this way existent: just this, the combination we just give a name, that's all. You cannot go further than this. You cannot go further than this to say Scott is special, we are looking, we are not satisfied, objectively, our ego is not satisfied. Especially when we have attraction by projecting a handsome quality to Scott. Scott anyway relatively has no handsome quality' so our ego tries to put a projection on him. The handsome projection, which almost went beyond his capacity isn't it?

You went beyond interdependent conventional levels when you put such projections there. Then that is become like absolute.

Today maybe we can hold, tomorrow disappears isn't it? So very difficult. On our side objectively we work that way. Also on his side, he won't accept his own ego as a conventional, superficial phenomenon: an interdependent phenomenon. Other people's projections almost, his things are. He has to realize his entire conventional reality. Scott is other people's projection; he has to understand but he doesn't understand, he thinks "Me, Scott is me".

So his ego went also beyond conventional reality. Also his ego holding such a handsome concept of I which for him is absolute: he tries to put that concept some place again. Sometime he puts it around this area, maybe here, sometimes he puts his eye, sometimes his nose, sometimes his mouth, his neck,

his heart, his navel chakra, his leg somewhere, he tries but no way isn't it?

It's like he is holding this flower, he is holding his I like this flower. He tries to put it inside here, here... No way. In other words I'm saying he holds such an absolute, unchangeable, unconventional, unsuperficial view as himself. Most times anyway he feels that is his reality. So this is the intuition—I say no intellectual, philosophical make up you know: simultaneously there is an inborn sort of ego which is a way of holding such concepts of I. Because it is simultaneously inborn nature ego, sometimes it is very difficult to catch the way of projecting. To catch the projection of ego is very difficult.

So you need a clean clear state of consciousness. For that reason you have to go beyond the intellectual. Therefore when we give mahamudra teaching traditionally instead of sitting inside meditating, the student is outside, just walking, put in the situation so he can experience moment to moment: he captures the thief of the projection of ego. So this time even in session, at break times, you try to just skillfully investigate.

Through your experience, through your investigation, you discover the non self existence of such an absolute quality of I. No way, subjectively or objectively. Lama Je Tsongkhapa said that when you investigate you can experience many things—you feel sometimes, somewhere in you body there is some big sort of concrete I you can experience or sometimes you feel the concrete I is in your heart sort of. Sometimes you feel you're completely in darkness. Sometimes you feel totally you are in space. Yet still with these kind of experiences you can not discover such projection of spontaneously born ego.

Through your checking you discover or you experience non-I, the non absolute I which is totally non existent from any element of one's aggregates. Even though you are subjectively seeking it. So at a certain point when you are seeking that way, you, and the seeker you, both are dissolved. Subject and object both dissolve. That is the experience. That's why sometimes you are scared because for a long time you have felt you are such a way existent. Also the simultaneous ego—holding such a universal projection of ego, the concept of I—such fantasy is built up so when this dissolves you get fear.

One should not be afraid of that. That fear is a natural reaction. It is conventional. Leave it, let go as this is a non-subjective, non objective state consciousness experience. Let go.

So now, not only the sense "I": even Scott is our point of view projecting objectively that Scott is, is not existent from any of his elements of body, any of his elements of mind. So realistically if we put Scott's body near the mirror, there are two things aren't there: in the mirror the reflection of Scott and he is outside there. So in our judgement we say, "Scott is this true one—inside the mirror is a reflection, it's not Scott". Maybe Scott is in the mirror' Maybe Scott is transforming, Scott is in there you know.

So now the great yogis, Nagajuna's and Lama Tsongkhapa's point of view, is that the reflection and himself, both these atmospheres of Scott are not existent. For example - the bubble. His elements are not him. It's like a car factory: before the equipment is put together, that time it is not a car is it? That combination is not a car. Okay. Similar. The combination of his elements is not him besides the reflection is not him. Both equally, there is no consideration like this combination is him, the reflection is not him. And there is no sympathetic interaction. Normally we say this is him because look, he is there.

So concerning the realistic point of view, if within the atmosphere of both of these you try to find Scott, no way.

This is very difficult, isn't it? Scott is from the name, labeling, that is why he is existent isn't it? From other people's concepts. They produce an artificial name, label, then Scott is existent. For that reason, all conventional reality is produced by the superstition mind.

For that reason, Scott is not earth, Scott is not water, Scott is not fire, Scott is not air, Scott is not consciousness, Scott is not space. So between the elements and the name, that is a superficial view. That's the only existent of the Scott. You cannot go further, you cannot go beyond the name.

When you reach beyond the name you discover the non existent of Scott, that which is not Scott but the totality of Scott, the mahamudra of Scott. So you wait to go beyond the name.

When we non-conceptualise the experience of Scott, at that time our mind reaches beyond the conventions of Scott. If you stay there a long time, contemplate, and then you break your session, open on his atmosphere or his element, then you see it's like a mirage: is there or not there, is real or not real. Somehow this vibration is not absolute. In other words, then absolute Scott disappears. That's right. When we are dealing in normal ego we always feel somehow that Scott is absolute, which is totally wrong, because we do not taste the absolute non-duality of Scott.

Well, when I talk about Scott, objectively I try to make examples; now practically that doesn't work. Practically each of us, oneself, we feel that "I'm so solid", so important one. You feel, if you observe skillfully, you feel that way. You really feel somewhere within your body or your mind "I'm here". This is the totally wrong conception. That means we do not recognize, do not accept the conventional, the interdependent operation of the way we exist. We are feeling ourself as an absolute quality.

First of all, conventional, relative I's existence is operating only conventionally, to only relative mind. So it is not possible to become absolute. Like for coca-cola to become absolute is not possible: coca-cola is a combination of elements, gathering then giving a name, then it becomes coca-cola. Same thing. That we say "I am this, that," is only the connection between name and element. That is the only way we are existent.

For example, when you experience a dream the dream experience depends totally on sleeping, doesn't it? This we talk about, dream and sleep go together. You go to sleep then can have a dream isn't it? So, similar. Because the conventional ego, superstition, leads to the fantasy of conventional existence. But the ego mind doesn't want to accept as conventional. Ego mind wants to accept as absolute. Not possible. That way wrong thinking starts. So, conventionally with these elements individually, each of these is not Scott and also the group is not Scott, the combination is not Scott. For these elements to become Scott is dependent on the label or name. So between the name and these elements, then this connection, this way of existence of the Scott, this operation is the Scott.

Each time you check up such a way and find the non existence of Scott, you're experiencing non-duality. Therefore contemplate and let go. Then the intuition comes, change the different space, you feel this, and again penetrate and again disappear and experience of non-duality comes. Contemplate, let go. So actually, in the true sense, it is such a simple thing.

First of all you understand that any time, perceiving any object, any phenomenon, you are perceiving it dualistically. At conception level, sometimes you have the intellectual non self-existent conception, you do have intellectually, but according to this view point, always perceiving dualistically.

So, so simple, that dualistic point of view, to observe if it's existent as it appears, that's all. Through your investigations, your experience, you discover such non-duality, such a way non-existent.

Then, if you feel overwhelming ego again—sometimes when you meditate huge ego comes, it is possible, sort of overwhelming—don't be depressed. It's good fortune that this time it comes out, take it as experience, as realization, then convert into bodhichitta, much love, much compassion to all living beings: those who have big ego, who are hallucinating, deluded, not touching any reality, conventional and relative; so much bodhichitta. That's okay, let go, you're not wasting your time.

So, shunyata experience, then love, compassion, bodhichitta.

Any time you are distracted you can do this way. You need both, each way each helps the other. So if any things come, take the opportunity to develop mindfulness of bodhichitta, mindfulness of mahamudra. That way so simple.

I feel, in a simple way investigate, so simple, so natural. It's not some philosophical way, made up, that's why in Buddhism mahamudra or shunyata, whatever it is describing is so simple. That is Lord Buddha's skill. Such incredible wisdom, such a simple way to show reality. So, all the conventional phenomena are so relative, so changeable, so artificial, so momentary. It's like changing concepts is so fast, superstition is so fast and so the relative world is also fast. So you know, the twentieth century world is so fast: why? Because superstition is so unbelievable, exploding, according to the Buddhist point of view.

So the superstition is the real source of the revolutionary change of conventional reality. The problem is holding the ego as absolute. So be careful. Now, we try a simple way, simplified to examine one's own concept of ego, and thereby you can discover the non-duality. You can do. Maybe today that's enough. Thank you.

THIRD DISCOURSE

Ways to practice mahamudra

There are two ways of practicing: some people or meditators think that first of all one has to study mahamudra or shunyata for fifty years then you begin to meditate.

Some people think, no, that's wrong: first you meditate then you check out the reality of shunyata. What do you think? Which is right and which is wrong?

First you have to study shunyata, shunyata, shunyata, mahamudra, mahamudra, mahamudra, twenty years, reading books, listening, listening, listening for twenty years. No meditation. Then meditate. Some say that's wrong: first meditate then you analyse the dualistic thought and the subject, the object as we explained yesterday.

What do you think? What is right and what is wrong? I'm not sure, that's why I'm asking. Interesting isn't it? I think, my point of view, twenty years without meditation, just thinking, thinking, thinking is wrong unfortunately. We have some misunderstanding sometimes about Lama Tsongkhapa's tradition—like some words, " first of all you study, check out everything, then intellectually comprehend everything clean clear, then after that meditate". Something like that. And also another way of explaining is: remember, there are three wisdoms, hearing wisdom, first you hear, develop hearing wisdom then after you have heard, check out analytically and develop the analytical wisdom, and then we obtain meditational wisdom. (Tibetans call them Tajong, Samjong, Gomjong). So we have this kind of explanation.

People understand that is the universal understanding, this way of explaining is correct, but people can interpret it in such a way, that first of all I have to study for twenty years, study, study, study with no meditation. If I meditate I must be wrong. First of all hearing, then analysis, then concentration, penetration, this is alright. What I'm saying is that Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist scripture is good but we seekers, followers can mistake and interpret the wrong way. That's all.

Also some people look at Lama Tsongkhapa's tradition. There are many translations of Lama Tsongkhapa and they think he is totally intellectual, he did not meditate, he just blah, blah, blah.

Lama Tsongkhapa always emphasizes the unity of hearing, analytical checking and penetration. You need all simultaneously. When I say need simultaneously I don't want you again to misinterpret, there is no degree, there is degree. For example maybe today first you heard, then second you check out, then third you penetrate.

Not just today, maybe for twenty years I heard. I'm not going to check out. I just heard, that's enough, fantastic. Buddha's teachings are fantastic. I don't need to check out, always right. Like this for twenty years, then after twenty years—oh, now I'm checking. Maybe many things, ten wrong, ten right. You are checking like that and then say, "Oh now I should not check, for twenty years I shouldn't check, I shouldn't analyze, very bad, I should just go and meditate". No, those are all wrong thinking.

My point of view is that this is misunderstanding the Buddhist way of practicing, misunderstanding Lama Tsongkhapa's way of practicing. Remember, Lama Tsongkhapa meditated in childhood. He went into the cave. He meditated. First time in boyhood, he meditated and had communication with Manjushri.

Therefore always to integrate these three wisdoms is very important. It's possible to first meditate then discover shunyata, then check out shunyata, it's possible. I want you to understand.

For example let's say I tell you my own experience. I teach for westerners, meditation. Some of our Tibetan culture has influenced my friends, many Geshes. So they think how they should teach meditation is first you have to study as we Tibetan monks studied, thirty years, then you should meditate. They negate what I'm doing. Communicating?

I say, I don't care. Well of course I can't say like that you know—I say I'm not sure. The true thing is I'm not sure, I just do, I don't know why I do. That's really my answer you know.

In all the oral teachings, lineages, we consider in the Gelugpa tradition the most important figure to be the Panchen Lama Chokyi Gyaltsen. He is the expert on Lama Tsongkhapa's tradition. He wrote this mahamudra, the root text of mahamudra on paper for the first time. Lama Tsongkhapa's mahamudra is not written on paper, no written root saying "This is the mahamudra". The Panchen Lama has written exactly the oral tradition of Lama Tsongkhapa and in this root text he explains the way of research or approach for realizing the universal reality of consciousness.

Now in mahamudra the unique way of presenting universal reality of consciousness is emphasis on the meditation. Remember we meditated yesterday and the day before yesterday, but this mahamudra has particular emphasis on meditation on the object of consciousness. Remember, normally we have a meditation object like Buddha's image, a deity, or can be any reality. But this time mahamudra has contemplation on the consciousness.

This is the reason mahamudra has it's name. I think Lama Tsongkhapa must be thinking it a very important way of approach, a very sensitive way of approach, a direct way of approach for realizing the universal reality of consciousness and easily eliminating the superstition and confusion. That is the point, and especially by contemplating on one's own consciousness it easily leads to universal reality of non-duality or mahamudra.

I think this is very sensible. Remember, the Buddhist point of view, any circumstance of samsara is a manifestation of consciousness. This is the central understanding: any happiness or liberation, the highest realization, comes from or manifests from the consciousness. Remember this one. Okay.

For that reason for example our life is controlled by the mind. When the desire comes to go to the beach, the thought of desire takes us to the beach. Then our life takes in the beach, not responsible... then thinking maybe India must be a big junkie place... we go. This thought comes, takes your life to India. So then you look at night clubs and those sort of things—must be very important for happiness, everbody looks happy and dancing and music. So this grasping mind takes you in there. So your life is controlled everyway by the thought or concept of desire or hatred. That's why, remember, the great yogi Shantideva said: mind is like a mad elephant: the person who is in charge of a mad elephant, if it is doing well, can let go. When it is acting crazy then he tries to control it. Similar. For us to control the mind is very important rather than having the deluded mind control us. Anyway, it is control isn't it. That's why one's own consciousness as the meditation object is the unique approach of the Gelugpa, Lama Tsongkhapa's tradition of mahamudra.

According to the mahamudra root text by the Panchen Lama, first you meditate then you seek mahamudra. For that reason I say that westerners should not think that first one studies for twenty or forty years without meditation, then after forty years can begin to meditate. If you have that kind of attitude then you're never going to meditate. Then it is purely intellectual study and transformation doesn't come and the growth doesn't come. It's just like study in books, you are outside, you are separate. For this reason, whatever you are hearing try to analyze, try to concentrate, to integrate these three.

So you see, if somebody is telling me like this, first forty years you have to study, then begin meditation; then also my superstition mind is thinking Wow' Must be that for forty years he did not meditate isn't it? I'm surprised' Then my negative mind is working. It is possible. You see some students understand that way. Let's say if I explain it like that in the Kargyu tradition meditation is the key to realizing

mahamudra or shunyata, and in the Gelugpa tradition meditation is not important, and study is the key to meditation. So too much study: confusion. Anybody feels that way? Ahhhh. Even here, you people... I'm going' Maybe, wow, I think I'm shocked.

Understand that these misconceptions come in Tibet even as in a western community. I think they do not come just like a mushroom. It has evolution. So the misconception is like many of my students also tell me that the Kargyupa and Nyingmapa traditions have much tantra practice, Gelugpa has no tantra practice - that kind of misunderstanding.

First of all Lama Tsongkhapa, most of his work is on tantra. Tantric subjects more than sutric subjects. One has to check up. Anyway that's not our business today but it came out by the way. All right. I'm not saying the Gelugpa tradition is better. No. I think all these Tibetan traditions are all right, all have the total path to enlightenment. I believe so.

Now, let's do our business now.

First of all we have to understand the character of consciousness. The characteristic of consciousness in the Buddhist point of view is the clean clear nature. Clear light nature. We call it "sel shing rigpa". The meaning of the consciousness. Sel means clear, rigpa means seeing. This way, if consciousness is not clear—dusty—it cannot take reflection. The consciousness is taking the reflection of the reality or the sensory reality. So for that reason in the Tibetan way of understanding the consciousness has clean clear nature. Like crystal, like a mirror, taking reflection, perceiving reflection, perceiving reality. That is the characteristic of consciousness.

Well, then maybe you think that if all the consciousness is clean clear nature then how can we have the deluded mind? Because the deluded mind conceiving the essential aspect of delusion also has the clear nature. Because delusion also has the clarity nature in order to perceive to some extent the projection. Like boiling water on the stove. When you boil there is turbulence isn't it. But still individually the energy in boiling water is of clean clear nature. But when it boils such a way, due to pressure, stimulation, there comes aggravation. Okay.

So all the delusions, all the concepts, all the desires or hatred, everything seems overwhelming like boiling water because of the dualistic complex. Boiling water is a good example. The dualistic complex is like this you know. But individually, if you look at each like this, each in its own character is still clean, clear nature. If you look it's so beautiful actually, so clear. Sort of much more clear than crystal. For that reason, from now on we are going much more to emphasize the meditation, the contemplation, meditation on the consciousness or thought. Thought nature is consciousness.

I think that now practically my suggestion is in the morning you do the Guru Shakyamuni yoga meditation... then absorption, then unify oneself with Shakyamuni Buddha; then this unified experience of consciousness or thought, you contemplate on that.

You see, consciousness hasn't got substantial physical energy. It has no color. It has no form. It is like the space, space energy. Its nature is the non-duality nature. It's nature is the non-self-existent nature. Somehow, concerning the experience, the meditation on the consciousness is similar to experience of the mahamudra. You see mahamudra, universal reality, it has a similar experience: easily

leads to mahamudra. That's why at the first beginning approach the concentration is on one's own consciousness.

Then maybe the question comes: "You monk say that we westerners should meditate on the mind, or the consciousness. But we don't know mind—what are you talking about? That's why we come for meditation". Understand? It sounds like "This monk has wrong conception, he thinks we understand consciousness so we can meditate on it". Now, very simple. The answer is, when you have this question you contemplate on the view of your own thought, view of your own concept. Normally when I look at him my mind is busy, sort of making cheesecake out of him. You understand, I never observe my mind view. I'm always busy there trying to make cheesecake of him.

The mahamudra way to bring concentration on the consciousness is first of all maybe you contemplate the view of your own thought. The view of your own thought is like sunrays: sunrays shooting out of you. Similarly all the view, right view or wrong view manifests from the consciousness. This is related, totally related, interdependent like this.

So it doesn't matter if it's clear or not clear view, it doesn't matter, you just contemplate on it there.

Somehow you touch your own thought, then contemplate. You do know, actually, you do know. Remember first we do the breathing meditation, the o method to neutralize. Mind becomes neutralized and so not extreme or emotionally disturbed. So you reach clean clear nature without emotional disturbance.

When you have reached the clear point, you do not start concepts like how beautiful, how wonderful. No. Just leave there. Also this mahamudra unique feature is meditation on consciousness—the mind keeps in the memory whatever you experience in thought. Keep memory continuously. Anyway, that is the meditation and don't try to have such clean clear nature, or try to make bright clear nature. If you get some, extend the object just let go.

If you make it too bright, too bright you loose. Again distraction comes. So you need to have developed skill, how much you put in energy and effort. In order to have the clarity you have to adjust through your own experience. You feel sometimes the signal of sluggishness then you make more brightness, more clarity. Then that is enough, you let go, let go. And also, when the distraction comes, this way you are not upset and do not reject. You recognize that that's also a manifestation of consciousness.

Keep mindfulness continuously. Keep the memory continuously. Somehow you can experience, you are like the full moon. Your consciousness is like the full moon. On this earth people, fish, chickens, trees, are all functioning, all organic sort of moving. But the full moon doesn't have thought, phonetic view, thinking that, this. No. Similarly your mindfulness or intensive awareness still remains, intensive awareness of consciousness, even though this distracted object is coming, going. It's no longer the important one. It's no longer energizing, it no longer can distract. You remain in the intensive mindfulness or memory. Even if the distracting thought comes you look at the essential aspect of the distracting thought. That it's nature is still the clean clear nature of consciousness isn't it? So if any deluded or superstition thought comes, instead of rejecting, look, penetrate into the essential aspect of the character of delusion.

It's like an ocean wave. An ocean wave manifests from the ocean doesn't it? It's still returning to the ocean. Similar. When the ocean wave becomes a wave, then we say that is a little bit of turbulence isn't it? When it drops out into the ocean again, then it's no longer different. Similar.

It's like space for example—this is a good example. When it's raining space is not disturbed. All this rain falls. Still it's part of space. Rain energy is part of space, isn't it? When we move we are a little bit disturbed. Then that energy becomes again quiet, peaceful. Similar, this rainfall is similar to our superstition. Our superstitions, when they are moving, sort of functioning, it's like rain, a little bit irritated but still non-duality nature, still the original nature.

Anyway the essence, the essential nature of mind or thought or consciousness in the Buddhist point of view is pure. It should not upset us: we have buddha-potential, like Maitreya.

A gold mine is a good example. Maitreya says underneath some muddy place there is gold isn't it. But the gold nature is not muddy. This is a different character. The essential aspect of gold is not the muddy water even though environmentally it's sitting under the muddy water situation. Absolutely similar, Maitreya says. That the mind is environmentally near or associated with the negativity energy, relatively associated. But the characteristic of mind is not the negative characteristic. As for example the dirty water characteristic is not the characteristic of gold. This I talk about relatively. For the absolute quality of the non-duality of the consciousness, of course, there is no discussion whether it's pure or not. Absolutely pure. Doesn't have any mark or concepts itself. It doesn't have any mark of ego complex nature. No.

So we have to understand both relative and absolute. Both ways. Buddhism says we have the human consciousness which is pure.

When you have also concentration, one way you are satisfied with concentration on your consciousness. That time when you experience concentration with satisfaction, then you use a little bit analytical wisdom.

The observation is how ego perceives the dualistic view. So you make a little bit observation. And keep conscious, you know, at the same time you use subtle mind for analytical checking. You know, such as, perceiving ego, existent or not? Check out. Again you know it's sort of automatic, when you are checking and investigating such a concrete entity it will naturally end up disappearing. Cannot face, no longer face, so at the same time as you experience non-duality, you can experience mahamudra.

So now, in this Lama Tsongkhapa tradition of mahamudra you unify the indestructible nature of meditation on the consciousness and bring the subtle wisdom to analyze the dualistic view.

This is the way to develop Vipassana. Tibetans call it "lak tong". Lak means extra, tong means seeing. What extra means, I think it's interpreted this way—extra means we see the conventional truth but what happens is, when you reach vipassana, you see the universal reality of mahamudra. So we call it Lak tong. What I'm saying is, we approach concentration on one's own consciousness. Try to develop this. That's the main point. It's not something I can say in words, blha blah blah, this, that. Whenever you feel somehow "Really this much is satisfactory," then you use the subtle analytical wisdom to analyze where is the wrong view.

When you are losing satisfaction in the concentration, just a little bit down you stop the analytical, intellectual checking.

However, maybe at the moment that's enough. Maybe we do questions and answers for a short time, maybe five minutes. Good idea? Okay

Q: When we are observing consciousness should we be observing the perception observing the thought or should we be observing the perception of the thought?

Lama: Good question. You should be observing both perception and view of perception. For example if I look at you with my mind, what I should do is observe how I hold the concepts of you and the view of my concepts when I look at you. Communicating or not?

Wait a minute, my language is not clear. When I look at you, there is a concept or perception which says you are this. So I should check out the way of holding the concepts, is perception actual or not. You know it is not actual. Holding this dualistic entity of you. My concepts are holding the dualistic entity of you and also perceiving dualistically. So my responsibility is that I have to observe this view, observe my perception and the way of holding the concepts as existent. That we have to check out.

Q: If when you look at your mind, you thought, then everything disappears at that point is that distraction or are you on the right track?

Lama: That's good. That's how you experience. When the thought, that concept disappears and objectively the object also disappears, anyway the object and subject were interdependent. So at that time you experience non-duality because it has fallen down, the Mount Meru of dualistic thought mandala. So that time when you experience that one, no intellect, again. When you are experiencing drop this heavy burden. Drop out and leave mind, let go of that state. Okay. Great.

Q: If what we perceive is a reflection of our own consciousness how can the Buddha perceive anything but clear light?

Lama: Now, put it this way. When we perceive, we perceive according to our karmic reaction the basic root of which is ego. But when Buddha sees reality or this existence there is no karmically wakening seed in order to see ordinary phenomena. It's like the way you see when you watch television. It is seeing exactly according to the way operating dualistic mind sees. All this operation or the conventional reality is only the way it operates, only functioning, like the supermarket is only functioning; the dualistic game. So Buddha sees as it is according to the way other, conventional, minds project. For him it's no longer effective; for me and you it is effective because I have a concrete concept of you. For the Buddha you are not effective. Is that good enough? Allright.

Now one thing. Maybe another way I answer. Another way is: Buddha sees the universal reality of mahamudra within you, so therefore you are like maybe you are like one atom. One atom is flying from space to space. From non-duality to non-duality. You know what I mean? So he is no longer dualistically energised.

For example, remember my example was like waves, ocean waves. Looks super but when you look at

the universal ocean of energy it's still an ocean isn't it. Similar—not a big deal for Buddha's mind. Right?

Q: You talked about concentration being satisfied. When does that come about?

Lama: Your experience. Didn't I say? It is your experience. You feel. I cannot judge for you. Of course intellectually I can say when you should be satisfied. Like this way, when your own consciousness is sort of keeping going without emotional distraction, you know, keeping going for maybe two minutes, super isn't it? I say super. So that time you should be satisfied. "Only two minutes, aaaagh' Twenty four hours I should have concentration"' Don't grasp, because then you lose the whole thing. So at that time you are satisfied.

So like a fish without disturbing the ocean—your own subtle wisdom moves like this fish. You know. How the conception and the view of conception at a certain point you reach, first it seems there is a sort of existent, then you reach a certain point and it is dissolved. The experience that both subject and object both dissolve. So then you let go. Allright.

Now Okay. If you have no more questions then I won't keep you. So try to contemplate. Not only coming in the session. Even during the break time or even just walking. Clear nature of consciousness is always existent. Normally we say "Oh I'm always confused" isn't it: other way of thinking. No clarity. But clarity is always existent, matter of fact. One has to be mindful and to contemplate.

Okay thank you, that's enough.

Colophon:
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